



A Study of the Book of Ezekiel

Prepared by Chris Reeves

Ezekiel in the Old Testament

<u>Law</u> (5) Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	<u>History</u> (12) Joshua Judges Ruth 1&2 Samuel 1&2 Kings 1&2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	<u>Wisdom</u> (5) Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon	<u>Prophecy</u> (17) <u>Major Prophets</u> Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel <u>Minor Prophets</u> Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
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Ezekiel 1:1-3

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The Prophet Ezekiel in the Old Testament

<u>Pre-Exile Prophets</u>	<u>Exile Prophets</u>	<u>Post-Exile Prophets</u>
Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah	Ezekiel Daniel	Haggai Zechariah Malachi

The Prophets and the Babylonian Captivity

- Daniel in Jehoiakim's time (Dan. 1:1)
- Ezekiel in Jehoiachin's time (Ezek. 1:1-3)
- Jeremiah in Zedekiah's time (Jer. 1:1-3)

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The Heavens Were Opened

- At Ezekiel's calling (1:1)
- At Jesus' baptism (Mt. 3:16)
- At the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:56)
- At Peter's vision (Acts 10:11)
- At John's vision (Rev. 19:11)

Ezekiel 1:1-3

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Visions of God

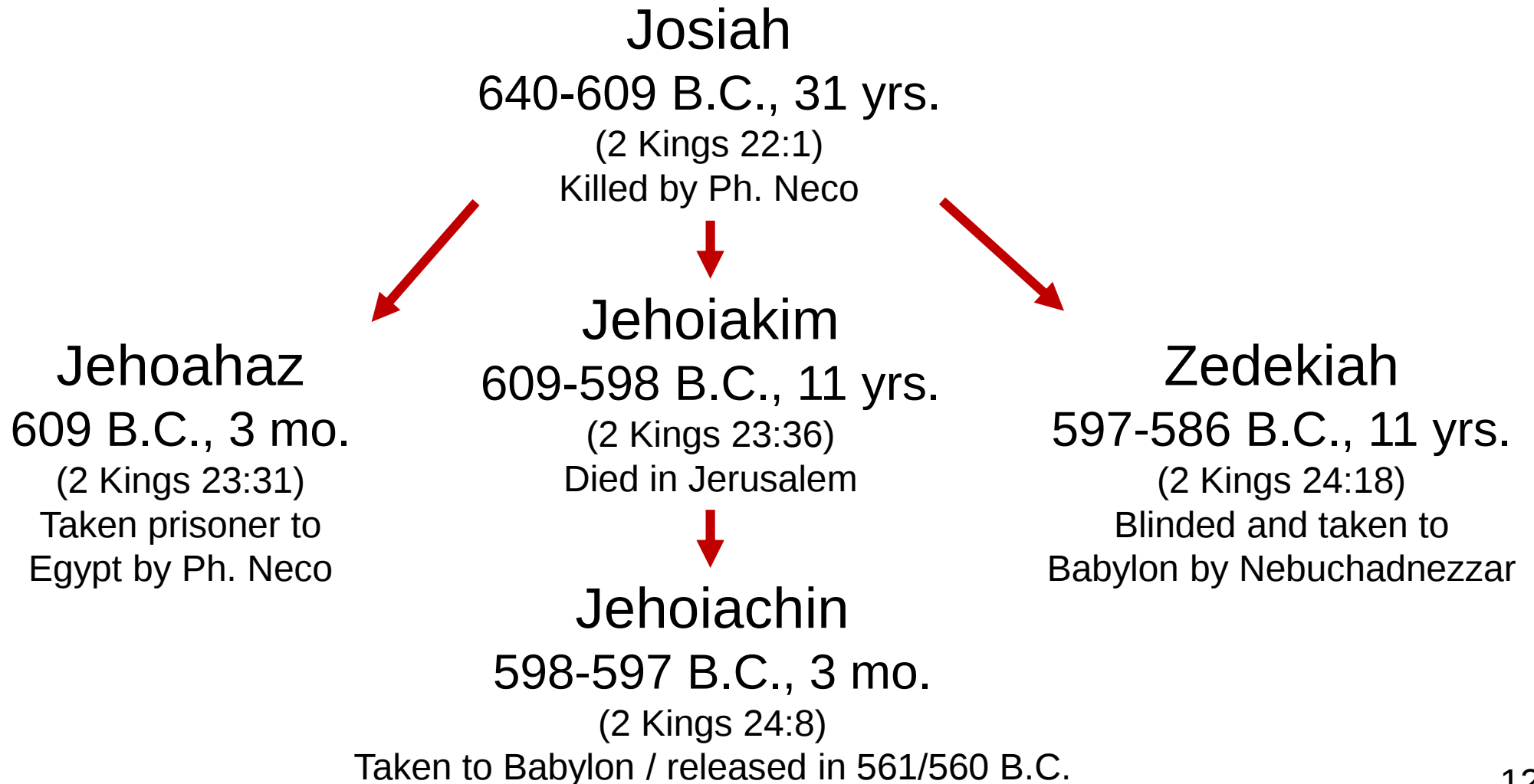
- At the beginning – when God's glory was present (1:1)
- Later on – when God's glory departed (8:3)
- At the end – when God's glory returned (40:20)

Ezekiel 1:1-3

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The Last Five Kings of Judah

(1 Chronicles 3:14-17)



The Babylonian Captivity

Date	Deportation	Captives Taken
605 (first year)*	First	Nobles, Daniel (2 K. 24:1; Dan. 1:1-2)
597 (seventh year)*	Second	Jehoiachin, Ezekiel (2 K. 24:12; Jer. 52:28; Ezek. 1:1-2)
586 (nineteenth year)*	Third	Residue of the people (2 K. 25:8; Jer. 52:29)
582 (twenty-third year)*	Fourth (Minor)	Small Group of 745 Jews (Jer. 52:30)

* Years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar

The 22-Year Ministry of Ezekiel

1:2

593/92 B.C. - Chapters 1-32 ← 586 B.C. → Chapters 33-48 – 571/70 B.C.

29:17

Prophecies Before the Fall
of Jerusalem

7/6 years of
prophecies concerning
judgment and Judah's
Fall

Prophecies After the Fall of
Jerusalem

16/15 years of
prophecies concerning
restoration and Israel's
future

Chapter 33:21

Ezekiel 1:1-3

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The Word of Jehovah

- Found 57 times (ASV) in the book

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Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

- His name means "God will strengthen" and he would need strength to face the Jews (2:5; 3:7-9). He is mentioned in the OT, only in 1:3 and 24:24 (comp. 1 Chron. 24:16).
- He was a 30-year old priest (1:3; see Num. 4:23, 30, 39, 43) and a prophet (2:5; 33:33). He was willing to rebuke the priests and temple misuse (7:26; 22:25-26; 23:39).

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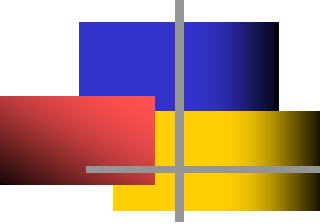


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The Hand of Jehovah Was Upon Me

- When he saw a vision (1:3)
- When he was called to be a watchman (3:14, 22)
- When he saw more visions (8:1)
- When he was called again to be a watchman (33:22)
- When he saw more visions (37:1; 40:1)



Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

- He was married and his wife died later (24:15-18)
- He (or his family) would have been influenced by:
 - Josiah's reforms
 - Temple services
 - Jeremiah's ministry
 - Five-year captivity (597-592 B.C.)



Ezekiel - the Man

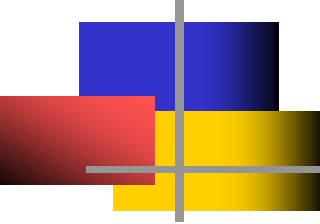
"Son of Man"

- He was born 622 B.C., during the reform days of Josiah (when the Law was found)
- He was 17 when he witnessed the first Babylonian captivity of 605 B.C.
- He was 25 when he was carried away captive to Babylon in 597 B.C. (Judah continued to decline - Ezek. 2:4; 3:7; 5:11; 6:13; 8:1ff; 9:9; etc.)

Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

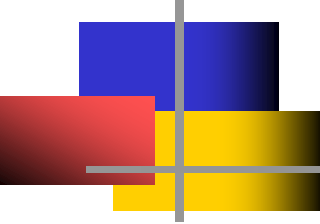
- His captivity is recorded in 2 K. 24:10-17



Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

- The situation on the River Chebar (*Naru Kabari*) in Babylon was mixed:
 - Some were pious (Jer. 24:4-7; Psa. 137)
 - Others were idolatrous (Ezek. 14:4; 20:30)
 - Many who heard Ezekiel rejected his message (Ezek. 2:3; 14:1-3; 18:19,25; 20:49; 33:32)



Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

- The situation on the River Chebar in Babylon was mixed:
 - Many thought their stay would be short (Ezek. 13:10, 16; see Jer. 28:1-4; 29:1-10)
 - Jewish captives in Babylon heard the truth from Jeremiah and error from false prophets (in Jerusalem and in Babylon, see Jer. 29:24-29)



Jeremiah, Jehoiachin (Jeconiah), and Ezekiel

- The captives at this time need to know that there will be “good figs” (faithful Jews) in Babylon with a “heart to know me” (Jer. 24:1-10; 29:12-14; see Esther 2:6; Jer. 52:31-34; Mt. 1:11-12)
- The captives (and false prophets) at this time need to know that there will be many years (70) in Babylon; it will not be a short stay (Jer. 27:20; 28:1-4; 29:1-32)



Jeremiah, Jehoiachin (Jeconiah), and Ezekiel

- The captives at this time were told by Jeremiah to settle down and live peacefully (Jer. 29:5-7)
- The influence and position of Daniel and his friends, from 605 – 593 B.C., may have also contributed to the successful Jewish resettlement in Babylon at this time (Dan. 1:17-21; 2:48-49)

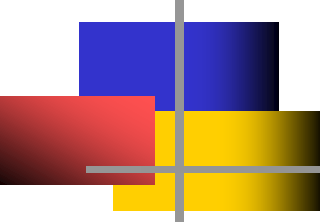


Ezekiel - the Man

"Son of Man"

■ His character:

- Humble (1:28-2:1)
- Powerful, courageous (2:1-10)
- Useful (3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1; 43:5)
- Self-controlled (3:15, 24, 26; 24:18)
- Sympathetic (9:8; 19:1, 14)
- Magnanimous (14:14-20)



Ezekiel - the Man

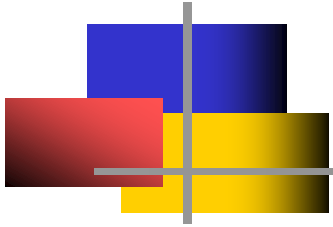
"Son of Man"

- His character:
 - Earnest (22:1-23:1)
 - Hopeful (34:1 – 37:28)

Ezekiel - the Man

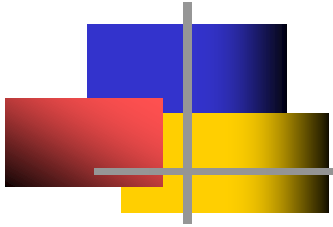
"Son of Man"

- He began preaching in 593/92 B.C., when he was 30 years old (Jerusalem fell six years later in 586 B.C.)
- He was preaching outside of Babylon at Tel-Abib by the river Chebar – a Jewish colony (1:1, 3; 3:15, 23; etc.). He was contemporary with Daniel in Babylon (Dan. 1:1-7; 605 – 536 B.C.) and with Jeremiah in Jerusalem, then Egypt (627 – 580 B.C.). He mentions Daniel by name (14:14, 20; 28:3).



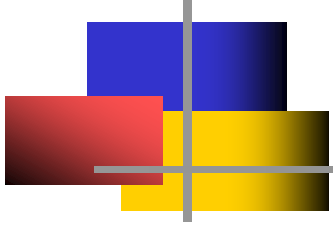
Ezekiel - the Ministry

- The time of his ministry: 22-years, from 593/92 B.C. (1:2) to 571/70 B.C. (29:17)
- The tone of his ministry:
 - **Horror** – Judah's **fall** – the glory of the Lord departs from Israel (593/92 to 586 B.C.)
 - **Hope** – Judah's **future** – the glory of the Lord returns to Israel (586 to 571/70 B.C.)



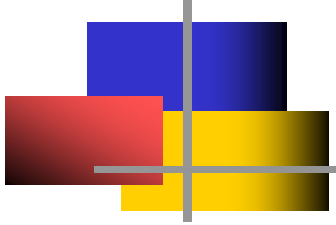
Ezekiel - the Ministry

- The manner of his ministry:
 - Some writing (24:2)
 - Some symbolic acting (4:1-3, 4-8; 9-17; 5:1-4; 12:1-6, 17-20; 21:18-23; 24:15-27; 37:15-23)
 - Some preaching (6:2-3; 13:2; 14:4; 17:2-3; 19:1-2; 20:3; 33:2; 34:2; 36:1)



Ezekiel - the Ministry

- The manner of his ministry:
 - Some parables and allegories (15:1-8; 16:1-23; 17:1-21, 22-24; 19:1-9, 10-14; 20:45-49; 21:21-17; 23:1-37; 24:1-14)



Ezekiel - the Ministry

- The symbolic actions of his ministry:
 - Designed to illustrate the message
 - Designed to arouse interest in the audience
 - See 4:1-3; 4:4-6; 4:9-12; 5:1-4; 12:3-6; 12:17-20; 21:19-20; 24;16-17; 37:16-17



A Study of the Book of Ezekiel

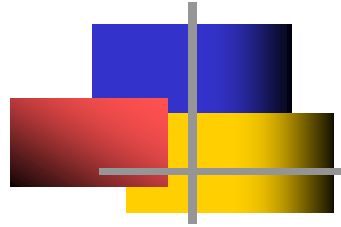
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Ezekiel - the Ministry

Message	Date
The first year of Ezekiel's captivity (2 K. 24:12)	597 B.C.
The beginning of Ezekiel's ministry (1:1-3)	593/92 B.C.
Ezekiel's second-dated message (8:1)	591/92 B.C.
Ezekiel's third-dated message (20:1)	590/91 B.C.
Ezekiel's fourth-dated message (24:1)	588/89 B.C.
Ezekiel's fifth-dated message (26:1)	586/87 B.C.
Ezekiel's sixth-dated message (29:1) *	587/88 B.C.
Ezekiel's seventh-dated message (29:17) *	571/70 B.C.
Ezekiel's eighth-dated message (30:20)	586/87 B.C.
Ezekiel's ninth-dated message (31:1)	586/87 B.C.
Ezekiel's tenth-dated message (32:1)	585 B.C.
Ezekiel's eleventh-dated message (32:17)	585 B.C.
Ezekiel's twelfth-dated message (33:21) *	585 B.C.
Ezekiel's last-dated message (40:1)	572/73 B.C.
* Not in order with the general flow of the book	

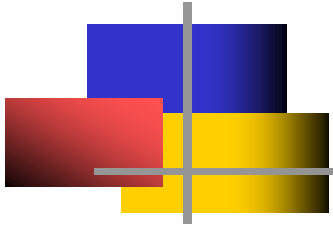
The Ministry of Jeremiah and Ezekiel

Jeremiah in Jerusalem	Date	Ezekiel Outside of Babylon
Zedekiah's first year (52:1)	597 B.C.	1:1-3
Zedekiah's fourth year (28:1; 51:59)	593 B.C.	
Zedekiah's fifth year	593/92 B.C.	1:1-3
Zedekiah's sixth year	591 B.C.	8:1
Zedekiah's seventh year	590 B.C.	20:1
Zedekiah's ninth year (39:1; 52:4)	588 B.C.	24:1
Zedekiah's tenth year (32:1)	587 B.C.	29:1
Zedekiah's eleventh year (1:3; 39:2; 52:1, 5)	586 B.C.	26:1; 30:20; 31:1
Post fall of Jerusalem / Egypt (40:1-44:30)	585 B.C.	32:1, 17; 33:21



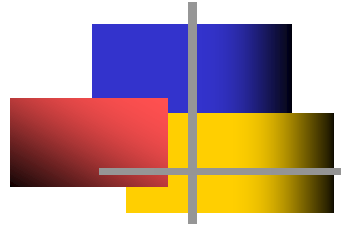
Ezekiel - the Ministry

- Like John in the book of Revelation, Ezekiel was made to see visions (Ezek. 1-3; 8-11; 37; 40-48):
 - Intended to convey a divine message through vivid imagery
 - Time and space are altered – he was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord (3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 5; 24; 37:1; 43:5)



Ezekiel - the Ministry

- Like John in the book of Revelation, Ezekiel was made to see visions (Ezek. 1-3; 8-11; 37; 40-48):
 - The emphasis is on seeing the majestic glory of God (1:28; 3:12, 23; 8:2-4; 9:3; 10:4, 18-19; 11:22-23; 43:2-5; 44:4)
 - Compare with visions of Isaiah (6:1-10), Daniel (10:5-14), and John (Rev. 1:12-19)



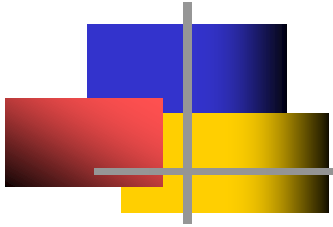
Ezekiel - the Ministry

- A passage is interpreted literally unless:
 - It would result in an absurd conclusion
 - It would result in promoting immoral behavior
 - It would contradict an interpretation given by another Bible writer
 - It would contradict clear teaching in other books of the Bible



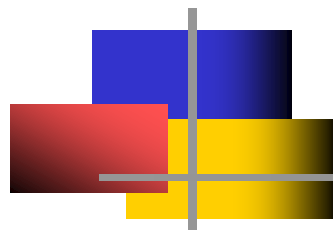
Ezekiel - the Ministry

- A passage is interpreted non-literally when:
 - It is used to hide truth from those who are not interested
 - It is past judgment or blessings that are used to describe future events
 - It is used for those who are slow to perceive spiritual truth
 - It is used to teach a familiar lesson
 - It is used so the hearer will not easily forget



Ezekiel - the Ministry

- Ezekiel 1-24: before fall of Jerusalem (593/92-587 B.C.)
- Ezekiel 25-35: during the fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.)
- Ezekiel 36-48: after the fall of Jerusalem (585-570 B.C.)

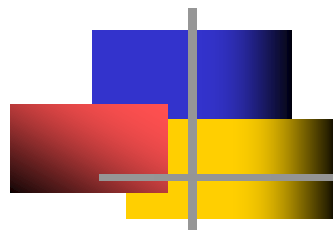


Ezekiel - the Mission

"A watchman unto the house of Israel"

As a watchman (Ezek 3 & 33), he was to...

- **Demolish delusions** – that Jerusalem could never be destroyed; that the exile would soon end (13:10-16; 22:23-31)
- **Expose apostasy** – thereby showing why God was punishing Judah (and the nations) with judgment for their sins (9:9)

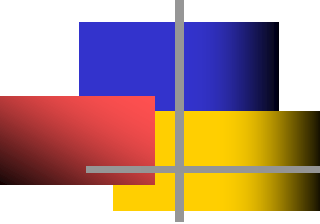


Ezekiel - the Mission

"A watchman unto the house of Israel"

As a watchman (Ezek 3 & 33), he was to...

- **Awaken repentance** – within a new people in order to inherit future promises
- **Stimulate hope** – for a better tomorrow with the promise of restoration



Ezekiel's Basic Three-Point Message

"You shall know that I am the Lord"

1. **The fate of God's people:** Jerusalem will fall (4-24)
2. **The foes of God's people:** the surrounding nations will fall (25-35)
3. **The future of God's people:** Israel will be restored (36-48)

Ezekiel - the Message

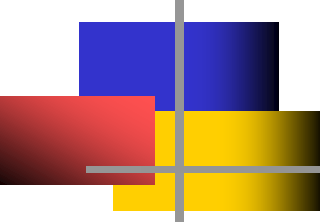
"You shall know that I am the Lord"

- The doctrine of God – the glory of the Lord (1:24,28; 10:18; 11:23; 36:21-22; 39:7,25)
- The doctrine of the Messiah – the true and faithful Prince (17:22-24; 21:27; 34:23-24; 37:24; 44:3)
- The doctrine of Man – the individual accountability and responsibility of man (11:19; 18:4ff; 33:11; 36:26; 37:23; 43:9)

Ezekiel - the Message

"You shall know that I am the Lord"

- The kingdom of God – the people with a new heart and new covenant (11:17,20; 16:62; 20:43; 34:11-19,23,24; 36:27,33; 37:24-28; 39:27,29; 46:9)

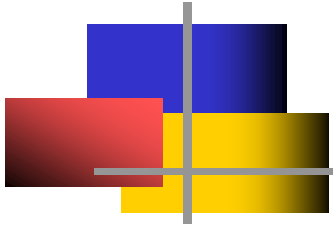


Ezekiel - the Message

"You shall know that I am the Lord"

Repeated phrases in Ezekiel

- "The word of the Lord came unto me..." (40 times)
and "Thus says the Lord..." (121 times)
- "Son of man..." (93 times)
- "You shall know that I am the Lord" (57 times)



Ezekiel - the Messiah

- Ezekiel sees the coming Messiah as...
 - A tree branch who will be planted on a high mountain and bear fruit for all (17:22)
 - A shepherd who will deliver and feed God's people (34:23)
 - A prince (king) who will rule and serve God's people (34:24; 37:24-25)

Ezekiel Outlined

- The Prophet's **Commission** (1-3)
 - The vision of God's glory (1)
 - The commission of God's watchman (2-3)
- The Prophet's **Condemnation** (4-35)
 - Judgment on Judah (4-24)
 - Judgment on the nations (25-35)
- The Prophet's **Consolation** (36-48)
 - The return of Israel (36-39)
 - The restoration of Israel (40-48)

Ezekiel's New Israel

- A new shepherd and covenant (34; 37)
- A new heart (36)
- A new life (37)
- A new judgment (38-39)
- A new temple (40-43)
- A new worship (44-46)
- A new land (47-48)

The Four Prophetic Viewpoints

1. Present-Day Viewpoint “Pageview”	2. Near-Future Viewpoint “Hillview”	3. Distant-Future Viewpoint “Bird’s-eye view”	4. Far-Distant Future Viewpoint “Mountain view”
God’s people (and nations) are in sin and need to come back to God’s law and covenant.	God’s people (and nations) will be judged for their wickedness and refusal to repent.	God’s people will be brought back to their land after a period of punishment.	God’s people will be granted many “new” blessings in the future days of the Messiah.
Hint: Look for language speaking of various sins, law, or covenant.	Hint: Look for language speaking of coming judgment, desolation, or captivity.	Hint: Look for language speaking of returning, restoring, or a remnant.	Hint: Look for language speaking of “in that day”, “in those days”, or “David their king”

The Sign-Acts of Prophets

- Visual images to help illustrate God's truth in a clear, understandable, and memorable way
- Often strangely different or bizarre behavior
- Sometimes challenging to accomplish, or requiring great sacrifice by the prophet (Jer. 13:1ff; Ezek. 4:4-6)

The Sign-Acts of Prophets

- Hosea – take a wife of harlotry (1:2-9), buy her back (3:1-5)
- Isaiah – go naked and barefoot (20:1-4)
- Ezekiel – shut yourself up (3:24-27), draw a picture of Jerusalem on a brick (4:1-3), lay on your side and eat bread (4:4-17), cut your hair (5:1-4), clap your hands (6:11-12), be mute (24:25-27; 33:21-22), etc.

The Sign-Acts of Prophets

- Zechariah – make an ornate crown of silver and gold and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak (6:9-15)

Jeremiah 18 and Ezekiel 18

- **Jeremiah 18:** the Lord and nations – “if” a nation changes (turns) from good to bad or from bad to good, then the Lord will change (repent) his response (punishment or reward) accordingly (see also 26:3, 13, 19; 42:10)
- **Ezekiel 18:** the Lord and individuals – “if” individuals change (turn) from good to bad or from bad to good, then the Lord will change (repent) his response (punishment or reward) accordingly

Israel's Religious Leaders Rebuked

Israel's Failed Leaders	Isaiah	Jeremiah	Ezekiel
Negligent shepherds	56:9-12	23:1-4 (see 3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 22:22; 25:34-36; 50:6)	34:1-31
False prophets	29:10; 30:10	23:9-40 (see 5:31; 6:13; 8:10; 27:15)	13:1-23 (see 22:25, 28)

The Lord's Judgments Upon the Nations

Nations	Amos 1-2	Isaiah 13-23	Jeremiah 46-51	Ezekiel 25-35	Misc.
Damascus	1:3-5	17:1-3	49:23-27		Zech. 9:1
Gaza (Philistia)	1:6-8	14:28-31	47:1-7	25:15-17	Joel 3:4-8
Tyre / Sidon	1:9-10	23:1-18		26:1 – 28:24	Zech. 9:1-7
Edom	1:11-12		49:7-22	32:29-30; 35:1-15	Obadiah; Joel 3:19
Ammon	1:13-15		49:1-6	25:1-7	Zeph. 2:8-9
Moab	2:1-3	15:1 – 16:14	48:1-47	25:8-14	Zeph. 2:8-9
Judah	2:4-5	22:1-25	52:1-34	33:1 – 34:10	
Israel	2:6-16	17:4-11			
Baylon		13:1-14:27; 21:2-9	50:1 – 51:64		Hab. 2:4-20
Ethiopia / Egypt		18:1 – 20:6	46:1-26	29:1 – 32:32	Zeph. 2:12
Wilderness		21:1			
Dumah / Arabia		21:11-17		27:21	
Kedar / Hazor			49:28-33		
Elam			49:34-39	32:24-25	