

Outline of Ezekiel

We hope that our outline of Ezekiel will help you broaden your understanding of this complex book.

The Hebrew name “Yhezkiel” (Ezekiel) means “may God strengthen.” Ezekiel certainly needed the strength of God. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest (1:3). In 597 B.C., Ezekiel was taken as a prisoner to Babylon (Josephus, Ant.; Bk.10, Ch.6.) as a young man, probably around 25 years of age (Ezekiel 1:1). At the age of 30 (1:1), he began to prophesy in 593 and continued until 570 B.C. (Ezekiel 1:2; 27:17; 33:21; 40:1). Until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., Ezekiel’s message was mainly about judgment. From 586 until 570, he prophesied about consolation.

The book is full of imagery, with some of the best being reserved for God. Chapter 1 introduces us to God with the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God. These visions of God along with Ezekiel’s bizarre behavior have led some to label Ezekiel as neurotic, paranoid, psychotic, or schizophrenic. However, his visions rang true and his behavior was not near as bizarre as the behavior of those he was warning. The vision of God’s glory (The Vision) found in chapter 1 re-appears often.

Besides the image of God’s glory, there are images of sieges, of an outcast vine, of divine love, of sexual promiscuity, of a cooking pot, of shepherds, of dry bones that gain flesh and live, of a new temple, and of future blessings. Jesus undoubtedly has in mind Ezekiel 34 when He spoke of being the Good Shepherd in John 10. The book gives us visions of God and visions of Satan, visions of destruction and visions of hope, extended imagery of patience and stupidity, and promises of a new covenant and a new time of peace.

The purpose of the book is obvious. It is so that people will come to know the LORD. The phrases: “And you shall know that I am the LORD,” “and they shall know that I am the LORD” or closely related phrases are found 94 times in the Old Testament, 72 of which are in Ezekiel (6:7, 10, 13, 14; 7:4, 9, 27; 11:10, 12; 12:15, 16, 20; 13:9, 14, 21, 23; 14:8; 15:7; 16:62; 17:21, 24; 20:12, 20, 26, 38, 42, 44; 21:10; 22:16, 22; 23:49; 24:24, 27; 25:5, 7, 11, 17; 26:6; 28:22, 23, 24, 26; 29:6, 9, 16, 21; 30:8, 19, 25, 26; 32:15; 33:29; 34:27, 30; 35:4, 9, 12, 15; 36:11, 23, 36, 38; 37:6, 13, 14, 28; 38:23; 39:6, 7, 22, 28).

Sixty times we have the phrase “the word of the LORD,” more than in any other book. Like Jeremiah’s “thus says the LORD,” the emphasis is on the source of the prophetic message. Like Isaiah, the holiness of God is emphasized, with the word “holy” found some 47 times referencing the sacred. The Holy Spirit is mentioned 14 times (2:2; 3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:1-2, 5, 24(2); 36:27; 37:1, 14; 39:29; 43:5).

The term “son of man” appears 93 times in reference to Ezekiel. Ezekiel was the human point of God’s spear pointing at Israel, warning them to turn, and ultimately offering hope; himself pointing to the Son of Man who was to come.

Note:

The vision in chapter one appears many times throughout the book. When it appears in the book, we write the words *The Vision* in the outline. When we have the location and the date of the prophecy, we include that as well.

Date: 593-570 B.C.

I. The Visions of God 1-3 (location: River Chebar, July 31-August 6, 593 B.C.)

A. The appearance of the likeness of the LORD’s glory 1

- B. The commissioning 2-3:15
- C. You are a watchman 3:16-27 (location: Tel Abib, *The Vision*)

II. Prophecies against Jerusalem 4-24

- A. The 430 day siege, with 8 ounces of food and 2/3rds quart of water each day (apparently in his courtyard 3:24-25) 4
- B. The hair (1/3, 1/3, 1/3 and a little) 5
- C. “Pound your fists and stamp your feet” Israel’s idolatry shall make them desolate 6
- D. “An end,” “a disaster,” “a day,” “violence,” “destruction comes; they will seek peace but none, disaster will come upon disaster” 7
- E. The hole in the wall 8 (location: Jerusalem, September 17, 592, *The Vision*)
- F. Six men, a marker, and the battle-axes 9 (*The Vision*)
- G. The glory of the LORD departs from the temple 10 (*The Vision*)
- H. The wicked men and the cauldron 11 (location: Chaldea, *The Vision*)
- I. Dig through the wall and take your belongings 12
- J. Foxes and untempered mortar — the false prophets 13
- K. Noah, Daniel and Job could not deliver them 14
- L. The Vine Branch 15
- M. Jerusalem, the harlot 16
- N. The great eagles and the vine 17
- O. The soul that sins shall die 18
- P. Lions and vine — the princes 19
- Q. Rebellious Israel 20 (August 14, 591)
- R. The sword of God, Babylon 21
- S. The sins of Jerusalem 22
- T. The two sisters 23
- U. The cooking pot and the siege begins 24 (January 15, 588)

III. Judgment on the nations 25-32

- A. Ammon 25:1-7
- B. Moab 25:8-11
- C. Edom 25:12-14
- D. Philistia 25:15-17
- E. Tyre 26-28:19 (April 23, 587)
- F. Sidon 28:20-26
- G. Egypt 29-32 (January 7, 587)
 - 1. The River is Mine 29:1-16
 - 2. The Coming captivity of Egypt 29:17-30:19 (April 26, 571)

3. Against Pharaoh 30:20-26 (April 27, 587)
4. The cutting of the great tree of Egypt 31 (June 21, 587)
5. Capturing the lion of Egypt 32:1-16 (March 3, 585)
6. Consigned to the Pit 32:17-32 (March 18, 585)

IV. The Blessing on His People 33-48

- A. The Watchman and the Fall of Jerusalem 33 (January 8, 585)
 - B. The shepherds and Shepherd 34
 - C. Judgment on Seir 35
 - D. Israel shall receive a new heart and spirit 36
 - E. Dry bones 37:1-14 (location: Valley of Dry Bones)
 - F. Two sticks 37:15-28
 - G. Battle of Gog and Magog 38-39
 - H. A New Temple 40-47:12 (location: The Temple, April 28, 573)
 1. The measurements 40-42
 2. The return of the LORD's glory and the altar 43 (*The Vision*)
 3. The temple is holy 44-45:17
 4. Celebrations and worship 45:18-46:24
 5. The waters and trees 47:1-12
 6. The Division of the Land 47:13-48:35
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Notes:

Dates are taken from W.S. Lasor in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, as he derived them from tables prepared by R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C. — A.D. 75* (1956).

Key Idea: You shall know that I am the LORD.

Key Passage: Ezekiel 18:32; 34:30-31

Key Lesson: Know God