

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

Author & Date: The book is named after the author, the prophet/priest Ezekiel, the son of Buzi (1:3). Ezekiel was 30 years old when he had his famous vision of the wheel (1:1) and began his ministry five years after the captivity of Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. Apparently Ezekiel was taken in this second phase of the exile. Ezekiel prophesied at least until 570 B.C., Jehoiachin's 27th year of captivity (29:17), so the book was probably written some time around 565 B.C.

Purpose: Hebrew names are typically significant. The name Ezekiel can mean either “God Hardens” or “God Strengthens”. Both names fit the message of the book as Ezekiel. In the first place, God describes the Israelites to whom Ezekiel will minister as “stubborn and obstinate” (Ezek. 2:4) and this can be literally translated as “stern [hard] of face and strong [hard] of heart”. Secondly, God promises to restore a remnant of Israel after His righteous anger has taken its course. In doing so, he will restore Israel to her former glory and “strengthen” those who suffered the consequences of sin (34:11-16). In viewing the book as a whole, the primary theme seems to be found in the phrase, “they shall know that I am the Lord” (6:7, 10; 12:16, 20:20) or other similar phrases repeated throughout the book (I have found 64 occurrences of this similar phrase). As such, God points out through the ministry of Ezekiel that His judgments and ultimate restoration are for the purpose of bringing Israel to Him and that they and the other nations may know through experience that the Lord is the Lord of all. God desires that all people know that He is the Lord.

Outline for Ezekiel

- I. The Visions of God (Chapters 1-3)
 - A. The Glory of God (chapter 1)
 - B. The commissioning of Ezekiel (chapters 2-3)
- II. Prophecies of Judgment (4-32)
 - A. On Jerusalem (chapters 4-24)
 - Interlude: Message on personal responsibility (chapter 18)
 - B. On the Nations (chapters 25-32)
 - Rulers of Tyre 28:1-19
- III. The Watchman’s Responsibilities (chapter 33 – c.f. chapter 3)
- IV. Prophecies of Restoration (chapters 34-48)
 - A. Comparison of the irresponsible shepherds and The Shepherd (chapter 34)
 - B. Judgment of Nations (35:1-36:7)
 - C. Blessings on Israel (36:8-39:29) – Millennial Kingdom
 - D. The New Temple (40:1-47:12)
 - E. Kingdom Borders (47:13-48:35)
 - Name of the City: “The Lord is There” (Ezek 48:35)

Key Passages:

- 6:7, 10, and many more** “that they may know that I am the Lord” (and similar statements)
- 11:19-20 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep my judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. (c.f. 36:25-28)
- 18:20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

- 18:31-32 31 “Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die O house of Israel? 32 for I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies.” says the Lord God. “Therefore turn and live!”
- 28:11-19 “The King of Tyre” – describes Satan’s fall (c.f. Isa 14:12-21 possible similarities)
- 33:11 “Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?”
- 34:11 For thus says the Lord God: “Indeed I Myself will search for my sheep and seek them out. (c.f. 34:15-16, 23-24, Jn 10:11, Mat 18:11, Lk 15)
- 39:29 And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel, says the Lord God.
- 48:35c and the name of the city from *that day shall be*: THE LORD IS THERE.”

Food for Thought

1. Ezekiel begins the book with a description of His glorious vision of God. What comes to mind when you read chapter 1 and what impression do you get of God from this vision? How can this image help shape our worship of God? (c.f. Ezek 10)
2. Throughout Ezekiel, the prophet is asked to do some unusual things to help deliver God’s message to his people. In the Commissioning of Ezekiel, he has him eat a scroll (2:9-3:3). What picture does this give us of God’s word? Compare this with a similar situation in Rev. 10:8-11.
3. What does God’s description of Israel and the gentiles tell us about the knowledge of God in 3:4-7)? (c.f. Matt 11:20-24) (side note: There is a theological movement called “Open Theism” that contradicts these passages in their understanding of God.)
4. Ezekiel is called a “watchman” for the nation of Israel. What is a “watchman” and what are the responsibilities of a watchman in Ezek 3:16-27 (c.f. Ezek 33:1-11)? How might that responsibility parallel that of a Christian today?

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

5. Object Lessons in Ezekiel

Like Jeremiah and other prophets, God had Ezekiel perform some object lessons to convey the message God wanted him to convey. Some of these lessons seem pretty unusual. Complete the chart below to summarize each of these lessons.

No.	Passage	Description	Purpose/Message	Application for Today
1	4:1-3*	The Tablet		
2	4:4-8*	Lying on His Side		
3	4:9-17*	Eating Defiled Food & Rationed Water		
4	5:1-4* (cf. Isa 7:20, Jer. 7:29, 2 Sam 10:5)	Hair Cut		
5	12:1-16	Packing		
6	12:17-28	Shaking in Terror		
7	20:45-59 (c.f. 17:24)	The Forest Fire		
8	21:1-17 (c.f. 20:45-49 parable)	The Drawn Sword		
9	21:18-32	The Sign Post		
10	24:15-27	Ezekiel's Wife Dies		
11	37:15-28	The Two Sticks		

*Summary Explanation in 5:5-17

6. Ezekiel 10 describes the departure of the Glory of God from the Temple. What makes this vision particularly tragic for Judah? How does the hope offered in 11:14-25 relate directly to this departure?

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

7. Read Ezekiel 14:12-16 and Jer. 15:1, what do these passages tell us about the men identified (Noah, Daniel¹, and Job), prayer/righteousness, and God's purposes? What characteristics of these three men make them candidates for this example?

8. Chapters 18 and 33 of Ezekiel may be the most applicable chapters in the book of Ezekiel. Chapter 18 begins with a saying that points to the conclusion that Israel would blame their forefathers for their current exile (v. 2). However, God counters with the simple fact that "all souls are Mine." In light of the fact that all souls are His, read chapter 18 with 33:1-20 and summarize the conclusions we should draw about the following:
 - a. Man's view of Justice and God's view (19, 25, 29-30)

 - b. Who is it that must face the penalty of death in God's justice (v. 4, 20)

 - c. What is God's attitude toward the death of the wicked? (23, 32, 33:11)

 - d. What is the requirement to move from death to life? (20-32, 33:13-20)

 - e. How do these passages fit with our understanding of the Gospel and the personal need for salvation? (consider Rom 3:23, Luke 5:32, Acts 11:18, 20:21, 2 Cor 7:10, Eph 2:9-10, 2 Pet 3:9)

9. Another interesting passage in Ezekiel, is the prophecy against Tyre in Ezekiel 28. What is the difference in whom the prophecy is against when comparing 28:2 to 28:12? Consider the description of the "king of Tyre" in verses 12 and following. Who do you conclude this portion is talking about?² What warning does this give us about the nature of sin and its consequences?

10. What characteristics of a shepherd does God promise to perform for His sheep in Ezek. 34:11-31? How does that image apply to us in light of Jesus teaching in Jn 10:11 and Matt 18:11-14?

¹ There is some discussion concerning the identity of the Daniel mentioned here since he was a contemporary of Ezekiel (possibly only in his 20s or 30s), apparently had children (v. 16) and the spelling of his name here is different than in the book of Daniel. Additionally, the wisdom of Daniel is mentioned in the judgment against Tyre in 28:3. Some conclude this supports a Canaanite Daniel (there is some evidence of a famous Daniel) who would have been known in Tyre as opposed to a young Daniel in Babylon. These questions can easily be answered, so there is no reason to assume another Daniel. First, Daniel exercised faith at an early age and rose to prominence quickly, secondly the argument concerning children is one from silence and assumes Daniel was made a eunuch in Babylon. Even if this were the case, the situation is "hypothetical" and indeed so could Daniel's children. Thirdly, alternate spellings of names are quite common and this can just be a variant of the same name. The context assumes a Daniel who is well known and one who as a righteous man would intercede to the Lord on behalf of others and the biblical Daniel fits the bill on all accounts.

² I would conclude this passage describes the fall of Satan who at this time was the real power behind the prince of Tyre. Isa. 14:12-15 is often viewed as a parallel passage describing the fall of Satan.

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

11. Ezekiel 34:23-24 describes the shepherd as “My servant David” and as “the prince.” The prince appears in the rest of the book in a number of passages. What do each of the following passages attribute to the prince. (Note: in 46 is appears the prince offers sacrifices for himself). Based upon these attributes, who would you identify as the prince?
 - a. 37:25
 - b. 44:3
 - c. 45:7, 16,
 - d. 45:9-25
 - e. 46:2
 - f. 46:16-18
12. What promised hope does God give to Israel in the picture of the valley of dry bones from chapter 37? How does that parallel the believer’s hope? (see 1 Cor 15:12-25)
13. Identification of Gog and Magog and the timing of the attack on Israel is the subject of much discussion in certain circles. The battle may occur during the first half of the tribulation (majority view) or possibly at the end of the millennium (1,000 year reign of Christ following the 7 year tribulation). This final option correlates with Rev. 20:7-10 and given that these are the only two times Gog and Magog are mentioned, they seem to point to the same event. The attack will come from the north and include “Persia, Cush (Ethiopia, and Put (Libya)”. Regardless of the exact timing of this war, what does its occurrence tell us about the position of Israel and God’s plan for Israel?
14. The remainder of the book describes the millennial kingdom and the new temple built during the millennium. Why do you think there would be sacrifice during this period? What event occurs in the temple in 43:1-5 to give hope in light of the problem in chapter 10?
15. What is the concluding hope Ezekiel leaves his reader with in 48:35? How does that relate to the main theme of the book, “that they may know that I am the Lord.”?

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

Passages with “that you may know that I am the Lord” or similar:

Ezekiel 6:7 "The slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 6:10 "And they shall know that I *am* the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them."

Ezekiel 6:13 'Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when their slain are among their idols all around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols.

Ezekiel 6:14 'So I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land desolate, yes, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblah, in all their dwelling places. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.' ' ' "

Ezekiel 7:4 My eye will not spare you, Nor will I have pity; But I will repay your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst; Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD!

Ezekiel 7:9 'My eye will not spare, Nor will I have pity; I will repay you according to your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD who strikes.

Ezekiel 7:27 'The king will mourn, The prince will be clothed with desolation, And the hands of the common people will tremble. I will do to them according to their way, And according to what they deserve I will judge them; Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD!' "

Ezekiel 11:10 "You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 11:12 "And you shall know that I *am* the LORD; for you have not walked in My statutes nor executed My judgments, but have done according to the customs of the Gentiles which *are* all around you." ' ' "

Ezekiel 12:15 "Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.

Ezekiel 12:16 "But I will spare a few of their men from the sword, from famine, and from pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the Gentiles wherever they go. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Ezekiel 12:20 "Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate; and you shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 13:9 "My hand will be against the prophets who envision futility and who divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of My people, nor be written in the record of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 13:14 "So I will break down the wall you have plastered with untempered *mortar*, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 13:21 "I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people out of your hand, and they shall no longer be as prey in your hand. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 13:23 "Therefore you shall no longer envision futility nor practice divination; for I will deliver My people out of your hand, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 14:8 "I will set My face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel 15:7 'and I will set My face against them. They will go out from *one* fire, but *another* fire shall devour them. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set My face against them.

Ezekiel 16:62 "And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD,

Ezekiel 20:12 "Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them.

Ezekiel 20:20 'hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.'

Ezekiel 20:26 "and I pronounced them unclean because of their ritual gifts, in that they caused all their firstborn to pass through *the fire*, that I might make them desolate and that they might know that I am the LORD." '

Ezekiel 20:38 "I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 20:42 "Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country *for* which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers.

Ezekiel 20:44 "Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel," says the Lord GOD.' "

Ezekiel 22:16 "You shall defile yourself in the sight of the nations; then you shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 23:49 'They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall pay for your idolatrous sins. Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.' "

Ezekiel 24:24 'Thus Ezekiel is a sign to you; according to all that he has done you shall do; and when this comes, you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.' "

Ezekiel 24:27 'on that day your mouth will be opened to him who has escaped; you shall speak and no longer be mute. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.' "

Ezekiel 25:5 "And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Ezekiel 25:7 "indeed, therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Ezekiel 25:11 "And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Ezekiel 25:17 "I will execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I lay My vengeance upon them." ' ' "

Ezekiel 26:6 'Also her daughter *villages* which *are* in the fields shall be slain by the sword. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.'

Ezekiel 28:22 "and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against you, O Sidon; I will be glorified in your midst; And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, When I execute judgments in her and am hallowed in her.

Ezekiel 28:23 For I will send pestilence upon her, And blood in her streets; The wounded shall be judged in her midst By the sword against her on every side; Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel 28:24 " And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all *who are* around them, who despise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel 28:26 "And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God." ' ' "

Ezekiel 29:6 "Then all the inhabitants of Egypt Shall know that I *am* the LORD, Because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 29:9 "And the land of Egypt shall become desolate and waste; then they will know that I *am* the LORD, because he said, 'The River *is* mine, and I have made *it*.'

Ezekiel 29:16 "No longer shall it be the confidence of the house of Israel, but will remind them of *their* iniquity when they turned to follow them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 29:21 ' In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to spring forth, and I will open your mouth to speak in their midst. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.' "

Ezekiel 30:8 Then they will know that I *am* the LORD, When I have set a fire in Egypt And all her helpers are destroyed.

Ezekiel 30:19 Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt, Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 30:25 'Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt.

Ezekiel 30:26 'I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.' "

Ezekiel 32:15 'When I make the land of Egypt desolate, And the country is destitute of all that once filled it, When I strike all who dwell in it, Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 33:29 "Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have made the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed." ' ' "

Ezekiel 34:27 "Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

Ezekiel 34:30 "Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, *am* with them, and they, the house of Israel, *are* My people," says the Lord GOD.' "

Ezekiel 35:4 I shall lay your cities waste, And you shall be desolate. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 35:9 "I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 35:12 "Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD. I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, 'They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.'

Ezekiel 35:15 "As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom -- all of it! Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."

OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel 36:11 "I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better *for you* than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 36:23 "And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.

Ezekiel 36:38 "Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 37:6 "I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 37:13 "Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

Ezekiel 38:23 "Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD." ' ' "

Ezekiel 39:6 "And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in the coastlands. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 39:7 "So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not *let them* profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

Ezekiel 39:22 "So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day forward.

Ezekiel 39:28 'then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer.