

EZEKIEL: “THE GLORY OF THE LORD”
 “You will know that I am the LORD”

PROPHECY OF JUDGMENT (THE LORD IS NOT THERE)		PROPHECY OF RESTORATION (THE LORD IS THERE)		
FATE OF JUDAH (Before the Siege)	FOES OF JUDAH (During Siege)	FUTURE OF JUDAH (After the Siege)		
593-588 BC	587-586	586-571		
7 YEARS OF PROPHECYING HORROR		15 YEARS OF PROPHECYING HOPE		
Chapter 1-3: Ezekiel's Commission	Chapter 4 -24 Judgment Against Judah	Chapter 25-32 Judgments Against the Gloating Nations	Chapter 33-39 Restoration of Israel to the LORD	Chapter 40-48 Visions of the Temple

Seeing how Ezekiel’s book is organized helps us understand the prophet’s message. The book opens with Ezekiel’s commission vision (chapters 1-3), followed by many chapters detailing God’s anger with Judah and the judgment He will pour out on the nation for their disobedience (chapters 4-24). False prophets, both in Judah and among the exiles, are assuring the Jews that very soon Nebuchadnezzar’s power will be broken and they will be able to return home. Ezekiel (along with Jeremiah back in Judah) assures the people this is not so—they are going to spend many years in captivity. The turning point of the entire book is Ezekiel 33:21—the final capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar. At this point, the tone of Ezekiel’s prophecies changes and becomes hopeful and encouraging. God is not casting off His people. He has great promises to fulfill in and through them yet. After their captivity they will emerge a purified people and permitted to return to their homes in Judah, as God “resurrects” the Jewish nation (Ezek. 38). This hopeful section of future blessedness in fellowship with God is the burden of chapters 33-48. This section assures the Jews they will return from exile, but even more importantly, it foretells the ultimate liberation of God’s people accomplished in the advent of the gospel dispensation. Between these two contrasting sections is one containing prophecies of punishment for the nations, that is, the gentile nations that had hurt Judah in various ways are going to be judged by God as well.



Christ in Ezekiel: Prophecy about Christ in Ezekiel is rare compared to Isaiah, but **Ezekiel 34** contains a beautiful prophecy of Christ. After upbraiding the failed “shepherds” of Judah (leaders), God promises that **He** will be His people’s Shepherd. This points forward to Christ, the Good Shepherd, as presented in John 10.

“That You May Grow Thereby...” 
 A weekly Bible reading plan

Ezekiel 1-12
“A Storm is Coming!”

Overview

For the next four weeks, our reading plan is going to take us through the book of Ezekiel. Many readers are mystified by the visions Ezekiel records and the strange actions he engages in as he conveys God’s messages to the Jews in captivity. The vision of chapter one can best be summarized as follows: “A storm is coming!” This vision portrays God riding His war-chariot, attended by the cherubim, and coming to judge wicked Judah. Ezekiel’s “commission vision” introduces several chapters (chapters 4–24) detailing the reasons for Judah’s punishment. There is a great lesson here that Bible readers of every age should learn: God is serious about punishing sin. Sometimes His long-suffering has been misunderstood and people fail to repent. However, God *will* fulfill His promises of judgment against sin.

Reading Schedule

- Monday: Ezekiel 1-3
- Tuesday: Ezekiel 4-5
- Wednesday: Ezekiel 6-7
- Thursday: Ezekiel 8-10
- Friday: Ezekiel 11-12

Ezekiel’s Commission

Reading chapter 1 of Ezekiel has discouraged many from reading the book. Ezekiel tells us what this vision is: “This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking” (1:28). Filled with awe by the striking spectacle he has witnessed, Ezekiel’s heart and ears are ready to receive God’s commission as a prophet (chapters 2 & 3). In these chapters, God reveals that Ezekiel is going to have a tough job—the Jews are persistent and stubborn in their disobedience. Nevertheless, Ezekiel is to speak to them whether they listen or not! God has made Ezekiel a watchman to the house of Israel/Judah. The admonitions to faithfully proclaim God’s message to God’s people are still applicable to preachers and teachers among the Lord’s people.

Ezekiel the Prophet

- **Family:** Like Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1), Ezekiel was born into a priestly family (Ezek. 1:3). Ezekiel, however, never served as priest. His family was carried into captivity when he was 25 years old, the usual age for induction into the priesthood.
- **Historical Setting:** Ezekiel served as a prophet from ~593 B.C. to ~570 B.C., to the exiles of the Babylonian Captivity as God judged the Kingdom of Judah. The “labor camp” where Ezekiel was housed is located near Tel Abib in Babylon near the Chebar “River”—a man-made irrigation canal in central Mesopotamia.
- **Other Prophets:** During Ezekiel’s time two other prophets labored. **Jeremiah** labored in Judah in its last days. **Daniel** was a captive at the court of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. Ezekiel lived among the captives in farm country south of Babylon.

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