

Book of Ezekiel

Study BIBLE



Introduction

Book No	26
Name	Ezekiel
Written By	Ezekiel
Testament	Old
Category	Major Prophets
Date Written	Approx. 571 BC
Place Written	Babylon
Audience	To the people of Israel
Purpose	To announce God's judgment on Israel and other nations and to foretell the eventual salvation of God's people
History Covered	627 - 538 BC
Chapters	48
Verses	1273
Key Verse	<p>For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.</p> <p>Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.</p> <p>A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. (36:24-26)</p>
Key People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ezekiel ❖ Nebuchadnezzar

Key Places	❖ Babylon
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Purpose of the Book

God's children must learn to obey their heavenly Father. Created in his image, they have a choice, and God allows them to choose. Ezekiel's message was addressed to a demoralized remnant of Judah exiled in Babylon. The moral responsibility of the individual is a primary theme in his message. Corporate responsibility no longer shields the individual. Each individual must accept personal responsibility for the national calamity. Each individual is responsible for his or her individual sin. It is the weight of the cumulative sin of each individual that contributed to the breaking of God's covenant with Israel, and each bears a share of the blame for the judgment that resulted in the exile to Babylon.

Ezekiel was a man who chose to obey God. Although he was a priest (1:3), he served as a Jewish "street preacher" in Babylon for 22 years, telling everyone about God's judgment and salvation, and calling them to repent and obey. And Ezekiel lived what he preached. During his ministry God told him to illustrate his messages with dramatic object lessons. Some of these acts included

- (1) lying on his side for 390 days during which he could eat only one eight-ounce meal a day cooked over manure,
- (2) shaving his head and beard, and
- (3) showing no sorrow when his wife died.

He obeyed and faithfully proclaimed God's word. God may not ask you to do anything quite so dramatic or difficult; but if he did, would you do it?

The book of Ezekiel chronicles the prophet's life and ministry. Beginning with his call as a prophet and commissioning as a "watchman for Israel" (chapters 1–3), Ezekiel immediately began to preach and demonstrate God's truth, as he predicted the approaching siege and destruction of Jerusalem (chapters 4–24). This devastation would be God's judgment for the people's idolatry. Ezekiel challenged them to turn from their wicked ways. In the next section, he spoke to the surrounding nations, prophesying that God would judge them for their sins as well (chapters 25–32). The book concludes with a message of hope, as Ezekiel proclaimed the faithfulness of God and foretold the future blessings for God's people (chapters 33–48).

As you read this exciting record, observe how Ezekiel fearlessly preached the word of God to the exiled Jews in the streets of Babylon, and hear the timeless truth of God's love and power. Think about each person's responsibility to trust God and about the inevitability of God's judgment against idolatry, rebellion, and indifference. Then commit yourself to obey God, whatever, wherever, and whenever he asks.

Overview

- ❖ 26th book of the BIBLE, Old Testament, 4th of the 5 major prophets and 4th of the 17 prophetic books
- ❖ Ezekiel was a prophet during the seventy-year period of Babylonian Captivity.
- ❖ Ezekiel was taken to Babylon before Babylon's final assault on Jerusalem.
- ❖ Ezekiel used four things to dramatize his message:
 - Prophecies
 - Signs
 - Parables
 - Symbols
- ❖ The vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (37) demonstrates that God can breathe new life into Judah again.
- ❖ Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest who was called to be a prophet of the Lord.
- ❖ A probable chronology would suggest that Jeremiah:
 - Was born in 622 B.C.
 - Was deported to Babylon in 597 B.C.
 - Prophesied from 592 B.C. to at least 570 B.C. (an active ministry of some 22 years).
- ❖ Ezekiel was 25 years old when he was taken to Babylon.
- ❖ He was 17 when Daniel was taken to Babylon in 605 B.C.
- ❖ Ezekiel received his prophetic commission when he was 30
- ❖ Ezekiel overlapped the end of Jeremiah's ministry and the beginning of Daniel's ministry.
- ❖ A part of Ezekiel's work was to remind the generation born during the Babylonian Captivity:
 - The cause of Judah's current destruction.
 - Of God's coming judgment on the Gentile nations.
 - The people being restored back to Jerusalem.

- ❖ Ezekiel shows the full circle of judgment upon the nations that surround Judah. In a clockwise circuit, they were:
 - Ammon
 - Tyre
 - Moab
 - Sidon
 - Philistia
- ❖ In 572 B.C. some 14 years after the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel returns in a vision to the fallen city (40-48) where he is given specific specifications for:
 - The reconstruction of the Temple.
 - The reconstruction of the city of Jerusalem.
 - The reconstruction of the land.
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in three stages:
 - 1st - In 605 B.C., he overcame Jehoiakim and carried off key hostages, including Daniel and his friends.
 - 2nd - In 597 B.C., the rebellion of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin brought further punishment.
 - - He made Jerusalem submit a second time.
 - - He carried 10,000 more hostages, including Jehoiachin and Ezekiel.
 - 3rd - in 586 B.C., after a one-year and 17-month long siege, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem and brought ravage and destruction to all of Judah.

Hebrew Names of GOD used in Ezekiel

- ❖ EL
- ❖ ADONAI
- ❖ JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH
- ❖ MELEKH

Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

In Ezekiel, Christology and the Person and work of the Holy Spirit are inextricably bound together. Although a messianic figure is not clearly discernible in Ezekiel's final vision, several messianic titles and functions in the book indicate that a Messiah is part of his eschatological vision.

The title “Son of Man” occurs some ninety times in Ezekiel. While the title is applied to Ezekiel himself, it was appropriated by Jesus as His favorite self-designation. Therefore, Ezekiel may be regarded as a type of Christ. As such, Ezekiel was empowered as a prophetic voice of the messianic age when “the Spirit of the LORD fell” upon him. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at Jordan empowered Him to articulate the advent of the messianic kingdom (Luke 4:18, 19).

Another messianic title is reflected in the vision of the Lord God as the divine Shepherd who gathers again His scattered flock. The figure evokes images of Jesus as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11–16).

Ezekiel further develops the fundamental idea of Israel as “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” which was rooted in the covenant of Sinai (Ex. 19:6). A restored sanctuary in the midst of a regathered people whose head is the King-priest, the Davidic Messiah, foreshadows the restored tabernacle of David, the church (Amos 9:11; Acts 15:16).

A final messianic prophecy of Christ employs the figure of a sprig of cedar planted by the Lord Himself on a lofty mountain, which becomes a lofty cedar providing fruit and nests for birds. This nature metaphor, like “the Root of Jesse” (Is. 11:1, 10; Rom. 15:12), serves to represent the future Messiah. Birds and trees represent Gentile nations to show Christ’s universal reign.

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

Whether the prophetic revelation is presented symbolically in visions, signs, parabolic actions, or in human speech, Ezekiel claims for them the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. In addition, there are numerous references to the Spirit of God in the book. One might almost characterize the Book of Ezekiel as the “Acts of the Holy Spirit” in the Old Testament. Several of these references merit special notice.

In 11:5, the prophet asserts autobiographically that “the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said to me.” The oracle that follows is thus God’s Word in Ezekiel’s words, inspired by the Holy Spirit. The same chapter presents the Spirit as active in a vision: “Then the Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to those in captivity.”

Perhaps the best-known instance of the Spirit’s activity is in chapter 37, the vision of the valley of dry bones: “The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in

the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones” (v. 1). The subsequent vision relates the spiritual rebirth of the remnant then in exile.

A final aspect of the Spirit’s action in the life of the prophet is found in 36:26, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.” It is not solely an external act of the Spirit “falling upon” someone, but the prophesied subjective experience of the Spirit’s presence within, such as Ezekiel uniquely experienced when “the Spirit entered” him (2:2). Ezekiel anticipated the new covenant’s “new birth” experience, which would be by the Spirit.

Mega Themes of Ezekiel

GOD’S HOLINESS

Ezekiel saw a vision that revealed God’s absolute moral perfection. God was spiritually and morally superior to members of Israel’s corrupt and compromising society. Ezekiel wrote to let the people know that God in his holiness was also present in Babylon, not just in Jerusalem.

Because God is morally perfect, he can help us live above our tendency to compromise with this world. When we focus on his greatness, he gives us the power to overcome sin and to reflect his holiness.

SIN

Israel had sinned, and God’s punishment came. The fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile were used by God to correct the rebels and draw them back from their sinful way of life. Ezekiel warned them that not only was the nation responsible for sin but each individual was also accountable to God.

We cannot excuse ourselves from our responsibilities before God. We are accountable to God for our choices. Rather than neglect him, we must recognize sin for what it is—rebellion against God—and choose to follow him instead.

RESTORATION

Ezekiel consoles the people by telling them that the day will come when God will restore those who turn from sin. God will be their King and shepherd. He will give his people a new heart to worship him, and he will establish a new government and a new Temple.

The certainty of future restoration encourages believers in times of trial. But we must be faithful to God because we love him, not merely for what he can do for us. Is our faith in him or merely in our future benefits?

LEADERS

Ezekiel condemned the shepherds (unfaithful priests and leaders), who led the people astray. By contrast, he served as a caring shepherd and a faithful watchman to warn the people about their sin. One day God's perfect shepherd, the Messiah, will lead his people.

Jesus is our perfect leader. If we truly want him to lead us, our devotion must be more than talk. If we are given the responsibility of leading others, we must take care of them even if it means sacrificing personal pleasure, happiness, time, or money. We are responsible for those we lead.

WORSHIP

An angel gave Ezekiel a vision of the Temple in great detail. God's holy presence had departed from Israel and the Temple because of sin. The building of a future Temple portrays the return of God's glory and presence. God will cleanse his people and restore true worship.

All of God's promises will be fulfilled under the rule of the Messiah. The faithful followers will be restored to perfect fellowship with God and with one another. To be prepared for this time, we must focus on God. We do this through regular worship. Through worship we learn about God's holiness and the changes we must make in how we live.

Life Lessons in Ezekiel

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>The people of Israel placed great value on their corporate identity as a nation.</p> <p>Ezekiel countered that emphasis by highlighting personal responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand that another person's righteousness cannot save you. Receive the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. ❖ Turn from your sin and live! While understanding the negative influence that circumstances, society, or even

<p>(in terms of behavior) and personal relationship with God. Though Israel had sinned as a nation, each person was responsible for his or her own individual sin. Godly living requires personal responsibility before the Lord. Like Israel, we cannot blame our families, our leaders, or our nation for the choices we have made, nor can we rely on someone else's righteousness to save us.</p>	<p>family may have on you, placing blame will not set you free. Take personal responsibility for your choices. God's desire is to forgive you and restore you fully to wholeness and relationship with Him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Receive forgiveness and cleansing from the Lord. Give Him every area of your heart that has become hardened, and receive a new heart and a new spirit. Yield to the Lord. Ask Him to transform your heart and your life today.
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>There are times in each of our lives when we feel spiritually dry, brittle, and lifeless. These struggles may result from not knowing God. Perhaps you once walked closely with the Lord, but have allowed sin or the priorities of the world to draw you away from Him. Or perhaps you have simply given to the point of exhaustion and need a fresh touch from God. Whatever the case, the Spirit of God is present to touch you, to heal you, and to lead you to Jesus, where you will find new life.</p> <p>Invite Jesus to bring life where death has been and fresh strength where you have been dry and weary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Believe that even as God was able to bring life in the valley of dry bones, He is able to bring new life to the dry and lifeless places in you. ❖ Ask Him earnestly to refresh you with new life and fresh power of the Spirit today. ❖ Hear God's word to you. No matter how dry, hopeless, or abandoned you may feel, know that God has not left you. He is able and desires to bring you out of a place of death into new life and hope. ❖ Ask for and receive a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit. Invite God's Spirit to touch every desperate place in you. Let the power of God transform you, restore you completely, and flow from you to those around you.

<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>Repentance, or turning away from sin, is a crucial message in Ezekiel. God had given Israel every possible opportunity to turn from their sin, but they would not. In God’s holiness and justice, He poured out His judgment both to punish and restore His people.</p> <p>Today, God continues to cry out to His people to turn from their sin and to return to a life of holiness and connectedness to Himself. God’s desire now is the same as it was then—for people to know Him. We are to walk in God’s ways and teach them to others.</p> <p>They are the pathway to life, joy, and wholeness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Turn from pretense and idolatry. Seek the Lord with a sincere and submitted heart. ❖ Praise God that He does not deal with us according to our sin or our corrupt ways. ❖ Receive Jesus; He bore our sin so that we can now walk in forgiveness, freed from guilt and shame (Rom. 10:10–13; 1 Pet. 2:24, 25). ❖ Know the Lord. God’s purpose in both the judgment and restoration of His people was that they would know that He is the Lord. This theme is repeated more than 60 times in Ezekiel, stressing God’s intense desire for His people to know Him and for their behavior to reflect His lordship in their lives. ❖ Understand that God does not desire for anyone to die in his or her sin (2 Pet. 3:9). ❖ Ask the Lord to teach you and give you discernment that will enable you to walk in His ways and honor Him through your actions. ❖ Teach others how to walk in His holiness.
<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>As New Testament believers, we have two exciting and uniquely wonderful opportunities. The first is to look forward in faith to the heavenly temple.</p> <p>From it flows the river of God, whose waters bring life and healing to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In faith, look forward to this heavenly temple, representing God’s eternal dwelling place with His people. ❖ Walk into the river. Ezekiel gives a picture of walking steadily deeper into the river until, by his own strength, he could no longer navigate the current. We are to walk increasingly deeper in the Holy Spirit, releasing ourselves entirely

<p>everything they touch. The second is to understand that we can walk in the river of God now. We have within us the Holy Spirit and God’s resurrection power. The Lord desires to use us as instruments of healing to the nations to extend His healing to everything we touch.</p>	<p>to Him. Ask the Lord to take you deeper in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Receive the Holy Spirit’s fullness in your life today. Understand that “the river” in these verses can represent the outpouring and blessing of the Holy Spirit given by Jesus to His church (John 7:37–39). Allow the living water of God’s Spirit to touch you and flow out of you. It will bring healing and abundant fruitfulness (Rev. 22:1–5).
<p>Steps to knowing GOD and HIS ways</p> <p>GOD’s WORD reveals that HE was silent as a judgement against HIS people neither answering their prayers nor speaking through prophets. GOD rejects false teachers and prophets who speak out of their own imaginations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ understand lack of prophetic leadership and vision comes to any people who refuse to obey GOD’s revealed will remember that GOD says that teaching or prophesying falsehood is lying
<p>Keys to wise living</p> <p>The wise person knows that his flesh is at war with his spiritual desires. The carnal nature attempts to reject the WORD of GOD and its renewing work and to defend the fortress of self will (2cor 10:4-6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ understand that carnal ear is rebellious and stubborn against GOD’s WORD ❖ remember that the evidence of rebellion is spiritual blindness and deafness ❖ be assured that GOD is against those who speak falsely in HIS name ❖ know that HE has set Himself against those who speak things HE has not said and who teach HIS WORD falsely

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ understand that the false teacher who motive is gain causes injustice and iniquity among GOD's people
<p>Steps to dealing with sin</p> <p>The prophet laments that GOD's people and their leader heal their sins lightly only paying lip service to sin and its devastation. They fail to confront or deal thoroughly with sin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ be advised that GOD will not answer the unrepentant prayers of an idolater or one who continually entertains sin in his heart although he may be of GOD' people ❖ repent in sincerity. ❖ Seek GOD for a new heart and a renewed spirit. ❖ Understand that true spiritual transformation involves repentance
<p>Lessons for leaders</p> <p>Ezekiel focuses on the common failure of GOD's servants. This results from their gauging their success by man's approval rather than by GOD's standards. Ezekiel is rich with insight into the hearts of GOD's people. Though ostensibly desiring GOD's will and way some seek their own benefit and personal gain. GOD warns the prophets not to presume the outward devotion of people is genuine unless sacrificial and transformed living is manifest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Leaders do not use success alone to gauge how well people see to receive you ❖ Leaders remember the principle of your responsibility as GOD's spokesman or watchman ❖ Accept your tasks to teach and correct whether people listen or not ❖ Leaders remember that popularity is no final measure of righteousness or your true effectiveness ❖ Beware of people's tendency to view preaching as a form of entertainment ❖ Leaders be warned that GOD sets Himself against pastors who take care of themselves and not the welfare of HIS people

Praise Points in Ezekiel

- ❖ His justice (18:24-32)
- ❖ His punishment, which brings his people back to himself (20:30-44)
- ❖ His power over all nations and people (25:13-2:32)

- ❖ His faithful servants who call god's people to obedience, though their message may be unpopular (33:1-9)
- ❖ His shepherdly concern for his people (34:11-16)
- ❖ His holiness (36:23)
- ❖ His spirit, whom he has placed in our heart (36:25-27)
- ❖ His everlasting covenant of peace with us (37:24-28)
- ❖ His promise to live with his people forever (43:9)
- ❖ His healing, which will be experienced by all creation (47:1-12).

Worship Insights in Ezekiel

- ❖ An encounter with God may be so incredible that we cannot fully describe it in human terms (1:1-28).
- ❖ True worshipers must obey God's instructions and communicate them to others, whether they listen or not (3:10-11).
- ❖ We must guard against those who give false messages and say they are from God (13:1-23).
- ❖ God will not accept our worship if we pledge our loyalty to other things instead (20:39-41).
- ❖ True worship brings us to repentance (20:43-44).
- ❖ Encounters with God may be so overpowering that our only response will be to fall down before him in worship (43:3).

An Outline of Ezekiel

I. Visions of God: [Eze 1:1-28](#)

- A. The Heavens Opened: [Eze 1:1-3](#)
- B. Creatures in the Wind: [Eze 1:4-14](#)
- C. Wheels in Wheels: [Eze 1:15-21](#)
- D. Firmament and Throne: [Eze 1:22-28](#)

II. Five Commissions: Eze. 2:1-3:27

- A. First Commission (Rebels): [Eze 2:1-7](#)
- B. The Sweet Scroll: Eze. 2:8-3:3
- C. Second Commission (Poor Listeners): [Eze 3:4-9](#)
- D. Third Commission (Lifted by the Spirit): [Eze 3:10-15](#)
- E. Fourth Commission (Watchman for Israel): [Eze 3:16-21](#)

F. Fifth Commission (Dumbness): [Eze 3:22-27](#)

III. Four Symbolic Portrayals of Jerusalem's Coming Siege: Eze. 4:1-5:17

A. Ezekiel Builds a Model of Jerusalem: [Eze 4:1-3](#)

B. Days of Punishment: [Eze 4:4-8](#)

C. Famine in the City: [Eze 4:9-17](#)

D. A Sword Against the City: [Eze 5:1-17](#)

IV. Coming Judgment: Eze. 6:1-7:27

A. Facing the Mountains: [Eze 6:1-10](#)

B. Clap and Stamp: [Eze 6:11-14](#)

C. Behold the End: [Eze 7:1-9](#)

D. Behold the Day: [Eze 7:10-22](#)

E. Crimes of Blood: [Eze 7:23-27](#)

V. Visions of the Temple: Eze. 8:1-11:25

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B. Seven Executioners: [Eze 9:1-11](#)

C. The Throne Chariot at the Temple: [Eze 10:1-22](#)

D. Judgment on Jerusalem's Evil Leaders: [Eze 11:1-13](#)

E. Home with a New Heart: [Eze 11:14-25](#)

VI. Bags Packed for Deportation: [Eze 12:1-28](#)

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B. No Delay in Departure Time: [Eze 12:17-28](#)

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A. Prophecy Against Prophets: [Eze 13:1-16](#)

B. Prophecy Against Prophetesses: [Eze 13:17-23](#)

C. Idols in the Heart: [Eze 14:1-11](#)

D. Four Severe Judgments: [Eze 14:12-23](#)

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B. Jerusalem, the Wayward Woman: [Eze 16:1-63](#)

C. The Two Eagles, the Cedar, and the Vine: [Eze 17:1-24](#)

IX. The Principle of Individual Responsibility: [Eze 18:1-32](#)

A. The Soul That Sins Will Die: [Eze 18:1-18](#)

B. Objections Overruled: [Eze 18:19-32](#)

X. Lamentable Leadership: [Eze 19:1-14](#)

A. The Lioness and Her Cubs: [Eze 19:1-9](#)

B. The Vine: [Eze 19:10-14](#)

XI. Idolatry, Past and Future: Eze. 20:1-21:7

A. Abominations of the Fathers: [Eze 20:1-8](#)

B. Disobedience in the Wilderness: [Eze 20:9-26](#)

C. Disobedience in Canaan: [Eze 20:27-32](#)

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