

INTRODUCTION

*It is advisable first to read the Preface in Part 1.



Ezekiel was exiled to Babylon together with thousands of Jews, including King Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. to join others already deported. In exile, Ezekiel belonging to a priestly family lived in his own house and was married. He was called to be a prophet in 593 B.C. As prophet, but denied the priesthood, he served the exiles deprived of the Temple services. In the early years of his ministry, Ezekiel prophesied the fall of Jerusalem to a people who believed it could never happen. After 586 BC, when Jerusalem was destroyed, Ezekiel's message changed to one of hope and the future restoration of a holy people, a holy city and a holy nation indwelt by the holiness of God.

The book of Ezekiel records in great detail and with precise dating the 22 years of the prophet's ministry ending in 571 B.C. There are 13 dates given altogether. God spoke to Ezekiel in 4 visions with 5 messages given as parables and 12 enacted symbolically, far more than all other prophets. *The Voice of the Lord (texts in red italics)* was conveyed to Ezekiel in divine judgements and as oracles both to Israel and the seven surrounding enemy nations. God's sovereign power over nations and historical events is a major feature in the writings of all the prophets and this is especially true for Ezekiel.

The prophet Ezekiel was addressed many times by the Lord as - *Son of man.*

VISION OF THE LIVING CREATURES

Read Ezekiel 1: 1 - 28

In Ezekiel's first vision (dated - 593 B.C.) he saw, above the wheels beside the four living creatures, the likeness of the wondrous light of the glory of God. In that glorious light was the likeness of a Man enthroned amidst the colours of a rainbow in the clouds of a storm.

When the living creatures, the cherubim, moved, Ezekiel heard -

The sound of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, the sound of tumult like the noise of a host.

Ezekiel 1: 24

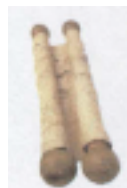
CALL OF EZEKIEL

Read Ezekiel Chapter 2 - 3: 16

The glory of the Lord, previously seen in both the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple, was now beheld by Ezekiel in the land of the Babylonians. Ezekiel heard *The Voice of the Lord* addressing him as - *Son of man* and calling him to be a prophet to the exiles and not to fear their words.

You shall speak My words to them whether they will hear or refuse to hear, for they are most rebellious.

Ezekiel 2: 7



A scroll was held out to Ezekiel, inscribed on both sides, with words of lamentation. Ezekiel was given the scroll to eat. It tasted sweet as honey; although God's message to his people would be one of woe, mourning and severe judgement.

God warned Ezekiel that Israel would not listen or obey him -

They will not listen to Me and obey Me, for all the house of Israel are stubborn of heart.

Ezekiel 3: 7

Ezekiel was given the protection a forehead harder than flint to resist the hardness of their hearts.

EZEKIEL - A WATCHMAN

Read Ezekiel 3: 17 - 21

Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me.

Ezekiel 3: 17

In Israel, a Watchman's duty was to stand on a high location and report the progress of a battle or the approach of messengers to the city. Ezekiel was commissioned to be a spiritual Watchman to the exiles; to declare *The Voice of the Lord* and thus warn the people of their accountability for their own sin.

EZEKIEL - A SIGN

Read Ezekiel 3: 22 - 27



With the vision of God's glory before him and the Spirit within, Ezekiel was told to go and shut himself up in his house. There he would be bound with ropes and be dumb so he could not talk to rebellious Israel until the Lord opened his mouth.

I will make your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth so that you cannot talk. But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth and you shall say to the people, thus says the Lord God.

Ezekiel 3: 26a, 27a

Read Ezekiel Chapters 4, 5

Ezekiel was commanded to enact the coming horrific siege of Jerusalem.

* First he depicted the siege on a clay tile.

* Then he lay, unable to turn over because of the ropes, on his left side facing north for 390 days and next on his right side facing south for 40 days. The prophet's obedience revealed God's wrath against the iniquity of Israel and Judah respectively - one day for each year for both the northern and southern kingdoms.

* Ezekiel was to prepare food and drink water as under grim siege conditions of starvation from famine.

* When the days of Ezekiel's symbolic siege ended, he was to shave his head and beard; then divide the hair into thirds as signs of God's severe punishment for their idolatry and defilement of His holy sanctuary.

A third of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed by famine; a third shall fall by the sword round about you; and I will scatter a third to all the winds and will draw out a sword after them.

Ezekiel 5: 12

Ezekiel prophesied against the mountains of Israel because of the disgusting idolatrous altars of their high places; such a grief to the Lord. The Temple would be desecrated by a pagan nation and the land doomed to barren desolation. Only those who escaped would live to remember the Lord God in exile. *They shall know, understand and realize that I am the Lord.*

Ezekiel 6: 14b

God's punishment of the sword without; and pestilence and famine within the city would no longer be delayed. *The end has come upon the four corners of the land.*

Ezekiel 7: 2b

King and people would mourn and despair in terror for the land would be plundered by the worst of the heathen nations - the Babylonians. The teaching of the priesthood and the counsel of the elders would be no more; and again they would understand God's often repeated words -

I am the Lord

Ezekiel 7: 27b

Read Ezekiel Chapter 8

With the elders of Judah before him, as Ezekiel sat in his house, the hand of the Lord came upon him. In a vision (2nd date - 592 B.C.) of a Man, as before, Ezekiel was lifted up in the Spirit and taken to the Temple in Jerusalem. There, he was given the sight of elders and women of the house of Israel before their idols and detestable wall paintings, with about twenty-five other men facing east, their backs to the Temple, worshipping the sun!

In His anger, the Lord would no longer regard them with pity or spare them.

THE MAN WITH AN INKHORN

Read Ezekiel Chapter 9, 10

In the glorious vision of the God of Israel, Ezekiel saw a man clothed in linen carrying an ink horn. He was to place a mark on all those who sighed at these abominations to spare them from being destroyed. The man clothed in linen was then commanded to take from the cherubim, in between the wheels, burning coals to be scattered over Jerusalem - a judgement of fire.

At the entrance gate of the Temple, Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy judgement against Israel's wicked leaders, who were confident they would not be as those Jews taken into captivity.



GOD'S GLORY DEPARTS FROM THE TEMPLE

In Ezekiel's vision - he saw the sad, sad departure of the Shekinah glory from the Temple in Jerusalem.

Although God's judgement was imminent, *The Voice of the Lord* promised His exiled people eventual restoration and that He would be to them a sanctuary for there was no Temple in the land of Babylon.

Read Ezekiel 11: 15 - 20

I will give them one heart and put a new spirit within them; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 11: 19

Read Ezekiel 12 : 10 - 28

* In another symbolic act, Ezekiel was commanded to pack his belongings for exile.

In the evening he was to dig through the wall of his house and with face covered carry out his baggage as a sign to the King, probably Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem, of the coming certain destruction.

* As a further sign, Ezekiel was instructed to eat and drink in fear and trembling.

For I have set you as a sign for the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 12: 6b

The people believed this sign was a vision for the distant future; and so would not concern them.

There shall none of My words be deferred any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be performed, says the Lord God.

Ezekiel 12: 28

(*Saith or Says the Lord* --is a phrase that always marks God's important words--the Lord and His word is one).

Read Ezekiel 13: 9 - 23

* Woe to the false prophets who spoke words of their own imagination saying:

Peace, when there is no peace.

Ezekiel 13: 10a

They deluded the people, as if daubing a flimsy wall with whitewash, which the Lord would cause to fall in the storm of his anger in the coming destruction.

Ezekiel was again addressed as the *son of man* and told to set his face against the daughters of his people. (13:17) Altogether, Ezekiel was commanded *to set his face against* 8 times - (20: 46, 21:2, 25: 2, 28: 21, 29: 2, 35:2, 38:2)

* Woe to the women who practice magic to deceive and profane My name.

Therefore you will no more see false visions or practice divinations, and I will deliver My people out of your hand. Then You will know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 13: 23

Read Ezekiel 14

The Lord condemned with the punishment of death as He, Himself, answered the idolatrous elders coming to enquire before Ezekiel. To regain the hearts of the people the Lord gave this message to the house of Israel and their guilty prophets for their judgement was certain.

** Repent and turn away from your idols*

Ezekiel 14: 6a

This is the first of three calls to the house of Israel to repent.

(Ezekiel 18: 30, 33:11)

Unless the people's sin was repented, even righteous Noah, Daniel (not the prophet) and Job could only save themselves if the Lord sent famine, wild beasts, the sword or plague.

These three righteous men, if in the land, could not save even their sons and daughters.

On the arrival of some survivors, the Israelites already in exile would acknowledge God's punishment of unfaithful Jerusalem was justified.

THE USELESS VINE



Jerusalem's judgement would be as the wood of the vine, useless except for fuel; for the blessed and beautiful city the Lord would be destroyed by fire. There had been gross idolatry, even sacrificing children in their worship of idols. Many alliances had been made with the surrounding pagan nations instead of reliance on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. Jerusalem was scorned and despised by her neighbours - (only place in O.T. where the surrounding pagan nations were called neighbours!). The sins of unfaithful and adulterous Jerusalem were worse than her sisters - Samaria, Sodom and Gomorrah!

Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant.

Ezekiel 16: 60

That you may remember and be confounded and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I have forgiven you all that you have done.

Ezekiel 16: 63

ALLEGORY OF TWO EAGLES AND THE VINE

Read Ezekiel 17: 1 - 21

The Voice of the Lord gave this historical parable to Ezekiel for the house of Israel. The VINE again represented Israel, the CEDAR - David's royal family and the EAGLES - the powers of Babylon and Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar (the Eagle) captured and exiled King Jehoiachin. His uncle Zekeiah was, as if planted, made king instead but rebelled in seeking military help from Egypt. Zedekiah therefore broke his oath to Nebuchadnezzar, despising the Lord, and suffered the consequences. He was blinded at the order of Nebuchadnezzar, imprisoned and died in Babylon according to the word of the Lord. The short and evil reigns of these kings (descendants of good King Josiah) ended the rule of David's dynasty in these calamitous times.

In another and related allegory, Ezekiel laments these wicked kings and princes of Israel.

(Ezekiel Chapter 19)



Read Ezekiel 17: 22 - 24

The explanation of the parable's conclusion is Messianic, for the Lord in future days would plant a tender shoot (a new king of David's line) in the land of Israel to become a tall and splendid Cedar bearing fruit.

Read Ezekiel 18: 20 - 32

The Lord put an end to the proverb quoted in v. 2 when He declared the most important message conveyed by Ezekiel, the spiritual Watchman to Israel, that all souls belong to God. Jeremiah had prophesied earlier that the people of Jerusalem would no longer use this same proverb. Ezekiel announced that its end had come because -

Behold, all souls are Mine.

Ezekiel 18: 4a

Only the soul that sins will die and not the son for the sins of the father - or vice versa.

The soul that sins, is the one that shall die.

Ezekiel 18: 20a

I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways.

Repent and turn from all your transgressions. (2nd call to Repentance)

Ezekiel 18: 30

For I have no pleasure in the death of him who dies. Therefore turn (be converted) and live!

Ezekiel 18: 32

Read Ezekiel Chapter 20

Once again (3rd date - 591 B.C.) elders came to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord. There was no answer except for a long historical account of the detestable sins of the house of Israel and imminent fire of judgement with eventual restoration in days to come. Then, the house of Israel will be gathered from all the nations and the Remnant brought into the everlasting *bond of the covenant*.

I will bring you into the covenant to which you are permanently bound.

Ezekiel 20: 37b

Ezekiel, addressed as the Son of man, was to set his face against the South, for the judgement of the Babylonian invasion from the north would spread there.

The people's response was one of sheer disbelief.

Does he (Ezekiel) not speak in parables?

Ezekiel 20: 49

ORACLE OF GOD'S SWORD OF JUDGEMENT AGAINST THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Read Ezekiel Chapter 21

Ezekiel was told to set his face against Jerusalem, the sanctuary and the land of Israel.

* In his 7th symbolic act, Ezekiel was commanded to groan and wail with bitter grief for the sword's destruction of the princes and people of Israel - both the righteous and the wicked.

Behold, I am against you and will draw forth My sword out of its sheath and will cut off both the righteous and the wicked.

Ezekiel 21: 3

There are 4 more Sword oracles - God using King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as His instrument of judgement. (Ezekiel 21: 3, 8 -17, 18 - 24, 25 - 27, 28 - 32)

* Ezekiel (8th symbolic act) was commanded to strike his hands together as God's sword would strike Jerusalem and her king (Zedekiah) for his rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar. The sword would not only come to Jerusalem but also in the direction of Rabbah, the Ammonite capital.

Royal power in Jerusalem would not be restored -

Until He comes Whose right it is to reign in judgement and righteousness, and I will give it to Him.

Ezekiel 21: 27b

After the ruin of Jerusalem, the sword of God's instrument would return to its scabbard before the wrath of the Lord would ultimately punish Babylon.

Ezekiel Chapters 22, 23

The Voice of the Lord as expressed by Ezekiel detailed the multitude of Jerusalem's sins. People, princes, priests and prophets were as dross for there was no justice in the land. They would be melted in the furnace of the Lord's anger.



I sought a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none.

Ezekiel 22: 30

The disgusting sins of Samaria and Jerusalem (likened to prostitution and represented by the sisters - Oholah and Oholibah respectively) were so great that the wrath of God was imminent.

The Voice of the Lord condemned their political alliances with the surrounding nations of Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, for these had replaced dependence on the Lord. In turn these nations had become Israel's cruel enemies.

You shall suffer the penalty for your sinful idolatry; and you shall know that I am the Lord God.

Ezekiel 23:49b

SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

Ezekiel was to record the actual day, month and year (4th date - 588 BC) revealed to him by the Lord when Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 24: 1)

The Voice of the Lord pronounced doom to the city.

Woe to the blood-guilty city!

Ezekiel 24: 6a, 9a

In an allegory, Ezekiel was to tell the rebellious house of Judah that Jerusalem was like the charred contents of a cooking pot. The pot was even reheated till it glowed to burn away its impurities.

The words of the Lord as foretold by Moses were now to be fulfilled -

Like the nations which the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 8: 20

DEATH OF EZEKIEL'S WIFE

Read Ezekiel Chapter 24

Son of man (Ezekiel), behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes (your wife) at a single stroke. Yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, neither shall your tears flow.

Ezekiel 24 : 16

Just as Ezekiel's wife, the delight of his eyes was taken away, the Temple sanctuary, Israel's pride and delight, would be desecrated; and also taken would be their sons and daughters.

Ezekiel is to you a sign; according to all that he has done, you shall do.

And when this destruction of the temple comes, you shall know; I am the Lord God.

Ezekiel 24: 24



The Voice of the Lord also revealed that an escaped fugitive would bring Ezekiel the news that Jerusalem was destroyed and on that day His dumbness would be gone.

You shall speak and be no more speechless, and you shall be a sign to them and they shall know that I am the Lord

Ezekiel 24: 27b

After the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel's oracles from the Lord were not only of judgement but also of consolation to His people.

ORACLES AND LAMENTS AGAINST THE NATIONS

The Voice of the Lord in these oracles conveyed God's judgement of the nations, as in the books of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. The surrounding nations were to be punished for their cruelty, malice and revenge against Israel.

The oracles ended with the words - *Then they shall know that I am the Lord.*

AMMON

Read Ezekiel 25: 1 -7

The nation rejoiced over the desecration of the Temple and the land of Judah when the people went into exile; and so Ammon would be plundered by people from the East.

The Ammonites would be destroyed and no longer remembered as a nation.

I will destroy you. Then will you know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 25: 7b

MOAB

Read Ezekiel 25: 8 - 11

Similarly and for the same reasons, Moab would be punished by the people of the East.

I will execute judgements upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 25: 11

EDOM

Read Ezekiel 25: 12 - 14, 35: 1 - 15

Edom (Seir or Teman), brethren through Esau and age-long enemy of Israel, failed to give sanctuary to the refugees on the fall of Jerusalem. Edom rejoiced, looted the wealth of the city and wasted the land. The revenge against Judah was the cause of the Lord's vengeance against Edom wreaked by the hand of Israel.

While the whole earth rejoices, I will make you (Edom) a waste and desolation.

Ezekiel 35: 14

PHILISTIA

Read Ezekiel 25:15 - 17

Another ancient enemy of Israel to be punished by the wrath of the Lord for their hostility in seeking the destruction of Judah.

I will execute great vengeance upon them with wrathful chastisements, and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I lay my vengeance upon them.

Ezekiel 25: 17

TYRE

Read Ezekiel Chapters 26, 27, 28

This oracle (dated between 587 and 586 B.C.) against Tyre for aiming to prosper on the ruin of Jerusalem. It includes prophecies and a lament against the King of Tyre and is the longest judgement against Tyre of all the prophets. The merchants of Tyre were famous for international trade in those days.

The prophetic words have been fulfilled exactly as described. The mainland city of Tyre was plundered by King Nebuchadnezzar. The offshore island port of Tyre was eventually captured and destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.

I will make you a bare rock; you shall be a place upon which to spread nets; you shall never be rebuilt, for I the Lord have spoken it, says the Lord God.

Ezekiel 26: 14

The Lord condemned the King of Tyre's pride as great as God in his wisdom and beauty.

The king's fall is likened to that of Adam in the Garden of Eden and is similar to Satan's fall from heaven recorded in the book of Isaiah (14:12).

SIDON

Read Ezekiel 28: 20 - 26

Sidon is always coupled with Tyre except in this instance in the O.T. Ezekiel continued these predictions in his prophesies of plague and the sword of Nebuchadnezzar against Sidon. Ezekiel also gave God's promise that when He gathered scattered Israel, the people would live in safety in their own land.

Yes, they (Israel) shall dwell securely when I have executed judgements upon all those around them who have despised and trodden upon them, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God.
Ezekiel 28: 26b

The awesome power and the holiness of the Lord would be known both in the surrounding Gentile nations and in Israel; even greater than in the first Exodus.

EGYPT

Read Chapters 29 - 32

Ezekiel received 7 oracles against Pharaoh and the land of Egypt and 6 of them are dated. The first oracle (6th date - 587 B.C.) judged Egypt as a broken reed to Israel to be plundered by Nebuchadnezzar's sword and left completely desolate for 40 years; but then restored.

The land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. And they shall know that I am the Lord. Because you have said, The river (Nile) is mine and I have made it.
Ezekiel 29: 9

Pharaoh, likened to a great monster, would never again be powerful; and Egypt, a ruler of nations. *Never again shall Egypt be the reliance of the house of Israel; their iniquity will be brought to remembrance whenever Israel looks toward them for help. They shall know that I am the Lord.*
Ezekiel 29: 16

In the 2nd oracle against Egypt (7th date - 571 B.C.) the wealth plundered from Egypt paid the wages of Nebuchadnezzar's army in his lengthy siege against Tyre, lasting 15 years from 586 to 571 B.C.

because they did it for Me, says the Lord God.
Ezekiel 29: 20

The oracle ended with a promise to Ezekiel that his dumbness would be removed. (29: 21b)

LAMENT FOR EGYPT

Read Ezekiel 30: 1 - 19

The Lament for Egypt described, in the 3rd oracle, the doom and destruction of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. The people would be scattered in exile, her many allies, cities and idols would fall and be destroyed because of the Lord's punishment.

They shall know that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in Egypt and all her helpers are broken and destroyed.
Ezekiel 30: 8

In the 4th oracle against Pharaoh, his arms would be broken (8th date - 587 B.C.) while the arms of Nebuchadnezzar would be strengthened to wield his mighty sword over the land of Egypt.
(Ezekiel 30: 25)

Cedar Lebanese
(Cedrus Libani)



A LEBANON CEDAR

Read Ezekiel 31: 1 - 18

In the same year (9th date - 587 B.C.) Ezekiel was given a 5th oracle against Egypt - another cedar allegory. The majestic cedar (Assyria), was cut down in describing its earlier conquest by Babylon. Pharaoh Neco had gone to Carchemish on the R. Euphrates to help Assyria against Babylon. At the historic battle of Carchemish, the Egyptian army was defeated in 605 B.C. Egypt's failed assistance was therefore of no avail and Assyria fell in 609 B.C.

Just as the power of Assyria had been cut down and destroyed, the parable foretold the eventual destruction of Egypt. Although not so many trees exist today, Lebanon is still famous for its cedars, the tree being depicted on the Lebanese flag.

A LAMENT FOR PHARAOH

Ezekiel 32: 1 - 20

Two years later, Ezekiel received prophetic words of Lament against Pharaoh for his pride. (10th date - 586 B.C. and 6th oracle against Egypt).

Thus says the Lord God: The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you.

Ezekiel 32: 11

Again that year, Ezekiel received the last and 7th oracle (11th date - 586 B.C.) against Egypt. (v.17)

Ezekiel was to wail for Egypt and her many allies going down to the grave to join the slain for all the terror they had brought to the land of the living.

A WATCHMAN

Read Ezekiel 33: 1 - 20

Ezekiel was again declared a watchman to the house of Israel and held responsible to give God's warning as recorded in Ezekiel 3: 17, 20 and Chapter 18.

(3rd Call to repentance)

I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his evil way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 33: 11

Yet your people say,

The way of the Lord is not just; but as for them, it is their own way that is not just. Ezekiel 33: 17

When the righteous turns back from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die.

But if the wicked turns back from his wickedness and does what is right, he shall live.

Ezekiel 33: 18, 19

JERUSALEM'S FALL REPORTED

Read 33: 21 - 33

Five months after the city fell (12th date - 585 B.C.) a fugitive from Jerusalem brought Ezekiel the news - *The city (Jerusalem) is taken.* Ezekiel 33: 21b

The evening before, the Lord had opened Ezekiel's mouth and he was no longer dumb.

At *The Voice of the Lord*, Ezekiel was to speak God's word to the sinful people surviving in Jerusalem's ruins. It was their sins that had brought about Israel's destruction and the dire consequences. The exiles still failed to listen and obey *The Voice of the Lord* through Ezekiel - merely a lovely voice to them!

When this comes to pass - for behold, it will come! Then shall they know that a prophet has been among them.

Ezekiel 33: 33



WOE TO THE UNCARING SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL

Read Ezekiel Chapter 34

Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy against the leaders of Israel who only cared for themselves.

Behold, I, I Myself, will search for My sheep and will seek them out.

Ezekiel 34: 11

The Lord will not only judge against the shepherds (Israel's princes, priests and prophets) but also between fat sheep and lean - meaning between the powerful and the weak.

I will raise up over them one Shepherd and He shall feed them, even My Servant David.

Ezekiel 34: 23a

This prophetic word refers to a future time of blessing and safety when -

I the Lord will be their God and My servant David a Prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.

Ezekiel 34: 24

In God's Covenant of Peace (v. 25) sinless Jesus Christ of King David's royal line will be the Head of His Body - the Church of the New Testament, all others being His servants saved by His blood from their sins.

AN ORACLE TO THE MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL

Read Ezekiel 35, 36

Unlike the earlier prophecy against the Mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 6), the Lord's word is now one of consolation after their punishment. The surrounding nations, especially Edom, will be punished because they took possession of the Lord's Land and rejoiced at the ruin of Israel - My people.

But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are soon to come home.

Ezekiel 36: 8

I do not do this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations to which you went.

Ezekiel 36: 22



Although the Jews were returned from exile after 70 years of captivity in Babylon, they were dispersed again for 2000 years. The Jews were scattered among the nations following the Crucifixion of Christ in Jerusalem; and their subsequent destruction by the Romans in A. D.70.

The many prophetic promises of re-gathering to the land were amazingly fulfilled in 1948 when Israel was declared a nation again.

A new heart will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will heed My ordinances and do them.

Ezekiel 36: 26, 27

In the Lord's timing the whole prophecy will be fulfilled and Israel will be a blessing to the nations.

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES



Read Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14

With the hand of the Lord upon Ezekiel, he was taken into a valley of very dry bones and asked -

Son of man, can these bones live?

Ezekiel 37: 3

Ezekiel was commanded to:

Prophesy to these bones and say to them,

O you dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Ezekiel 37:4

As Ezekiel prophesied there was a rattling as the bones came together with skin covering them but there was no breath in them. Prophesying again, the Sovereign Lord made breath and spirit-giving life come into them and the bones stood up as a great army - the house of Israel in a national restoration.

O My people, I will bring you back home to the land of Israel.

Ezekiel 37: 12b

I shall put My Spirit in you and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land.

Then you shall know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, says the Lord.

Ezekiel 37: 14

ONE NATION

Read Ezekiel 37: 15 - 22



In his last enacted prophecy, Ezekiel was commanded to take two sticks and write the name of Judah on one and Ephraim on the other.

(The two nations had been separated after the reign of Solomon).

Then Ezekiel joined them together making a union of one stick - meaning the nation would be reborn. There would be an everlasting covenant of peace, joy and blessing as promised to King David.

I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King over them all; and they shall be no longer two nations, neither be divided into two kingdoms any more.

Ezekiel 37: 22

GOD'S PROMISES TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL

- * *They would no longer worship idols for they would be cleansed.*
- * *David, My Servant, will be their King and they shall have one Shepherd.*
- * *They will walk in My statutes and do them.*
- * *They and their children's children will live in the Land.*
- * *The Lord will make an everlasting covenant with them, a covenant of peace.*
- * *The people of Israel will be multiplied and blessed.*
- * *My sanctuary will ever be in their midst.*
- * *They will be My people and I will be their God*
- * *Then the nations will know that Israel is consecrated for holiness when My Temple is in their midst.*

Ezekiel 37: 23 - 28

EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY AGAINST GOG

Read Ezekiel Chapters 38, 39

Ezekiel received God's judgement against Gog (world leader and enemy of Israel) and the forces of many nations for the predicted invasion of Israel in future years. Like the previous Assyrian and Babylonian invasions, the attack would come from the north - against a people living at peace.



On that day, there would be a great earthquake and shaking of the mountains. There would be torrents of rain, hail and burning sulphur pouring down on the invading troops; the sword of the Lord, in the fire of His fierce anger, causing catastrophic confusion. Animal life and all mankind would tremble at the presence of God's holiness.

Thus will I demonstrate My greatness and My holiness, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations; yes, they shall know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 38: 23

Bloodshed and pestilence would bring final destruction on a colossal scale.

I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My holy name any more; and the nations shall know, that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

Ezekiel 39: 7

Great would be the burial of the slain as a sacrifice in the Valley of Hamon Gog (multitude of Gog) to cleanse the land.

The house of Israel shall know, beyond all question that I am the Lord their God from that day forward.

Ezekiel 39: 22

Neither will I hide My face any more then from them, when I have poured out My Spirit upon the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 39: 29

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE NEW TEMPLE

(Only a brief outline of the New Temple area can be given, being a subject for Study on its own).

Ezekiel Chapters 40 - 42

In the 25th year of the exile (last and 13th date - 573 B.C.) and 14 years after the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel, with the hand of the Lord upon him, was taken to Jerusalem.

He was given a detailed vision of the New Temple with all its precise measurements. This was the future plan and design of the House to be built for the Presence of God to dwell with His people - those who trust Him.

In Ezekiel's vision, he saw a Man (Angel) with the appearance of bronze, holding a linen cord and measuring rod in his hand. The Man guided Ezekiel on a tour around the Temple area and told him to note carefully everything he saw, measured and heard with these words of instruction -

Declare all that you see to the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 40: 4b

COURTS AND GATEWAYS

In his visions of God, Ezekiel saw the outside Temple wall surrounding the enclosed outer and inner courts. He was shown the east, north and south gateways, their flights of steps, alcoves and porticoes, the posts and pillars carved with palm tree decorations. Precise measurements and locations were given for the guards' and priests' rooms; and the tables for the preparation of all the varied sacrifices.

Ezekiel was shown the square Court, the sides measuring 100 cubits.

The Lord gave measurements for the Great Altar of burnt offering and the regulations for all the different sacrifices to be made for its cleansing and dedication.

Only then would the offerings in worship be accepted.

(43: 13 - 27)

THE NEW TEMPLE

The Temple was built on a foundation platform. This holy sanctuary, like the inner court, also measured 100 cubits square and was constructed on three levels with stairways and windows. The inside was panelled with wood and beautifully carved with cherubim and palm trees.

There were double doors at the entrance to the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.

The doors had two folding leaves and were intricately carved with alternating palm trees and cherubim - each with two faces of a man and a lion.

Only the angel went into the inner part of the Sanctuary, the place of God's royal throne.

On leaving after taking measurements, the Angel explained -

This is the Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies).

Ezekiel 41: 4b

In front of the Most Holy Place there was another wooden Altar, much smaller than the Great Altar. There was no record of a Lamp stand or Altar of Incense as in the Tabernacle or Solomon's Temple.

The man (Angel) said to me,

This is the table that is before the Lord.

Ezekiel 41: 22b

Unlike the temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel, enlarged by Herod, Ezekiel's vision for the Third Temple was larger than Solomon's; but has not as yet been built.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Read Ezekiel 43: 1 - 12

With all the detailed measurements for the plans completed, the glory of the Lord came by way of the east; entering by the East Gate and filling the Temple with His glory.

Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east and His voice was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with His glory.

Ezekiel 43: 2

At the sight of the awesome vision, Ezekiel in humility fell down with his face to the ground but the Spirit lifted him up to behold the Lord's glory.

Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.

Ezekiel 43: 7a

The Voice of the Lord again instructed Ezekiel to show the Temple's design -

to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of all their iniquities.

Ezekiel 43: 10b

The whole area of the Temple Mount was to be separate and most holy, being set apart.

Behold, this is the law of the house of the Lord.

Ezekiel 43: 12b

THE GOLDEN GATE

Read Chapter 44



Ezekiel was told that the East Gate must remain shut because the Lord, the God of Israel had entered through it. Only the Prince would be allowed to enter and leave by way of the East Gate and eat there in the presence of the Lord. Again, Ezekiel was told to observe all these regulations concerning the Temple of the Lord. Ezekiel was to remind the rebellious house of Israel all their evil ways

The Golden Gate is still sealed up today and can be seen in the wall surrounding the Moslem Temple area.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE PRINCE

As in the Tabernacle of old, the Levites because of their sin of idolatry were to serve and be in charge of the Temple duties; but never to enter the Holy Place.

Only the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, were to enter the sanctuary of the Holy Place and to abide by its regulations (44: 15 - 31).

The priesthood was not to own any land, the Lord alone being their inheritance.

The priests shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the common or profane and cause them to distinguish between the unclean and the clean.

Ezekiel 44: 23

Their ministry to Me shall be to them as an inheritance, for I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no possession in Israel, for I am their possession.

Ezekiel 44: 28

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LAND

Ezekiel Chapters 45, 46

When the land was allotted, there was to be a large area with specified sections for the Temple, the Priesthood, the Levites and the city of Jerusalem. The entire area was a perfect square with the Temple situated in the centre; including the land for the Priests and Levites holy to the Lord.

Unlike Jerusalem of former times, the city would be situated south of the Temple courts and would belong to the whole house of Israel.

The people were to present a special gift from the produce of the land for the Prince to provide the holy offerings at the yearly Feasts and on the Sabbath. Morning by morning there was to be a daily burnt offering. The east gate of the inner court was to be kept shut but opened on the Sabbath and during the holy Feasts.

The Prince was allotted a large area bordering the western and eastern sides of the sacred district. There was to be no more violence or oppression of the people. The laws of inheritance were to be kept; and weights and measures, including the coinage, were to be accurate and standardised.

Unlike the people coming to worship who were to leave by the opposite gate from entry, the Prince was to leave by the same gateway.

THE RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE

Read Ezekiel 47: 1 - 12

After the Angel completed the tour of the New Temple, Ezekiel saw water flowing eastwards from its threshold issuing from the southern side of the great Altar. Ezekiel was led by the Angel, via the north gate, to stand in the flowing stream. The angel measured off a distance of a 1000 cubits and the water was then ankle deep. After another thousand, the water had become knee deep, then up to waist-level to become a river deep enough for swimming and too deep for Ezekiel to cross.

This wonderful life-giving stream flowed down to the Dead Sea making its saline waters fresh and abundant with fish like the Great Sea - the Mediterranean. The land bordering the river was fruitful with many kinds of trees.

Each tree shall bring forth new fruit every month, because their waters came from out of the sanctuary. And their fruit shall be for food and their leaves for healing.

Ezekiel 47: 12b

BOUNDARIES AND DIVISION OF THE LAND

Ezekiel 47: 13 - 23, 48: 1 - 35

According to *The Voice of the Lord*, the boundaries of the land and regions allotted to the twelve tribes were defined.

Finally, the gates of Jerusalem were named after the twelve tribes; and the city given a new name.

The name of the city from that day and ever shall be,

THE LORD IS THERE.

Ezekiel 48: 35

DANIEL IS THE LAST OF THE MAJOR PROPHETS



NOTICE OF COPYRIGHT

'Scriptures taken, unless otherwise stated, from THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE, Old Testament copyright, (c) 1965, 1987 by The Zondervan Corporation. The Amplified New Testament copyright (c) 1958, 1987 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.'