

Chapter 40:1-48:35 - The vision Ezekiel saw describing the final and ultimate temple of the Lord.

- A. These visions expand the concept of God returning to bless and be with his people (48:35; 43:1-9; see 9:3; 11:23; 37:24-28; 39:25-29).
- B. With the return will come blessing to the nations (47:1-12).
- C. In the church/kingdom (temple of the Lord) blessings are available for all (1 Pet. 2:4-10; Eph. 2:14-22; 1 Cor. 3:9-11; Heb. 12:18-29).
- D. Consider Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:13-20; Ezek. 42:20; 43:1-5, 10, 12; 48:35).

Chapter 40:1-4 - Ezekiel carried in a vision to Jerusalem.

Chapter 40:5-42:20 - The temple is measured to distinguish the holy from the profane.

Chapter 41

More measuring of the parts, etc., of the temple.

Chapter 42

This contains a special description of the chambers of the priest and information of the outer court.

Chapter 40 - God's Protection and Instruction

God's Perfection

1. His works are perfect - Dt. 32:4
2. His words are " - Psa. 19:7a
3. His ways are " - Psa. 18:30

He God who goes before

1. He has gone before us in this life
2. He has " " " " the spiritual realm
Eph. 1:3; Heb. 3:12
3. we can trust on the basis of what he has done
in the past, that he has gone before us into
eternity - Jn. 14:3

God returns to the Temple, He fills it

1. Solomon's Temple — 1 Kgs. 8:10, 13
2. Ezekiel " — Ezek. 43:2, 4, 7
3. The day of Pentecost — Acts 2:
4. The New Jerusalem —

Chapter 43

1. Solomon gave a dedication speech at the opening of his temple (1 Kgs. 8) and the Lord gives a dedication speech here (vv. 6-12).
2. This house is where God abides forever (v. 7). (Cf. Rev. 21:10-22:5). In which house will he dwell forever?
3. They were to measure the pattern and be ashamed of their ungodliness (v. 10-12).

Regulations for Acceptable Worship Given – 43:13 – 46:24

Chapter 43:1-27 -

A. The Lord returns to the temple.

1. The glory of the Lord enters the new temple as it had departed from the old (43:1-5; 9:3; 10:18-22; 11:22-25).
2. The Message given is one of holy obedience (43:6-12; read verses 10 through 12).
3. The altar of burnt offering is described and dedicated (43:13-27).
 - a. The description of the altar (43:13-17).
 - b. The dedication of the altar (43:18-27).
 - c. Question: Was Christ's sacrifice temporal, and was the old Mosaic system to be reinstated?
 - (1) To answer "yes" is to contradict the NT (Heb. 9-10).
 - (2) To answer "no" is to demand a symbolic and/or figurative interpretation of these verses.

B. Organization of the people around the most important item to their well-being—the temple, unto which the Spirit of God had returned (44:1-46:24).

1. The position of the prince and the priest (44:1-14).
 - a. The prince (44:1-3).
 - b. The uncircumcised in heart and flesh excluded (44:4-9).
 - c. The place of the genuine Levites (44:10-16).
2. The conduct and support of the priests (44:17-31).
 - a. Both service and conduct to be beyond reproach (44:17-22).
 - b. To be engaged in teaching and upholding truth (44:23-27).
 - c. The inheritance and support of the priests (44:28-31).
3. The position of the land in relationship to the sanctuary, city, priest, and prince (45:1-8).
4. The demand for justice and not oppression (45:9-12).
5. Sacrifices and sacred days (45:13-46:15).
 - a. The people's offering for the prince (45:13-17).
 - b. The sin offering of the first month (45:18-20).
 - c. Sacrifices at the Passover and the feast of tabernacles (45:21-25).
 - d. Sacrifices for the Sabbath and the new moon (46:1-8).
 - e. Opening of the temple for the people and prince (46:9-12).
 - f. The daily sacrifice (46:13-15).
6. The limitation of the prince's disposition of his property (46:16-18).
7. The sacrificial kitchens for the priests, and for the people (46:19-24).

*Priesthood Reproved
and condemned
for cleansing and
purifying the priesthood*

*Instructions for
Worship*

*Chapter
44*

*Chapter
45*

*Chapter
46*

C. The river of water of life (47:1-12).

1. The source and magnitude of the river (47:1-5).
2. The subsequent influence of the river of life (47:6-12).
3. Consider Psalm 36:8-9; Zech. 14:8; Isa. 58:11; John 7:37-39.

D. The boundaries and division of the land (47:13-23).

E. The portions of land assigned (48:1-29).

1. To the north seven tribes (48:1-7).
2. In the center to Jehovah—for the sanctuary and priests (48:8-22).
3. To the south five tribes (48:23-29).

F. The size, gates, and name of the city (48:30-35).

G. Note the parallels between Ezekiel's city and the "new Jerusalem" of Rev. 21.

1. Twelve gates named after the 12 tribes of Israel 48:31-34; Rev. 21:12-14.
2. Both cities were square – 48:20; Rev. 21:16.
3. As in Ezekiel's vision a guide with a measuring rod showed John the city – 40:3; Rev. 21:15.
4. John describes a river and trees – 47:12; Rev. 22:1.
5. John heard a voice – 48:35; Rev. 21:3.

H. Rivers

1. River in Eden (Gen. 2:10-14). Nourished the Garden.

2. Ezekiel's vision (47:19) – Provide provision

3. John's vision (Rev. 22:1) – Symbolized through prophecy the Christian's future hope of God's care in the new heaven and new earth.

47 - vision of the great river flowing from beneath the temple. Teaches that all blessings—material and spiritual—come from the presence of the Lord.

Temple symbolized God's presence
Priests " of Christians
Sacrifices " blood of Christ
ministration of the priests symbolized or typified
the spiritual services which Christians offer to God

JEHOVAH IS THERE—JEHOVAH—SHAMMAH

I. Ezekiel Refutes Many Errors (by Robert Taylor, Jr.)

A. No Payday for Sin Refuted (Ezek. 18:20).

B. Calvinism Refuted - Each of the major planks.

1. Total hereditary is refuted by the passage that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father (18:20).
2. Original sin refuted—sin is an act committed, not inherited (18:20).
3. Unconditional security is refuted—the righteous person can become wicked and the wicked person can become righteous (18:24-27).
4. Direct operation of Holy Spirit—they could obey.
5. Limited atonement—God was interested in the whole nation, not just a few.

C. Premillennialism Refuted

1. The fact that they were taken captive from Palestine proves they inherited it (Cf. Josh. 21:43-45).
2. "Ezekiel prophesied of their return WHILE they were in Exile—not AFTER it ended (20:33ff).

D. Infidelity Refuted

1. Hundreds of times he attributed his message to the God of heaven.
2. Begins with visions of God (1:1ff) and closes with "The Lord is there" (48:35).

E. Idolatry Refuted. Ezekiel 6 and 14 portray the sinfulness of idols.

F. Deism refuted. It has long contended that God is not interested in his universe.

1. The ancients of Israel were actually saying (8:12).
2. God would not have exiled his people if he didn't care.

G. Transferred or borrowed righteousness refuted.

1. The Catholic Church has long had its supererogation or a bank of Good Works.
2. Ezekiel 18 clearly shows that a son is not righteous just because his father is righteous.

II. Powerful Positive of Towering Truths

A. The inspiration of the Scriptures.

1. Such expressions as "the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "then saith he unto me," "thus saith the Lord," etc., appears 300 times—an average of more than six times per chapter.
2. Either he spoke by inspiration or he lied more than 300 times. Would just a book survive on such a flimsy foundation?

B. The importance of preaching—then and now.

C. God's character in perfect balance. He is a God of wrath and love (cf. Rom. 11:22).

D. The glory of God (Ezek. 1).

E. Individual responsibility (Ezek. 18).

F. Respect for God's Word.

III. "And they shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. 6:10)

LESSONS TO REMEMBER

1. The heart of God yearns for the salvation of all men.
2. Each individual must bear the responsibility of his own sin.
3. The human will is more powerful in determining destiny than either heredity or environment.
4. The terrific responsibility that rests upon God's messengers should cause him to remain faithful.
5. The minister must not let personal griefs and disappointments injure his ministry.
6. As a faithful watchman, the preacher must warn the sinner of his folly.
7. Before one can be effective as a teacher, he must be able to see the problem from the other man's side.
8. God will not always strive with sinful men.
9. What He cannot do for us (because of us) He can do for His own name-sake.
10. God wants us to see His GREAT Love as shown in the story of the Good Shepherd.
11. Here we see the value of repentance and forgiveness.
12. Before they could hope to return to Jerusalem they had to return to God - so also we.
13. From God flows the life-giving stream that will heal and save all who come to it and drink.
14. God works His will among the nation that the world will know that He is Jehovah!
15. One day, God's people will live with Him in the heavenly city, Jehovah-shammah.

Some major themes and/or issues in Ezekiel:

A. "Personal accountability before the Lord."

1. The notions of collective responsibility, collective guilt, and collective punishment are common in the prophets.
 - a. A whole society may be held accountable for allowing certain evils (e.g., idolatry) in it.
 - b. An entire group (e.g., Judah) might be punished for the nation's corruption—even including some innocent people (e.g., Daniel, Ezekiel).
2. Ezekiel gives strong emphasis to the companion truth that salvation is on an individual basis. Cf. Ezek. 3:16-21; 9:4.
 - a. The wicked will not be spared by the presence of a few good people among them, Ezek. 14:14.
 - b. The innocent will not have to bear the guilt of the wicked—though they may suffer some evil consequence from their wickedness, Ezek. 18:20.
3. Ezek. 18 is an important Old Testament chapter on this theme of individualism.
 - a. Scripture is anti-deterministic and anti-fatalistic.
 - b. It is neither heredity nor environment but personal choice that determines one's relationship with the Almighty.
4. In the time of Jesus, he had to rebuke the smug idea of collective righteousness and emphasize the theme of personal accountability, John 8:39ff; cf. Matt. 3:7-10.
5. Perhaps we, too, need to be reminded that salvation is a personal decision for each of us." (Rubel Shelly)

B. There are many statements in Revelation that are found in Ezekiel.

1. The four living creatures (1:5; Rev. 4:6).
2. The rainbow around the throne (1:28; Rev. 4:3).
3. The eating of the scroll (3:1,3; Rev. 10:10).
4. The sealing of the servants (9:4; Rev. 7:3).
5. The burning of the city (10:2; Rev. 8:5).
6. The Fall of Tyre and the Fall of Babylon (26-28; Rev. 18).
7. God's dwelling in the midst of men (37:27; Rev. 21:3).
8. Gog of the land of Magog (38:2,3; Rev. 20:8).
9. The seer placed on the high mountain (40:2; Rev. 21:10).
10. The city measured (40:3; Rev. 11:1; 21:16).
11. The river issuing from the temple (47:1,12; Rev. 22:1-2).
12. The gates with tribal names on the various sides of the city (48:31; Rev. 21:12).

C. Idolatry is an abandoning of the unique reason for Israel's existence.

1. "Let us be like the nations" (20:32) is the spirit that motivates it.
2. It can be traced back to Egypt (20:7-8) and they desert (20:15-16). It is only here that we learn of Israel's idolatry in Egypt and God's thought to destroy them.
3. It had taken on new forms in Canaan (21:28).

D. A distinctive feature of Ezekiel is that God acts "for the sake of his name."

1. God wants the nations to have the proper impression of his nature.
2. "He deals in keeping with that essential nature rather than according to their evil ways (Ezek. 20:44)" (Lewis, p. 344).
3. Israel's behaviour had profaned his holy name (Ezek. 36:21ff).

4. There were many points at which God would have destroyed Israel—Egypt, the wilderness, Canaan—"had it not been that it would have led to a misimpression of His essential nature."

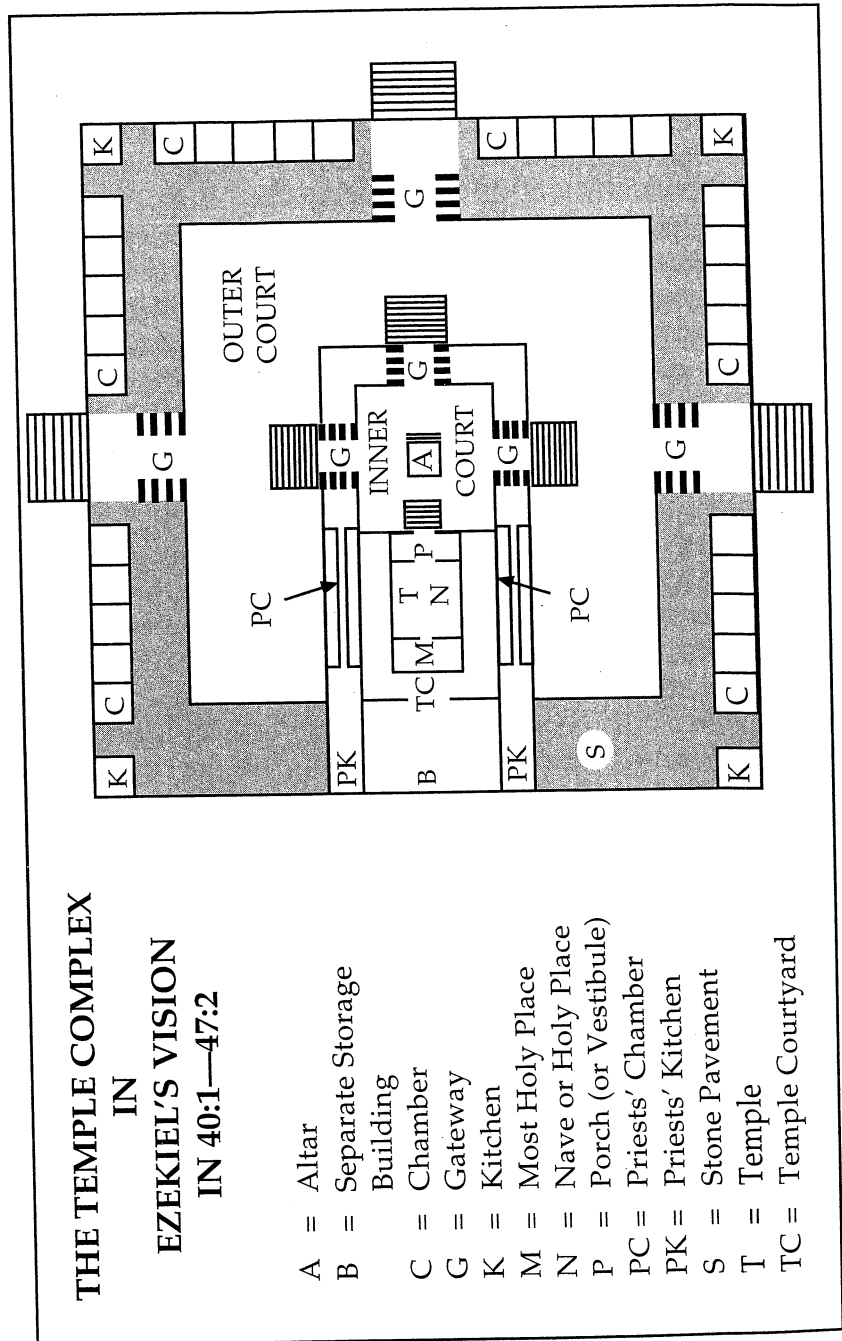
ALLUSIONS FROM EZEKIEL IN REVELATION

Revelation	Ezekiel	Parallel Passage/Allusion
1. Rev. 1:13	Ezekiel 1:26; 8:2, 9:11	"Like a son of man" wore a linen robe
2. Rev. 1:15	Ezekiel 1:4; 43:2	Voice of the Lord--rushing water
3. Rev. 2:7	Ezekiel 31:9	Tree of life
4. Rev. 2:5	Ezekiel 1:13	Natural powerful phenomena--thunder, lightning, earthquakes
5. Rev. 3:12	Ezekiel 48:35	Name of God's city
6. Rev. 4:3	Ezekiel 1:28	Description of throne
7. Rev. 4:5	Ezekiel 1:13	Natural power phenomena
8. Rev. 4:6	Ezekiel 1:22	Sea of glass
9. Rev. 4:8	Ezekiel 1:5, 18	Four living beings
10. Rev. 4:7	Ezekiel 1:10	Description of four beings
11. Rev. 5:1	Ezekiel 2:9	Scroll
12. Rev. 6:8	Ezekiel 14:21, 5:12, 17, 33:27	Destruction by famine, sword, and wild beasts
13. Rev. 7:1	Ezekiel 7:2	Four corners of earth
14. Rev. 7:3	Ezekiel 9:4	Mark on four heads
15. Rev. 8:7	Ezekiel 38:22	Hail and fire rains
16. Rev. 9:4	Ezekiel 9:4	Mark on foreheads
17. Rev. 10:10	Ezekiel 3:1, 3	Eating the scroll
18. Rev. 11:1	Ezekiel 40:3	Measuring rod
19. Rev. 11:11	Ezekiel 37:5, 10	Breath of life given to non-living objects
20. Rev. 11:19	Ezekiel 1:13	Natural power phenomena
21. Rev. 14:1	Ezekiel 9:4	Mark on forehead
22. Rev. 14:2	Ezekiel 1:4, 43:2	Voice of Lord--rushing water
23. Rev. 14:10	Ezekiel 38:22	Torment of burning sulfur
24. Rev. 14:14	Ezekiel 1:26, 8:2	"Like a son of man" wore linen robe
25. Rev. 16:18	Ezekiel 1:13	Natural power phenomena
26. Rev. 15:2	Ezekiel 1:22	Sea of glass
27. Rev. 18:9-15	Ezekiel 27:26	Woes pronounced upon spiritual prostitution
28. Rev. 18:16-19	Ezekiel 27:26	Woes pronounced upon spiritual prostitution
29. Rev. 18:22	Ezekiel 26:13	End of music
30. Rev. 19:6	Ezekiel 1:4, 43:2	Voice of Lord--rushing water
31. Rev. 19:11	Ezekiel 1:1	Heavens open--visions of God
32. Rev. 19:17	Ezekiel 39:17	Call of animals to feast
33. Rev. 20:8	Ezekiel 38:1, 4	Gathering of large armies
34. Rev. 21:3	Ezekiel 37:27	"I will be their God; They will be my people"
35. Rev. 21:10	Ezekiel 40:1	Vision of new Jerusalem
36. Rev. 21:12	Ezekiel 48:31	Gates of Jerusalem named after children of Israel
37. Rev. 21:16	Ezekiel 43:16	Square measurements of Jerusalem
38. Rev. 22:1	Ezekiel 47:1	The river of life

39. Rev. 22:2
40. Rev. 22:2
41. Rev. 22:4
42. Rev. 22:14
43. Rev. 22:19

Ezekiel 31:9
Ezekiel 47:12
Ezekiel 9:4
Ezekiel 31:9
Ezekiel 31:9

The tree of life
Leaves of healing
Mark on foreheads
Tree of life
Tree of life



AN OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL 40—48:

THE NEW TEMPLE AND GOD'S KINGDOM

THE CONTENT

The last nine chapters of Ezekiel are a unit which describes a vision of the new temple and all of its buildings, walls, and sacrificial implements, along with priestly allotments of land and the priests' sacrificial duties. These chapters were written after the other portions of the book (the vision is dated around 573 B.C.), and they provide an important conclusion to Ezekiel's prophecy, especially in one key area: the return of the glory of the Lord. John B. Taylor wrote, "They are therefore to be thought of not as a completely independent composition, only loosely tacked on to the end of the main body of Ezekiel's work, but as a real climax to his thought as it has been maturing through twenty years of prayer, meditation and ministry."¹ In 11:22, 23, God had withdrawn from the evils so prevalent in the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Was there any hope of His returning? Had He abandoned His people forever? Chapters 40 through 48 provide a fitting answer to these all-important questions.

In showing Ezekiel the "four abominations" centered in the temple, God provided substantial reason why He should abandon the temple. It had become hopelessly corrupt. The Holy One of Israel could not continue to inhabit such a place. When He departed, His protection of this place also departed. Its destruction was inevitable, and it came to pass in 587(6) B.C.

¹John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1969), 250.

However, just as Ezekiel began his book with the magnificent vision of the glory of the Lord, the book appropriately ends with another prolonged vision. This time, Ezekiel saw the Lord returning to dwell with His people.

THE PURPOSES

1. It encouraged the exiles, showing that they would again be recipients of God's blessings, dwelling in a beautiful and productive land. It created a dream for a discouraged people.
2. It showed that God had not forsaken His people forever. He would return to them, cleanse them, and dwell with them once again.
3. It underscores the importance of covenant obedience. The people were expected to be faithful to God's statutes and ordinances (see 43:11; 37:24).
4. It demonstrates that even those without hope can come to God and receive His blessings.
5. It shows how all of God's people have a place in His kingdom and how He has work for all to do (see Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9, 10).

THE INTERPRETATION

Literal: Those who hold this view of interpretation strive to apply literally all of the numbers, buildings, and priesthood duties in these chapters. This section is seen as a divine blueprint which God expects the faithful to follow meticulously as they construct His future dwelling.

Dispensational/Premillennial: This view was made popular by The Scofield Reference Bible, which titled this section "Israel in the Land during the Kingdom-Age." It points to a future time when a messianic kingdom is set up, a thousand-year reign is about to begin, and Ezekiel's temple will be literally constructed.²

²This is the position presented in Ralph H. Alexander, "Ezekiel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 6:942-52.

AN OVERVIEW OF EZEKIEL 40—48

Symbolic Christian: This position sees the fulfillment in the church and the work of Christians as priests of God. It seeks to define the various measurements and descriptions by using symbols.

Apocalyptic: This view presents the section as a vivid symbolic prophecy, describing the glorious return of the exiles to the Promised Land. It includes the idea that they would again enjoy the presence of God, the beauty of a rebuilt city and temple, and land ownership. This is the most logical position. It honors the type of literature Ezekiel was using (chs. 40—48) and allows for immediate application to the discouraged exiles.

FOR FURTHER STUDY: AN ANALYSIS OF FOUR VIEWS FOR INTERPRETING EZEKIEL 40—48

Literal

Strengths

1. Ezekiel had prophesied a return to the land and anticipated a future rebuilding of the temple.
2. Logically, God would provide guidance concerning the holy edifice the returning exiles would have to reconstruct.
3. Ezekiel, as a priest, was surely the one to predict the glorious future of the Lord's temple.
4. It provides a framework for the holiness of the Lord to be re-established. Ezekiel connected the building of the new temple with the return of the exiles, which in turn established the holiness of the name of Yahweh.

Weaknesses

1. The exiles did not attempt to use the "blueprint" when they returned. Apparently, they did not view this literally. The builders of Herod's temple did not attempt to follow these specifications either.
2. Unlike the description of the temple in Exodus, this temple has many measurements that are nonspecific, thereby casting doubt that this was ever intended to be a literal "blueprint."

3. Certain details would be impossible to construct.
4. Other vital parts of the temple are not addressed, which leaves to the imagination how they might be constructed. Such omissions are out of character for the way God instructed His people.
5. Some details are unfeasible—for example, the size of the temple and its location on “a very high mountain” (40:2). The literal placement of the temple would be outside the city, and the tribal allotments do not match the topography of Israel (47:13—48:29). The function and location of the river (47:1–12) are also unlikely.
6. This view fails to appreciate the conditional nature of biblical prophecy. Even if the description of the temple were to be taken literally, it could not serve as a divine guarantee—because its fulfillment required faithfulness on the part of the people (see Jer. 18:5–10).

Dispensational/Premillennial

Strengths

1. It provides legitimacy for the theme of God’s glory and its return. God’s glory left because of wickedness, but Ezekiel said that it would return once God’s people returned to the land and purified themselves. This cleansing is intimately connected with the new temple.
2. Since God’s holiness was to be established only when God’s people were brought back to the land (36:20–24), a future return to the land was necessary.
3. Ezekiel 43:6, 7 says that when God’s glory returned He would “dwell among the sons of Israel forever.” This terminology lends itself to a literal premillennial fulfillment because God said that He would dwell with them when He returned Israel to the land.³
4. The entire tenor of the section seems to imply that these events could describe the end of history and the onset of the

³Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 363.

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messianic kingdom. In 47:12 Ezekiel described a river of life, as did Moses in Genesis 2:8–14 and John in Revelation 22:1. This river that was lost in the beginning will be regained in the end.

5. The idea of God's dwelling with His people is predominant in this temple (48:35) and is a part of the end time description in Revelation 22:1–6.⁴

Weaknesses

1. It requires switching back and forth between literal and figurative applications of the Ezekiel temple.⁵
2. Several aspects are incompatible with Christianity.
3. It fails to appreciate the atoning work of Christ, encouraging God's people to revert to inferior ways.
4. It overlooks the place of the church in the overall scheme of God.⁶
5. It requires a literal fulfillment of these chapters, thus hav-

⁴See Alexander, 944.

⁵Those embracing this view are aware of these difficulties. Therefore, they maintain that the sacrifices symbolize worship. Anthony A. Hoekema cited support from *The New Scofield Reference Bible*: "The reference to sacrifices is not to be taken literally, in view of the putting away of such offerings, but is rather to be regarded as a presentation of the worship of redeemed Israel, in her own land and in the millennial Temple, using the terms with which the Jews were familiar in Ezekiel's day" (C. I. Scofield, ed., *The New Scofield Reference Bible* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1967], 888; Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979], 204). This statement is used to substantiate that even dispensationalists recognize a nonliteral approach to portions of Ezekiel 40—48. Admittedly, this is only one of two ways that *The New Scofield Reference Bible* declares the sacrifices could be interpreted. It is the deviating between "literal here" and "figurative there" exegesis that makes this view unacceptable.

⁶"A major fallacy of premillennialism is in its basic opposition to the redemption of the human race. If Christ *had* established the millennial kingdom, as millenarians maintain was his actual intention, then he would not have been rejected and crucified, and redemption could never have been offered to mankind. . . . The gospel of salvation becomes the unexpected and unplanned result of Christ's failure to establish the kingdom!" (Edward C. Wharton, "Interpreting Old Testament Prophecies: Premillennial Violations Exposed," in *Difficult Texts of the Old Testament Explained*, ed. Wendell Winkler [Montgomery, Ala.: Winkler Publications, 1982], 105–6).

ing many of the same weaknesses given previously regarding literal interpretation.⁷

6. It requires the text to skip the most significant time in history—the incarnation of Christ. How could a description of the new temple overlook the work of Christ? How could it describe the return of God to His people and neglect the “Immanuel,” the literal presence of God with His people?

7. It fails to appreciate that the Old Testament was designed to lead us to Christ and the events of the first century, not to reach beyond that time.

8. It is based on the false doctrine that Christ failed to establish His kingdom during the first coming and will therefore return to establish His millennial kingdom (of which this temple would be a part). Jesus taught during His earthly ministry that the kingdom was “at hand” and that the time was “fulfilled” (Mk. 1:15). He said that the kingdom would be established before some of His hearers died (Mk. 9:1).

9. It fails to appreciate the fact that this section does not *have* to be fulfilled, because this prophecy—like others—was conditional upon faithfulness (see Jer. 18:5–12). Since Israel was untrue to the covenant (even after the return from exile), why should we expect God’s plan for a glorious, new physical temple to proceed?⁸

⁷“If it follows from this that Old Testament festivals, blood sacrifices, priesthood and worship at a temple are to be reintroduced, after the New Testament revelation of Christ and His finished, fulfilling work, it shows how completely this view misinterprets the significance of Christ’s salvation and how it casts doubt on the consistency of God’s dealings with mankind. But its fault is basically in regarding Ezekiel 40–48 as prophecy and insisting on a literal fulfilment of it, if not in the past then in the future” (Taylor, 252–53).

⁸For example, Merrill F. Unger overlooked the possibility of prophecy unfulfilled because of disobedience: “Only one conclusion is possible. Non-premillennial views just do not supply any appropriate place for Ezekiel’s temple. This great section of Old Testament prophecy must remain wrapped in darkness and confusion, unless some plan of prophetic interpretation is provided to give a fitting and suitable future fulfillment to all that is written in this vision” (Merrill F. Unger, *Great Neglected Bible Prophecies* [Chicago: Scripture Press, 1955], 62).

Symbolic Christian

Strengths

1. It utilizes the same type of symbolic terminology used by John in Revelation. John's new Jerusalem had numerous parallels to the temple described by Ezekiel.
2. It provides a framework for Christianity, with its connection and relationship to the Old Testament forms (in a way similar to type/antitype fulfillment).
3. It draws upon the promise of the Davidic king who will rule His people (as promised in 34:23, 24). The rule of the Messiah is seen through His church. (Jesus is head of the church that He built [Mt. 16:16–18; Eph. 1:22, 23]).
4. It provides an all-important prophecy of the church, which is otherwise absent in the Old Testament.

Weaknesses

1. It has no bearing or relevance to those of Ezekiel's day.
2. It is nowhere used or referred to by the inspired writers of the New Testament; there is no application of this to the church. If this were the glorious prediction of the church, there would be one or more direct quotes.
3. Even when applied to Christianity, the forms, the priesthood, and the tribal allotments in Ezekiel 40—48 do not fit logically with the pattern of Christianity. The interpreter has to stretch and make unsubstantiated parallels, leaving solid exegetical principles and engaging in speculation.

Apocalyptic

Strengths

1. It allows for a message given directly to the exiles. This section of prophecy, interpreted in such a way, would have filled them with hope for their future. It describes "the glorious future of the people of God in the age to come in terms which the Jews of that day would understand."⁹

⁹Hoekema, 205.

2. It fits with previous non-apocalyptic passages in which Ezekiel described a return to the land (see 34:11–19; 36:8–38; 37:1–10, 11–28).

3. It provides a logical connection with 39:21–29 and fits with the apocalyptic style of writing in chapters 38 and 39.

4. It was the view held by Jewish interpreters, who did not seek a literal application or fulfillment of these chapters.

5. Ezekiel was clearly using figurative and symbolic language (see 40:2, 3; 43:1–5).

6. He made no mention of the high priest, an inexcusable oversight if he intended for the temple to be built literally in the Old Testament or was giving a prophetic view of a millennium. (The work and function of the high priest is a key idea in the New Testament.)

7. There are contradictions to laws given by Moses (for example, in sizes, duties, and allotments).

Weaknesses

1. Apocalyptic language does not use this much detail. Opposing this position, Alexander wrote, "The many details of these chapters would be difficult to comment on if one took the approach just described, for such an approach can only deal in generalities. The details would have little or no meaning."¹⁰

2. It leaves many verses unanalyzed, because no application can be made. This appears to be a waste of space.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Other Purposes

Other purposes of this section include the following, according to Taylor:¹¹

1. The text illustrates "the perfection of God's plan for His restored people, symbolically expressed in the immaculate symmetry of the temple building."

¹⁰Alexander, 907.

¹¹Taylor, 253.

2. It shows "the centrality of worship in the new age, its importance being expressed in the scrupulous concern for detail in the observance of its rites."

3. It reaffirms "the abiding presence of the Lord in the midst of His people."

4. It shows "the blessings that will flow from God's presence to the barren places of the earth (the river of life)."

5. It demonstrates "the orderly allocation of duties and privileges to all God's people, as shown both in the temple duties and in the apportionment of the land (a theme taken up in Rev. 7:4-8)."¹²

Dispensational/Premillennial View: Practices Incompatible with Christianity

Here is a list of elements which make the dispensational/premillennial view incompatible with Christianity:

Animal blood sacrifices. The writer of Hebrews stated that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (10:4). Why would there be a return to this futile system? Only the blood of Jesus can wash away sin. These sacrifices were only a "shadow" and not the "very form of things" (Heb. 10:1).

The Aaronic/Levitical priesthood (44:10-31). The law of Christ declares all Christians to be priests (1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6). The priesthood of Christ is superior to that of the old covenant (Heb. 7:1-28).

Old Testament festivals (45:18-46:15). Paul declared that festivals, new moons, and Sabbath days are no more than "a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ" (Col. 2:16, 17; see Heb. 8:5; 10:1).

A physical temple. The New Testament shows the better way—that "the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands" (Acts 7:48). It teaches that the temple of God is the church

¹²"These are of course only the main themes which Ezekiel seems to be expressing in this apocalyptic sequence. There is much more which can be adduced through detailed exposition. But if the vision is interpreted on these lines, and not as prophecy in the conventional sense, readers will be spared the necessity of trying to look for some fulfillment of the words in past or future history" (Ibid., 254).

(1 Cor. 3:16), the bodies of Christians (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). Paul noted that the "Spirit of God" resides in these temples—in us, not in some physical edifice.

Temple worship. It was a part of the old system, which Jesus told the Samaritan woman was soon to pass (Jn. 4:20–24).

Tribal allotments (47:13–48:29). This concept is contrary to the "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Pet. 3:13) and the portrayal of our eternal abode (see Rev. 22:1–5).

Evidence That the Old Testament Leads to Christ

The following Scriptures show that the Old Testament was designed to lead us to Christ and the events of the first century, not to reach beyond it:

Luke 24:44–47. All of the divisions of the Old Testament, including the Prophets, were fulfilled in Jesus.

Matthew 11:13. The Law and the Prophets brought us to John's ministry, not beyond it.

Luke 16:16a. The Law and the Prophets "were proclaimed unto John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached" (emphasis added). The Old Testament did not proclaim events beyond the work and ministry of John, Jesus, and the apostles.

Acts 26:22, 23. The Old Testament predicted the ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ.

1 Peter 1:10–12. The prophets testified regarding the coming grace connected with "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories to follow."

2 Timothy 1:10. Jesus "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Teachings regarding future rewards were not found in the Old Testament. Such was not the intended purpose of the prophets; their job was to prepare people for Christ. Then Christ and His apostles would teach what was to come in the future.

Ezekiel

1. The vision – two things underscored.
 - a. The judgment of God because of their sins.
 - b. The mercy of God when people repent and turn back to God.
2. The book shows the universal sovereignty of God.
3. These visions show a call for reverence for God everywhere.
4. The unity of God's purpose in all his actions.

Chapters 1-3

1. 1:26
 - a. Likeness of a throne – Judah no longer has an earthly king – This vision shows that God's throne is still intact.
 - b. Activity of God still going on.
2. 2 and 3 – His call and commission. It was important that Ezekiel know that God is still in control.
 - a. 2:1 – Son of man – used of Daniel only one time and of Ezekiel more than 90 times. When God speaks, man must listen.
 - b. Chapter 2 emphasizes the importance of saying what God says.

High Points

1. Fall of Israel in 772 B.C. – 2 Kgs. 17:5-6.
2. Origin of the Samaritans – 2 Kgs. 17:23ff.
3. Hezekiah – 2 Kgs. 18:20.
4. Manasseh – 2 Kgs. 21.
5. Josiah – 22 – 23:1 – 30.
6. Jehoahaz – 23:31-33.
7. Jehoiakim – 23:34-37; 24:1-6.
8. Jehoiachin – 24:6.
9. Jeremiah Mentioned – 2 Kgs.

Ezekiel

1. Why study Ezekiel right after Jeremiah?
2. Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem with Ezekiel.
3. Daniel – 3rd year of reign of Jehoaikim
1 captivity – Daniel, Shadrach
4. Ezekiel – 5th year of King Jehoaichin captivity

First 33 chapters has to do with Ezekiel's prophesy before the fall.

Second, he then prophesied after the fall of Jerusalem.

"That ye may know that I am the Lord" – key to the book – 72 times.

1. God intended for them to be a light to the nations about them.
2. But they left the wrong impression about God.
3. Their captivity would help Israel to see that idols did them no good.

Ezekiel by Chapters

1. Chapters 1-3 – Call of the prophet and commission.
2. 4-7 – Promises of destruction of Jerusalem.
3. 8-11 – God forsaking the temple.
4. 12-19 – Exposure of the sins that were so prevalent to let them know the why of the captivity.
5. 20-23 – The righteousness of God in sending them into captivity.
6. 24 – The siege of the fall of the city.
7. 25-32 – Prophecies to the nation.
8. 33-39 – Promise of better times.
9. 40-48 – The beauty of the new and restored kingdom.

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Wisdom's Corner

Volume 10 number 50

Water Issued Out

In Ezekiel 47, God gives Ezekiel an interesting picture of the church and Christ.

Ezekiel sees a small trickle of water coming out of from the right side of the wall of the Holy Place.

This water is representative of salvation which comes from Jesus and his word. The trickle of water goes underneath the outer wall of the Temple and runs down to the Jordan River.

As the water travels from the Temple it grows from just a trickle to a raging river. Ezekiel says it was only ankle deep, then knee deep, then waist deep, and then so deep and raging that he could not swim across it. This represents the tiny beginning of salvation for the world. At first only a small number of Jews were converted on Pentecost. But as salvation was preached, more Jews were converted. Then salvation was preached to Gentiles and many were converted.

The water which had flowed down through the Jordan River entered the Dead Sea. Nothing can live in the Dead Sea because of the salt content. But the waters of salvation bring life to the Dead Sea. Fishermen are shown pulling many out of the now living waters. This is a picture of Christians catching men through the teaching of the gospel. The Dead Sea is representative of Gentiles receiving salvation.

I am glad that Jesus was willing to die on the cross for our sins. I am glad that he has given us a way to salvation. Read your Bible. Learn what is necessary to obey God and receive salvation. And if any of this is hard to understand, ask an adult to help you.

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Ezekiel - Prophet Of Reality & Hope

HE WAS A PROPHET IN A STRANGE land. His name was Ezekiel, which means “God strengthens”—a suggestion of the keen need he would have in the challenging role assigned him by the Creator.

Ezekiel was a part of that group taken captive into Babylon during the reign of Jehoiachin (2 Kgs. 24:14-15). He was of a priestly lineage, possibly of Zadok heritage—the only priestly group not guilty of apostasy during the time of the monarchy; cf. Ezek. 44:15ff). Little is known of his personal life. He had his own house in the community of Telabib by the river Chebar (3:15, 24; 8:1). Ezekiel was married, though his wife died in the ninth year of the captivity (24:16-18)—a fact that became significant in his preaching.

It is generally believed that the expression “thirtieth year” (1:1) refers to his age at the time he commenced his prophetic ministry in Babylon—in the fifth year of Jehoiachin’s captivity (which began in 597 B.C.). This was more than a half-dozen years prior to the actual fall of Jerusalem. This would suggest that the prophet was born c. 622 B.C. His writing ministry thus spanned about twenty-two years (29:17).

The Mission Of The Prophet

The captivity in Babylon was a hard blow to the proud Israelite spirit. The Hebrews simply could not bring themselves to believe that this subjugation would last the full seventy years that Jeremiah had announced (cf. Jer. 25:12). Jewish false prophets had arisen, attempting to provide some relief from the

dreaded years ahead. They suggested, for instance, that the imprisonment would last only a couple of years, and then Judah and her sacred treasures would be restored to the homeland (cf. Jer. 28:3). It was Ezekiel’s challenging task to give his brethren a “reality check.” They would have to serve the full complement of seventy years!

The Divisions Of The Book

Ezekiel was commissioned to accomplish several tasks. (1) He would remove the false hope that many entertained regarding the prospect of an early return to Canaan. (2) In the earlier portion of his ministry, he would soberly warn of the coming destruction of the sacred city (Jerusalem) itself. (3) He would provide hope of an eventual restoration to the holy land. (4) Finally, he would proclaim that Israel’s *greatest* hope was in the coming of the Messiah and the building of a more glorious “temple.” Actually, the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. forms a sort of “watershed” point in the book of Ezekiel. Chapters 1-32 contain prophecies made before Jerusalem’s fall. Chapters 33-48 embody those predictions given following that catastrophe.

This book of forty-eight chapters rather easily divides into several sections. First, there is the material dealing with the prophet’s call to his important office (chapters 1-3). Second, there is a series of judgment prophecies directed against Judah—prior to the fall of Jerusalem (4-24). Third, there are prophetic declarations of judgment directed to several neighboring pagan peoples (25-32). Finally,

there is the glorious hope of the future—first in the restoration to the land; ultimately, though, in the coming of the Messianic kingdom (Chapters 33-48).

In the balance of this article, let us consider some of these matters.

The Prophet’s Initial Vision & The Majesty of Jehovah

God sometimes prepares a man for a particularly demanding role in a rather dramatic fashion. It was true in the case of Moses at Sinai, Isaiah in Judah, Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Paul on the Damascus road, and John on Patmos. It was no less the case with Ezekiel.

In a dramatic series of visions (1:1ff), the prophet saw four creatures emerge from a fiery cloud. They were similar to men but had four faces—like that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (v. 10). They had hands like men but feet like calves (7-8). Each creature had four wings, two of which covered the body (11), and two that stretched upward supporting “the likeness of a firmament” (22-23). Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and their movements were as flashes of lightning (13-14). Beneath these four creatures were four wheels, and each was fashioned as “a wheel within a wheel,” thus enabling them to move in four directions without turning. Moreover, the rims of the wheels were “full of eyes” (15-18). Above all of this was a throne upon which sat one who had the “appearance of a man,” and who was surrounded by a fiery and glorious brightness (26-28). Ezekiel was overpowered by the vision and fell on his face.

It is tragic that bizarre interpretations have been assigned to these symbols in modern times. A few years back, Erich von Däniken, in his book, *Chariots of the Gods*, contended that this description depicted flying saucers with aliens from outer space. This is the epitome of foolishness.

The four living creatures are plainly identified as heavenly cherubim (cf. 10:15, 20). Cherubim were an order of angels, employed by God in a number of important roles (see Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:22). Jewish tradition suggested that: "Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds; the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among the wild beasts, and greatness has been given them, yet they are stationed below the chariot of the Holy One" (Midrash Rabbah *Shemoth*, No. 23, on Ex. 15:1). This vision is doubtless designed to reflect Jehovah's *supremacy* and *sovereignty* over the entire creation.

The wheels, assembled at right angles to facilitate movement in all directions, most likely represented the fact that the Almighty is ever-present throughout the entire universe. He fills heaven and earth (Jer. 23:24). The multidirectional wheels, "full of eyes," suggest the constant watchfulness of the all-seeing Creator. Finally, the One sitting upon the throne was in "the likeness of the glory of Jehovah" (28). What an awesome scene to inaugurate the prophet into his noble ministry. What thrilling descriptives of the traits of the great I AM!

But let us notice some additional data in this amazing Old Testament book.

Prophecies Regarding Tyre

Prophecy is one of the powerful evidences of the divine nature of the Bible. Ezekiel's predictive declarations regarding the ancient city of Tyre are astounding indeed.

Tyre was an important seaport community on the Phoenician coast in the north-west region of Palestine. There actually were two "Tyres"—one on the mainland, and another called Tyre "in the midst of the sea" (Assyrian inscriptions; cf. Ezek. 27:25-26).

Tyre is first mentioned in the Bible in the book of Joshua, where it is described as a "fortified city" (19:29). The ancient historian Herodotus dated the founding of the city at more than 2,700 years before the birth of Christ. There are historical references to its

existence from the 14th century B.C.

Tyre was a wicked city. She was a terror to her neighbors (Ezek. 26:17). Joel condemned her for trafficking in slavery (3:6). There is a tablet in the British Museum which records the transaction of the sale of two Hebrew slaves to an Assyrian woman by a citizen of Tyre for \$135. Tyre's wealth was legendary (she piled up silver like dust - Zech. 9:3), and her awful pride was to be her undoing. Jehovah, through his prophets, announced the eventual doom of this seaside community (see Ezek. 26:2-29:18; Isa. 23:1-17; Jer. 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Joel 3:4-8; Amos 1:9-10; Zech. 9:2-4).

But the destruction of this area was accomplished in stages, and involved both mainland Tyre, and the island-city just off the coast. Some prophecies, therefore, refer to the former, and some to the latter (Newton, 159ff). This concept is most important in harmonizing the various OT texts which assert the fall of this region.

Tyre was besieged on several occasions in the ancient past, but its first really devastating blow was during the regime of the Babylonian ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. This heathen force came against the stubborn city and assaulted it for 13 years. Tyre was defeated in 572 B.C., which signaled the demise of Phoenician national life. A third of a century later, Tyre came under the control of the Persians—though she still prospered as a trading and export center, widely known for her commerce in cedar (cf. Ezra 3:7; Neh. 13:16).

In c. 333 B.C., the brilliant military commander, Alexander the Great, swept through the Persian territories. In Phoenicia, Sidon and various other communities quickly surrendered to the Greek ruler, but Tyre was determined to resist.

Because she was situated at this time on the island, about a half-mile off the coast, with a strong wall (150 high) on her mainland side (one stone of which has been found, measuring 17 feet long by 6½ feet thick), Tyre elected to resist the Greek assault. Alexander did not want a protracted military effort; accordingly, he took stones, timber, and soil—from old, mainland Tyre—and with these components constructed a causeway, a half-mile long and 200 feet wide, out to the island (the water was about 18 feet deep). This ambitious effort remarkably fulfilled one of Ezekiel's prophecies. "... [T]hey

shall lay your stones and your timber and your dust in the midst of the waters" (26:12).

For seven months the labor continued with considerable hardships along the way. Eventually, Alexander was able to roll huge war machines (battering rams and engines for propelling massive stones) across the isthmus to assault the east wall, while his navy (ships commandeered from Sidon) attacked the southern side of the city. A breach was made in the wall, and thousands of Greek soldiers poured into the city, slaughtering men, women and children. The vanquished city was torched (see Amos 1:10; Zech. 9:4), and some 2,000 citizens of Tyre were crucified on the nearby seashore. Alexander, who had hitherto been thought of as modest and gentle, as military men go, now assumed the mantle of a haughty and cruel despot, though he was but of the tender age of 22! As a commander, Alexander was both brilliant and brave; as a humanitarian, he had a withered soul (Abbott, Chapter VII).

And so Ezekiel's vivid previews of the destruction of Tyre were fulfilled dramatically, some two and one-half centuries after the "prophet of reality" declared them so.

This note also must be added. While Alexander served as the *instrument*, God Almighty was the *Cause* of Tyre's destruction. The ways of Providence are mysterious indeed. Make no mistake about it: the Lord will deal with those who rebel against him. And let us remember this: These things were written for *our* learning (Rom. 15:4).

"My Servant David"

Following the destruction of Jerusalem (586 B.C.), Ezekiel focused on a message of deliverance. In Chapter 34, he begins by delivering a blistering rebuke to certain irresponsible "shepherds" in Israel, who had abandoned their duty. Presently, though, he sweeps forward across the centuries with the glad tidings of a coming time when the Lord would raise up a *new* Shepherd, who is called "my servant David" (v. 23). This, of course, was not the former "David," who had been dead four centuries; rather, this was David's illustrious offspring, the Lord Jesus (Mt. 1:1; Rev. 22:16). There is a common figure of speech employed in the Bible known as metonymy. One form of this is when the "type" is used for the "antitype." So, in this case "David" stands for his famous descendant Christ (cf. 37:24; Hos. 3:5).

In the context of 34:20ff, the "servant David" is described in the following fashion. (a) He is the "one shepherd," i.e., the *exclusive leader* over his people (cf. Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20ff). (b) As "prince" he possesses *regal authority* (Acts 3:15; 5:31). (c) He would initiate the "*covenant of peace*" (cf. Mt. 26:28; Eph. 2:14ff). (d) His people shall dwell in *safety* (cf. Isa. 11:6ff; Jn. 10:28). (e) Showers of *blessings* will accompany their lives (Eph. 1:3). (f) They will be *fruitful* (Rom. 7:4; Col. 1:6). (g) They will be *delivered* from their enemies (2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 19:11ff).

In a further oracle, the prophet sees the kingdoms of Israel and Judah being reunited under the regime of "my servant David" (37:15ff). As in Jeremiah 33:14-26, this looks to the days of the Messiah's kingdom, when people of all ethnic backgrounds flow into the house of God (cf. Isa. 2:2-4). Samaritans and Jews became a part of the one spiritual family (Acts 8:4-17), and the same was true for Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:28-29). Within the body of Christ, all men can be united in their worship of the true God (cf. Jn. 4:19-26).

Before leaving this section we must make two comments relative to some very unusual ideas that have grown up around these passages. First, there is the *dispensational* notion that the "David" of these texts is the *literal* David, the son of Jesse, and that this text refers to his resurrection from the dead during the so-called "millennial reign" of Christ (Dyer, 1295). Such a view is absolutely false. The Messiah's reign takes place while David is "sleeping" in the grave with his ancestors (2 Sam. 7:12ff). Second, the odd notion, advocated by the Mormon Church, that the two "sticks" mentioned in Ezekiel 37 represent the Bible and the Book of Mormon, is sheer fantasy, having no support from that context or elsewhere.

Ezekiel's Temple

One of the beauty spots of Ezekiel's composition is the prophecy concerning a glorious temple of the future. The vision regarding this structure was received in the 25th year of the captivity (14 years after Jerusalem's fall), and the record of it is found in chapters 40-48. It was designed to give hope to a despondent people in a foreign land.

There are but two possible interpretative philosophies regarding this vision. (1) It refers to the building of a *literal* temple in

Israel's future; or, (2) The imagery is *symbolic*, denoting an ideal spiritual environment wherein "Jehovah is there" (cf. 48:35). Which of these is viable?

The premillennial theory subscribes to the first of these; i.e., the notion that Ezekiel's temple is a literal edifice to be constructed during the "millennial reign" of Christ, which supposedly commences just following his Second Coming. This view contends that the resurrected saints, together with the converted Jewish nation that returns to Palestine, will divide the holy land as described by Ezekiel. They will build the temple of the prophet's vision and institute a system of worship which conforms to the Mosaic system, with all its animal sacrifices. The sacrifices, it is argued, will be memorial, not atoning (Archer, 362ff).

This view is to be rejected without hesitation—though it is popularly entertained by a host of denominationalists. The premillennial theory of Ezekiel's temple is fallacious for the following reasons.

(1) Premillennialism itself is a false theory. It finds no substantial basis in the Scriptures. Of course Revelation 20:1ff is appealed to as the support text for the millennial scheme. But does it stand to reason that if Christ is to reign for 1,000 years in Palestine, after his return, such an event is mentioned *nowhere else in the entire Bible*—save in this solitary chapter, which, admittedly, is deeply symbolic? The fact is, had Jesus intended to establish an earthly regime, he easily could have done so during the days of his earthly sojourn. Following the miraculous feeding of the multitude with the loaves and fish (Jn. 6:1ff), the Hebrew people wanted to take the Lord, and by force, "make him [their] king" (6:15). The Savior rejected such advances. He plainly taught that his kingdom was not an "of this world" sort (Jn. 18:36).

(2) The premillennial view contradicts the very design of the Mosaic economy, as a *temporal* measure, and bestows upon it a significance that is antagonistic to the very spirit of Christianity. If there is a truth that rings manifestly clear in the New Testament, it is surely this. The Old Testament economy was never anything but a temporary phenomenon, the design of which was to *prepare the way for the coming of the Savior*. The law was but a "tutor," whose mission was to direct men to Jesus (Gal. 3:24). It was not the substance, but merely a "shadow of the things

to come" (Col. 2:17), and it was permanently abrogated at Calvary (so the force of the perfect tense verbal "hath taken" in verse 14. See Robertson, 494). Who can read the book of Hebrews, noting the contrast between the Mosaic system and the "better" New Testament regime, and still believe that God intends for his people to return to the "carnal" administration (cf. Heb. 9:10)?

(3) The premillennial concept of Ezekiel's temple is burdened with absurdity. For example, the temple's "outer court" measured 500 "reeds" on each side (42:15ff). Each "reed" was 6 Babylonian cubits (a minimum of 21 inches each), which would indicate that the temple court was about a mile in each direction—*larger than the entire city of Jerusalem* (see McClintock, 258).

Additionally, the temple is supposed to be located in the center of a sacred parcel of ground that measures 25,000 "reeds" on each side, which, according to the figure given in 40:5 (1 reed = 6 cubits), would make the holy area almost 50 miles in each direction. There is not enough room, in Palestine proper, to accommodate a region of that size—with Jerusalem at its center! Obviously, the narrative is highly figurative, much like numerical symbols in Revelation (cf. 21:10ff). The fact is, we have ample New Testament evidence that the "temple" motif of the Old Testament finds its realization in the *church* of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21-22).

Finally, it is apparent that the supernatural river that flows out of the temple, all the way to the sea of Arabah (Dead Sea), healing those waters of their saltiness, is a *symbol* (47:1ff). The millennialists, of course, contend that God will appropriately "redesign" Palestine to facilitate the descriptives of Ezekiel's vision! That is desperate.

The book of Ezekiel is a thrilling document. It is unfortunate that it has been so crassly abused. *WJ*

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Notes From The Margin Of My Bible

The prophet Ezekiel foretold the complete fall of the kingdom of Judah, which ultimately was realized in the reign of Zedekiah (586 B.C.). In one of these denouncements, Zedekiah is described as a "deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel" (21:25). Ezekiel speaks of "the time of the iniquity of the *end*," i.e., the time that runs out *because of iniquity*. Judah's days were numbered; the clock was ticking off warnings of coming judgment.

In the midst of that pronouncement, Ezekiel, speaking on behalf of God, charged: "Take off the mitre, and take off the crown" (21:26). Note the word "mitre" (diadem - KJV). It is the headdress of the *high priest*. In addition, the "crown" is removed; this was the *king's* adornment. The symbolism suggests that the time is coming when both the priesthood and the regal office of king would be taken from the nation. C.F. Keil wrote: "These words contain the sentence of death upon the theocracy, of which the Aaronic priesthood and the Davidic monarchy constituted the foundation." After Jerusalem's fall to Babylon, these offices were never restored to their original form.

The Lord "overturned" that system completely (note the triple emphasis on "overturn" in v. 27). Happily, though, it is announced that the time would arrive when the Lord would bestow these offices, i.e., priesthood and kingship, upon him "whose right it is." By the side of this passage write: *See Zechariah 6:12-13*. There, the prophecy is contained concerning the coming Branch (the Messiah), who is to rule, and who likewise will function as "a *priest* upon his *throne*." The two offices will be combined in one Person!

Both of these texts looked toward that day when Jesus, as our high priest, entered heaven and sat down to reign upon the sacred throne. His atoning sacrifice qualified the Lord as our priest (Heb. 10:19-21); his victory over death bestowed upon him regal authority over all powers (see Eph. 1:18ff). Enter these New Testament passages in the margin of your Bible at Ezekiel 21:25-27. WJ

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Ezekiel - Introduction

David B. Smith

I. Setting:

A. Historical background.

1. 745 BC - Tiglath-pileser III began a reconnaissance quest to the West.
2. 738 BC - TP III arrives at the gates of Samaria (Pekah is king).
 - a. Pekah goes to Syria and forms an alliance with Ephraim (Rezin is king).
 - b. Together, they then moved to form an alliance with Judah (Ahaz is king). Ahaz refuses involvement.
 - c. Syria and Ephraim turn on Judah out of anger and war against her. This was known as the Syro-Ephramatic War [cf. Isaiah 7].
 - d. Judah seeks to form an alliance with either Egypt or Assyria, and eventually forms and alliance with Assyria [this involved them swearing loyalty to Assyria].
3. 722 BC - Side tracked with their battle against Judah, Samaria and the Northern Kingdom fall to Assyrian captivity.
4. 711 BC - Sargon, new Assyrian ruler, turns on Judah, and devastates the countries of Judah and Philistia.
5. 705 BC - Sennacherib, current Assyrian leader, seeks to secure his provinces. Judah turns to Egypt for alliance.
6. Judah's condition:
 - a. Prospered under the righteous influence of men like Isaiah.
 - b. Judah sees revival and spiritual uplifting under the leadership of Hezekiah.
 - c. Hezekiah's good was undone by his evil son Manasseh. Manasseh's son Amon followed in his father's footsteps and did evil.

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- d. Amon's son, Josiah, brought renewal to Judah. In 621 BC, a copy of the Mosaic law was discovered in the Temple (where it was supposed to be - but note the spiritual condition of the people), and upon reading it, was moved to fully obey it. Though Josiah did much with his reforms, he did not bring about full restoration.
7. Assyria's reign as the world superpower was slowly diminishing. They had dominated for nearly 250 years, and the Babylonian government was on the rise.
 8. 612 BC - The Babylonian empire defeats the Assyrian world power, crushing Nineveh.
 9. 609 BC - Pharaoh Neco (Egypt) marches to aid the Assyrian remnant. Josiah meets the Egyptian force at Megiddo with the intent of preventing them from joining with Assyrian forces. Josiah is killed in the battle.
 10. 605 BC - Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacks the combined forces at Carchemish on the Euphrates and demolishes Assyria - Babylon is the new world power.
 11. 605 BC - Babylonians push their conquest to the South and invade Judah, taking many prisoners [to include Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël and Azariah].
 12. 601 BC - While the ongoing battle between Egypt and Babylon is at a stalemate, Jehoiakim rebels.
 13. 598 BC - December 9, Jehoiakim dies during the month that the Babylonians began to attack Judah.
 14. 597 BC - Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, surrenders to Babylon - 10,000 people are taken captive [Ezekiel is among this group].

B. Current setting:

1. Due to the message of the false prophets, Zedekiah was persuaded to rebel against Babylon.
2. 588 BC - Babylon begins to lay siege on Jerusalem, having already destroyed the fortified cities of the Judean hill country.
3. 586 BC - In the fall of 586, Jerusalem is destroyed by Babylon.
4. This was a period of great turmoil and unrest. It was a time of gross immorality among God's people, who had fallen from grace. It was during this chaotic period that Ezekiel prophesied.
 - a. They were a rebellious people, 2:4; 3:7.

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- b. They refuse to obey God, 5:6,7.
- c. Defiled the sanctuary, 5:11.
- d. Rampant idolatry, 6:13.
- e. Summation - 9:9.

II. The Man, Ezekiel:

A. His name.

- 1. The Hebrew yechezqe'l means: "God strengthens," or "God is strong."
- 2. Ezekiel is not mentioned by name by any other inspired writer.
- 3. His name appears only twice in the Book attributed to him.
- 4. His name, like all of the other prophets, would reflect his message:
 - a. Ezekiel was to preach to people labeled as stiff-hearted and of a hard forehead.
 - b. 2:5; 3:7,8

B. His family and function.

- 1. He was the son of Buzi - nothing known about him.
- 2. He was a priest/prophet - but a priest first.
 - a. Book seems to suggest that he was of the line of Zadok [40:46; 43:19; 44:15,16].
 - b. I Kings 2:35 - the Zadok line came to prominence during the reformation of Josiah.
 - c. This line was considered part of Jerusalem's aristocracy - seems to account for the fact that he was carried off to Babylon in 597.
- 3. Ezekiel had a wife, but in the ninth year of his captivity, just four years after beginning his prophetic ministry - she dies [cf. chap. 24].

C. His background/influences.

- 1. He would have been greatly influenced by the reforms of Josiah. Ezekiel's childhood (up to age 13) coincided with the push to reform Judah to spiritual fidelity.

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2. Ezekiel's writings seem to portray, rather obviously, his deep impressment with the services of the Temple.
 3. His life coincided with the life of the fiery Jeremiah; surely this would influence the devout man of God.
 4. His deportation to Babylon, no doubt, had a great impact/influence on him/his writings.
 - a. Settled in Tel-Abib (3:15), near the river Chebar (1:3).
 - b. He knew that Babylonian captivity would last only seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11).

D. His prophetic ministry.

1. Most likely, the reference to the 30th year in 1:1 is a reference to his age.
2. Continued to prophesy until the age of 52.
 - a. Began in 593 BC.
 - b. Last recorded prophecy - April 28, 573 (40:1). Plus or minus a year, he likely prophesied for 22 years.
3. A Jewish legend states that Ezekiel was executed by a Jewish prince because of his message. According to the legend he was buried in the tomb of Shem and Arphaxad. This is pure speculation, though interesting.
4. He was contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel (14:14,20; 28:3).

III. The Book:

A. Authorship.

1. The book claims to be by Ezekiel.
 - a. 1:1; 8:1; 33:1; 40:1-4
 - b. There is no reason to discredit what the Bible affirms, except to try and discredit the Bible itself.
2. Six factors for Ezekielian authorship:
 - a. Balanced structure and logical arrangement.



- b. Autobiographical nature.
- c. Clear chronological sequence.
- d. Internal consistency of the message within the structural balance.
- e. Uniformity of language and style.
- f. Consistency of Ezekiel's personality throughout the book.

B. Canonicity.

1. The Book of Ezekiel was one of five antilegomena - books spoken against - in the Hebrew canon.
2. There were certain Jewish rabbis that were convinced Ezekiel did not harmonize with the law of Moses.
3. However, the Jew's failure to understand the message of Ezekiel does not disprove its canonicity. The book is truly canonical.
4. Externally, its canonicity has been proven:
 - a. Ezekiel was included in the LXX, which came about ca. 280 BC.
 - b. Josephus numbered this among those books counted as the canon of the Scripture.
 - c. It was listed in the Talmud as belonging to the canon.
 - d. Melito (AD 172) acknowledged that it was canonical.
 - e. Origen (AD 250) also acknowledged its canonicity.

C. Textual Criticism.

1. "Many of the oracles in chapters 1-24 are relevant to Jerusalem and Judah rather than to exiles."
 - a. Who is to say that what he stated was not appropriate to the situation in Babylonia?
 - b. Some of his oracles may have been taken back to Jerusalem by travelers.
2. "In chapter 16 Ezekiel is told to make known to Jerusalem her abominations."

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- a. No small number of prophets have prophesied to lands that they were not in, had never seen or had ever visited.
 - b. In now way does this necessitate Ezekiel being in Jerusalem.
 3. "Prophecies are directed to "the house of Israel," the "rebellious house" which might refer to the inhabitants of Palestine."
 - a. The exiles were considered the house of Israel.
 - b. This is truly paltry!
 4. "Ezekiel betrays an intimate acquaintance with what is going on in the Temple in chpts. 8-11."
 - a. Ezekiel is a priest, of course he would know!
 - b. Divine revelation does not necessitate the individual to understand anything - many a prophet have made pronouncements without understanding what they were saying.
 5. "Chapter 11 demands a supernatural power on the part of Ezekiel, if he were living in Babylonia. How could he have known that Pelatiah had died immediately in response to the oracle that had just been given."
 - a. It may very well be that such was a part of the vision?
 - b. Again, divine revelation, divine revelation and divine revelation!!!

IV. Hermeneutics/Ezekiel:

A. Literary Characteristics.

1. Sentences are often long and involved.
2. Many times he overwhelms the audience with the facts, at other times the language is full of imagery.
3. Some times he halts and staggers, some times he plunges forward.
4. It is marked by several stylistic characteristics:
 - a. It is saturated with the supernatural.
 - b. It is marked by highly imaginative discourse.

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- c. Extensive use of early Scriptures - especially the Pentateuch.
- d. His dictation was cultured.
- e. It is full of repetition and deliberate redundancy.

B. Interpretation.

1. Ezekiel is a mixture of:

- a. Prosaic and poetic
- b. Historical and prophetic
- c. Literal and symbolic
- d. Realistic and idealistic

**** Each type must be interpreted according to the principles of hermeneutics that govern each.**

2. Apocalyptic Language (Ezekiel/Revelation):

- a. The four living creatures (1:5; Rev. 4:6).
- b. The rainbow around the throne (1:28; Rev. 4:3).
- c. The eating of the scroll (3:1,3; Rev. 10:10).
- d. The sealing of the servants of God (9:4; Rev. 7:3).
- e. The burning of the city (10:2; Rev 8:5).
- f. Gog of the land of Magog (32:2,3; Rev. 20:8).
- g. et.al.

3. Parables

- a. The vine tree - chapter 15.
- b. The unfaithful wife - chapter 16.
- c. The parable of the two eagles - chapter 17.

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4. Symbolic Acts:

- a. 4:1-3, 4-6, 9-12
- b. 5:1-4
- c. 12:3-6, 17-20
- d. 21:19-20
- e. 24:16-17
- f. 37:16-17
- g. see chart*

5. Various forms of prophetic oracles.

- a. See chart for various oracles.
- b. Oracles usually conclude with one of three formulas:
 - (1) "Oracle of Jehovah" - standard oracle conclusion.
 - (2) "I, Jehovah have spoken" - affirmation formula
 - (3) "And ye/they shall know that I am Jehovah" - recognition formula

V. Doctrines of Ezekiel:

A. God.

- 1. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit of God.
- 2. The doctrine of the coming Messiah.
 - a. His eternal rule.
 - b. His eternal kingdom.
- 3. The holiness of God.
- 4. The sovereignty of God.
- 5. The omnipotence of God.

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6. The omniscience of God.
7. God's presence as the arbiter and controller of human history.
8. God's eternal purpose of achieving redemption for mankind.
9. The certainty of God's ultimate victory over every obstacle.

B. Man.

1. Individual responsibility.
2. The original innocence of man, and the separation that results from sin.
3. Individual accountability and free moral agency.

C. Salvation.

1. Every man's eternal destiny hinges upon his character as evidenced at the end of his life.
2. Salvation is results from God's grace, not from human merit - but, is impossible unless man submits to the doctrine of God.
3. The doctrine of holiness as a prerequisite to salvation.
4. Disobedience can forfeit salvation.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

TABLE A.

Historical Events Connected with Ezekiel's Prophecies.

B.C.	
701	Deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib.
698	Manasseh
641	Josiah
630	Scythian invasion
627	Jeremiah begins his work.
621	Discovery of the Book of the Law.
608	Josiah slain at Megiddo. Jehoshaz; succeeded by Jehoiakim (Eliakim).
605	Defeat of Necho at Carchemish.
596	Surrender of Jehoiachin; First Deportation; Zedekiah.
587	Siege of Jerusalem commenced (January).
586	Pharaoh's attempted assistance (April. Fall of Jerusalem (July); Second Deportation. Nebuchadnezzar attacks Tyre.
581	Third Deportation.
568	Nebuchadnezzar invades Egypt.
562	Death of Nebuchadnezzar.
538	Cyrus takes Babylon.
537	First Return of Jews under Zerubbabel. Restoration of Altar.
520	Rebuilding of Temple commenced.
515	Temple completed.
444	Ezra reads the law at Jerusalem.

TABLE B.

Dates of Ezekiel's Prophecies.

Part I. Chapters I-XXIV

B. C.		
July	592. i. 2.	The Prophet's call. First Cycle of Threats.
Aug.	591. viii. 1.	Jerusalem's Sin. Second Cycle of Threats.
Aug.	590. x. 1.	Third Cycle of Threats.
Jan.	587. xxiv. 1.	The End at Hand!

Part II. Chapters XXV-XLVIII.

Division I Chapters XXV-XXXII. The Fall of The Nations.

....	xxv. 1.	Oracles against Ammon, &c., and Tyre.
Jan.	586 xxix. 1.	Oracle against Egypt.
Mar.	586 xxx. 20.	Oracle against Egypt.
May	586 xxxi. 1.	Oracle against Egypt.

Division 2. Chapters XXXIII-XXXIX. The Purification of Israel.

Jan.	585 xxxiii. 21	Individual Responsibility. The Restoration and Final Deliverance.
Mar.	585 xxvi. 1	Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Tyre.
Feb.	584 xxxii. 1	Dirge over Egypt.
Feb.	584 xxxii. 17.	Dirge over Egypt.]

TABLE B. (Cont'd)

Division 3. Chapters XL-XLVIII. The Ordering of The Nation.

Sept.	572. xl. 1.	The Temple, the Temple Service, and the Land.
[Mar.	570. xxix. 17	Last Prophecy on Tyre.]

INTRODUCTION

1. For H. L. Ellison, "The prophet speaks primarily to the man of his own time, and his message springs out of the circumstances in which he lives."
 - 1) Ezekiel is best understood as one seeks to understand what his generation should have.
 - a. New Testament applications are not to be overlooked.

THE STRUCTURE OF EZEKIEL

- I. Ezekiel's Call: Ch. 1. - 3:21
 - A. Vision of God: Ch. 1
 - B. Prophet's Commissioning: Ch. 2 - 3:21
- II. Prophecies of Doom: Ch. 3:22 - 24:27
 - A. Opening Messages of Judgment: Ch. 3:22 - 7:27
 - B. Sin of Jerusalem: Ch. 8 - 19
 - C. Foulness of Jerusalem's Sin: Ch. 20 - 23
 - D. The Midnight Hours: Ch. 24
- III. Prophecies Against the Nations: Ch. 25 - 32
 - A. Judah's Neighbors: Ch. 25
 - B. Tyre: Ch. 26 - 28
 - C. Egypt: Ch. 29 - 32
- IV. Prophecies of Restoration: Ch. 33 - 39
 - A. The Prophet's Function: Ch. 33
 - B. Ruler's Past and Future: Ch. 34
 - C. Enemies of Israel: Ch. 35
 - D. The New Covenant: Ch. 36
 - E. National Resurrection: Ch. 37
 - F. The Last Enemies: Ch. 38 - 39

V. The People of God: Ch. 40 - 48

A. The Temple: Ch. 40 - 43

B. The Worship: Ch. 44 - 46

C. The Rivers: Ch. 47:1-12

D. The Land and City: Ch. 47:13 - 48:35

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE

608 B.C. - Battle of Hegiddo; death of Josiah

605 B.C. - Battle of Carchemish; Babylon Supreme

597 B.C. - Jehoiachin deported to Babylon

592 B.C. - Ezekiel's call

588 B.C. - Zedekiah's revolt

586 B.C. - The Fall of Jerusalem

571 B.C. - Last dated prophecy of Ezekiel (Ch. 29:17-20)

562 B.C. - Death of Nebuchadnezzar

560 B.C. - Release of Jehoiachin (II Kgs. 25:27-30)

538 B.C. - Capture of Babylon by Cyrus

Behold the Abominations That My People Are Doing!

*A Study of Ezekiel's vision concerning the final Babylonian invasion to
Jerusalem (586 B.C.).*

Course: Jeremiah-Ezekiel

Instructor: Roger Shepherd

Student: Kevin E. Key

Behold the abominations that My People are doing
Instructor: Roger Shepherd
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INTRODUCTION

In a study of the Bible, it is more than interesting to see the many ways God has conveyed His message through and to His people. For instance, when God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, instructing him to go to Egypt and lead His people to the land of Canaan, the “land flowing with milk and honey.” Another would be the vision to Paul in the night, “a man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us” (Acts 16:9), concerning his call to Macedonia. The number of ways are just too numerous to list each one. However, there is one I wish to address in this lesson. This message comes from the book of Ezekiel 8:1-11:25, which deals with Ezekiel’s vision from God concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel’s prophecy is filled with visions. There is no other book of the Old Testament that contains so many vivid pictures of what God caused a person to see. It was certainly not necessary for a prophet to see visions to receive God’s revelation. Visions were, however, one way for God to convey His truth through a prophet to His people (6:27).

When we are first introduced to Ezekiel, he is carried off to Babylon with about ten thousand other Jews; they are captives in the second siege of Jerusalem, in 597. At the time of this vision, and his calling, Ezekiel is still a captive in Babylon. “Most scholars agree that he would have been about thirty years of age when he was given his inaugural vision in calling him to be a prophet for God” (4:8). The vision under consideration comes just fourteen months from the time in which he had received his

calling. It is my stated purpose to examine this vision, its purpose, and the application we may make today for God's people.

CONSIDERING THE TEMPLE

To gain a better understanding of this vision, I believe it is important to understand some things about the temple which Solomon built during his reign. His reign began after the death of his father, David. Shortly after his inauguration, Solomon desired to follow through with his father's desires to erect a temple for God, a place for God to dwell among His people. While David was not able to build this temple, for he was always at war which hindered him, he did make provisions that allowed for Solomon to proceed with his fathers plans.

In trying to grasp an understanding of the purpose of the temple built by Solomon, it is important, I believe, to consider the value it. The temple was constructed only with the finest materials available at that time. The timbers, (cedar and Cyprus logs) which were used were shipped in from Lebanon at Solomon's request. The foundation of the temple consisted of costly stones (hewn stones). These stones were mined and worked from the various quarries of the area. There was an estimated 200,000 men who worked at gathering of stones, laboring on the temple, and supervising the work. At the completion of the temple it was overlaid with pure gold, both within and without. It is estimated that in monetary terms it would have a value of around "one trillion dollars," if it were built today. One might ask why God would allow for such an astronomical amount of time and money to be spent on a physical building. The answer to that I believe is found in I Kings 6:11-13.

Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, and keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you which I spoke to your father David. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people.

The temple, which Solomon built, served as a place where God put His name. This represented God's presence among, and care for, His people. His promise was to continue to dwell with His people as long as they followed according to His ways (there is modern application made in the closing portion of this paper).

As one studies the history of Israel, you will find that they were not always successful in accomplishing God's commands for them. After Solomon's death, the nation soon became divided. This led to what was known as Northern Israel and Southern Judea. This division brought about a further distance between God and His people. Finally, after many years of being warned, in 722 B.C. God used the Assyrian army to destroy and capture Northern Israel, taking them back to Assyria for captivity. Judah, failing to learn from Israel's mistakes, fell to Babylon, by the hand of God, in 606 B.C. Then again in 597 B.C., Babylon invaded Jerusalem which led to Ezekiel and about ten thousand other Jews being carried off into captivity. This point in history brings us to Babylon with Ezekiel's vision; its meaning and purpose.

THE ABOMINATIONS OF JERUSALEM

When we begin to read in chapter eight of Ezekiel, we learn that Ezekiel is in the sixth year of his captivity in Babylon. We are told that he was sitting in his house. It has been suggested that "the fact that he was sitting in his house may indicate that he was in a contemplative pose awaiting additional word from God" (3:113). However, the Scripture does not explicitly state this thought. Sitting with Ezekiel was the elders of the Judean

exile. Douglas Stuart stated, "Apparently, these leaders had retained their rank and prestige in the exile community" (5:137). One might wonder why these elders were sitting with Ezekiel. It is suggested that "perhaps they had come specifically to enquire about the state of affairs in the homeland" (5:137). "Or possibly they had just come to see if he would receive a second vision" (3:113). Whatever the case, it appears "that Ezekiel is having difficulty in giving these elders of his the terrible message that has been laid on him" (4:85). McGuiggan goes on to state,

This is a respectable young man and these are the leaders of his people. And, after all, they are bowing down to idols—why can't he give them a message of consolation? (We'll learn later that these elders have their idols inside their hearts—chapter 14:1ff.) As they sit together in Ezekiel's house the hand of the Lord comes upon him and he receives the message he must give to these leaders (4:85).

In this vision, Ezekiel will receive both information which was needed for God's people and the importance of sharing this warning from God with these elders. In striving to bring Ezekiel to understand the severity of their situation, God takes Ezekiel back to Jerusalem in this "vision of God" (Ezk.8:3). While Ezekiel was only taken to Jerusalem in vision, he was made to see things as if he were actually present bodily.

I believe that it is important to point out that God did not merely bring Ezekiel to Jerusalem, but he was brought to the northern gate which led to the inner court of the temple. Throughout this vision "the northerly direction will be cited several times" (3:114). The north, "it was one of the most conspicuous spots about the temple" (5:139). "Just as the abominations were issuing from the temple in a northward direction, so God would soon bring the destruction of the city and the temple from the north by means of the fierce Babylonians" (3:114). The temple and the area around it are of great significance in this vision.

Outside the court gate which looked toward the north, was an image. This image was referred to as the “image of jealousy” (Ezk.8:5). We are not told exactly what the image was or its likeness. However, the identity of the image is not as important as God’s attitude toward it. McGuiggin stated, it was referred to as such “because it provoked the Lord to jealousy (not the fickle emotion which humans feel but the response of a holy God against those and that which prostitute His holy things and holy people.” (4:86). God had stated specifically at Mount Sinai that He was a jealous God Who would not allow nor tolerate His holy people bowing down to or serving “other gods” which were man made (Ex.20:3-5).

God’s righteous jealousy was predictably provoked. It was not enough for these apostate people to build their groves and shrines to pagan deities throughout the land—they had to defile the very entrance to God’s temple (and the temple itself, as will shortly be revealed) in their ultimate blasphemy (3:115)!

Then, in contrast to this image of jealousy, Ezekiel now sees the “glory of the God of Israel” at the entrance to the inner court. Here we might consider where Ezekiel said that God met him. God’s normal presence was in the holies of Holy. However, here Ezekiel says that God met him at the door of the temple. One might ask, what is significant about that? This tells us that the “image of jealousy” and all the practices surrounding it have caused God to “go far away from His sanctuary” (Ezk.8:6).

God has nothing to do with sin. Sin causes separation between God and those who commit such (Is.59:1-2). “He could not abide with the abominations that were being practiced in His house. The true and living God was on His way out of His own temple, being driven out as it were by His own beloved people who preferred lifeless pagan gods over Him. He will soon forsake them utterly to their own devices and destruction” (3:115).

To further emphasis the wickedness of these leaders and His people, God then takes Ezekiel to the door of the court. It is here that He revealed to Ezekiel a hole in the wall. When Ezekiel dug away at the hole he found a secret door. McGuiggin referred to this door as “a door for hypocrites” (4:87). These people could not worship in public but in secret. They hid behind this “wall” to shield themselves from the public view. In this room he saw drawings on the walls (these were either carved or painted) of the various images and objects which these people were worshipping. What he found behind these doors were called “greater abominations.” I believe the words of the apostle Paul fit here. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things” (Rom.1:22-23). While Paul spoke of what took place among the Gentiles, it is interesting to note that the same thing had happened here.

Besides this, there was more; there were “seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel and Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan” (Ezk.8:11). “That they were ‘elders’ would indicate men of leadership, men who were respected” (3:117). It is thought that the number seventy may represent the whole nation, meaning that all are corrupt. However, it is later revealed that there were a few who grieved over such abominations (Ezk.9:4).

The point God is stressing is that these were offering up incense unto heathen objects of worship in the same court where God’s alter was. Jesus said, “no one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt.6:24). These leaders had not only sinned themselves, but because of their influence, they lead the whole nation away from God.

Furthermore, they not only hid their worship from the public, but thought they had concealed it from God. "The Lord does not see us, the Lord had forsaken the land" (Ezk.8:12). Their reasoning was "how could He see or care since He had forsaken them and given them into the hands of their enemies" (3:118). They failed to realize the omnipresence of God. They failed to see that it was not God who turned from them, but their turning from God, which does lead to His departure. In their failure to see this, they turned to other gods for protection. By their turning to these other gods, it "actually amounted to blaming God for their abominable practices" (3:118).

Ezekiel is then brought to the north gate of the temple itself where he sees women weeping. It would have been nice if they were weeping over the condition of their husbands and all Judah, but instead they are weeping over what is presumed to be their favorite pagan deity, Tammuz. "Tammuz was the Babylonian Adonis, consort of the Syrian goddess Venus. The worship of Tammaz was celebrated in wild orgies of immoral indulgence. It was said that the image of Tammuz wept, and then worshippers wept with it. They bewailed the death of Tammuz and rejoiced in its returning to life again" (2:823). Douglas Stuart wrote, "Tammaz death was observed every fall when the crops died and trees shed their leaves, and whose coming back to life was celebrated every spring with the sprouting of nature" (6:90).

Now Ezekiel is shown what is called still a "greater abomination." He is now at the actual door of the holy place, between the burnt offerings and the temple porch. Here he sees twenty-five men worshiping the sun with their backs to the temple. Most scholars suggested that these twenty-five men may represent all the priesthood. It is explained as follows: "David divided the priesthood into twenty-four courses (I Chron.24:1-18), thus

each of these courses could have been represented by one of these men, and the twenty-fifth may have been the high priest” (3:119). Rather than these men following the sacred rites of the worship of God, they were engaged in worshipping the sun.

Dub McClish observed, “the mercy seat (where the Lord made His presence known to Israel [Lev.16:2]) was in the rear of the temple, which was the extreme west end of the edifice (Exod.26:22). This meant that in turning to the east to worship the sun, these priests had turned their backs to Jehovah, not only symbolically, but physically” (3:119)! Many scholars feel that the possible reason this is referred to as a “greater abomination” is its location in the temple and the involvement of the high priest.

In all of this, God has been building His case before the eyes of Ezekiel that he might not only see the wickedness these people were doing, but also the necessity of judgment by God. In the conclusion of this warning God told Ezekiel that these people had “turned again” to provoke His anger. He stated, “indeed they have put the branch to their nose” (Ezk.8:17). As to the exact meaning of this phrase we cannot be sure. However, it was not unknown to Ezekiel and those of his generation. McClish expressed that “it was most likely an idolatrous gesture of some sort that further signified utter defiance, pride, and irreverence toward the true and living God. They had no shame” (3:120)! Stuart said that “it should probably be rendered something like ‘are a stench to My nose’ referring to how offensive these actions are to the Lord” (6:90).

God then tells Ezekiel that because of all the abominations these people commit which are such a desecration of His holy place and His holy covenant, He will bring swift, unbridled punishment to this city and its people.

GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM

God will now act by execution of the threat He has made upon these people. In this portion of the vision it is interesting to see that those who normally would have been in charge of protecting the city will now be the ones God uses to carry out this destruction. There are seven mentioned.

Six come armed with weapons, the seventh among them is described as “clothed in linen, and had a writer’s inkhorn at his side” (Ezk.9:2). These two descriptions are very significant in understanding this man’s role and God’s justice. First, he is to be “God’s messenger of mercy amidst the carnage that will soon be visited on the wicked city” (3:121). Secondly, the inkhorn is used to mark the foreheads of those who weep and are ashamed of the corruption found in these people. Their lives will be spared in this invasion from Babylon.

What is important to remember about the marking process is its relationship to the doctrine of individual responsibility so strongly asserted in this book (cf. chap.3). While God may judge nations, cities, cultures, etc. as a group, He is not an arbitrary, unfair judge. Those who have turned against the evils of their own people will be spared by God’s judgment, even if from an earthly point of view they may be caught up in the fate of the corporate entity to which they may belong (6:93).

The six were commanded to begin their work at the temple, “perhaps because it had become the fountain of all the corruption” (3:122). After they had finished their work at the temple, they were to move throughout the city killing all those who were not marked for safety. “They have gone too far. The fault is theirs. They have deliberately insulted His majesty, spurned His love, despised His law, mocked His holiness, killed His prophets, burned their children in idolatrous worship—no more! Now wasn’t the time for clemency but for justice. They had succeeded in wearing out God’s patience” (4:88).

While God indeed loves, He too works justice. He will not tolerate sin and the defiling of His name. These Jews were guilty of both.

THE LORD DEPARTS FROM THE TEMPLE

We need to recall God's words to Solomon when he constructed this temple for Him. God had promised Solomon and His people that He would dwell among them, in the holies of Holy (in the temple) as long as His people "walked in His status, executed His judgments, and kept all of His commands" (I Kings 6:13). These people, whom Ezekiel is seeing in this vision, had turned from following God. Therefore, God will exit from the temple; He will no longer occupy a presence (a special care for them) among these people. Because of this, they will no longer enjoy the security/protection from invading nations.

Ezekiel chapter ten and verse fifteen tells us that the cherubim "mounted up" (this is the means by which the Lord departed) and began to move. As the cherubim throne-chariot begins to move, so does the "glory of the Lord" (Ezk.10:18).

He moved from the threshold (where He had been since 9:3), from whence He had issued all of His judgments against Jerusalem, to take up His throne above the cherubim. They bore Him away from the ungrateful and unworthy nation on their heavenly wheels and wings. '(He) ascended that stately chariot, as the judge, when he comes off the bench, goes into his coach and is gone.' He would not return till Judah had learned her lesson in the harsh school of crushing defeat, suffering, and captivity and had built Him a new house uncorrupted by the apostasy and idolatry of the old (3:127).

Once God has departed the temple it is only a few short years (586) until Nebuchadnezzar is allowed to come in and totally destroy the wall surrounding the city, the temple (taking the gold back to Babylon), the city itself, and carrying the remaining Jews (except for a few older Jews who fled to Egypt) off to Babylon to serve as slaves.

They would remain there for a period of about 70 years (from the time of the first exile of Judah). Yet in all of this, God, once again, assures Ezekiel that those who seek His ways will be gathered back to the land of promise.

Therefore say, Thus says the Lord God: Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone. Therefore say, Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you are scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel (Ezk.11:16-17).

At the conclusion of the vision Ezekiel is carried into Chaldea where he shares the vision with those who were in captivity. As we know from history, Judah failed to heed the warnings from God and suffered greatly at the hands of Babylon for their disobedience. Then as promised, seventy years later a remnant returned to Jerusalem to begin anew.

Modern Day Application

I remember various moments of my childhood days in Indiana, especially the times I spent with my siblings. My sister was older than me, and I know there were times I would look to her as an example. Then as I grew, my brother turned to me as his example. I know that there were many times that he was able to glean some valuable lessons from my mistakes on how to avoid getting into trouble.

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Rom.15:4). The things which are written in the Old Testament do serve as examples to us today. One might ask what lesson is there in Ezekiel’s vision for us. Allow me to try and make modern application from this vision.

I would like for you to recall that Ezekiel's vision centered on the temple and the various abominations that God's people were doing in connection to the temple. When we come to the New Testament, we are introduced to the idea that Christians are now referred as the temple of God. What is the significance of this, and its possible relationship to the temple message under consideration in Ezekiel?

What does God mean when He refers to us as the "temple of God" (I Cor.3:16-17; 6:19-20)? To understand this, I believe we must look back to the things we viewed earlier concerning Solomon's temple he constructed for the Lord. First, consider all that was involved in the planning stages of the temple (these were discussed in the section "*Considering the Temple*"). Great preparation was made for the temple Solomon constructed during his days. Equally so, God's plans for mankind's salvation began before the foundations of the world (I Pet.1:20-21). It was only in the "fullness of time that God brought forth His Son" to be the Savior of the world.

Secondly, recall the value of the temple built by Solomon. As was stated earlier ("*Considering the temple*"), the estimated cost of the temple today would be around one trillion dollars. Plus, when we consider what was involved in the dedication of the temple; Solomon offered twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep (I Kings 8:63). I could not even start to image spending neither that kind of money nor the sight of all that blood in one place at the day of dedication. That is beyond my imagination. But that is what it took to purchase and then dedicate the temple of God.

When we stop to consider that we are the "temple of God," it is interesting to me that neither the one trillion dollars nor one drop of that blood can even start to compare to

the price (I Cor.6:19) and blood (Eph.1:7) that was offered for each of us. We are the place where God chooses to put His name today.

Thirdly, in order for God to remain present among them, Israel had to keep these abominations out of their lives and away from the temple area. Today, we too are to keep sin from our lives (the practice of sin Co.3:7). “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (I Cor.3:16-17). God desires to be a part of our lives. However, if we live a life of sin, we hinder God from being present and active within our lives.

Finally, when we come to understand God’s feelings about sin and His people, we too can see the importance of following Him as He desires. This helps us to understand that when people do not adhere to His commands that there is indeed justice in the judgment they will receive in the Day of Judgment.

Conclusion

There are many great lessons we can and must strive to learn as we study the Bible. God’s plan for man has been revealed piece by piece from the beginning of time until its complete revelation in the New Testament. Therefore, there is great value in studying both the Old and New Testaments so that we may grasp the entirety of God’s message to all mankind.

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Ezekiel - Prophet Of Reality & Hope

HE WAS A PROPHET IN A STRANGE land. His name was Ezekiel, which means "God strengthens"—a suggestion of the keen need he would have in the challenging role assigned him by the Creator.

Ezekiel was a part of that group taken captive into Babylon during the reign of Jehoiachin (2 Kgs. 24:14-15). He was of a priestly lineage, possibly of Zadok heritage—the only priestly group not guilty of apostasy during the time of the monarchy; cf. Ezek. 44:15ff). Little is known of his personal life. He had his own house in the community of Telabib by the river Chebar (3:15, 24; 8:1). Ezekiel was married, though his wife died in the ninth year of the captivity (24:16-18)—a fact that became significant in his preaching.

It is generally believed that the expression "thirtieth year" (1:1) refers to his age at the time he commenced his prophetic ministry in Babylon—in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity (which began in 597 B.C.). This was more than a half-dozen years prior to the actual fall of Jerusalem. This would suggest that the prophet was born c. 622 B.C. His writing ministry thus spanned about twenty-two years (29:17).

The Mission Of The Prophet

The captivity in Babylon was a hard blow to the proud Israelite spirit. The Hebrews simply could not bring themselves to believe that this subjugation would last the full seventy years that Jeremiah had announced (cf. 25:12). Jewish false prophets had arisen, attempting to provide some relief from the

dreaded years ahead. They suggested, for instance, that the imprisonment would last only a couple of years, and then Judah and her sacred treasures would be restored to the homeland (cf. Jer. 28:3). It was Ezekiel's challenging task to give his brethren a "reality check." They would have to serve the full compliment of seventy years!

The Divisions Of The Book

Ezekiel was commissioned to accomplish several tasks. (1) He would remove the false hope that many entertained regarding the prospect of an early return to Canaan. (2) In the earlier portion of his ministry, he would soberly warn of the coming destruction of the sacred city (Jerusalem) itself. (3) He would provide hope of an eventual restoration to the holy land. (4) Finally, he would proclaim that Israel's *greatest* hope was in the coming of the Messiah and the building of a more glorious "temple." Actually, the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. forms a sort of "watershed" point in the book of Ezekiel. Chapters 1-32 contain prophecies made before Jerusalem's fall. Chapters 33-48 embody those predictions given following that catastrophe.

This book of forty-eight chapters rather easily divides into several sections. First, there is the material dealing with the prophet's call to his important office (chapters 1-3). Second, there is a series of judgment prophecies directed against Judah—prior to the fall of Jerusalem (4-24). Third, there are prophetic declarations of judgment directed to several neighboring pagan peoples (25-32). Finally,

there is the glorious hope of the future—first in the restoration to the land; ultimately, though, in the coming of the Messianic kingdom (Chapters 33-48).

In the balance of this article, let us consider some of these matters.

The Prophet's Initial Vision & The Majesty of Jehovah

God sometimes prepares a man for a particularly demanding role in a rather dramatic fashion. It was true in the case of Moses at Sinai, Isaiah in Judah, Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Paul on the Damascus road, and John on Patmos. It was no less the case with Ezekiel.

In a dramatic series of visions (1:1ff), the prophet saw four creatures emerge from a fiery cloud. They were similar to men but had four faces—like that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (v. 10). They had hands like men but feet like calves (7-8). Each creature had four wings, two of which covered the body (11), and two that stretched upward supporting "the likeness of a firmament" (22-23). Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and their movements were as flashes of lightning (13-14). Beneath these four creatures were four wheels, and each was fashioned as "a wheel within a wheel," thus enabling them to move in four directions without turning. Moreover, the rims of the wheels were "full of eyes" (15-18). Above all of this was a throne upon which sat one who had the "appearance of a man," and who was surrounded by a fiery and glorious brightness (26-28). Ezekiel was overpowered by the vision and fell on his face.

In the context of 34:20ff, the "servant David" is described in the following fashion. (a) He is the "one shepherd," i.e., the *exclusive leader* over his people (cf. Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20ff). (b) As "prince" he possesses *regal authority* (Acts 3:15; 5:31). (c) He would initiate the "*covenant of peace*" (cf. Mt. 26:28; Eph. 2:14ff). (d) His people shall dwell in *safety* (cf. Isa. 11:6ff; Jn. 10:28). (e) Showers of *blessings* will accompany their lives (Eph. 1:3). (f) They will be *fruitful* (Rom. 7:4; Col. 1:6). (g) They will be *delivered* from their enemies (2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 19:11ff).

In a further oracle, the prophet sees the kingdoms of Israel and Judah being reunited under the regime of "my servant David" (37:15ff). As in Jeremiah 33:14-26, this looks to the days of the Messiah's kingdom, when people of all ethnic backgrounds flow into the house of God (cf. Isa. 2:2-4). Samaritans and Jews became a part of the one spiritual family (Acts 8:4-17), and the same was true for Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:28-29). Within the body of Christ, all men can be united in their worship of the true God (cf. Jn. 4:19-26).

Before leaving this section we must make two comments relative to some very unusual ideas that have grown up around these passages. First, there is the *dispensational* notion that the "David" of these texts is the *literal* David, the son of Jesse, and that this text refers to his resurrection from the dead during the so-called "millennial reign" of Christ (Dyer, 1295). Such a view is absolutely false. The Messiah's reign takes place while David is "sleeping" in the grave with his ancestors (2 Sam. 7:12ff). Second, the odd notion, advocated by the Mormon Church, that the two "sticks" mentioned in Ezekiel 37 represent the Bible and the Book of Mormon, is sheer fantasy, having no support from that context or elsewhere.

Ezekiel's Temple

One of the beauty spots of Ezekiel's composition is the prophecy concerning a glorious temple of the future. The vision regarding this structure was received in the 25th year of the captivity (14 years after Jerusalem's fall), and the record of it is found in chapters 40-48. It was designed to give hope to a despondent people in a foreign land.

There are but two possible interpretative philosophies regarding this vision. (1) It refers to the building of a *literal* temple in

Israel's future; or, (2) The imagery is *symbolic*, denoting an ideal spiritual environment wherein "Jehovah is there" (cf. 48:35). Which of these is viable?

The premillennial theory subscribes to the first of these; i.e., the notion that Ezekiel's temple is a literal edifice to be constructed during the "millennial reign" of Christ, which supposedly commences just following his Second Coming. This view contends that the resurrected saints, together with the converted Jewish nation that returns to Palestine, will divide the holy land as described by Ezekiel. They will build the temple of the prophet's vision and institute a system of worship which conforms to the Mosaic system, with all its animal sacrifices. The sacrifices, it is argued, will be memorial, not atoning (Archer, 362ff).

This view is to be rejected without hesitation—though it is popularly entertained by a host of denominationalists. The premillennial theory of Ezekiel's temple is fallacious for the following reasons.

(1) Premillennialism itself is a false theory. It finds no substantial basis in the Scriptures. Of course Revelation 20:1ff is appealed to as the support text for the millennial scheme. But does it stand to reason that if Christ is to reign for 1,000 years in Palestine, after his return, such an event is mentioned *nowhere else in the entire Bible*—save in this solitary chapter, which, admittedly, is deeply symbolic? The fact is, had Jesus intended to establish an *earthly* regime, he easily could have done so during the days of his earthly sojourn. Following the miraculous feeding of the multitude with the loaves and fish (Jn. 6:1ff), the Hebrew people wanted to take the Lord, and by force, "make him [their] king" (6:15). The Savior rejected such advances. He plainly taught that his kingdom was not an "of this world" sort (Jn. 18:36).

(2) The premillennial view contradicts the very design of the Mosaic economy, as a *temporal* measure, and bestows upon it a significance that is antagonistic to the very spirit of Christianity. If there is a truth that rings manifestly clear in the New Testament, it is surely this. The Old Testament economy was never anything but a temporary phenomenon, the design of which was to *prepare the way for the coming of the Savior*. The law was but a "tutor," whose mission was to direct men to Jesus (Gal. 3:24). It was not the substance, but merely a "shadow of the things

to come" (Col. 2:17), and it was permanently abrogated at Calvary (so the force of the perfect tense verbal "hath taken" in verse 14. See Robertson, 494). Who can read the book of Hebrews, noting the contrast between the Mosaic system and the "better" New Testament regime, and still believe that God intends for his people to return to the "carnal" administration (cf. Heb. 9:10)?

(3) The premillennial concept of Ezekiel's temple is burdened with absurdity. For example, the temple's "outer court" measured 500 "reeds" on each side (42:15ff). Each "reed" was 6 Babylonian cubits (a minimum of 21 inches each), which would indicate that the temple court was about a mile in each direction—*larger than the entire city of Jerusalem* (see McClintock, 258).

Additionally, the temple is supposed to be located in the center of a sacred parcel of ground that measures 25,000 "reeds" on each side, which, according to the figure given in 40:5 (1 reed = 6 cubits), would make the holy area almost 50 miles in each direction. There is not enough room, in Palestine proper, to accommodate a region of that size—with Jerusalem at its center! Obviously, the narrative is highly figurative, much like numerical symbols in Revelation (cf. 21:10ff). The fact is, we have ample New Testament evidence that the "temple" motif of the Old Testament finds its realization in the *church* of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21-22).

Finally, it is apparent that the supernatural river that flows out of the temple, all the way to the sea of Arabah (Dead Sea), healing those waters of their saltiness, is a *symbol* (47:1ff). The millennialists, of course, contend that God will appropriately "redesign" Palestine to facilitate the descriptives of Ezekiel's vision! That is desperate.

The book of Ezekiel is a thrilling document. It is unfortunate that it has been so crassly abused. WJ

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A SYNOPSIS

EZEKIEL: the man and his message.

H. L. Ellison

Prepared by: Ron Edlin

For: The East Tennessee School of
Preaching and Missions.

This synopsis has been prepared due to the fact that this fine book is no longer in print. No intention is involved to take credit for H. R. Ellison's research and work.

October, 1974

The Prophet of Exile

Key Verse: Chapter 3:16-19

INTRODUCTION: God has always raised up qualified men for His work in times of need. Ezekiel was the man God used to save Israel through the Babylonian Captivity.

I. The Times:

A. In Jerusalem 598-587 B.C.

1. Following the tragic death of King Josiah in 612, His son, Jehoahaz, ruled but 3 months before being imprisoned by the Egyptians. They place Jehoiakim on the throne as a puppet.
2. In 606 Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and sent Jehoiakim to Babylon in chains.
3. ^(Coniah, Jeckoniah) Jehoiachin then reigned only 3 months before he and 10,000 of the Jews were taken to Babylon (Ezekiel was in this group).
4. Zedekiah was left as (agent of Babylon) king.
5. Strong forces in the country clamored for an alliance with Egypt ... which ultimately led to the complete destruction of the nation.
6. Jeremiah was God's prophet to the people. He was very unpopular.

B. In Babylon:

1. Two groups of exiles were there - 606 -, 597
10,000 exiles living in concentration camp circumstances.
2. They lived by the river Chebar - a canal connecting the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Babylon was the most beautiful city in the world.
3. False prophets were filling the people with false hopes of an early return to Jerusalem.
4. The people had apostatized from God in: a. idolatry, b. profaning worship of Him, c. immorality, d. injustice, e. rebellion.

5. *The exiles were completely demoralized, feeling God had failed to save them; perhaps because He was weak, whimsical, or so angry that He would not save.*
b. In captivity, the synagogue and the scribes were born, to stay with Hebrews to this day.

II. The Man:

A. Ezekiel - name means "God will strengthen".

B. A Levite Priest and son of a priest.

C. The son of Buzi.

D. He was taken to Babylon at age 25 and began his work at age 30.

E. As a young man in Jerusalem, he would have lived under the influence of Jeremiah.

II. The Man (Cont'd)

- F. He came to Babylon in 597 with other of the aristocracy and Jehoiachin - the second group of captives.
- G. He lived at Telabib, ^{"hill of corn"} by the canal river Chebar (the Grand Canal).
- H. He was married but lost his wife in the midst of his ministry - 24:15-18.
- I. His call to serve as prophet was a spectacular vision of God and a personal commission to him.
- J. He was a strict moralist, when such ^{was} not popular.
- K. His preaching was blunt and uncompromising.
- L. He served his people some 22 years.
- M. He stands as one of the greatest of all the Hebrew prophets and leaders.

III. The Message of Ezekiel:

- A. His burden was to show Israel they would not soon return to Jerusalem - *Many of the captives did not accept fact that God would destroy the nation. They refused to unpack in Babylon. Ezekiel's task was to convince them. Jerusalem would fall & govt be dissolved, so they should make homes in Babylon and serve God. Restoration would come when God was ready.*
- B. He showed them why - they had apostatized from God and had refused to repent!
- C. Key phrase, "That they may know that I am Jehovah".
- D. Although God's glory had left the temple - 10:1 ; 11:23 - yet it would one day return again, 43:1-5.
- E. Ezekiel demonstrates the goodness and the severity of God, Rom. 11:22.

F. *the literary style - Ezek. writes mainly in prose, narrative style, while most other prophets wrote in poetic style.*

IV. Hist. Bkgs. - 2 Ki. 28:28ff.; 2 Chron. 35:30ff. cover period of Ezekiel's life.

OUTLINE OF EZEKIEL

I. The Prophet's call and commission, 1:1-3:27.

A. Superscription: Ezekiel's abode and date, 1:1-3.

B. Ezekiel's call to the Prophetic Office, 1:4-28.

- 1. His vision of ~~stormy~~ wind with fire, 1:4.
- 2. The four Cherubim, 1:5-14.
- 3. The wheels, 1:15-21
- 4. The throne of the glory of Jehovah, 1:22-28a.

C. The Prophet's Commission, 2:1-3:27.

- 1. The charge to speak God's Word, 2:1-7.
- 2. Ezekiel commanded to "eat God's book", to ingest its message, 2:8-3:3.
- 3. God Promises to equip him for his chore, 3:4-11.
- 4. He is taken in the spirit to the camp of the captives in Babylon, 3:12-15.
- 5. His duties as a watchman innumerable, 3:16-21.
- 6. A second vision of God with a special commission to speak God's message to rebellious Judah, 3:22-27.

II. Prophecies Against Judah Before the Fall of Jerusalem, 4:1-24:27.

A. Messages of the fifth year (593-2 B.C.), 4:1-7:27.

1. Four Acted Prophecies, 4:1-5:17.

- a. A picture of the siege of Jerusalem, 4:1-3.
- b. He lays on his left and then right side symbolically bearing the iniquity of Israel and Judah, 4:4-8.
- c. The coming famine acted out, 4:9-17.
- d. Slaughter of the seige described, 5:1-4.
- e. An exposition of the signs, 5:5-17.

2. Apostrophe to the land of Israel, announcing the impending disaster, 6:1-14.

3. Israel's Inescapable Doom Declared, 7:1-27.

- a. Four short oracles declaring doom, 7:1-13.
- b. The machinery of destruction is already at work, 7:14-27.

B. Messages of the sixth year (592-1 B.C.), 8:1-19:14.

1. He views the idolatry taking place in the temple in Jerusalem in a vision, 8:1-18.

2. Slaughter of Jerusalem, but preservation of the righteous remnant foreseen, 9:1-11.

3. He sees coals of fire cast over Jerusalem - it will be burned, 10:1-8.

4. The Glory of God departs from the temple, 10:9-22.

5. Wicked rulers in Jerusalem denounced but a sure promise of restoration given, 11:1-25.

6. Prophecy of Zedekiah's exile and captivity acted out by Ezekiel, 12:1-16.

7. Another prophesy of the consternation of the Hebrews acted out, 12:17-20.

8. Message against false prophets and prophetesses who said, "Peace when there was no peace", 12:21-13:23.

9. Judgement decreed upon the idolators in Israel, but the remnant will be spared, 14:1-23.

10. Jerusalem declared to be as worthless as the dead wood in the vineyard, so it will be destroyed, 15:1-8.

11. Despite God's tender-loving care, Jerusalem had repaid him by playing the harlot in idolatry; therefore, they must be punished, 16:1-63.

12. With the allegory of two eagles and a vine, he predicts God's judgment upon Judah for seeking Egypt's help against Babylon, 17:1-29.

13. God is just, only the soul that sinneth shall die, 18:1-32.

14. With a parable of a lioness and her whelps he predicts the captivity of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim and laments their fall, 19:1-14.

C. Messages of the seventh year (591-0 B.C.), 20:1-23:49.

1. He rehearses their continued idolatries, yet in spite of this, He had spared them for His own name's sake, 20:1-44.

2. Prophecies of fire and sword against Jerusalem and Judah, 20:45-21:32.

3. The catalogue of Jerusalem's sins and her punishments, 22:1-31.

4. Samaria, Oholah and Jerusalem, Oholibah, pictured as two vile harlots to be punished, 23:1-49.

D. Message of the ninth year (589-8 B.C.), 24:1-27. No mourning for Ezekiel's wife or for Jehovah's fallen Israel.

III. Prophecies Against Heathen Nations, 25:1-32:32.

A. Against Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia (nearest neighbors) 25:1-17.

B. Against Tyre and Sidon, the Mart of the Nations, 26:1-28:26 (587-6 B.C.)

1. Doom of Tyre, 26:1-21.

2. Lament over Tyre, 27:1-36.

3. Downfall of the King of Tyre, 28:1-19.

4. Doom of Sidon, 28:20-23.

5. Restoration of Israel, 28:24-26.

C. Prophecies Against Egypt, 29:1-32:32.

1. Doom of Egypt, 29:1-16. (Jan. 587 7 months before the fall of Jerusalem) (Pharaoh Hophrah).

2. Egypt's Humiliation, 29:17-32:16.

3. Egypt in Sheol, 32:17-32 (585 B.C.).

IV. Prophecies of Israel's Reconstruction and Restoration, 33:1-48:35.
(Delivered after Jerusalem's Fall).

A. Preparation for the Return of the Glory of the Lord, 33:1-29:29.

1. Responsibilities of the prophet and the people, 33:1-33.

a. Prophets are God's watchmen, warning His people, 33:1-9.

b. Every man is responsible only for his sins, 33:10-20.

c. News of Jerusalem's destruction, 33:21-33 (August, 586).

2. God's People will be Delivered from False Shepherds, Jehovah himself will be Shepherd, 34:1-31.

CHAPTER I

THE MAN AND HIS TIMES

INTRODUCTION:

1. Two reasons the majority do not study or appreciate the book:
 - 1) Ezekiel himself would be considered abnormal during any time and in any society.
 - 2) The prophecies cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of their historical background.
 - a. Haggai and Zechariah (Ch. 1 - 8) also carefully date their prophecies.
 - b. A date requires further study for the full understanding.

I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

A. Josiah becomes king of Judah - 639 B.C.

1. Under Assyria's rule
 - a. New hope of freedom as Ashurbanipal's reign closed.
 - b. Assyria's power crumbles after death of Ashurbanipal - 633 B.C.
2. Height of Josiah's reformation - 621 B.C.
 - a. Political as well as spiritual - II Chron. 34:6-7.
 - b. A failure spiritually - Jer. 5; after 621 B.C.
 - c. A failure politically - II Kngs. 23:29; Josiah's death 609 B.C.
3. Jehoiakim becomes a vassal to Egypt - II Kngs. 23:33-35.
 - a. Lasted till Egypt's defeat at Carehemish by Nebuchadnezzar - 605 B.C.

B. Jehoiakim dreamed of greatness - Jer. 22:13-19.

1. Rebelled against Babylon - II Kngs. 24:1.
 - a. Jehoiachin surrenders - II Kings 24:6, 8-12.

C. Babylon took control of Jerusalem - 597 B.C.

1. Jehoiachin not removed from office formally.

- a. Ezekiel 1:2 - dates by his captivity.
- b. II Kngs. 25:27:30 - Was deported to Babylon.
- c. Zedekiah left as king - regent - II Kngs. 24:17.
- 2. All influential people deported - II Kngs. 24:14 ff.
 - a. Aim: Leave the nation with no leadership.
- D. Optimism prevailed among the captives.
 - 1. Hananiah prophesying in Jerusalem - Jer. 28.
 - 2. "Prophets" speaking falsely of speedy return in Babylon - Jer. 29:4 - 9.
 - 3. Optimism destroyed by:
 - a. Jeremiah's letter - Jer. 29.
 - b. Hananiah's death - Jer. 28:15 - 17.
 - c. Ahab's and Zedekiah's death - Jer. 29:21 - 23.

II. Ezekiel's Background

- A. From a priestly family - Ch. 1:3
 - 1. Reasons it is concluded he was of the influential circle:
 - a. Respect shown by Judah's exiled elders - 8:1; 14:1; 20:1.
 - b. Included in those taken to Babylon.
- B. His dating is throughout Jehoiachin's captivity: Beginning of 597 B.C.
 - 1. One date of difficulty - "30th year" - 1:1.
 - a. Most probable explanation - Ezekiel's 30th year.
 - b. Temple service probably began at thirty - Num. 4:3.

Note: Num. 8:24; I Chron. 23:3; 24 - "The younger ages were probably for initiatory and more menial service."
 - c. Ezekiel probably never functioned in the Temple service.

- d. His accuracy in every detail indicates preparation had been made for the priestly office.

III. Ezekiel and Symbolism

- A. Defined: "a building, a dress, action, form of words, or whatever is involved have a deeper spiritual meaning than a merely literal interpretation would suggest."
 - 1. His priestly training had made him familiar with every aspect of this method of teaching spiritual truth.
- B. Vital to remember this difficult feature to understanding the book.
 - 1. Our duty is to penetrate to the truths contained in his use of symbolism.

IV. The Exiles in Babylonia

- A. Not to consider them as normal prisoners of war.
 - 1. Prisoners of war were slaves whose fate depended on the captor.
 - 2. The 10,000 plus, were taken into exile to prevent rebellion.
- B. The exiles condition:
 - 1. Some were in the company of the ruling class; "guests of Nebuchadnezzar in or near Babylon."
 - 2. Craftsmen and smiths (II Kngs. 24:14) were held as a mobile labor force.
 - 3. The remainder were settled in centres throughout Babylonia with some freedom.
 - a. Concluded from Jer. 29:4 - 20 and Ezekiel's portrayal of exile life.
 - b. No effort was made to destroy their national identity - Reference to Judah's "elders" in Ezekiel and restoration of exiles in Ezra.

V. To Whom Did Ezekiel Prophesy?

- A. Ezekiel's activity was confined to the exiles with no evidence he ever moved from Tel-Abib.
 - 1. No evidence the prophecies were sent to Jerusalem in letter form.

- a. Time speaks against it - Ezek. 33:21; II Kngs. 25:3, Six months for news of Jerusalem's destruction to reach exiles; Ezra 7:9; 8:31, Time needed to reach Jerusalem under favorable conditions.
2. If Ezekiel sent prophecies to Jerusalem, it is strange he did not encourage Jeremiah nor did Jeremiah refer to any prophecies from the exiles.
3. If Ezekiel sent prophecies to Jerusalem, alterations in the order of the text.
 - a. But Ezekiel was prophesying of Jerusalem.
 - b. Jeremiah 24 shows the real sinners were left in Jerusalem and the exiles were those with whom God would make a renewed people.
 - c. To prepare for the future; the exiles had to realize they were in Babylonia because of God's grace.

CHAPTER II

THE VISION OF GOD

- I. The Throne of God: Ezek. 1:4 - 28
 - A. The summer of 592 B.C.
 1. Transported in a trance - Ezek. 3:12, 14.
 - a. To banks of the river Chebar - a main irrigation canal in Babylonia.
 2. Tel-Abib, his home in area of canal - Ezek. 3:15.
 - B. Saw the chariot-throne of Jehovah as a storm cloud from the north - Ezek. 1:4.
 1. God's sovereignty displayed in His control of nature and history.
 - a. Ezekiel is to declare the deportation and the coming destruction of Jerusalem are acts of God.
 - C. Why coming from the north?
 1. Jerusalem, almost due west and the vision of Jehovah's glory leaving the Temple had not been given.

2. God willing to go the way exiles had traveled. The exiles shame not hidden from God.
3. Babylonian belief their gods lived in north: Isa. 14:13.
 - a. No heavenly or earthly power hindered God's victorious way.

D. Throne bearers are the cherubim: 1:5 - 14.

1. Mentioned often with little said of their functions.
 - a. Symbolic description: Difference seen in Rev. 4.
 - b. Ezek. 41:18 - 19: Recorded as having two faces.
2. Their appearance and number imply "they are peculiarly the heavenly representatives of the earth."
 - a. Earth is the "crown of God's creation."
 - b. Fitting God's throne be borne by beings "linked with His creative and redemptive power."
3. Four representatives of the earth under Jehovah's authority, 1:5
 - a. Four corners, four quarters, four winds (37:9) - the earth in its completeness.
4. Their human form predominated - Ezek. 1:5, 7.
 - a. Little meaning to be connected with their feet.
 - b. Seems we are to conclude they had two hands, 1:8.
 - c. Four faces - represent all living beings.
5. Wings touch at tips, 1:9 - form a protective square around throne: Compare Rev. 4:6.
 - a. Rabbinic comment, "Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds, the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among wild beasts; and all of them have received dominion, and greatness has been given them, yet they are stationed below the chariot of the Holy One."
6. Symbolic meaning of v. 12, the ability to go straight forward in any direction not so clear as to how to interpret.
7. Spirit of God the life power of the cherubim - 1:13.

E. The Chariot-Throne: 1:15-21

1. Has wheels; Dan. 7:9 - because it is a chariot throne.
 - a. God's rule is everywhere.
 - b. Not necessary for movement.
 - c. Their vitality and intelligence (eyes) are because they are a part of God's throne.
 - d. Perfect unity exists: 1:19.
 - e. Go in any direction without turning: 1:17.

F. Platform Supporting the Throne: 1:22 - 25.

1. Above cherubim
 - a. As ice or crystal - Rev. 4:6.
2. Portrays the glory of heaven.

G. The Vision of God: 1:26 - 28.

1. More symbolic than proceeding.
 - a. Color reminds of the blue vault of heaven.
 - b. Glory of the covenant rainbow surrounds.
2. Fire and glory depicts the dimly seen figure.
 - a. Since God made man in His image, when He appears to man in symbolic form, He Himself grants/condescends to appear in "a likeness as the appearance of a man."

II. The Vision of God: Ezek. 1:26 - 2:2.

A. Effect of vision on Ezekiel: 1:28.

1. Robbed of all strength.
 - a. Compare: Dan. 8:17; 10:9 ff; Rev. 1:17.
 - b. Needed Divine power and energy: 2:2.
 - 1) Spirit of God referred to impersonally.

B. Point to stress: A Real Vision of God Despite its Symbolic Nature.

1. To seek to understand as an end of itself is to misunderstand its purpose.
2. To a man standing on his feet and strengthened by the Spirit that God gives His prophetic message.
 - a. A willing and rational service.

CHAPTER III

GOD'S SERVANT

I. Ezekiel's Commissioning: Ezek. 2:3 - 3:14

A. Addressed as "Son of man".

1. Not to be equated with "The Son of Man" Jesus used of Himself.
 - a. A self-identification of Messiah: Dan. 7:13.
 - b. The claim to be the one true and representative man.
2. Means no more than "man."
 - a. His insignificance stressed compared to glory he has seen.

B. In a Trance-Vision; time measured by God as His servant is instructed.

1. Ezekiel must adapt himself and assimilate the material before the message continues.
 - a. The form of his activity to come at a later time: 3:15 - 21.

C. Those to whom he is to prophesy: 2:3.

1. Both Judah and Israel.

- a. "Judah" seldom used in Ezekiel; where it is, refers to distinctive Southern kingdom or the one tribe.
- b. Ezek. 8:17 is one exception.
- c. Distinctions determined by context.

2. Reasons for predominant usage of Israel:

- a. More natural for one of the tribe of Levi.
- b. Message intended for Southern and Northern kingdom exiles: The entire nation.
- D. A symbolic picture of the message's source and inspiration: 2:8 - 3:3.
 - 1. Union of Divine and human in prophetic message illustrated.
 - a. Message from God with no room for human additions.
 - b. Message to become a living part of the prophet.
 - 2. Effect of assimilating message: 3:3, 14.
 - a. Very sweet when word first received.
 - b. As assimilated, God's attitude shared towards the sinful people. Compare: Jer. 6:11.
 - 3. Only "lamentations, mourning and woe" is contained.
 - a. A re-commissioning before he began to build up and comfort: Ezek. 33:1 - 20.
- E. It is clear that God's message will deliberately and without excuse be refused although some may accept: 3:11.
 - 1. Message spoken primarily to exiles with whom he lived: 3:11 - 15.
- F. "The spirit lifted me up...": 3:12; 8:3.
 - 1. Two to be interpreted identically.
 - a. Trance is justifiable usage for 1:3 - 3:14.
- II. Ezekiel the Watchman: Ezek. 3:15 - 21.
 - A. The application of God's words to human sin and need causes astonishment as Ezekiel views his surroundings with "new eyes."
 - 1. Seven days for adjustment: 3:15 (Symbolism present).
 - a. Time of mourning for dead; Gen. 50:10; Num. 19:11; Job 2:13.
 - b. Time for priest's consecration: Lev. 8:33.
 - B. He is to be especially a watchman.

1. Not entirely a new name for a prophet: Isa. 52:8; Jer. 6:17.
 2. Included in his re-commissioning: Ezek. 33:1 - 9.
 3. A feature not the prominent aspect of prophets before him.
- C. An important aspect of a priest's work was oversight.
1. To see the Law was known and kept: Lev. 10:11; Deut. 24:8; Mal. 2:7; II Chron. 17:7 - 9.
 2. Ezekiel is God's spokesman to people in general, to the individual in particular.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST PROPHECIES

- I. A Prophet Restrained: Ezek. 3:22 - 27
- A. Almost immediately after being commissioned, Ezekiel is instructed to shut himself up at home: Not able to leave or speak.
1. "They shall lay bands upon thee:" 3:25 - Extreme and bitter opposition.
 - a. Probably because of action described in Jer. 29:21 - 23.
- B. Another Trance-Vision: 3:22
1. Restraint matched with restraint: 3:25; 4:8.
 - a. Unwillingness to hear with silence: 3:26.
 - b. To be able to speak from time to time: 3:27.
- C. Major problem of interpretation: Are certain statements literal or used as metaphors and symbols?
1. Ezekiel's dumbness: 3:26; 24:27; 29:21; 33:22.
 2. In other passages, speaks normally: 14:4; 17:2, 12; 19:1 - 2; 20:3.
 - a. No mention God suspended dumbness: 3:27.
 3. Passages where it is suggested he is expected to speak: 8:1; 14:1 - 4; 20:1.

4. "It seems probable that Ezekiel's dumbness was no actual inability to speak, but a refusal to speak on ordinary matters with those who had refused to hear him as God's messenger, combined with a relative rarity in Divine revelations." ,p. 32.

II. Preaching By Symbols: Ezek. 4:1 - 5:4.

A. Goes back to early days of prophecy, both true and false.

1. I Sam. 15:27 f; I Kngs. 11:29 ff; 22:11; II Kngs. 13:14 - 19.
 - a. Purpose of: By doing some action similar to prophesy, helping forward the fulfillment and certainty of prophesy.
 - b. Symbolic actions made words more impressive - Note: Jer. 19:1 - 13; 20:1.
2. Isaiah and Jeremiah used symbolic actions when the people did not hearken to the spoken word: Isa. 20:2 f; Jer. 19:1 f, 10 f.

B. Excitement in Tel-Abib as news Ezekiel was acting in a way to symbolize Jerusalem's disaster.

1. Crowds would grow as he laid on floor with his model.
 - a. Until ready for the Divine explanation: 5:5 - 7:27.

C. Between 1:2 and 8:1 is a time of 1 year, 2 months. A period of 413 days, if a leap year 442 days.

1. If ordinary year, the figures of 4.5 f looked at as concurrent.
 - a. If leap year assumed, allow for seven days of 3:16, unspecified time of 3:22 and 390 days for Israel and 40 days for Judah barely allows time to be consecutive.
2. In view of 4:9, safe in assuming the time to be concurrent.
 - a. If this is true, literal time is removed.

D. The tile, 4:1 is a freshly made Babylonian clay brick.

1. May have been separate clay models for siege works.
 - a. "thou shalt lay siege against it:" 4:3 may indicate a gradual moving of models nearer together.

E. Ezekiel lying on his side. 4:4

1. Left side is chosen for Israel, right side for Judah.
2. Immobility and cords: 4:8; the conditions of exile.
3. "To bear the iniquity of:" 4:4, 6; symbolically bearing punishment.

F. Why 390 days and 40 days?

1. Most likely of several explanations: 40 was chosen by God as being less than total of Babylonian lordship and remission of wilderness wanderings.
2. Subtract 40 from 390 for last period shared by both kingdoms together; 350 is round numbers indicates from Jeroboam to Ezekiel's time.
3. Ellison does not maintain this view dogmatically but as one which fits the symbolic setting.
4. Note page 34 for two other views.

G. Ezekiel's Diet: 4:9 - 17.

1. About 12 oz. of "bread" and 1 3/4 pints of water a picture of siege conditions.
2. Nature of food points to the impurity of the exile; 4:13.
 - a. Instead of normal fuel, "dung" to be used: Deut. 23:12 ff.
 - b. Mixture of grains - ate what they could get.
 - c. Ceremonially defiled - Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:9 ff.

H. Shaving of His Head. 5:1 - 4.

1. Forbidden by the Law: Lev. 19:27 f; 21:5; Deut. 14:1.
 - a. Universal sign of mourning: Isa. 3:24; 22:12; Mic. 1:16; Jer. 16:6.
2. Use of sword as razor - no doubt for reason to mourn.
3. Weighing and Dividing hair stresses God's supervision of the doom: Compare: Jer. 15:2; Ezek. 5:12; 6:12.

I. Ezekiel's actions after the 390 days are past: 5:2 ff.

1. The message of Jeremiah 24:8 ff and Ezekiel is that those left in Jerusalem were the sinners. Note: 5:4.

- a. The few who escaped and joined the exiles would only be a curse to them.

- J. These symbolic prophecies to prepare the exiles for the coming tragedy.

1. Given about four years before Zedekiah's revolt.

III. The Coming Doom of Jerusalem: Ezek. 5:5 - 7:27.

- A. Seems from the giving of the symbolic prophecies, he is treated with respect: 8:1; 14:1; 20:1.

1. Prophecy of 5:5-17 a commentary on symbolic actions.

- a. Judgment coming for past wickedness.

- b. Good had been removed: Jer. 24.

- B. In 38:12 Palestine called "middle of the earth;" Note 5:5.

1. Jerusalem isolated from surrounding life.

- a. God set Israel where His will could be worked out.

- b. Israel had not remained loyal to God but influenced by the heathen.

2. Note 5:7 and Jer. 2:10 f.

- a. Israel's neighbors at least remained loyal to their dishonorable religions.

- C. The Prophecies of Chapter 6.

1. Religious sin the cause of Jerusalem's destruction.

- a. Jehovah had been worshipped as a nature god-idolatry, called rightfully Baal worship.

2. Addressed to "mountains of Israel" - the location of the semi-pagan sanctuaries.

3. Ezek. 6:9 should read - "when I have broken their whorish heart."

4. Ezek. 6:11 - Portrays deep emotion and rejoicing (25:6).

- a. He is to rejoice that the evil is to be done away with.

- 5. Ezek. 6:14 - render "Riblah;" scribal error of D for R
 - a. From south to north: Compare Num. 34:11.
- D. A dirge over the land: Ezek. 7:1 - 27.
 - 1. 7:19: the helpless of their idols of silver and gold.
- IV. "They Shall Know That I Am The Lord."
 - A. Most characteristic expression of Ezekiel.
 - 1. Appears 54 times and another 18 times with expansion.
 - a. Connected with the judgments of God.
 - 2. Not stressing the existence of Jehovah but His actions.
 - a. To the Israelite, Jehovah meant "God as He had made Himself known in redemption and covenant."
 - B. In Ezekiel's day, men felt sure of "what Jehovah would and would not do, could and could not do."
 - 1. Ezekiel stressed the God who would bring Jerusalem's destruction and a renewed people was the same who delivered them from Egypt.

CHAPTER V

ICHABOD - 'THE GLORY IS DEPARTED': I Sam. 4:21 f

- I. Jehovah Abandons His Temple: Ezek. 8:1 - 11:25
 - A. The elders of Judah sitting before Ezekiel a year and two months after his first vision.
 - 1. The respectful position of scholars to learn from Ezekiel.
 - B. Ezekiel's visit to Jerusalem in the spirit.
 - 1. Indicated by what he saw: actions hardly physically possible: 8:8.
 - a. Definite statements: 8:3; 11:24.
 - 2. Much of vision to be taken symbolically.
 - 3. Likely he spoke during the vision: Compare 11:25.

- C. Should read "the appearance of a man:" 8:2.
 - 1. Same vision of God as in 1:27.
 - D. In a major detail Solomon's temple differed from Zerubbabel's and Herod's.
 - 1. The temple had one court which really belonged to it.
 - 2. Incidents seen transpired partly in the temple proper and partly in the adjacent great court.
 - a. Actions in great court were not authorized by temple authority.
 - D. Glory of God had already left holy of holies: 8:4.
- II. The Idolatry of Jerusalem: Ezek. 8:5 - 18.
- A. Usual assumption is Ezekiel's vision represents the actual and public idolatry during times of Zedekiah in Jerusalem.
 - 1. Reversion of religions forms done away by Josiah's reformation would have resulted in public apostasy.
 - a. Not indicated: II Kngs. 23:31 - 25:26; II Chron. 36:1-21.
 - b. Idolatrous references in Jeremiah 2 before Josiah's reformation.
 - c. Idolatry referred to in Jer. 7:16-18 a tendency back to the ways under Hanneh. Note: Jer. 44:15-23; v. 18 is not compatible with resuming the old heathen rites.
 - 2. More likely refers to the predominant false beliefs in Jerusalem.
 - B. Four forms of idolatrous worship show the false religious tendencies a century and a half before the exile.
 - 1. The image of jealousy: 8:3, 5.
 - a. A popular religion: outside the north gate, in great court.
 - b. An image in connection with Jehovah worship: compare: Ex. 20:4 f; Deut. 4:23 f; 5:8 f.

c. Possibly an image or symbol of Asherah, the mother-goddess of the Canaanites is intended: I Kngs. 15:13; II Kngs. 21:7.

d. Canaanization of Jehovah worship; image placed just outside most popular entrance to temple court.

2. The worship of the elders: 8:6 - 12.

a. Usually assumed the mention of animal worship referred to Egyptian idolatry introduced in region of Jehoiakin for political purposes.

1) But Egyptian religion usually not exported.

2) Aspects of Babylonian religion would fit description.

3) In view of v. 10 any confined to one too narrow.

4) In view of v. 12 a literal interpretation dangerous.

5) The figure of 70 (v. 11) contrasted to 25 (v. 16) indicates to be taken symbolically to show virtually all the elders involved in this worship with only a few taking the final step in apostasy.

b. Probably Ezekiel is referring to all foreign cults being introduced during time of Ahaz and Manasseh.

c. Pertained mainly to the ruling class who opened their hearts to the idolatry and memories of the past. A mood to eradicate the conceptions and memories of worshipping other gods.

d. Compare Jer. 44:18 to 8:12 b. Secrecy and defiant despair. Ashamed to go back openly to covenant under Josiah.

3. The Wailing for Tammuz. 8:13, 14.

a. The women, most conservative element in religious life.

b. Dealing with an ancient and popular god of vegetation from Canaan to Babylonia.

c. It was said, Tammuz died in summer heat and returned to life with the coming of rains.

- d. Pure nature worship: Degraded Jehovah, admitted gods of conquering lands besides Jehovah were objects of worship.

4. Sun-Worship. 8:15 - 18

- a. From their location, inferred they were priests or Levites of senior rank (9:6).
- b. A deliberate rejection of Jehovah as they worshipped Shamash, the Babylonian sun-god.
- c. Note 8:17 results of: social violence and insult to Jehovah. "Branch" refers to some insult or obscenity.
- d. Justice of Jeremiah's condemnation of priests: Jer. 5:31; 6:13.

III. The Judgment of Jerusalem: Ezek. 9:1 - 10:2

- A. A symbolically predictive vision: Zedekiah's revolt had not begun.
- B. Instruments of judgment obviously angels: Called 'men' however.
 - 1. Armed with "clubs" 9:2 compare to Jer. 51:20 ff.
 - a. Slaughter was not indiscriminate.
 - 2. A mark of safety on the foreheads of God's people: 9:4; Rev. 7:3.
 - a. Innocent separated from guilty: Principle of Jer. 31:29 f; Ezek. 18.
 - 3. After apostates killed, the city set on fire, 10:2.
 - a. Ezekiel attempts to intercede: 9:8; Evil had gone too far. Note: Ezek. 11:13; 14:14; Jer. 7:16, 11:14; 15:1.
 - b. "residue of Isreal" - Judah.

IV The Throne of God: Ezek. 10:3 - 22

- A. Little added to description of 1:4 - 28.
 - 1. Not clear as to why repeated.
- B. Made clear the four living creatures are the cherubim.

C. The Glory of God had already left the sanctuary: 8:4.

1. Preparing to leave the temple area completely: 10:19.

V. The Judgment on the Priestly Leaders: Ezek. 11:1-13.

A. No doubt the 25 of v. 1 are the same as in 8:16.

1. Description of 11:6 agrees with 8:17.

2. Activity of 11:2 suits priestly position.

3. Their open idolatry 8:16 f matches their cynicism 11:3.

4. The two names can not be identified with certainty.

B. Rejected Jehovah and His will.

1. Refused to see in Jerusalem's capture and Jekoiachin's deportation the truthfulness of Jeremiah and God's judgment.

a. Saw in their position a sign of God's favour than His judgment.

b. Basing themselves that the city walls would protect them no matter how hot the Babylonian attack was. 11:3.

c. Basing themselves that Nebuchadnezzar had not technically captures Jerusalem. II Kngs. 24:12.

d. Basing themselves on their trust in the temple-- already condemned. Jer. 7:4.

2. "We be the flesh" reflects their pride. 11:3; Jer. 24.

a. Saying "they were the good flesh preserved by God in Jerusalem."

C. Spirit of prophecy fell on Ezekiel. 11:5

1. Pronounced their doom and God's favor on those they had cursed. 11:6 f.

2. They would not be privileged to die in Jerusalem. 11:7:10.

a. Execution of some leaders at Riblah: II Kngs. 25:18-21.

b. For others, death in exile: looked at God's severe punishment: Amos 7:17.

3. 11:7 implies a resurrection.
4. No ground for considering Pelatiah's death as symbolic or visionary only.
 - a. Result of message unexpected by Ezekiel. 11:13.
 - b. "When Ezekiel spoke the Word of God he had caused something to come into being that was active and creative." p. 47.

VI. God's Grace to the Exiles. Ezek. 11:14 - 21

A. God's promise confirmed and expanded from Jer. 24.

1. Addressed to "all" exiles: 11:15
 - a. Included earlier exiles from North.
 - b. Should read, "men of thy exile."
 - c. Looked upon as being far from Jehovah: I Sam.26:19.
 - d. The truth is, those left in Jerusalem were the ones far from Jehovah.
2. Promise of restoration: 11:17.
 - a. Dealing with the spiritual loss felt by the exiles by separation from temple.
 - b. Punishment was corrective for some and would result in an ultimate blessing: The bitter tasted before the sweet.
3. "One heart:" 11:19.
 - a. Probably the removing of old jealousies between north and south. Ezek. 37:22.

B. A point to stress: The sovereignty of God but He is no determinist.

1. Salvation is God's work but man must prepare the way for it by repentance.
 - a. People back to land by God: 11:17 but before character change: 11:19 f, the people are to remove all traces of idolatry: 11:18.

- b. Judgment is also not arbitrary on those left in Jerusalem: They were warned to repent.
- c. The exiles will be judged if they hold to their old idols or turn to Babylon's idols: Ezek. 14:2-6.

VII. The Temple Forsaken: Ezek. 11:22 -25

- A. Withdrawal of chariot - throne to the Mount of Olives.
 - 1. To see its return to the new temple years later: 43:1-4.
 - 2. Temple an empty shell and offerings are only an outward show. Note: Rev. 3:20.

CHAPTER VI

WOE TO THE PROPHETS

- I. The Fate of King and People: Ezek. 12:1 - 20.
 - A. Time: 591 or 590 B.C.: Compare 20:1 with 8:1.
 - 1. Zedekiah's revolt: 588 B.C.
 - B. Need for prophecy: "a rebellious house" applied to exiles: 12:2, 3, 9.
 - 1. Still hoping for early return to Jerusalem.
 - a. A little bundle of necessities--exile's luggage: 12:3, 4.
 - C. Explanation of Ezekiel's actions in v.v.4-5: 12:10-16.
 - 1. Acted out the fate of Zedekiah.
 - a. His escape, capture, blinding, leading into exile: II Kngs. 25:4 ff.
 - b. Jehovah pictures as snaring Zedekiah and bringing him to his doom: 12:13.
 - D. Ezekiel never calls Zedekiah king as he does Jekoiachin; Exek. 17:12; 21:25.
 - 1. Regarded Jekoiachin as the true king: 17:13.
 - a. Judean kingship ended with exile; no hope could be put in him.

E. Actual fate of Zedekiah followed by acting out fate of people: 12:17-20.

1. Largely repetitive of Ezek. 4:9-12.

a. Stresses dismay and anxiety by which small amounts eaten of rations.

II. The Problem of Prophets and of Prophecy: Ezek. 12:21 - 14:11.

A. That which distinguished Jeremiah and Ezekiel from the other prophets is they had a message of 'unrelieved doom.'

1. Phrase "false prophets" is one of the New Testament.

2. Micaiah Ben-Imlah faces Ahab's prophets: I Kngs. 22:19-28.

a. Jehovah caused them to be led into error.

3. Note: Ezek. 14:9 f; Jer. 4:10: Prophet's deceived.

4. Qualities of true and false prophets:

a. Wore a "hairy mantle:" Zech. 13:4; II Kngs. 1:8; Mt. 3:4.

b. Acted signs: I Kngs. 22:11; Jer. 28:10.

c. Dream dreams and saw visions.

5. Jeremiah did not call Hananiah a "false prophet:" Jer. 28:1-9.

a. Stated Jehovah would show whom He had sent with the fulfillment of the prophet's words.

B. Clear test: Deut. 18:22.

1. Deut. 13:1 f: The sign given by a prophet may come to pass with the object to draw the people after other gods.

2. Sometimes the predictions of true prophets seemed to be falsified: Examples: Jer. 18:7-12; Jonah 3:4 though fulfilled later.

3. God's long-suffering had been taken to mean the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah would not transpire: Ezek. 12:21-28.

a. Therefore, the renewed prophecies of doom were not taken seriously.

C. The false prophets could not be classified under any single heading.

1. What are the fruits: Mt. 6:17.
2. A prophetic commentary on false prophets: Jer. 23:9-40.
 - a. Immorality condemned: 69:14.
 - b. Message with no bearing on spiritual needs is condemned: v. 15-24.
 - c. Message of unworthy source is condemned: v. 25-29.
 - d. Those who do not even pretend to receive God's message: v. 30-32.
3. The reason Ezekiel tries to teach the exiles how God looks on those who dulled the reception of God's message of condemnation.

III. The Despising of Prophecy: Ezek. 12:21 - 28

- A. A point before the exiles were taken from their homes: 12:22.
 1. Assumed past prophecies annulled because not gone into fulfillment.
 - a. Attitude reflected in II Pet. 3:4.
 - b. Did not recognize God's grace had postponed the worst.
 2. Ezekiel assured them, his prophecies and all postponed prophecies were about to be fulfilled: 12:23.
 - a. All false prophecies of hope would come to an end: 12:24.
 - b. After temple destroyed, false prophets discredited: Zech. 13:2-6.
- B. Those who considered Ezekiel's words to be in the future and not in their life time: 12:26-28.
 1. The assurance that all the evils to be foretold were about to transpire.

IV. The Foolish Prophets: Ezek. 13:1-16

- A. Calls the prophets "foolish": the word 'nabal' translated "fool."

1. "A mental or spiritual obtuseness that borders on atheism; as applied to the prophets, nabal would mean insensible to Jehovah's benefits, as in Deut. 32:6." p.5'
 2. Prophesied from their own mind: 13:2.
 3. Dominated by their own desires and motives: 13:3.
 4. Compared to foxes dwelling among ruins: 13:4 - Destructive.
 5. Their visions were vanity and lies: 13:6, 7.
 - a. Expect Jehovah to fulfill their words.
 6. Their three-fold punishment: 13:9.
 - a. Will lose honoured place in council.
 - b. Struck out of roll of true Israelites.
 - c. Will not return from exile.
- B. A main cause of false prophesy: 13:10-16.
1. The desire to 'swim with stream.'
 - a. Proclaimed what was expected and desired.
 - b. Whitewashed the flimsy wall the people had erected.
 - c. The prophet's whitewashing prevented the truth from being seen.
- V. The False Prophetesses: Ezek. 13:17-23.
- A. The women described would be termed sorceresses.
1. Their punishment: 13:23 (Would lose all influence.)
 - a. Not as great as prophets.
 2. "Handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread" probably some of their instruments of divination.
 3. "Hunting of souls" probably refers to the power a sorceress gains over those who consult her.
- B. Those who resorted to sorcery would not have an ear for the spiritual message of the prophets.

VI. The Idolater and The Prophet: Ezek. 14:1 - 11.

A. Men largely responsible for flourishing false prophets.

1. Called "elders of Israel:" 14:1; 20:1.

a. Likely no difference intended of "elders of Judah:" 8:1.

b. Said "taken their idols into their hearts;" set their affections on them: 14:3.

c. Typify the people generally: 14:4, 7.

2. Ezekiel may not only be referring to visible idolatry as in Ch. 8 but also stressing the false gods of their heart.

B. No greater insult to God than for one to offer Him a divided allegiance and not accept His will unless it suits the one asking.

1. The prophet will be silent: 14:4, 7.

a. Answer of judgment by God Himself.

b. God has given the prophet no answer and the true prophet will only speak God's word.

C. What about the false prophet?

1. Would be enticed and give answer to the people's satisfaction: 14:9-10.

a. God would use answer to the destruction of inquirer and prophet.

2. False prophet governed by a generation that does not know God.

VII. The Absolute Justice of Jerusalem's Punishment: Ezek. 14:12-23.

A. Destroys the hope God might make some exception in one's favour.

1. Evil of Jerusalem already stressed: 8:1 - 11:25.

2. Made clear the future of nation resided with exiles: 11:14-20.

B. No satisfactory reason ever given for mention of Noah, Daniel and Job: 14:14.

1. One explanation: Three typically righteous men who achieved works of deliverance but did not nor could they deliver the entire generation nor the present generation.
 2. Seems more likely they are named to stress not what little they saved but "what they had not been able to save." p. 59.
- C. God bringing all four (completeness) of His major scourges upon Jerusalem. 14:21.
1. Show greatness of Jerusalem's sin; the hopelessness of escape except those marked by God. (cf. 9:4)
 2. Any survivors would be for the sake of exiles in Babylonia: 14:22.
- D. A point to stress: "He who does not let himself be influenced by the righteous, cannot expect to be able to profit from the 'merits' of the righteous in the day of judgment."

VIII. The Parable of the Vine: Ezek. 15:1-8.

- A. Takes the picture of a wild vine in the forest and asks what superiority the vine has: 15:2.
1. Portrays Israel only as a nation among nations.
 2. There is no superiority but inferiority: 15:3.
 - a. Charred at both ends and in middle with exile of Jehoiachin and his companions: 15:4.
 - b. Completely useless: 15:5.
 - c. What remained was left to be burned: 15:6.
 3. Only destruction remains for the time of fruit-bearing is ended.

CHAPTER VII

JERUSALEM, QUEEN AND HARLOT

- I. An Allegory of Jerusalem: Ezek. 16:1 - 63.
- A. The imagery is unattractive but matches the more unattractive nature of sin.

B. Four natural divisions. vv. 1-43, 44-52, 53-59, 60-63.

1. First two are distinct but related oracles.
2. Believed the last two are probably after Jerusalem's destruction.

C. Use of Jerusalem is symbolic.

1. Refers to southern kingdom representing all Israel.
2. Many would say reference to Amorite and Hittite, 16:3, 45, refers to the historic origin of Jerusalem.
 - a. More likely the Semetic and non-Semetic elements of the Canaanite scene during the Patriarchs and conquest are referred to.

II. The Foundling Child God's Bride: Ezek. 16:1-14.

A. Ezekiel makes no effort to make the details connect with the Patriarchal period.

1. Stresses the spiritual condition not the historic picture.

B. The foundling's (a deserted infant) completely weak and unwanted position: Ezek. 16:4-6.

1. In Gen. 14:13 title "the Hebrew" attached to name Abram.

a. One meaning given: "descendant of Eber;" Gen. 10:24 f.

b. Or "the man from the other side; the immigrant."

c. Neither interpretation supported by other uses of "Hebrew."

1) Note its use in Gen. 40:15; impossible to suppose Abraham's descendants so powerful in Canaan for the Egyptians to consider it their land.

2) Note its use in Gen. 43:32.

3) Hebrew is not Israel's name for itself.

2. Archaeology has established that Hebrew is not a national name; they are "landless soldiers, raiders, captives and slaves of miscellaneous ethnic origins." p. 62.

- a. Some form of lower social standing seems implied in the name: Note: Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12, Jer. 34:9, 14.
 3. To be aware of the social stigma attached to "Abram the Hebrew;" name remained with his descendants; add the Egyptian bondage and Ezekiel's picture becomes very strong.
- C. The Ignorance of God is implied.
1. The pollution of Israel's birth remained until Jehovah's marriage with her at Sinai: Ezek. 16:8-10.
 - a. Beliefs of Abraham's old home remained among people at least till time of Josua: Joshua 24:14 f.
 - 1) Also implied in Gen. 35:2: Merely external actions described.
 - 2) The account of the golden calf: Ex. 32.
 - b. Consider Gen. 38:1-6: A fair probability that virtually all Jacob's daughters-in-law were from the heathens.
 - c. Ezek. 23:3: Egypt strengthened heathenism in Israel.
 - 1) Also implied in Ezek. 16:7: "foundling left to grow up a young savage, by the light of nature, naked." p. 63.
 - d. "Badger's skin" (K.J.V.): "sealskin" (A.S.V.) should simply be "leather" (R.S.V.): 16:10; Ex.25:5.

III. The Harlot: Ezek. 16:15-34.

- A. Covers the spiritual history from the conquest to Ezeiels' time.
 1. Israel's unnatural and irresponsible wantonness stressed.
 - a. No excuse; not been paid by her lovers, but has paid those that have taken their pleasure of her: 16:31, 33 f.
- B. First stage in downward path: 16:15-22.
 1. The blending together of Jehovah worship with the Canaanite religion.

- a. Called Baal worship by the prophets.
 - b. Its climax was human sacrifice: 16:20 f.
 - 2. No reason to think human sacrifice after Judges; until times of Ahaz and Manasseh: II Kngs. 16:3; 21:6; Mic.6:7.
 - a. The conclusion of bringing Jehovah down to a nature god: Jer. 7:31; II Kngs. 23:10.
 - C. Second stage in downward path: 16:23 - 34.
 - 1. Open apostasy and idolatry.
 - a. 16:24: Likely Ezekiel referring to their high places as brothels and their signs; places of immorality in the name of religion.
 - 2. Allegorical nature seen in reference to Egypt: apart from cult of Isis which became identified with Ash-toreth or Astarte, Egyptian religion not exported.
 - a. Worship of 16:26; constant turning to Egypt for help against Assyria (condemned by Hosea and Isaiah). A recognition of Egyptian god's as being powerful.
 - b. "great of flesh;" referred to Egypt: Ezek. 23:19-21. Apparent strength of Egypt - "flabby fat."
 - 3. Passes to Assyria: 16:28; to Chaldea (Babylonia named after ruling people): 16:29.
 - a. Note II Kngs. 20:12-19 for Assyria.
 - b. 16:29 should be rendered: "the trading land of Chaldea."
 - 1) "Canaan:" "Canaanite" used of trade and trader - Ezek. 17:4; Hos. 12:7; Zeph. 1:11; Zech. 14:21; Pro. 31:24.
 - c. In Assyria's case: recognition of their gods by worship of "the host of heaven" from Ahaz to Josiah.
 - D. No mention of attempts at reformation.
 - 1. Reason: Except for minority, had only been external.
- IV. The Judgment on the Harlot: Ezek. 16:35-43.

A. Nebechadnezzar led to destroy Jerusalem by Jehoiakim's and Zedekiah's unfaithfulness: 17:13 f; 16.

1. Israel progressively weakened by all she came in contact with when unfaithful to Jehovah.

V. The Allegory of the Sisters: Ezek. 16:44 - 52.

A. A new allegory closely linked with preceding in thought and time.

1. Jerusalem stands for only the Southern Kingdom.
2. Samaria stands for the Northern.

B. Sodom portrayed as dwelling to the south of Jerusalem. 16:46.

1. Cities of the Plain probably at north end of Dead Sea, due east of Jerusalem.
 - a. Because this is allegory, no sufficient evidence to hold a literal Sodom is intended.
2. "elder" and "younger;" 16:46 - more and less powerful than Jerusalem.
 - a. Samaria very recent city when compared to Jerusalem - I Kngs. 16:24.
 - b. Not likely Ezekiel joining two capitals together.
 - c. No parallel to restoration of Sodom: 16:53, 55.
 - d. Since promise of 16:53 is literal cannot spiritualize the one to Sodom.
 - e. Not restoration of cities but of righteous inhabitants. Samaria never ceased as a city.
 - f. Reasonable to see in Sodom the small heathen states and cities left around Israel.
3. Essential link of Israelite kingdoms with Canaan stressed: 16:45.
 - a. Therefore see in Sodom all that survived of the Canaanites.
4. The "daughters" - Dependant towns and villages of the main towns.

C. Israel knew Canaan's religion was judged by God (destruction of Sodom) so in imitating their religion, Israel's guilt was more than those they copied.

1. Judah refused to learn from Northern Kingdoms downfall: Ezek. 23:11; Jer. 3:6-13.

D. Lesson: Since Sodom and Samaria were destroyed, no hope at all for Jerusalem since she is more guilty.

VI. The Restoration of the Sisters: Ezek. 16:53 - 59.

A. Two reasons to consider these verses as a later ending to allegory.

1. Shame of Jerusalem he foretells would turn hearers away from original lesson: The certain destruction.

2. Until judgment on Jerusalem, hope is for exiles brought to Babylonia: No hope held out for doomed city.

B. Jer. 18:7-10 prophecy is conditional.

1. Restoration of Sodom and Samaria is conditional upon their repentance.

VII. Reconciliation: Ezek. 16:60 - 63.

A. The conclusion of the allegory of the unfaithful wife and sisters.

1. Dated after the fall of Jerusalem.

a. Marriage broken beyond hope of repair: Jer. 3:1.

2. God would again take them as His bride.

a. Details of promise: Ezek. 36.

b. Jer. 31:31-34 lies behind Ezekiel's message.

c. To remain the shame of the memory of Jerusalem's past.

d. God would blot out the past but memory of it would keep Jerusalem faithful to Him.

VIII. The Treacherous Folly of Zedekiah: Ezek. 17:1 - 24.

A. A prophecy of his doom not his actions.

1. Dated about 588 B.C.; revolt against Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Later than 20.1 dated 590 B.C.; break in chronological order.
 3. Israel's apostasy (Ch. 16) is changed to the "criminal and sacreligious folly" of those remaining in Jerusalem.
- B. His message in the form of "a riddle and...a parable."
1. Reason: Hearts of majority of exiles with those who prophesied an early return.
 - a. With Zedekiah's revolt, hopes of many would rise.
 - b. Ezekiel's message of doom grew unpopular: a method to gain the people's attention.
- C. Actual language of the allegory needs little explanation.
1. The eagle; vulture - largest bird of East symbolizes the speed of the conqueror: Jer. 48:40; 49:22; Isa.46.11.
 2. The cedar - The Davidic house: Isa. 10:33-11:1.
 - a. In 12:12 Zedekiah not regarded as true king.
 - b. In 11:14-21; Jer. 24 - True Israel in captivity.
 - c. The change from cedar to vine shoot carries its own implied condemnation: Note. Ezek. 15.
 - d. 17:5 - Stresses Nebuchadnezzar's generosity in not placing a foreign ruler in the land.
 1. Note: 17:22 ff where Ezekiel deals with the true king to come.
- D. The folly of Zedekiah's action condemned.
1. Planted by first eagle, turned to the second to be watered.
 - a. Turned to Egypt, changed masters to rebel against Babylon.
- E. Zedekiah breaks his oath: 17:13; II Chron. 36:13.
1. Probably an oath of loyalty.
 2. Probably special circumstances suggested by his punishment: II Kngs. 25:6 f

- a. Jehovah called as a witness of his oath, 17:19.
 - b. Zedekiah's punishment guaranteed.
- F. Jerusalem's hope is not in its present ruler.
- 1. Ezek. 17:22 ff; Jer. 22:28 ff.
 - 2. Another twig, not from twig growing in exile but from parent tree to be planted in Zion.
 - a. Old dynastic tree had met its doom: Isa. 11:1.
 - 3. "All the trees of the field:" 17:24 - all the mighty of the world.
 - a. Note: I Sam. 2:1-10; Lk. 1:46-55.
 - 4. Messianic nature of the passage, but not stressed.

CHAPTER VIII

GOD AND THE INDIVIDUAL

- I. The individual and the Justice of God: Ezek. 18:1-32.
- A. The laws of the Pentateuch are always addressed to the individual--the observance of these laws the individual's responsibility.
- 1. Modern thought considers the bodies as giving one's individuality.
 - a. In the Old Testament, it is the flesh which binds one to their fellow man and one's responsibility to God which gives one their individuality.
 - 2. Man bound to the ground from which taken and to all living on the ground, his actions have an influence.
 - a. Abominable conduct causes "the land to sin." Deut. 24:4; Jer. 3:1, 9.
 - 1) A reason for natural punishment: Ps. 107:33 f.
 - 2) To dwell in a polluted land, man shared in its pollution.
 - b. A chief fear of the exiles: It was an unclean land. Amos 7:17.

3. Ezekiel makes it clear that the righteous few would be delivered: Ezek. 9:4; 14:14.
 - a. No Old Testament passage suggests the righteous must perish with the wicked but they will suffer with them.
- B. Among the exiles, pessimism had surfaced. Ezek. 18:2.
 1. Concluded that if the people were doomed because of their ancestors actions, then it did not matter about their own behaviour.
 - a. Jeremiah's answer: Jer. 31:29-34.
- C. The exiles implied that Jeremiah and Ezekiel were wrong in proclaiming the exile as God's grace. cf. Ezek. 33:10.
 1. The only sign of God's favour they looked for was early prosperity.
- D. Ezekiel does not deny 'corporate suffering'.
 1. Note Ezek. 11:14-21: exile a place of suffering but ultimately would result in spiritual blessing.
 - a. In a few years, Jerusalem would be destroyed and only a few (the exiles) would live: Ezek. 14:12-23.
 - b. Ezekiel thinking in terms of physical survival: in the misery of exile, life and death became criteria of God's attitude.

II. Righteousness and Wickedness

- A. "The Bible exists to give God's judgments of man, not that man may sit in judgment on his fellow-man." P. 74.
 1. The righteous man is the one who lives up to God's standard.
 - a. Old Testament standard was the Law with the test of living mainly external.
 - b. Individual knew he never achieved standard perfectly but his actions revealed his hearts desires.
 2. The wicked man deliberately rejects God's Law in part or in whole.
- B. The test of character as given by Ezekiel:

1. Canaanized idolatrous worship of Jehovah: 18:6a.
 2. Sexual passions, no respect for marriage: 18:6b.
 3. Taking advantage of another's weaknesses: 18:7a
 4. Inhumanity and hardness of heart: 18:7b.
 5. Profiting from riches, another weakness or social position: 18:8.
 6. A general presentation of the law: 18:9.
 7. Summary statement: a man's attitude towards his fellow-man is a true index of his attitude towards God.
- C. Ezek. 18:17, 20 does not affirm the righteous son will not suffer for the sins of his wicked father but in the greater issue of 'life and death', the individual's actions are the only consideration before God.
- D. Ezek. 18:21, 24: "All"
1. Not thinking of a periodic turning but of a radical change to good or bad.
- E. "Nowhere in the Old Testament is the picture of sin blacker, of failure more complete than in Ezekiel, just because the prophet knows that the purpose of the God that condemns is salvation for all who will hear and turn." p. 75.

III. A Lament: Ezek. 19:1-14.

- A. The complete change of metaphor is clearly explained by viewing Chapter 19 as two laments.
1. Ezek. 19:1-9: Bewail the sad plight of Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin.
 2. Ezek. 19:10-14: Written after Zedekiah's rebellion shows its fatal effects on Jehoiachin's fortunes.
- B. The mother: 19:2 - the kingdom of Judah.
1. Jehoiakim not mentioned; his fall was of his own devising.
 - a. A most despicable descendant of David: Jer. 22:19.
 - b. Never chosen king by his subjects: II Kngs. 23:34.

- C. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin never able to show what they were capable of.
 - 1. II Kngs. 23:32; 24:9: Each reigned three months and neither merited fame.
 - 2. Jeremiah 22:10 ff; 22:24-30.
- D. We know nothing of Jehoahaz' fate - Assumed he did not survive long in Egypt.
- E. Do not know if Jedekiah's rebellion made matters worse for Jehoiachin.
 - 1. Released: II Kngs. 25:27-30.
 - a. No hope of restoration to his throne.
 - b. Right of succession for his descendants denied: Jer. 22:29 f; I Chron. 3:17.
- F. Note the R.S.V. on vv. 10-14 for a closer force of Ezekiel's lament.
 - 1. Referring to Jehoiachin, under whom the vine was plucked up.
 - 2. The fire: 19:14 - Zedekiah.

CHAPTER IX

THE FAILURE OF ISRAEL

- I. The Spiritual History of Israel: Ezek. 20:1-44.
 - A. A new section: The period between the final drift into revolt (590 B.C.) and the Babylonian armies appearing at Jerusalem (588 B.C.; 24:1).
- II. Israel Cut Off From God: Ezek. 20:1-4.
 - A. God refuses to answer the elders because they are heirs of their ancestors: Note vv. 30-32.
 - 1. Judgment is carried out by rehearsing God's verdict on the past: Ezek. 22:2; 23:36.
- III. Israel in Egypt: Ezek. 20:5-9.

- A. Begins when Moses returned to Egypt with Jehovah's message:
cf. Ex. 4:29-31.
 - 1. May explain Moses' unwillingness to return: cf. Ex. 4:1.
 - B. "The idols of Egypt": 20:7 are not the actual gods worshipped in Egypt, but the great uniformities of nature and human life they represented.
 - 1. The plagues of Egypt were more than God's punishment.
 - a. Demonstrations of Jehovah's power over Egypt's gods: Ex. 9:14 ff; Ro. 9:14-18; Ex. 12:12.
 - C. Three signs given to Moses: Ex. 4:1-9.
 - 1. Imitated by Egyptian magicians, two of the three:
Ex. 7:11 ff; 22.
 - 2. To proclaim to Israel, Jehovah controlled nature.
 - a. The plagues were real blows to the Egyptian gods.
 - D. No evidence that Israel questioned Jehovah's existence in Egypt.
 - 1. They doubted His power in the uniformities of life.
 - a. Enthusiasm upon Moses' return: Ex. 4:31.
 - b. Their true feelings when under pressure: Ex. 5:21; 6:9; 14:11 f.
 - 2. God's "natural" action would have been to punish Israel and finish with them then and there: 20:8.
 - a. His action based on His character represents His unchanging purpose: 20:9.
- IV. Israel in the Wilderness: Ezek. 20:10-26.
- A. Ezekiel divides the wilderness period in two.
 - 1. Ezek. 20:10-17: Those who left Egypt and had death passed on them at Kadesh Barnea.
 - 2. Ezek. 20:18-26: The fortunes of their children.
 - B. Little known of Israelite idolatry in wilderness.
 - 1. Joshua 24:14 f: must have been widespread.

2. Lev. 17:7: one form it took.
 3. Psa. 81:12; Acts 7:42 point to its existence.
- C. Ezekiel refers to the Sabbath. 20:11 f.
1. Drastic and public punishment in Num. 15:32-36:
a needed public example.
 - a. From this passage and Neh. 9:14, the Sabbath a part of the revelation at Sinai.
- D. Ezek. 20:23 refers to Deut. 28:15-68.
1. A lack of faith and obedience on the part of the second generation led to disaster just as it had for the first. Note: Joshua 24:19.
- E. Ezek. 20:25: Bulk of Mosaic Law before Kadesh Barnea.
1. Only those with a true faith in and understanding of God would understand it rightly. cf. Ro. 5:20; Gal.3:19.
 - a. Seems they were convinced they were doing God's will by formal law keeping.
 - b. Note: Gal. 3:24.
 2. The wilderness wandering was the 'poison root' that led to the 'bitter fruit'.
- V. Israel in the Land: Ezek. 20:27-29.
- A. All the false religion from the Judges and monarchy was the result of what had gone before.
1. A dismissal of man-made perversion with a pun: 20:29.
 - a. The popular etymology of 'Bamah' and all it represented was a place of human choice and not of God's will.
- VI. Ezekiel's Own Generation: Ezek. 20:30-32.
- A. A lack of evidence causes us not to infer from v. 31 that human sacrifice was reinstated after Josiah's death.
1. Compare with Mt. 23:29-35; Lk. 11:47-51.
 - a. Josiah's reformation had meant no real break with the past.

2. The contemporaries of Ezekiel faced the temptation of adopting the idolatry of the place of their exile. v.32.

VII. Jehovah's Triumph: Ezek. 20:33-44.

- A. "Once God chose Israel for His own purposes, nothing that Israel could do could thwart Him in working out His final will, however much He might have to discard generation after generation on the way." p. 83.
 1. Israel's history worked out under a broken covenant: Jer. 31:31 f.
 - a. God will now be king over them in judgment: 20:33 f.
 - b. There would be the testing of exile: 20:35.
 - 1) A separation of His true people from the idolators.
 2. Many of the exiles must have adopted the surrounding idolatry but they vanished with no trace: 20:39.
- B. Verses 40-44 have had a partial fulfillment when the remnant returned under Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel and Joshua reinforced with Ezra's work.
 1. A real zeal for God: Judaism of the return provided the setting in which Christ could come, His church could be established and spread.
 - a. Synagogue had prepared the way for its spread in a large measure among the Gentiles.

CHAPTER X

THE BLOODY CITY

- I. The Sword of The Lord: Ezek. 20:45 - 21:32.
 - A. Consists of four oracles spoken during the time Nebuchadnezzar on his way to subdue revolts in Tyre, Ammon and Jerusalem.
 1. The last oracle is possibly an exception as to time.
- II. The Sword of the Lord is Drawn: Ezek. 20:45 - 21:7.
 - A. Oracle divided in two.

1. Ezek. 20:45-49: Figurative description of Jerusalem's coming destruction.
 2. Ezek. 21:1-7: Jerusalem's coming destruction explained.
 - B. Ezek. 20:46: Word "south" used three times.
 1. The third: South refers to Negeb.
 - a. A dry semi-wilderness to the south of Judea.
 2. "Set face to south": Ezekiel transported in spirit to the Chaldean army marching south from Carchemish and the Euphrates.
 - C. Prophet has no liberty to recast the message into a more acceptable form: 20:49.
 1. Because something in Word obscure, it was taken as an excuse to ignore the message.
 - D. Use of forest fire as an image explained in 21:3.
 1. Once sword of Lord was drawn, it would slay indiscriminately.
 - a. Only God can pass the judgment as to who is walking in His ways.
 - E. Evidently a vision of destruction broke him down: 21:6 f.
 1. Prophet seldom a passive recipient of visions: Amos 7:2, 5; Jer. 4:19 ff; 31:26.
- III. The Song of the Sword: Ezek. 21:8-17.
- A. Language is often difficult: Compare to R.S.V.
 1. V. 10b: "Or do we make mirth?" - is the warning a joke?
 2. V. 10c: All lesser chastisement has been despised.
 - B. Exultation of prophet contrasts to his distress in 21:6 f.
 1. Exults because God triumphs.
 2. Distress because of those who perish under judgments.
- IV. Nebuchadnezzar is the Sword of the Lord: Ezek. 21:18-27.
- A. R.S.V. rendering of v. 19 "mark two ways": prophecy accompanied by a symbolic action.

1. Ezekiel depicts the scene at the road-fork where the Babylonian king decides which of the rebels, Ammon or Jerusalem, is to feel his chastisement first.
 2. Three means of divination employed:
 - a. Arrows with names written on them are thrown in a certain way--lot comes for Jerusalem.
 - b. Consults the teraphim.
 - c. Sacrifices and looks at the liver.
- B. Ezek. 21:23 is difficult.
1. Jerusalem does not take the result of the divination seriously - Why?
 - a. Not clear who has sworn oaths to whom.
 - b. Old interpretation of some manuscripts may be the key: "they have weeks upon weeks" - The Chaldeans are in no hurry.
- C. The time of reckoning has come and their confidence is baseless: 21:25.
1. The "mitre" a priestly garment only: v. 26; Ex. 28:4.
 - a. Zedekiah may have claimed to be head of both 'church and state'.
- D. With Zedekiah's fall, the old order passed, never to be restored again until Messiah came. 21:27.
1. Interpretation of Shiloh in Gen. 49:10.
 - a. Ezekiel reads the word shelloh - "whose it is."
 - b. Shiloh as a proper name a rarity before, 15:34.
- V. The Sword of Ammon: Ezek. 21:28-32.
- A. Ammonites seek to appease Nebuchadnezzar after the decision to march on Jerusalem by attacking Judah.
1. Their attack will only bring judgment on them.
- VI. The Bloody City: Ezek. 22:1 - 16.
- A. Word "blood" seven times in these verses.

1. Ezekiel sees Jerusalem through a "shimmer of blood."
- B. Lev. 17:11; Gen. 9:4 - The principle of blood in life, Gen. 2:7 recognizes the role of breath in giving and preserving life.
 1. Breath indicates life being lived: Isa. 2:22; Job 27:3; 33:4.
 - a. "God is the giver of life, which is outside man's power to bestow." P. 87.
 2. Taking of life expressed by "the shedding of blood" an insult to God except by His permission or command.
 3. What taking of life means to God: Deut. 19:1-13.
 - a. Curbed blood feuds and freed the unintentional manslayer from civil punishment.
- C. Jerusalem called "the bloody city": 22:2, because the sins she is charged with are against the true life of man and destroy the society in which they are tolerated.
 1. Linked with the charge of idolatry: 22:3.
 - a. Israel prone to reduce Jehovah to 'a nature god.'
 - b. Nature religions have no reverence for life.
- D. Judicial murder included: 22:6.
 1. Supposedly for the high purposes of state.
 2. Include the perversion of justice by bribery and false witnesses: 22:7, 9, 12.
 3. "princes" likely refer to corrupter kings: cf. 12:12.
- E. A purely literal interpretation of 22:9 a and 12 a would be dangerous.
 1. Motive behind most judicial unrighteousness was to obtain land: Amos 2:6 f; Isa. 5:8; Mic. 2:2; I Kngs. 21.
 2. The landless man virtually an outcast with little hope of survival except to sell himself into slavery.
 - a. Jer. 34:8 - 22 shows Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12 was seldom observed.

- b. I Kngs. 21:3 shows a man separated from his inheritance lost a part of his dignity and standing.
- F. God demands justice for the stranger, widow and orphan: 22:7 b, c.
 - 1. Clear commands from God: Deut. 24:17; 27:19; Ex. 22:21-24.
 - a. Stranger is not a foreigner passing through but one separated from his natural protectors and depends on the justice of those he lives in the midst of.
 - 1) Deut. 18:6; Judges 17:7; 19:1, 16.
 - 2. Orphan and widow have lost their natural protectors and have none to replace them.
 - a. The ignoring of justice caused these to be driven to the condition described in Job 24:4-12; 30:2-7.
- G. The lack of justice in usury: 22:12.
 - 1. In an agricultural society where few had adequate reserves, any major loan even with no interest was an almost unsupportable burden.
 - a. The command: Deut. 15:1 f.
 - b. To add any interest (frequently large) was to break God's law and the debtor.
- H. The other sins enumerated which lead to a collapse of society.
 - 1. Treating parents with contempt: 22:7.
 - a. A capital offence with God's curse: Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 27:16.
 - 2. A contempt for God's commands: 22:8.
 - 3. A group of sexual sins: 22:9 b - 11.
 - a. "eaten upon mountains" - the feasts in semi-Canaanized high places where sexual promiscuity prevailed.
 - b. No deadlier danger for individual and society when they find approval of religion.
- I. A gesture of scorn: 22:13, 6:11; 21:14, 17.
 - 1. The threat: 22:15.

2. 22:16 probably rendered more accurately, "I shall be profaned through you."

- a. Because the nation did not believe Jehovah had been able to protect His nation and temple.

VII. Jerusalem the Smelter Furnace: Ezek. 22:17 - 22.

A. Reminiscent of Jer. 6:27 - 30.

1. No concern with God purifying and refining His people as in Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2 f.

- a. Nothing left to be refined.

2. Purification meant blotting out the survivors.

VIII. The Corruption of The People: Ezek. 22:23 - 31.

A. Addressed to Jerusalem looking back and explaining God's actions in destroying her. 22:24.

1. "day of indignation" began for Judah when Josiah fell at Megiddo, 609 B.C.

- a. Past tenses used refer to the whole century and a half of decline since Ahaz onward.

- b. The future destruction is inevitable, the conclusion of the process begun earlier. (Can be explained as "prophetic perfect.")

B. The "princes": 22:27 are the great men of the land.

1. No blood connection with the royal house is implied.

C. The priests are condemned: 22:26.

1. Their neglect in the same category as the lack of justice on the part of their kings and great men.

- a. Their indifference and neglect of God's law showed their lack of respect for God.

- b. They lost their ability to restrain the unrighteousness of the mighty.

D. The people of the land condemned: 22:29.

1. "The free, property-owning, full citizens of Judah." p.91.

- a. II Kngs. 11:14, 18; 21:24; 23:30, 35; 25:19.
- b. Zealots for the old order but not extending to obeying the will of God.
- E. If any prophet could have postponed judgment, it would have been Jeremiah: 22:30.
 - 1. Ezekiel therefore probably refers to kings: downward course of Judah began with Jehoshaphat's death.
 - a. Reforms had been external and not internal (Hezekiah and Josiah).

IX. Oholah and Oholibah: Ezekiel 23.

- A. Main thought is not similar to chapter 16.
 - 1. Ezekiel 16 deals with corruption of Israel's religion and its decline into idolatry.
 - 2. Ezekiel 23 deals with Israel's unfaithfulness seen in its relation to other nations.
- B. The gods of Israel's heathen neighbors were considered the rulers of the whole world.
 - 1. Though their functions in nature were considered universal, the heathen considered their gods as dividing their earthly domain.
 - a. Explains why a god or goddess considered the god of a city or country.
 - b. Acted together to prevent chaos.
 - c. One of their numbered recognized as king.
 - d. Had family quarrels and fights; kingship could be passed from one god to another.
 - e. Earthly wars were believed to be reflections of heavenly struggles.
 - f. Peace and alliances therefore involved gods as well as men.
 - 2. In view of foregoing, reason why all alliances Israel made were condemned by the prophets.
 - a. Humble status of Israel's ambassadors was viewed as Jehovah's lowly status before Amon, Ashur or Marduk.

- b. All such alliances are unfaithfulness to God -- sheer harlotry.
- C. Religious decline in Israel and Judah took different forms.
 - 1. Jer. 3:6-13: picture of Jehovah's two wives used to emphasize Judah's guilt in a corrupted religion.
 - a. As no difference in their foreign policy, no excuse for Judah not learning from Israel's fate.
- D. Mention of Egypt to be understood as in 20:7 f and 16:26.
 - 1. Earliest political alliance between Israel and Egypt: 1 Kngs. 3:1.
 - 2. Israel in the organized state of Egypt had come to doubt Jehovah's ability to control nature and triumph without human order and power.
 - a. Lies behind: I Sam. 8:5.
 - b. Lies behind Solomon building up his kingdom by marriage alliances.
- E. Oholah's voluntary association with Assyria 23:5 probably refers to Jehu's payment of tribute to Shalmaneser III in 841 B.C. (Evidence not recorded in Bible--refer to Bible archaeology.)
 - 1. An act of discretion not of necessity: Israel's temporary rise in power, II Kngs. 13:25; 14:25, 28 quite possibly helped.
- F. Oholibah's association with Assyria, 23:12 refers to Ahaz placing Judah under Tiglath-pileser III; II Kngs. 16:7-10 despite Isaiah 7:3-17.
 - 1. Association with Chaldeans, 23:14-16 refers to days of Hezekiah: II Kngs. 20:12-19; Isa. 39.
 - a. Never minimize the doom pronounced by Isa. 39:6 f.
- G. Four threats against Oholibah:
 - 1. Her Chaldean "lovers" come to judge her: 23:22-27.
 - 2. No excuse in her disloyalty to Jehovah: 23:28-31.
 - a. Her motive had been the selfish, self-interest of the harlot.
 - b. Calculated disloyalty leads to idolatry: 23:30.

3. The cup of God's wrath: 23:32 - 34.
 - a. Note: Jer. 25:15-31; 49:12; Lam. 4:21; Hab. 2:16; Obad. 16; Isa. 51:17, 22 f; Psa. 75:8,
 - b. "The wine of God's wrath is pressed from the vines of man's own planting and cultivation."
4. To be left to herself: 23:35.
- H. Ezek. 23:36-49 an independent prophecy serving as a sort of appendix.
 1. Not easy to interpret but clearly stresses the result of political entanglements and faithlessness to Jehovah is idolatry and the worst forms of pagan worship.
- I. Some find difficulty in Jehovah's wives being depicted as two sisters.
 1. Prohibited by the Law: Lev. 17:17; same picture used in Jer. 3:6 ff.
 2. A common picture of Jehovah's wife being Israel from Hosea onward.
 - a. Since Judah and Israel were His, natural to speak of them as His wife.
 - b. It was only as a part of "all Israel" that either kingdom could claim this relationship to Jehovah.

CHAPTER XI

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

- I. The Blow Falls: Ezek. 24:1 - 27.
 - A. Dated January 588 B.C.
 1. Zedekiah's plot is rewarded; Nebuchadnezzar's army surrounds Jerusalem.
 - a. Iron ring to temporarily ease to deal with army of Pharaoh Apries: Jer. 34:21 f; 37:5, 11.
 - b. Egyptians return homeward not to interfere or aid their Judean allies: Jer. 37:7.

- B. The day Jerusalem invested, Ezekiel ordered to note the date: 24:1, 2; II Kngs. 25:1; Jer. 39:1.
 - 1. Demonstrated it was not Jehovah's inattention nor carelessness that caused the siege and capture. cf. I Kngs. 18:27.
 - C. Impossible to state with certainty if the remainder of chapter happened on the day the siege began or expanded over period of time.
 - 1. Best to assume entire chapter dates on the 10th and 11th days of the tenth month.
- II. The Parable of The Pot: Ezek. 24:3 - 14.
- A. Though not necessary, probably Ezekiel acted out his words.
 - 1. A common cooking pot used in which an entire lamb could be cooked.
 - 2. "Take the choicest one of the flock, pile the logs under it." R.S.V. 24:5.
 - B. Message of 24:3-5 depicts the extreme straits of the besieged.
 - 1. 24:6: Jerusalem depicted as the cooking pot.
 - a. 24:6 b: the fate of the besieged.
 - b. If Ezekiel acting out the parable, the rust marks remind him of blood-stains: Recall 22:1-16.
 - 2. 24:7: Stresses Jerusalem's calloused and casual attitude toward murder.
 - a. 24:7 c: refer to Lev. 17:13.
 - b. Believed that blood not covered cried aloud for vengeance: Job 16:18; Gen. 4:10; Isa. 26:21.
 - 3. 24:9: God Himself makes up the fire.
 - a. A result, the contents well cooked, unceremoniously dealt with--destroyed.
 - 4. 24:10: "Multiply the logs, kindle the fire, make an end of the flesh, and empty out the broth, and let the bones be burned up."
 - 5. 24:11: Empty pot melted to get rid of the rust.
 - 6. Note R.S.V. on 24:12.

III. The Death of Ezekiel's Wife: Ezek. 24:15-24.

- A. The awareness of his wife's coming death probably came as people gathered around listening to the parable.
 - 1. All normal outward forms of mourning prohibited.
 - a. "bread of men" - the bread mourners generally ate.
- B. Loss of his wife a trifle when compared to coming destruction of the sanctuary: 24:21 (loose parallel in Jer. 16:1-9).
- C. A feasible explanation why the exiles will not mourn Jerusalem's destruction.
 - 1. Zedekiah's revolt caused an aggravated condition for exiles.
 - a. All would become suspected as potential rebels.
 - b. Any outward show of grief over the chastisement of the rebels would receive the worst interpretation.
 - c. Would have been the implicit official prohibition of mourning.
 - 2. Noting the day the siege began as a working of God, so the prohibition of outward mourning would bring the awareness that Jerusalem's destruction was an act of the sovereignty of God.
 - a. Ezek. 24:24: The first step to a new hope.

IV. The End of Ezekiel's Dumbness: Ezek. 24:25 - 27.

- A. Refer to Ezek. 3:26.
 - 1. "Ezekiel could speak normally, but refrained from doing so, except when he had a message to give from God." p. 98.
- B. "That day": 24:26.
 - 1. Six months after Jerusalem's destruction, a fugitive arrived with the news. 33:21.

CHAPTER XII

THE PROPHECIES AGAINST THE NATIONS

I. Their Purpose:

- A. In most cases, the normal prophecy about nations never came to the ears of their rulers. (Some exceptions: Isa. 18: Jer. 27:1-11.)
 - 1. Prophets almost always spoke to Israel.
 - a. To enforce and explain their message to Israel when they addressed neighboring nations.
- B. No reason to think Ezekiel's messages ever carried to the nations mentioned.
 - 1. Devoted to disproving that there is favoritism for God's people so that He relaxes His requirements for them as He renders judgment on nations that do not know Him.
 - 2. To disprove the error of stressing God's activities among His people and then conclude surrounding nations are left to their own devices.
 - a. Jerusalem had not fallen by accident and the exiles knew Jehovah was not weaker than heathen gods but they were in danger of despair as they faced surrounding hostile forces.
 - b. These prophecies show God's rule and judgment on nations with whom the exiles came in contact with.
- C. The two groups of nations dealt with:
 - 1. The Ammonites (25:1-7); Moabites (25:8-11); Edomites (25:12-14); and Philistines (25:15-17).
 - a. Had joined in plotting with Zedekiah: Jer. 27:2 f.
 - b. Made their peace with Nebuchadnezzar. Showed their zeal against Jerusalem.
 - c. Their shift of loyalties will not prevent their doom.
 - 2. Egypt (29-32); Tyre (26:1-28:19) and Sidon (28:20-24). Symbolism enters in for these.
 - a. Egypt: Where Israel learned idolatry: 20:7 f; to trust in foreign powers: 23:3.

- b. Tyre: The commerce of the time: Represents Babylon one of great commercial centers--could not tell of Babylon's downfall without serious results. When Babylon's hour comes, the power riches can buy will not save her. Not to imply 26:1 - 28:19 are not prophecies against Tyre, for they are.

D. The mercantile character of Babylon.

1. Ezek. 16:29; 17:4.

- a. Had modern idea of 'law and order' due to commercial stability.
- b. Commercial interests a leading part of Babylonian life.

II. The Prophecies Against Israel's Neighbors: Ezek. 25:1-17.

A. In many ways reminiscent of Amos 1:3 - 2:3.

- 1. Accusation fastens on one point.
- 2. Punishment stated in general terms.

B. Doom of Ammon and Moab--to become the prey of Arab tribes.

- 1. The "side of Moab"; 25:9 - The long line of the mountains of Moab seen from Jerusalem.

C. The instrument of Edom's punishment is to be Israel: 25:14.

- 1. Fulfilled in time of John Hyrcanus: 134-104 B.C.
 - a. Gave them the choice of Judaism or the sword.
- 2. Although many Edomites/Idumeans remembered their origin, they became fanatical Jews.

D. No agent of punishment stated for the Philistines.

- 1. In time of Hashmoneans, after 165 B.C., the former Philistine cities considered themselves as Greek.

III. The Conditional Nature of Prophecy. (If possible consult pp.102-105)

A. In Ezek. 26, Tyre's complete destruction by Nebuchadnezzar is prophesied.

- 1. Destruction to be final and not to be rebuilt: 26:14.
 - a. A lament over Tyre: Ezek. 27.

- b. A lament over its prince and king: Ezek. 28:1-19.
- 2. Sixteen years later, 29:17 with 26:1.
 - a. Announces "no wages from Tyre": 29:18.
 - b. Instead promises spoil from Egypt: 29:19.
- 3. In Ezek. 30:1-19, the results for Egypt.
 - a. Ezek. 29:1-16, a description of Egypt's devastation not directly linked to Nebuchadnezzar's promise.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre from 856 - 573 B.C.
 - 1. Terminated by Ithobaal, the king recognizing Babylon as supreme.
 - 2. In 567 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year, fighting between Babylon and Pharaoh Amasis.
 - a. Cannot be sure he penetrated into Egypt.
 - b. Can safely say he penetrated the border districts of the Delta.
 - c. May have fulfilled Tahpanes prophecy: Jer. 43:8-10.
 - d. Can not say he fulfilled Jer. 43:11 ff; Ezek. 30:1-19; Ezek. 29:10-13.
- C. Tyre taken and destroyed by Alexander the Great: 332 B.C.
 - 1. Eighteen years later, regained much of its former importance.
 - a. Recaptured by Saracens in 1291.
 - b. Dwindled to a fishing village.
 - 2. Argued by some the prophecy of Ezek. 26:14 was fulfilled based on Nebuchadnezzar destroying mainland city and the city Alexander captured was off the original site on an island.
 - 3. It appears however, that Tyre was from the first built on the island.
- D. What is the answer to these problems of prophecy?
 - 1. Jer. 18:7-10: The conditional nature of national prophecy.

- a. Based on conditions present at time of prophecy; if they change, prophecy ceases to be in force.
 - b. Obvious example is Jonah's prophecy to Nineveh. Not fulfilled: Jonah 4:2.
2. Except where God confirmed His promise with an oath, cf. Gen. 22:16; Ps. 105:9; Heb. 6:13, safe in concluding that statements of the future have some conditional qualities in them.
- a. A change of behaviour can annul a prophecy of doom or of prosperity.
 - b. Explains Hezekiah's smugness: Isa. 39:8.
3. Where the prophecy is one of God's purposes of blessing mankind, the element of condition is of time and manner and not of substance.
- a. Example: II Sam. 7:12-16; the sins of his successors caused the fall of the royal house - But Christ fulfilled the essential portion of the promise.
 - b. If one understood this, much error would be done away derived from poor exegesis of prophetic scriptures.
 - c. Daniel and Revelation are classed as apocalyptic with a distinct difference made to prophecy.
4. Prophecy appeals to the free-will of man and the absolute foreknowledge of God is not stressed.
- a. God's foreknowledge and sovereignty never cause Him to ignore man's free-will.
 - b. Apocalyptic reveals God's sovereignty, and is His encouragement of His own in the hour of trial.
5. Note: Where a prophecy was not literally fulfilled, we find it coming into force at a later date in all essentials.
- a. Jonah did not see Nineveh destroyed. However, the Medes and Babylonians destroyed it a century and a half later.
 - b. Babylon not destroyed as Jeremiah 50-51 prophesied but sank in due course of time.
 - c. Tyre not destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar but destroyed 2 1/2 centuries later to only be a fishing village. None can recall the old commercial center.

- d. Egypt never left uninhabited but has become the "basest of all kingdoms" never to be restored in its old pre-eminence.

IV. The Doom of Tyre: Ezek. 26.

A. Be aware of two contrasted errors in study of Scripture:

- 1. Never constantly seek the new and the novel.
- 2. Never be unduly impressed by apparent unanimity of opinion.

B. It is generally agreed that 26:2 portrays Tyre's rejoicing over the fall of a commercial rival. Doubly unacceptable:

- 1. Doubtful that the southern kingdom ever exercised any influence on the trade routes that were Tyre's concern.
- 2. Tyre's trade would be far more seriously threatened by Jerusalem's fall than her continued existence.

- a. Once Babylon controlled the entire Mediterranean coast from the Tarsus range to borders of Egypt, a stranglehold would be exercised on Tyre's trade.

C. Fundamental sin of Egypt was pride: 29:3, 9; insensible to the needs of others: 29:6 f.

- 1. Israel's neighbors condemned for spiritual sins: Ezek. 25.

- a. Ammon: 25:3 and Moab: 25:8 - Included hatred for Israel's religion and position.

- 2. Reasonable to assume Tyre was guilty of the same.

D. Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4: prophesied of when Jerusalem would be a magnet for all people.

- 1. Jerusalem and Tyre stood for two goals, ideals and loyalties which could never be reconciled.

- a. May be "gate" is a pointer to the deeper meaning-- "Babylon is really Babel, or Bab-ili, the Gate of God." p. 106.

- 2. Babylon sought political, commercial and religious supremacy: cf. Dan. 3:1-6.

- a. The destruction of Jerusalem was a joy for all forms of natural religion.

- b. The many nations Tyre looked to to replenish her was to be her doom: 26:3.

From the Library of
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Study Notes on Ezekiel

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To:

Violet Masters

A Christian lady, friend, and secretary.
With deep appreciation for her life, friendship
consistent encouragement in Christ

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important truth, study carefully Acts 15:16ff. (context verses 13-20) and the inspired on of the symbolic interpretation of Amos 9:11-12 and the prophets in the New See also Ezekiel 42:20; 43:1-5, 10-12; 48:35.

Following comparisons should be understood by all who are consistent in their study of

New Testaments:

ing David to be king over them had in view the Christ

come = John the Baptist

OT was faithful priest, a type of faithful priesthood to come

lek order in OT, Christ priesthood in the NT

OT from Levi, priests in NT are all Christians

1 OT was type and shadow, replaced in NT with genuine

it in Jerusalem but everywhere

ah, David foreshadowed Christ and spiritual kingdom

1 OT was typical, replaced by spiritual in NT

1 OT is replaced by the people of God in NT

od in OT is replaced with church of God in NT

God in OT is replaced with church in NT

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Section One: (1:1-3:27)

EZEKIEL IS CHOSEN BY GOD TO BE A PROPHET
Historical Setting (1:1-3)
The Vision of God Appears to Ezekiel (1:4-28)
The Voice of God and the Commission of Ezekiel (2:1-3:27)

Section Two: (4:1-24:27)

THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD:
JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM AND THE PEOPLE
WILL DECLARE IT

The First Series of Symbolic Pictures and Illustrations (4:1-11:25)
Justification for, the Lord's Departure from the Doomed City (8:1-11:25)
Plight of the Nation at the Fall of Jerusalem and the Exile (12:1-19:14)
Imminence of Jerusalem's and Judah's Doom (20:1-24:27)

Section Three: (25:1-32:32)

PROPHETIC MESSAGES TO THE HEATHEN NATIONS
Section Introduction
Messages to Border Nations (25:1-17)
Messages to the Coastal Cities of Tyre and Sidon (26:1-28:25)
Messages to Egypt (29:1-32:32)
Summary Lessons from the Section

Section Four: (33:1-48:35)

(Ibid, p. 1258)

Notes on 29:18 and 28:2

besieged Tyre for thirteen years before it fell in 572 B.C." (Ibid, p. 1259)
in island one-half mile from the Phoenician coast. From the island stronghold, withstand Nebuchadnezzar's siege for thirteen years. As an island fortress it is recognizable for that day" (Ibid, p. 1256).

ON CHAPTERS 38-39

regard it as simply an anticipated history of transactions that were to take place in form and manner here described; or rather as an ideal delineation of what, as to right certainly be expected to happen, though possibly under aspects and relations from those to be found in the prophet's description? For a satisfactory answer we ally to the leading features of the description itself" (Patrick Fairbairn, *An Ezekiel*, p. 421).

real name, and it is associated with an indefinite territory.

under Gog's sway are from the far extremities of the earth and remote from

members spoiling the nation of Israel demand an ideal interpretation (38:12-13).

is of people were to be gathered from the most distant regions of the earth, acting together against all the known principles of human nature; and for what? under a land which could not, had they got all it contained, have been a handful of number—could not have served to maintain the invaders for a single day!"

Israel's victory demand an ideal interpretation. "The word of the adversaries' serve for fuel to all Israel for seven years! And all Israel were to be employed in burying the dead! It would be but a very moderate allowance, on the literal say that a million of men would thus be engaged, and that on an average each row corpses to the tomb in one day; which, for the 180 working days of the seven make an aggregate of 360,000,000 of corpses! Then the putrefaction, the arising from such masses of slain victims before they were all buried! Who ch a time?" (Ibid, p. 423).

difficulty in harmonizing the precise location of the final great battle over evil. Here taking place upon the mountains of Israel, and covering the whole land with the 34 "we have, to all appearance, the same controversy of the Lord's judgment upon ies, when his indignation is to be upon all the nations, and his fury upon all the again, it takes place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, or the valley of decision (chap. 20) around the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Thus we have distinct localities, each represented as the scene of a last conflict, ending in a final cause of God over the leagued hostility of the world. If held to be literal they of course mutually destroy one another; for the localities being different (as the accompanying circumstances), they must either be ideal delineations under of what was to happen, or they are literal and contradictory descriptions" (Ibid,

ated revelation (New Testament), and the figures employed demand a spiritual not a carnal kingdom. Where is the church told to arm herself? Are elders the litary battle? Is the kingdom to be advanced by the sword? (Eph. 6:10-20). When ment in the Divine character came thereby into fuller manifestation, and, as a sequence, everything carnal fell into the background" (Ibid, p. 424).

erry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 435, writes: "Chapters xxxvii and xxxix contain the

Part I: General Introduction

I. Purpose: These notes are not meant to be exhaustive but to brief introduction and overview of the book and its content that the student may have a beginning point for a textual s Book of Ezekiel.

II. Ezekiel and His Work

- A. We know very little about his personal life apart from himself.
- B. He was the son of Buzi, and a priest (1:3); he was his wife died the day the city of Jerusalem was besieged 15-18).
- C. What Jeremiah was doing for the cause of truth in J Ezekiel was doing in Babylon.
- D. At the arrival of Ezekiel, Daniel had been in Babylon years and had gained considerable recognition (Eze Ezekiel's work extended over a period of some 22 years.
- E.
 1. It began in the 5th year of Jehoiachin's exile, dated 592/3 B.C. (1:1-2).
 2. His last dated prophecy is considered to be a B.C. (29:17).
- F. Ezekiel was a priest as well as a prophet.
 1. His mission was to show the exiles that their caused the captivity and that the destruction of the temple was evidence of God's wrath and the disobedient nation (1:1-24:27).
 2. His prophecies against the surrounding nation them that they too are subject to God (25:1-30:26).
 3. With prophetic hope he points those in captivity in the future when they will return home God will send his servant "David," pour out the house of Israel, and abide with them forever (33:1-48:35).
- G. False prophets among the exiles promise them a return to Jerusalem, where Hananiah reports from Jerusalem, where Hananiah reports from Babylonian yoke will be broken in two years; encourage the exiles to have a false hope for return.
 1. When Jeremiah writes a letter that they should and prepare for a 70-year period of exile, the prophets become more active (Jer. 29).
 2. Shemaiah writes back to Jerusalem charging

END NOTES

found a number of sources cited in the notes to be most helpful in getting the book of Ezekiel and wish to express gratitude to the authors and others cited.

They Shall Know ...” (80 proof texts)

BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

(38 times)

for, whether they will bear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there is propitiation among them.

Let mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted; and they shall the LORD have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
I shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

can ye know us? I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every hill, upon every high place, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer to all their idols.

I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblah,

ye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smelleth.

shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be laid unto them after their way and according to their devices.

fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

shall know that I am the LORD: for ye, have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have manners of the heathen that are round about you.

They shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the

will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their
among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I am the

the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged:

5, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD.

and shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people.

all they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall

the Lord GOD.

break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the

col shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that

chiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be

shall know that I am the LORD.

ye shall see no more vanity, nor ^{divine}divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall

the LORD.

set my lace against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of

ye shall know that I am the LORD.

shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without

have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them: and we shall know

AND, WHEN I set my face against them,

renewed my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD:

...gruives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and

that I shall have spoken to,

the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have

[illegible]

1. The glory of the Lord enters the new temple as it had adapted from the old (43:1-5; 9:5-10:18-22; 41:22-25).
2. The MESSAGE given is one of holy obedience (43:6-12; read verses 10 through 12).
3. The altar of burnt offering is described and dedicated (43:13-27).

a. The description of the altar (43:13-17)

b. The dedication of the altar (43:18-27)

c. Question: Was Christ's sacrifice temporary and was the old Mosaic system to be re-instituted?

- (1) To answer "yes" is to contradict the NT (Heb. 9-10).
- (2) To answer "no" is to demand a symbolic and/or figurative interpretation of these verses.

Organization of the people around the most important item to their well-being—the temple unto which the Spirit of God had returned (44:1-46:24).

1. The position of the prince and the priests (44:1-13)

- a. The prince (44:1-3)
- b. The uncircumcised in heart and flesh excluded (44:4-9)
- c. The place of the genuine Levites (44:10-16)

2. The conduct and support of the priests (44:17-51)

- a. Both service and conduct to be beyond reproach (44:17-22)
- b. To be engaged in teaching and upholding truth (44:23-27)
- c. The inheritance and support of the priests (44:28-31)

The position of the land in relationship to the sanctuary, city, priest, and prince (45:1-8)

The demand for justice and not oppression (45:9-12)

Sacrifices and sacred days (45:13-46:15)

- a. The people's offering for the prince (45:13-17)
- b. The sin offering of the first month (45:18-20)
- c. Sacrifices at the Passover and the feast of tabernacles (45:21-25)
- d. Sacrifices for the Sabbath and the new moon (46:1-8)
- e. Opening of the temple for the people and prince (46:9-12)

f. The daily sacrifice (46:13-15)

The limitation of the prince's disposition of his property (46:16-18)

II.

The Vision of God Appears to Ezekiel (1:4-28).
A. The "storm cloud" appears (1:4).
B. The four living creatures are described (1:5-14)

1. In general, like a man, but with some exceptions—
2. He describes their—

- a. Faces (man, lion, ox, eagle)
- b. Wings (four, with two touching and two spread)
- c. Feet (like calf's foot)
- d. Appearance (like burning coals and fire)
- e. Movement (Like a flash of lightning)

C. Wheels (1:15-21) "full of eyes round about"
1. One before the face of each living creature
2. The color was like beryl (yellow, green, blue, red)

3. The appearance was as a wheel within a wheel
4. Movement could be in any direction without turning
5. One spirit controlled the movement—all acted in unison

D. From the firmament above the living creatures is seen the likeness of God, and His voice is heard by Ezekiel

1. The expanse was over the wings of the living creatures
2. As movement occurred, it was like the voice of Almighty.
3. When movement ceased, the living creatures stood with wings as they stood; (they seemed to stand ere movement occurred)

4. From above the expanse was seen the likeness with the likeness of a man.

5. There was a brightness about as of fire and the rainbow.

6. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the Jehovah."

- a. Ezekiel fell upon his face when he saw it.
- b. Ezekiel heard the voice of one that spake.

It has been suggested that in this vision we have emphasized: Majesty, Order, Activity, and Person

8. The wheels of divine government or providence work. Behind the seen world is the unseen power
9. The fiery storm of refining judgment upon the world

Ezekiel is to take place.

III.

The Voice of God and the Commission of Ezekiel (2:1-3:27)

- A. Son of man, go to the rebellious house, the house with its stiffhearted children (2:1-7)

23)

David is to be king over them forever. (37:24-25, 34-22)

An everlasting covenant is to be established and GBU is to
 with them forever and proposed to place his abemacle
 and sanctuary with them (24:6-28) QUESTION: Is this
 their 6 symbolic?

Acis 15-18 is inspired commentary upon what God had in mind. See also Amos 9: 1-13.

Symbolically described are the restored and united nation's conflicts, and God's deliverance (38:1-39:29).

The symbolic interpretation is demanded for if not absurd conclusions are drawn (39:9-10, 12-13).

The hordes of Gog are assembled (38:1-9).

Gog attacks peaceful Israel, and God's defense of Israel and defeat of Gog sanctifies God before them (38:10-16). The destruction of Gog manifests to the nation the justice and supremacy of Jehovah (38:17-23).

Gog is to be defeated upon the mountains of Israel (39:1-8).

Israel will need seven (7) years to burn the weapons of the foe and seven (7) months to bury the dead (39:9-16). The hide and the

The birds and beasts are to be filled with the slain enemy as the land is purged from evil, and the name of God is vindicated among Israel and the nations (39:17-24).

God's disciplinary actions and future blessings, which are promised, are to vindicate His holy name before Israel and the nations, and to usher in the day when He will pour out His spirit upon them (39:25-29).⁴

is broken. Saw Describing the Final and Ultimate Temple of
[Q1-#48-32]

on Introductions

These visions expand the concept of God returning to bless and to be with His people forever (48:35; 43:1-9; see 9:3; 11:23; 37:24-28; 39:25-29).

With the return will come also blessings to the nations (47:1-12).

In the church/kingdom (temple of the Lord) blessings are available for all (1 Pet. 2:4-10; Eph. 2:14-22; 1 Cor. 3:9; 11; Heb. 12:18-29).

Consider Amos 9:11-12 and the inspired interpretation of the symbolic passages of the prophets in Acts 15:13-20.

Section Two: (4:1-24:27)

THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD
JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM AND THE PEOPLE
WILL DECLARE IT

I. The First Series of Symbolic Pictures and Illustrations (4:1-

A. Four symbolic pictures (4:1–5:4)

1. Jerusalem besieged (4:1-3)

- a. It is to be portrayed upon a tile.
 - b. It is to be a sign to the house of Israel.
2. The prophet's posture (4:4-8)
- a. With the prophet symbolically received experienced by the nation.
Israel, 390 days; Judah, 40 days (total=430 days)
 - b. The lesson: the nation must bear its iniquity
 - c. The prophet is also to prophesy against the nation (4:7)²

c. Pressing the literal figures may create problems. 1:1-2 the date is the 5th year, 4th month, 1st day. In 8:1 the date is given as the 6th year, 1st month and the 5th day, this is 14 months. The 14th day month multiplied by 14 months we have 420 days.

3. The prophet's food (4:9-17)

- a. The famine conditions are depicted in the *Book of Lamentations* (1:1-22).
- b. The famine conditions are depicted in the *Book of Isaiah* (16:1-14).
- c. The application is to Jerusalem, besieged and wasting away in her iniquity (4:16-17). If such food is eaten it means that Ezekiel is defiled (Deut. 14:3; 13:1-5; 23:12-14).
- d. The application is to Jerusalem, besieged and wasting away in her iniquity (4:16-17). If such food is eaten it means that Ezekiel is defiled (Deut. 14:3; 13:1-5; 23:12-14).

months hair (5.1=4) 91.7

~~The prophets hair (5:1-4)~~

a. Some to be burned, representing those who
chez les nazis
the siege of the city.

- b. Some smitten with the sword round about th
 - c. Some to be scattered to the wind
 - d. A very few bound in his skirt, and even fro
- them some were destroyed in the fires of jud
- These are the ones in Babylon with Ezekiel.
- B. The judgment upon the nation elucidated (5:5-7:27)
1. The chosen nation has forsaken her purpose and m
- held accountable to the One who chose her purpose and m

not be. See Numbers 24:17-19.

As all the world was being taken captive by the Babylonians, the message of God's prophets gave an unmistakable interpretation of why the captivity and destruction of all the nations occurred. What about the false philosophy of the survival of the fittest?

Section Four: (33:1-48:35) MESSAGES CONCERNING THE RESTORATION THE NATION DELIVERED AFTER NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAD TAKEN JERUSALEM

Nation's Future (33:1-39:29) *the Watchman's Job*

Ezekiel is shown to be a true prophet/watchman to a disobedient people (33:1-29).

1. The duty of a watchman is specified (33:1-6).

2. The reappointment of Ezekiel as the nation's watchman (33:7-9).

3. The people are rebuked for denying the justice of God and are shown the importance of individual responsibility (33:10-20). *The Sovereign's Word*

The fall of the city of Jerusalem is reported and the prophetic office is restored (33:21-22).

An escapee from Jerusalem confirms the destruction to Ezekiel and the captives, the date being 12th year, 10th month, the 5th day (33:21-22). *City taken*
the 11th year and 4th month, burned on the 5th day.
(The nation remains in Babylon and Babel (33:23-33).
"The land is ours," says the nation; "Not in disobedience," says the Lord (33:23-29). *of Jer. 7:14 - the temple*
They reign to be interested in Ezekiel's Jehovah's words
but do not obey them (33:30-33).

bad shepherds of Israel are condemned and their removal
punished (34:1-10). See Jeremiah 2:8; 23:1-8; Deuteronomy
14:20.

The shepherds' sins (34:1-6)

The shepherds' removal (34:7-10)

var' premises to be their the shepherd - searching
sheep and judging them properly (34:11-22).

34:11 will appoint one shepherd over them - David and he
shepherd and bless the one flock (34:23-31).

Note that Jehovah is to be the shepherd
and that David is to be the shepherd.

Note that there is to be but one flock.

rebuilding the nation's that

6th year, 6th month, 5th day

The vision is at Ezekiel's house and before
Judah (8:1).

3. The supernatural elements of the vision are
(3).

4. In the vision Ezekiel is transported to the
Jerusalem and sees the manifestation of the
as he had in the plain in the earlier vision (1
The contamination of the temple is forcing the Lo
(8:5-6).

1. Ezekiel is shown the object of the Lord's jea
2. The abominations are the cause of the Lord's
from the sanctuary (8:6).

D. God shows Ezekiel their idolatrous practices (8:7-1
1. The picture of the elders' idolatry (8:7-13)
a. Ezekiel is positioned so that he might c
practices (7-9).

b. Ezekiel is shown them practicing their i
c. The elders of Israel are seen worshipping
of creatures and abominable things (11-
d. The elders falsely assume that God does
that He has forsaken the land (12-13).

2. The picture of women weeping for Tammuz (8
3. The picture of men worshipping the sun (8:16).
4. The corruption of the people is bringing the wr
upon them (8:17-18).

E. God shows Ezekiel that idolatry will be purged from t
(9:1-11).

1. The servants who execute the judgment are calle
forth (9-1-2).

2. The innocent are marked and spared (9:3-4).

3. The guilty are removed (9:5-7)

4. Ezekiel intercedes and the Lord answers (9:8-10)
a. Ezekiel fears that all will be destroyed and
to God (8).

b. God explains that the guilt is great and that
reward them according to their evil deeds (9

c. They will learn that the Lord is in the land
He sees their evil (9).

5. The man clothed in linen (the one in charge) retur
stating: "I have done as thou hast commanded me"

F. God manifests Himself to Ezekiel at the temple to judge
and to reveal his departure from the temple (10:1-22).

4. Lamentation over the fall of the King of Tyre (28:11-19)
 - a. Blessed as Eden of God
 - b. A terror to all, but now gone forever

Sidon (28:20-26)

1. Sidon is to be punished but not to the extent of the other nations and cities.
2. Following such judgments Israel is to return home and dwell securely, "and they shall know that I am Jehovah. . ." (28:25-26).

ages to Egypt (29:1-32:32)

The setting and commission (29:1-2)

1. In 10th year, 10th month, and 12th day, 587 B.C.
2. Prophecy against Egypt.

The judgment of God upon Pharaoh and his people and land (29:3-16)

1. Egypt's pride and token support of Israel in rebellion means that they will be plucked from the security of their land (29:3-7).
 2. Egypt will not be totally destroyed but will be restored to a lowly kingdom (29:8-16).
- Nebuchadrezzar will plunder Egypt; God has given him Egypt as a reward for plundering Tyre (29:17-21).

The time is the 27th year, the 1st month, in the 1st day, 571 B.C., Jerusalem fell in 586 and the siege began in 588 (9/10/10)

This is the latest dated prophecy in the book and is not in chronological order.

He also foretold of the revival of Israel's strength at this same time (29:21).

Judgment upon Egypt will be swift and complete (30:1-26). Judgment upon Egypt and her allies is announced (30:1-5). Nebuchadrezzar and his people are announced (30:6-9). executors of the judgment (30:10-12).

The vengeance of the Lord upon Egypt is further described (30:13-19).

The arm of Pharaoh is to be broken by Nebuchadrezzar (30:20-26).

- a. Date of this prophecy is the 11th year, 1st month, 7th day (30:20).
- b. They shall know . . .

te of Assyria (the great cedar) is a warning to Pharaoh

- e. will with their new heart is stated (God's promise to bring evil upon th Jerusalem and the land (21)
3. The Spirit of God departs the city and return vision) to the captives in Babylon (11:22-23)
4. Ezekiel describes to the captives the things shown him (11:25).

III. Additional Prophetic Visions Depicting the Plight of the Fall of Jerusalem and the Ensuing Captivity (12:1-19:14)

A. Historical setting

1. These prophecies likely came in the time span of eleven months' period suggested by 8:1 and God, in judgment upon the nation, is seeking false confidence of the nation, and bring it to repentance.
2. Consider the introductory remarks in 12:1-2; 14:1-3; 20:1.
3. It would seem from what is presented in this s the earlier prophecies and messages had little effect on the nation in general.
4. Pictures of the people confronted with exile (12:1-23)

B.

1. A Rebellious House (12:1-2) See Eze. 1:1-3
2. Ezekiel is to symbolize a house preparing for ex
 - a. Preparation by day
 - b. Exit by night through the hole in the wall
 - c. Explanation and interpretation: This symbolizes the plight of the prince in Jerusalem and those as they are captured and taken into exile (see Jer. 39:1ff.; 52:4ff.; II Kings 25:4ff.).

Ezekiel is to symbolize a house which takes refuge in fear and trembling (12:17-20)

- a. Again Ezekiel is to symbolize the action (12:17-20)
- b. The symbol explained and applied: This is the symbol of the people at the conquest of the nation t Babylon (18-20).

A house which refuses to heed the prophetic warning (12:21-28; see Jer. 23:9; 5:31; 6:14; 14:13; 28:2-4, 9, 21).

- a. The false proverb: "The days are prolonged, every vision faileth" (12:22).
- b. The truth: "There shall none of my words be deferred any more, but the word which I shall

sanctuary, the pride of her power, and desire of their eyes, and that no pity is to be expressed (24:20-24).

c. "When this cometh, then shall ye know that I am the Lord Jehovah" (24:24).

d. The news will come to Ezekiel by one of the refugees, and the restriction placed upon his speaking will be removed (24:25-27, see 33:21-22).

Section Three: (25:1-32:32)

PHETIC MESSAGES TO THE HEATHEN NATIONS

1. Introduction

See Isaiah 13-23 and Jeremiah 46-51 for other prophetic messages to the nations.

2. Nation overview

Messages to border nations

- Ammon (descending from Lot)
- Moab (descending from Lot)
- Edom (descending from Esau)
- Philistia

Messages to Tyre and Sidon

Messages to Egypt

Noticeably absent is any condemnation of Babylon. Study should be made of Daniel and other prophets upon this point.

Messages to Border Nations (25:1-17)

Ammon (25:1-7)
Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy against them, because—
They rejoiced at the downfall of the sanctuary and house of God, as well as the land of Israel.

The religious overtones are obvious and equaled joy at the defeat of God (3, 6).

They and their land would also be delivered to the east (4-5, 7)

"They shall know that I am Jehovah" (7).

Moab and Seir rejected the divine role of Israel (8).

Their cities will be given to those of the east (9-11).
"They shall know that I am Jehovah" (11).

Edom had not only rejoiced at the fall of the house of

Judah but had participated in attacking it (12). See Obadiah; Amos 1:11-12; Psalm 137:7; Ezekiel 35:5).

- (1) Men with idols in their hearts ()
 - (2) These will be answered accordingly multitude of their idols (4-5)
- b. The call for repentance (14:6-11)
- (1) Those refusing to repent will be the people (6-8).
 - (2) The deceptive prophet will be an error of his way so that he and his false prophecies will hasten destruction, and by so doing make separation of good and evil become (9-11). Consider the following: I 2:11-12; I Kings 22:1-40; I Sam 28:1-17

~~7. A house with false hope that a few righteous will save it from destruction (14:12-23)~~

- a. The false hope refuted: The good of others (Noah, Daniel, and Job—would not be at the assigned judgment (12-20) "Noah saved his family along with himself; Daniel was at his friends (Dan. ii, 17, 18); but Job, with righteousness, was not able to save his children" (Keil I, p. 186). See Jeremiah 15:1-4.
- b. The application to Jerusalem (14:21-23)

- (1) Jerusalem identified (21)
- (2) The four sore judgments of sword, evil beasts, and pestilence are cited (Rev. 6).
- (3) The remnant coming to the exiles will manifest the truth that God did not cause (22-23).

~~8. A house whose value is the same as the useless wild vine (15:1-8)~~

- a. The allegory of the vine (15:1-5)
- (1) The vine is compared with the trees forest (1-4).
- (2) The uselessness of the vine is shown

- (a) When it was whole, it was no
- (b) Much less, when it is burned!

- b. The application to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (15:6-8)
- (1) No doubt this was given to refute the idea and hope of Israel's favored position was conditional.

- b. Restoration will come, not according to her doings, but for His Name's sake (20:40-44).
- Fire and sword: judgment is imminent (20:45-21:32).
1. Fire in the South (20:45-49)
 - a. This is judgment on Judah, and it is God who has kindled the fire.
 - b. She denies its coming, saying: "Is he not a speaker of parables?" (49)
 2. The sword of the Lord is drawn, and none can withstand it (21:1-32).
 - a. The sword is drawn, and the effects are disastrous (21:1-7).
 - b. The sword is sharpened and polished and is set for the destruction of Jerusalem (21:8-17).
 - c. The sword of the Lord (the instrument is the King of Babylon) will smite Jerusalem and then Ammonites (21:18-23).
 - d. The prince of Israel will be overthrown (21:24-27).
 - e. The Ammonites will be destroyed at the same invasion (21:18-32).
 - (1) Anyone who tries to withstand is nothing but fuel for the fire (32).
 - (2) Ammon will again be cited for destruction, in Ezekiel 25:1-7.

The sins of Jerusalem and Israel enumerated (22:1-31)

1. The indictment (22:1-6)
 - a. General: bloodshed and idolatry (1-5)
 - b. Abominable acts associated with the departure from God (6-12)
 - c. Judah to be purged when scattered among the nations (13-16).
2. Israel is to be refined in the furnace of besieged Jerusalem (22:17-22).
3. Her prophets, her priests, her princes, her people—all are corrupt (22:23-31).
 - a. Prophets (25, 28)
 - b. Priests (26)
 - c. Princes (27)
 - d. People (29)
 - e. NOT A MAN COULD BE FOUND TO OFFER OPPOSITION (30)

Shohah (Samaria, capital of Israel of the North) and Oholibah (Jerusalem, capital of Judah of the South) are twin sisters in

- (1) The restoration of Israel will be the restoration of Sodom, Sam Philistia, etc.
 - (2) These heathen nations stand for general.
 - (3) The only hope any have is in the Christ (Eph. 1:25; Gal. 3:26-29; Acts 8:5ff, 11:25-36, 32).
10. ~~A house whose hope is seen to be false, whose neighboring kings and sons will see the truth, God (17:1-24)~~
- a. A parable set forth (17:1-10)
 - (1) The great eagle
 - (2) The cropping of the top of the tree and carrying it to the land of Mesopotamia
 - (3) The planted seed of the land and subjected growth depicted
 - (4) The second eagle
 - (5) The vine turns its roots and branches to the second for sustenance.
 - (6) A series of questions designed to show the folly of the action of the vine, and its destruction.
 - b. The interpretation and application of the parable (17:11-21), see introduction notes for setting.
 - (1) The great eagle is the King of Babylon
 - (2) The cropped Lebanon cedar is the Kingdom of Judah (Jehoiachin) taken to Babylon
 - (3) The planted seed represents the restoration of Judah as subjected king in Jerusalem
 - (4) The second eagle is the King of Babylon
 - (5) The branches and roots turned to the second eagle represent Zedekiah's rebellion against God and the King of Babylon (52:1-11; II Chron. 36:9ff.).
 - (6) When the vine is destroyed, the observer will know that it was the word of the Lord (18-21).
 - c. God promises that He Himself will also crop the top of the Lebanon cedar (royal house of David) and plant it, and it will exceed all other trees.

JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL SYMBOLIZED – II

(Ezekiel 4:1-5:17)

Joseph D. Meador

THE CONTEXT OF EZEKIEL 4 AND 5

When Ezekiel was given his prophetic commission by God (cf. Ezekiel 2:1-3:27), he was told to go to the rebellious house – the house with impudent and stiff-hearted children (cf. Ezekiel 2:1-7). This rebellious house represented the disobedient children of Israel, to whom he was to speak “thus saith the Lord” (cf. 2:2-4). God informed Ezekiel that regardless of whether the people repented or not, “They shall know that there has been a prophet among them” (cf. 2:5). Further, Ezekiel was told not to fear them or their words (cf. 2:6-7). Finally, Ezekiel was promised strength for his service to God (cf. 3:4-15), as he served as the Lord’s “watchman” to the people of Judah (cf. 3:16-21).

As the opening chapters of Ezekiel present the preparation of the prophet as commissioned by the Lord, the first three chapters are important as the foundation is provided for understanding the Lord’s judgment upon Jerusalem. This latter section comprises chapters four through twenty-four of the book of Ezekiel. Specifically, the purpose of this lecture is to focus on Ezekiel chapters four and five. These two chapters are the doorway by which one enters into the first series of symbolic prophecies of Ezekiel, i.e., The Prophet’s Portrayal, 4:1-3; The Prophet’s Position, 4:4-8; The Prophet’s Provision, 4:9-17; and, The Prophets Purging, 5:1-4. Indeed, there is great benefit to studying each of these sections of Scripture. In addition, great spiritual lessons are contained in these passages for Gospel preachers, as well as for every member of Christ’s church.

THE PROPHET’S PORTRAYAL, 4:1-3

In Ezekiel 4:1-3, the prophet was told by God to portray the city of Jerusalem as a clay tile (v. 1). He was then to draw a battle diagram depicting an attack against the city by a military foe (v. 2). The Lord told Ezekiel to be explicit in his portrayal, including a “fort” (lit. a siege wall) and a mound or mound built by the enemy against the outer wall. In verse three, God told Ezekiel to take an iron “pan” (lit. a flat plate of metal used to bake a thin cake of bread, cf. Leviticus 2:5), and to place the metal plate

between himself and the military diagram of Jerusalem. As such, the metal plate represented a “wall of iron.” There are three common views with regard to this metal pan. First, some view it as symbolic of the wall around Jerusalem, in which the Jews trusted. Second, some view it as symbolic of the severity of the persecution Jerusalem endured. Third, others view the pan as representing the iron-like barrier which had arisen between God and Israel.

Next, Ezekiel, in representation of divine judgment, was told to set his face against the city of Jerusalem as portrayed. Once done, he was told to lay siege to it. Ezekiel was to play the role of the attacking army of Babylon, and by so doing symbolized God’s judgment upon the city. When the congregation of Israel was ready to listen to Ezekiel, the prophet explained his actions (cf. vv. 1-3) and their subsequent meaning in Ezekiel 5:5-7:27.

SW

A LIFE WITHOUT GOD

Al Macias

Have you ever stopped to think how your life might have turned out if you had made different decisions? What if you had married someone other than the person that you did marry, or what if you had studied and prepared yourself for a very different kind of work than that which you are now doing. What if you and your mate had never had children – how would life be? There are so many “ifs” in life that it is not profitable to be thinking on those things, especially since they are in the past. Just as it is not profitable to think of the “what-ifs,” it is also unprofitable to make all sorts of plans without including God in them. In James 4:13-17, we have some instruction as to what God expects from all of us while we journey through this life on earth. In this passage we read, “Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings; all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

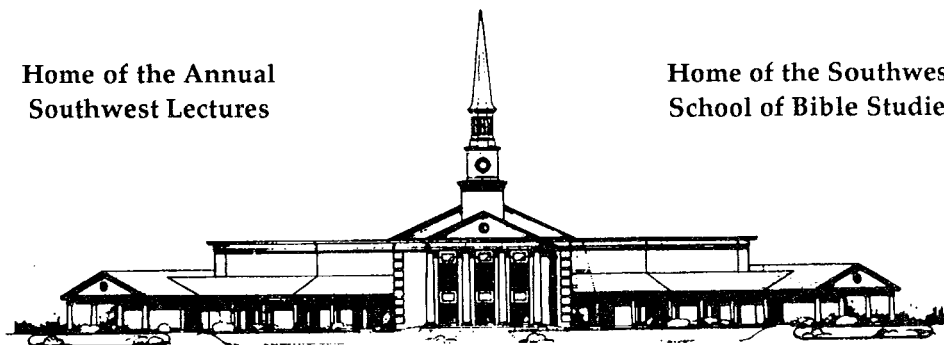
What seemed to have been the problem of those who James was addressing here? And what did James

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THE SOUTHWESTERN

Home of the Annual
Southwest Lectures

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School of Bible Studies



Published weekly in the interest of New Testament Christianity by the Southwest church of Christ in Austin, Texas

MARK YOUR CALENDAR – APRIL 13-16, 1997

Gary Colley

The time is fast approaching for the Annual Southwest Bible Lectures 1997! Plans have been in progress for over a year; speakers have been preparing their lessons; many hours of work have been given by members of the Southwest church of Christ. We do not want a single soul who has an interest in the Lord's church to miss these fine lessons! We trust that you are making your plans, marking your calendar, and looking forward to the Southwest Annual Lectureship!

ON THE LORD'S DAY

April 13-16 (second full week in April) are the times that have been set aside since 1982 for the general public to attend the lectureship. All members at Southwest look forward to this time when we can work together for the success of this Bible Lectureship. It is a thrill to see our friends come each year from the local sister congregations, over our nation, and even from foreign lands. There is such a wonderful attitude that prevails when all have come together to learn, to make new friendships, and to enjoy fellowship in the Gospel with one another, as we give diligence "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1), through preaching "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2). We are hopeful that all will announce our plans by every avenue at your disposal!

AREA-WIDE SINGING

Again this year we are planning a congregational pot-luck dinner at the Southwest building following the morning worship services. All visitors from afar in attendance for the morning ser-

vice are considered our special guests and are invited to remain for this dinner.

Following this meal, we invite all to come together for the AREA-WIDE SINGING at 2:00 p.m. This has proven to be a great addition to the enjoyment of the Lectureship, when Christians from many places blend their voices in worshipful praise to our Heavenly Father! You will not want to miss this bountiful time of singing! We have so many things for which to be thankful, so we are hopeful you will also be a part of this service of praise in song!

EXPECTATION MOUNTING!

It takes the best efforts of all the members at Southwest to be sure that the lectureship is conducted smoothly. And, we are thankful to say that the interest of the membership at Southwest is always ready for the preparation and carrying out of these duties! Great anticipation is increasing as the announcements go out, the speakers arrive, the displays are set up, and our visitors arrive! We are always delighted to make every attempt to show our hospitality and to make our visitors comfortable.

NEED HELP FOR RESERVATIONS?

If you need to make reservations for your stay in Austin, call our office, (512) 282-2486, today for either space in the homes of Southwest members or for information concerning local motels. Hook-ups are available on our parking lot for vans and campers. All in all, WE WILL BE LOOKING FOR YOU TO ATTEND THE SOUTHWEST LECTURESHIP, 1997!

SW

plans to be present for every service possible, as well as enjoying the special events during the week! You will not be sorry for the time taken for this spiritual feast, and it well could mean enlarging and undergirding your hope of Heaven at last!

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JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL SYMBOLIZED – III

(Ezekiel 4:1-5:17)

Joseph D. Meador

THE PROPHET'S POSITION, 4:4-8

In Ezekiel 4:4-8, the prophet is now given the symbolic role of representing the apostate nation of Israel. In verse 4, God commanded Ezekiel to lie on his left side in order to represent God's judgment upon Israel. As one commentator has observed:

"In 4:1-3 Ezekiel impersonated Jerusalem's enemies; his role is now reversed. Here Ezekiel symbolizes the apostate people of God. He is to lie first on his left side, then on his right side, to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The Oriental habit was to face eastward when indicating points of the compass. Facing east one has north on his left side and south on his right. Hence, the left side represented the House of Israel, the Northern Kingdom which had been carried captive in 722 B.C. The right side symbolized the house of Judah, the Southern Kingdom, which was in its dying days at the moment Ezekiel received this revelation. The number of days which the prophet spent on each side symbolized the number of years which each kingdom had stood under the condemnation of God." (James Smith, *Commentary on Ezekiel*, p. 96)

In verse 5, the time indicated seems not to represent the time of Israel's sinning, but rather the period of time during which the people of God had been or would be punished for their sins. The longer number of years required in the punishment of the Northern Kingdom of Israel indicated the greater guilt of that nation. These principles seem clear; however, one must be cautious in seeking to press

the literal figures into a set or literal meaning beyond that which is clearly evident in the text.

In verse 6, Ezekiel was told now to lie on his right side, as in so doing he would symbolically bear the sins of the house of Judah some forty days. In verse 7, Ezekiel was commanded to set his face toward the siege of Jerusalem. In essence, Ezekiel was to look upon the tile which depicted the besieged city. This seems to indicate a divine steadfastness of purpose on the part of the Lord. In verse 8, the Lord prevented Ezekiel from turning from one side to another during the period of this part of his symbolic prophecy.

THE PROPHET'S PROVISION, 4:9-17

In Ezekiel 4:9-17, the prophet is presented with a warning concerning the coming famine, which would consume the city of Jerusalem. Indeed, a careful study of this context reveals that two thoughts are to be distinguished. First, there is the issue of the famine itself (cf. vv. 9-11, 16, 17). Second, there is the issue of the ritual uncleanness involved in eating such food in a foreign land (cf. vv. 12-15). As such, six divine commands were given to Ezekiel regarding his own personal diet. Such a diet was to be symbolic in regard to the coming famine as well as pertaining to Judah's eating of ritually impure food.

In verse 9, six different types of food grain are given. These included wheat, barley, beans (p^{ol}), lentils, millet and fitches (spelt). These grains were put into one vessel. Although the Torah forbade the sowing of mixed seeds (cf. Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:9), perhaps the act of mixing these grains and seeds in flour would not fall under such prohibition. Nevertheless, such an act depicted the scarcity of basic food grains as flour had to be made with combined seeds as one grain source was not plentiful on its own.

In verse 10, Ezekiel is seen as being restricted to one meal per day totaling twenty shekels in weight. Twenty shekels equals about a nine-ounce serving or portion. Again, this serves to illustrate the severity of the coming famine.

In verse 11, Ezekiel is told that he would be rationed water by the measure of a sixth of a hin, which is approximately two pints.

In verses 12-13, the multi-grain flour was to be made in the fashion of a barley cake. It was to be prepared by a fire which was fueled with human dung. To Ezekiel, brought up as a priest, human excrement was too revolting.

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THE SOUTHWESTERNER

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Published weekly in the interest of New Testament Christianity by the Southwest church of Christ in Austin, Texas

ARE YOU PLANNING TO ATTEND? WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOU, APRIL 13-16, 1997!

Gary Colley

It is an enjoyable pleasure to be a part of the Southwest Annual Lectureship each year! All of the visitors can see the abundant loving attitude of the members of the Southwest church of Christ, who are willing and ready to go the "second mile" to make our guests comfortable and the Bible preaching a great success! The excitement grows as the displays are put into place, the speakers arrive, the recording equipment is set up, the campers and RVs take their parking places, and even one who generally sets up his tent on the beautiful grounds of the Southwest church building.

ENJOYABLE TIMES

In addition to all of the excellent speakers one may hear during the lectureship, and the periods of singing Monday through Wednesday evenings (6:15-6:45), we look forward to the Area-Wide Singing, Sunday at 2:00 p.m.! We thank our Heavenly Father for placing singing in the church for the good of His children (Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16-17). Nothing lifts our hearts and expresses our unity more than great singing! With all the "sweet singers of Israel" gathering at the appointed time, we know that the singing will be edifying, admonishing, and uplifting. It is a privilege and pleasure to be present with this great number on this Sunday afternoon for this time of worship!

SWSBS APPRECIATION DINNER

It is always an enjoyable occasion to attend the Southwest School of Bible Studies Dinner under

the big tent! The food is so enjoyable, and there is always an intriguing speaker that lightens and enlightens our hearts. Just being together in this relaxed atmosphere, usually out among the bluebonnets, is pleasant beyond description. It is a time of appreciation for those faithful brethren who have shown such prayerful and financial interest in the important training of men to preach the Gospel of Christ. And it is a time for support and appreciation to be expressed to the Southwest elders and members; to brother Joseph D. Meador, who directs this fine work; and to all of the teachers who labor so diligently in the school! It gives us an opportunity to say thank you to all for the prayers, support, and encouragement!

PLAN TO BE PRESENT

We are writing these articles to encourage each and every soul who reads this bulletin, to make their plans to attend the Southwest Annual Lectureship, April 13-16, 1997! When the last prayer is prayed, closing out this year's lectureship, it will be too late for you to come and enjoy these events with us! True, you may obtain the lectureship book, hear the tapes, or view the videos (and we hope all who cannot come will obtain these), but you will miss so much if you are not a part, in person, of the Southwest Bible Lectureship 1997! May God bless you with the strength of His Word to help you make your

(Continued on page 2)

JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL SYMBOLIZED – IV

(Ezekiel 4:1–5:17)

Joseph D. Meador

THE PROPHET'S PURGING, 5:1-4

In Ezekiel 5:1-4, the Lord commanded the prophet to shave his head and face with a sword (the sword was used as a barber's razor). In the Hebrew Scriptures, shaving the head was a sign of catastrophe (cf. Isaiah 7:20; Jeremiah 41:5). Indeed, the sharp sword seems to represent the invading Babylonian army.

In verse 1, although the shaving of the head was forbidden in the Torah (cf. Leviticus 19:27; 21:5), the act was regarded, in certain examples, as a sign of lamentation (cf. Isaiah 3:24; 22:12). In addition, such shaving was forbidden to a priest (like Ezekiel) as the hair of the priest served to mark his sanctification to the Lord (Leviticus 21:5; 19:27). After shaving his head and face, Ezekiel was to divide his shorn hair by weight with balances.

In verse 2, Ezekiel is told to divide his hair in thirds. This action represented the fate of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They were to be burned, slain, and scattered. The phrase "and I will draw out a sword after them" indicates the completeness of the destruction as God's sword would pursue those that fled the city of Jerusalem.

In verse 3, Ezekiel was commanded to bind some of the hair in the hem of his garment. These hairs, presumably from those that had been scattered, seem to represent a saved remnant which the prophet would keep close to him in his garment. In essence, a remnant of those carried off to exile would survive (cf. Ezekiel 6:8-10; 9:8; 11:13).

In verse 4, Ezekiel is told to take some of the hair from the hem of his garment and cast them into the fire. Such seems to represent that from a small remnant some will be destroyed leaving a smaller remnant to be saved in the end.

CONCLUSION

In Ezekiel 5:5-17, the Lord presents his teaching regarding the judgment upon the nation of Israel. In the judicial sense the chosen nation of Israel had willingly forsaken God and, therefore, her purpose as a nation was rendered ineffectual. As such, she was accountable to God. In verses 5-17, the four symbols, as found in Ezekiel 4:1-5:4, are

explained as being related to the city of Jerusalem.

In verse 5, Ezekiel is told that "this is Jerusalem," meaning that the application of the four symbolic prophecies was clear. Indeed, Jerusalem's sin was great because of the position which she occupied in the world. Her influence for good could have been great, but she yielded to worldly pressure.

In verse 6, further indication is seen in that Israel rebelled against God and had openly rejected His commandments. As such, the wickedness of Jerusalem appeared worse than that of the heathen nation around Jerusalem.

In verse 7, the city of Jerusalem is seen as being in a rage against God. The inhabitants of the city are opposed to God's law and His system for dealing with man's sins. They thought they had found another way. When compared with other nations, it was manifest that the pagans were more loyal to their non-gods than was Israel to the true and living God.

In verse 8, two lessons are presented by the Lord. First, the coming judgment would be the work of the true God of Israel. Second, the coming judgment would take place in the sight of the world.

In verse 9, the Lord told Ezekiel that the coming judgment would be unprecedented. Yet, this judgment would be in response to the unprecedented rebellion of God's chosen people.

In verses 10-17, the nature of the judgment against Israel is explained. In verse 10, specifically, God would scatter His people. Allusion is made to those Jews who would flee from the Babylonian invasion, as well as those who would be taken captive by them.

In verse 11, God informs Ezekiel that punishment is due Israel because she had defiled the temple – God's dwelling place. As such, God would have no pity upon her. This was sheer presumption on the part of Judah.

In verse 12, the Lord tells His prophet that the manner of divine judgment would be threefold, namely, by pestilence/famine, sword, and dispersion.

In verse 13, God tells Ezekiel that His divine wrath would be assuaged only when Jerusalem was in ruins and her inhabitants were scattered abroad. Indeed, the righteous do suffer the tragic effects of those who do evil. Yet, if they remain faithful, they will be saved to enjoy the blessings of righteousness.

In verse 14, the Lord informs the prophet that Jerusalem would be made the great object lesson of the age; while in verse 15, the city would become a reproach to the nations round about. In essence, the

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PLANS AND PRIORITIES

Gary Colley

We realize that there are many demands on our time. It is sometimes hard to think of placing one more thing into our schedules! Paul taught that Christians at Ephesus were in need of taking advantage of the more important opportunities. He wrote, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16). To redeem the time meant to buy up the opportunities. One wise sage stated, "Opportunity knocks but once!" Once the opportunity is past, it may never be ours to choose in these matters again.

CONCERNING OUR SOULS

Jesus taught that the soul is more important than earthly interests (Matt. 16:26). He also taught that the soul is of greater value than the body and its comfort, because, among other things, of the length of time it will exist (Matt. 10:28). However, we realize also the importance of making our plans in harmony with our true needs, as well as those of our families whom the God of Heaven has put in our care. Since the soul is proclaimed in the Bible to be of utmost importance, it is imperative that we, for our soul's needs, set our priorities to take precedence over other lesser matters!

SOUTHWEST BIBLE LECTURES

We have already heard of so many who are making their plans to be in Austin for the Southwest

Bible Lectures, April 13-16, 1997. We are delighted to know of their interest and plans, because we believe their priorities are set for their best interest. They, no doubt, have other things that could occupy their time, but they have chosen the better part. Remember what the Lord said to Martha, who grumbled because Mary chose to hear the precious words of Jesus instead of helping her prepare the dinner, "Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Lk. 10:38-42).

MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE – DO NOT MISS THE SOUTHWEST LECTURES, APRIL 13-16!

As you consider the great theme, "THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST SALUTE YOU," the great speakers that will present these excellent lectures, the great throng of faithful brethren that will be present, the heart-lifting singing and fellowship that will be enjoyed by all, we trust you to use your better judgement about your plans and priorities. We believe you will make the right choice to be present for each and every session, April 13-16! It is an opportunity that once past will not be repeated! Other things should be considered of less importance than the kingdom and righteousness of God. These should have first place in our lives (Matt. 6:33).

We are hoping to see you during the lecture-ship!

SW

EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING AND MISSIONS

Jeremiah-Ezekiel, O2608

Instructor: James Meadows

Fill in the Following Blanks:

FINAL TEST
~~4/25/06~~

1. The city of Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.
2. Lordship over Judah passed about 605 or 606 B.C. from Egypt to Babylon.
3. The first group of Jews was carried into captivity about 606 B.C.
4. Daniel was among the first group of Jews carried into captivity.
5. In 586 B.C. the last group of Jews was carried into captivity.
6. Gehiel was among the second group.
7. Ezekiel means God is strong or whom God strengthens.
8. Ezekiel was 30 years of age when called.
9. He received his call by the river Chabar.
10. Ezekiel was a priest and the son of Buzi.
11. The expression "son of man" appears 90 times in the book.
12. "That ye may know that I am the Lord" appears 72 times.
13. Ezekiel's wife died in the 9th year of the exile.
14. "The word of the Lord came unto me" appears 49 times in Ezekiel.
15. There are at least 25 references to the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel.
16. It has been said that Isaiah is the prophet of the Son, Jeremiah the prophet of the Father and Ezekiel the prophet of the Holy Spirit.
17. Jim McGuigan divides Ezekiel into four major sections. Name them and give the chapters.
 - a. 1-24 Jerusalem must fall
 - b. 25-32 Foreign nations must fall
 - c. 33 Bridge between 1-24 + 34-48

d. 34-48- Jerusalem must be comforted

18. Name the three occasions on which cherubims make their appearance as revealed in the word of God.

a. Garden of Eden (Gen. 3)

b. Gebel in Babylon (Ezek. 1)

c. above Heaven (Rev. 4)

19. "The glory of the Lord" appears 14 times in the first eleven chapters of Ezekiel.

20. Name the four places where God has recorded his name.

a. altar c. Temple

b. Taborach d. Church

21. What lesson is God trying to teach Judah by using the vine in chapter ¹⁵ 14? Healed a

open

purpose for them to bring forth fruit but they failed

open

22. What verse in chapter 16 gives a good definition of adultery? 25

23. Who is the great eagle in 17:3 and who is the great eagle in 17:7? a. Babylon

b. Egypt

open

24. Show how the ^{three} major planks of Calvinism are refuted in Chapter 18.

a. Total depravity - Son shall not bear iniquity of the father
Refuted by verse 18

b. ~~Original sin refuted~~ - innocent I was

c. ~~Unconditional election~~ - limited atonement Refuted by verse 23

d. Direct operation of holy spirit - irresistible grace

e. ~~Limited atonement~~ - perseverance of saints

25. Idolatry is traced back to where in chapter 20? Egypt
Refuted by verse 24

26. God acts, not according to their wicked ways, but for my name's sake.

open 27. Who is Aholah? Assyria Who is Aholibah? Judah

Open 28. Name at least five nations that God punished for their evil deeds.

a. Babylon c. Moad e. Edom
b. Tyre d. Philistia

29. How complete was the destruction of Tyre? Nothing left - blue to hang fishermen's nets

30. Egypt is pictured as what in chapter 29? a great monster

31. Who was the instrument that God would use in destroying Egypt? Babylon

32. Why does God mention Assyria in connection with the destruction of Egypt? God destroyed mighty Assyria and he could destroy any nation

33. God has no pleasure in whose death? wicked

34. What was the people's attitude about Ezekiel's preaching? They did not think highly of it - laugh

open 35. Explain Ezekiel 34:23-24. Christ is referred to in the prophecy - peace between Judah & Israel for the whole world

36. What is the great lesson taught in Ezekiel 37? Israel is going to be united with Judah - a restoration

37. There are many allusions from Ezekiel found in what NT book? Revelation

38. Why was Ezekiel carried in a vision to Jerusalem?

39. Why did God's glory depart from Jerusalem?

TRUE OR FALSE:

- T 1. Ezekiel prophesied at least 22 years.
- T 2. Ezekiel was the prophet of the exile and the prophet of the return. *2nd page of notes*
- T 3. The purpose of the first part of Ezekiel was to check the optimism of the people.
- T 4. Ezekiel is the first prophet to be called to service outside of Palestine.
- T 5. At least four manifestations appear in chapter 1.
- T 6. "The glory of the Lord" symbolized God's divine presence.
- F 7. Ezekiel ate the roll, but it was bitter in his mouth., 3:3
- T 8. Failure to warn the wicked will bring his blood upon our heads.
- T 9. Chapters 3 and 18 emphasize individual responsibility.
- T 10. Ezekiel was carried in a vision to Jerusalem.
- T 11. God's glory departed from Jerusalem.
- F 12. Chapter 12 has a prophecy about Zedekiah.
- T 13. False prophets said the captivity would last two years.
- T 14. Noah, Daniel and Job are mentioned.
- T 15. God's four sore judgments are named.
- T 16. The book of Ezekiel traces idolatry all the way back to Egypt.
- F 17. God has pleasure in the death of the wicked.
- T 18. God acts for the sake of his name.
- T 19. "My servant David" that is mentioned in chapter 34 refers to Christ.
- T 20. The bones in Ezekiel 37 referred to "the whole house of Israel."

Bonus Question here

EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING AND MISSIONS

Jeremiah-Ezekiel, O2608

Instructor: James Meadows

Final Test

Fill in the Following Blanks:

1. The city of Nineveh fell in _____ B.C.
2. Lordship over Judah passed about _____ or _____ B.C. from Egypt to Babylon.
3. The first group of Jews was carried into captivity about _____ B.C.
4. _____ was among the first group of Jews carried into captivity.
5. In _____ B.C. the last group of Jews was carried into captivity.
6. _____ was among the second group.
7. Ezekiel means _____ or _____.
8. Ezekiel was _____ years of age when called.
9. He received his call by the river _____.
10. Ezekiel was a _____ and the son of _____.
11. The expression "son of man" appears _____ times in the book.
12. "That ye may know that I am the Lord" appears _____ times.
13. Ezekiel's wife died in the _____ year of the exile.
14. "The word of the Lord came unto me" appears _____ times in Ezekiel.
15. There are at least _____ references to the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel.
16. It has been said that Isaiah is the prophet of _____, Jeremiah the prophet of _____ and Ezekiel the prophet of _____.

17. Jim McGuiggan divides Ezekiel into four major sections. Name them and give the chapters.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

18. Name the three occasions on which cherubims make their appearance as revealed in the word of God.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

19. "The glory of the Lord" appears _____ times in the first eleven chapters of Ezekiel.

20. Name the four places where God has recorded his name.

- a. _____ c. _____
- b. _____ d. _____

21. What lesson is God trying to teach Judah by using the vine in chapter 15? _____

22. What verse in chapter 16 gives a good definition of adultery? _____

23. Who is the great eagle in 17:3 and who is the great eagle in 17:7?

- a. _____
- b. _____

24. Show how the three major planks of Calvinism are refuted in Chapter 18.
- a. Total depravity - _____
 - b. Unconditional election - _____
 - c. Perseverance of saints - _____
25. Idolatry is traced back to where in chapter 20? _____
26. God acts, not according to their wicked ways, but _____
_____.
27. Who is Aholah? _____ Who is Aholibah? _____
28. Name at least five nations that God punished for their evil deeds.
- a. _____ c. _____ e. _____
 - b. _____ d. _____
29. How complete was the destruction of Tyre? _____

30. Egypt is pictured as what in chapter 29? _____
31. Who was the instrument that God would use in destroying Egypt? _____
32. Why does God mention Assyria in connection with the destruction of Egypt? _____

33. God has no pleasure in whose death? _____
34. What was the people's attitude about Ezekiel's preaching? _____

35. Explain Ezekiel 34:23-24. _____

36. What is the great lesson taught in Ezekiel 37? _____

37. There are many allusions from Ezekiel found in what NT book? _____

38. Why was Ezekiel carried in a vision to Jerusalem? _____

39. Why did God's glory depart from Jerusalem? _____

40. Explain Ezekiel 13:22 _____

41. What lesson is God teaching in chapter 14 by mentioning Noah, Daniel, and Job?

42. What is the main lesson taught by the vision in chapter one? _____

TRUE OR FALSE:

- _____ 1. Ezekiel prophesied at least 22 years.
- _____ 2. Ezekiel was the prophet of the exile and the prophet of the return.
- _____ 3. The purpose of the first part of Ezekiel was to check the optimism of the people.
- _____ 4. Ezekiel is the first prophet to be called to service outside of Palestine.
- _____ 5. At least four manifestations appear in chapter 1.
- _____ 6. "The glory of the Lord" symbolized God's divine presence.
- _____ 7. Ezekiel ate the roll, but it was bitter in his mouth.,
- _____ 8. Failure to warn the wicked will bring his blood upon our heads.
- _____ 9. Chapters 3 and 18 emphasize individual responsibility.
- _____ 10. Ezekiel was carried in a vision to Jerusalem.
- _____ 11. God's glory departed from Jerusalem.
- _____ 12. Chapter 12 has a prophecy about Zedekiah.
- _____ 13. False prophets said the captivity would last two years.
- _____ 14. Noah, Daniel and Job are mentioned.
- _____ 15. God's four sore judgments are named.
- _____ 16. The book of Ezekiel traces idolatry all the way back to Egypt.
- _____ 17. God has pleasure in the death of the wicked.
- _____ 18. God acts for the sake of his name.
- _____ 19. "My servant David" that is mentioned in chapter 34 refers to Christ.
- _____ 20. The bones in Ezekiel 37 referred to "the whole house of Israel."

BONUS QUESTION: Five points if correct.

Name God's four sore judgments:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Explain the following: (Open Bible)

1. In a few words explain the significance of the vision in chapter one.

It is a vision of the glory of God

2. Explain 2:5-6 Speak God's word whether they hear or don't hear - Be not afraid

3. What tremendous responsibility is placed upon teachers of God's word in 3:17-21?

We must warn the wicked and the righteousness that there shall be no more on us.

4. Explain 5:2,12 A third part of Judah shall die with a pestilence, a third part is a ~~fourth~~ ^{up to the sword} and a third part scattered to the winds

5. Explain 7:26. Visions would cease from the prophets - They would be like a man who

6. Why was Ezekiel carried in a vision to Jerusalem? (Chapter 8) To see the abomination in the temple.

7. Explain 9:4-6. Put a mark upon those that are the remnant in verse 4 and those to be slain in verse 6.

8. Why did God's glory depart from Jerusalem? (11:23) Fellowship was broken —
9. Explain 13:22. They had grieved the heart of the righteous and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not turn from his wicked ways
10. What lesson is God teaching in chapter 14 by mentioning Noah, Daniel and Job?
People can become so wicked that even righteous people like Daniel, Noah and Job could save them by being in their midst, but they shall deliver their own souls.
- BONUS QUESTION: Five points if correct.

Name God's four sore judgments:

- a. Sword
- b. pestilence
- c. Famine
- d. Beast

①

EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING

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Final Test

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Fill in the Following Blanks:

1. The city of Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.
2. Lordship over Judah passed about 606 or 605 B.C. from Egypt to Babylon.
3. The first group of Jews was carried into captivity about 605 B.C.
4. Daniel was among the first group of Jews carried into captivity.
5. In 586 B.C. the last group of Jews was carried into captivity.
6. Ezekiel was among the second group.
7. Ezekiel means God is strong or whom Jehovah strengthens.
8. Ezekiel was 30 years of age when called.
9. He received his call by the river Chabar.
10. Ezekiel was a priest and the son of Buzi.
11. The expression "son of man" appears 87 times in the book.
12. "That ye may know that I am the Lord" appears 72 times.
13. Ezekiel's wife died in the 9th year of the exile.
14. "The word of the Lord came unto me" appears 49 times in Ezekiel.
15. There are at least 25 references to the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel.
16. It has been said that Isaiah is the prophet of faith, Jeremiah the prophet of love and Ezekiel the prophet of hope.
17. Jim McGuiggan divides Ezekiel into four major sections. Name them and give the chapters.
 - a. Chapter 1-24 tell us that Jerusalem must fall
 - b. " 25-32 " " " foreign nations must fall

(4)

5. Explain 7:26. God takes away the vision from his people
6. Why was Ezekiel carried in a vision to Jerusalem? (Chapter 8) So he could see how wicked Jerusalem had become and that he was just in destroying her
7. Explain 9:4-6. God's faithful were to be made and given safety
8. Why did God's glory depart from Jerusalem? (11:23) The people had become so wicked
9. Explain 13:22. False teachers had use lies to make the heart of the righteous sad and had strengthened the hands of the wicked
10. What lesson is God teaching in chapter 14 by mentioning Noah, Daniel and Job?
The city had become so wicked that even such righteous men as Noah, Daniel and Job could not save her, but their own souls

BONUS QUESTION: Five points if correct.

Name God's four sore judgments:

- a. The sword
- b. The famine
- c. The noisome beast
- d. The pestilence
- (14:21)

②

- c. Chapter 33 bridges 1-24 and chapter 34-48
d. Chapter 34-48 tell us that Jerusalem (and its people must be comforted)
18. Name the three occasions on which cherubims make their appearance as revealed in the word of God.
- a. On the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24)
b. For Gediel here in Babylon (1:4-25)
c. On heaven during John's vision (Rev. 4:6-8)
19. "The glory of the Lord" appears 14 times in the first eleven chapters of Ezekiel.
20. Name the four places where God has recorded his name.
- a. Altar c. Temple
b. Tabernacle d. Church

TRUE OR FALSE:

- T 1. Ezekiel prophesied at least 22 years.
T 2. Ezekiel was the prophet of the exile and the prophet of the return.
T 3. The purpose of the first part of Ezekiel was to check the optimism of the people.
T 4. Ezekiel is the first prophet to be called to service outside of Palestine.
T 5. At least four manifestations appear in chapter 1.
T 6. "The glory of the Lord" symbolized God's divine presence.
F 7. ^{3:3} Ezekiel ate the roll, but it was bitter in his mouth.,
^{3:18} T 8. Failure to warn the wicked will bring his blood upon our heads.
^{8:3} T 9. Chapters 3 and 18 emphasize individual responsibility.
T 10. Ezekiel was carried in a vision to Jerusalem.
²³ T 11. God's glory departed from Jerusalem.

3

- T 12. Chapter 12 has a prophecy about Zedekiah.
- T 13. False prophets said the captivity would last two years.
- T 14. Noah, Daniel and Job are mentioned.
- T 15. God's four sore judgments are named.
- 20:38,15 T 16. The book of Ezekiel traces idolatry all the way back to Egypt.
- F 17. God has pleasure in the death of the wicked.
- T 18. God acts for the sake of his name.
- T 19. "My servant David" that is mentioned in chapter 34 refers to Christ.
- T 20. The bones in Ezekiel 37 referred to "the whole house of Israel."

Explain the following: (Open Bible)

1. In a few words explain the significance of the vision in chapter one.

God wanted Ezekiel to know that he was still on the throne.

2. Explain 2:5-6 *The Lord became church's enemy and destroyed many of her sacred things - increased lamentation & mourning*

3. What tremendous responsibility is placed upon teachers of God's word in 3:17-21?

Responsibility to warn the wicked to be free of their blood

4. Explain 5:2,12 *(1) a third part killed with pestilence (2) a third part with famine (3) a third part by sword*

I. Call & commis/

A. Intro.

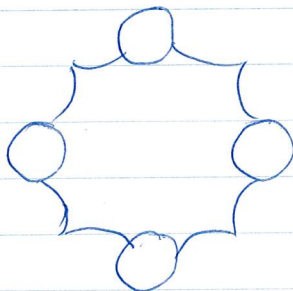
1. 30th yr. (of his life) Num. 4:3
2. 5th yr. of Jehoiachin's captivity.
4th mo. = July.
3. Chebar.

II. The call in detail 1:4-14

A. Power & grandeur of God.

- 4,5. 4 creatures - cherubim - see ch. 10.
each had 4 faces (v. 10), 4 wings, 4 feet
feet like brass - hard, durable.

CHERUBIM



omnipresence

face of man - intelligence

" " lion - king, powerful

" " ox - service

" " eagle - swift, superb vision.

fire, lightning - magnificence

B. Chariot-throne of God. 15 - ~~21~~ 21ea. ^{creature} ~~face~~ had a wheel, a wheel within a wheel

omnidirectional, all-seeing. Circle symb. eternity, Omniscient.

wheels went wherever creatures went

C. The glorious God on throne. 22 -

22. crystal. Comp. Rev. 4:6

23, 24. voice, noise indicate power.

26-28. Jehovah on throne.

II. The prophet's commission, Ch. 2.

A. v.l. needed to know more about his mission; God reveals in 2:1-7.

Son of man - emph. humanity of the prophet.

2. Spirit entered him.

3. To children of Israel.

B. He needed to know abt his msg., so God gave him a scroll.

2:8. - 3:3. Comp. Rev. 10:1-10

This is vision; he did not actually eat book.

C. Needed to know his audience, so God sent him into exile at Telabib.

4-11. Not foreigners. Hardheaded. Will not hearken. God wd make E. as tough as the Israelites.

10. words spoken for him to hear. - not actually written in scroll. Declare words to

the people.
D. Needed strength for his task. 12-15.

13. Cherubim - manifesta/s of attributes of God.

see Lev. 8:30-36 re: 7 days. cf. Num. 19:11 re: 7 da of mourn.; also Gen. 50:10.

14. bitterness, heat of ~~the~~ spirit - he was greatly upset. (Still a vision, not transport.)

See 8:1-4 re: vision.

E. Needed to know duties. 16-

A preacher, not a policeman! Proclaimer, not enforcer!

Second vision, w special commission 22-27

prob. still a vision; did not actually go out into the plain.

25, 26. May have actually had ropes put on him, been w/o speech. "Look at that boy! Why doesn't he say anything? Why is he sitting there w ropes around him?"

4:1 - 5:17 - 4 acted-out prophecies.

I. Picture of the siege of Jerusalem. cf. 5:5ff.

3. barrier between Israel and God. - Their sins.

II. Bearing sins of Judah & Israel.

4:4-8. Rehoboam to destr. of Samaria - 394 yrs.

Septuagint reads 190 days in v.5.

7. arm unhindered. cf. Isa. 52:10. symb. God's punishment ready.

III. Famine of the siege acted out. 4:9-17.

ration food & water. 6th part of a hin = 2 pts.

spelt - cummin seed.

IV. Sign of siege of Jerusalem acted out. Ch. 5:1-4

Shave off beard & hair w sword.

~~burned up - those who died in city siege.~~

~~smitten w sword~~

see v. 12

V. Exposition of the signs. 5-12

6. nations = Gentiles

7,8. God to execute judgments on Jerusalem

10. cannibalism

VI. Purpose of the destruc/. 13-17

13. The foregoing will satisfy God's wrath.

15. Other nations wd look at Israel as example 1 Re. 4:14-18.

16. God's weapons: famine, ^{predators} beasts, pestilence, war.

Chap. 6 - An apostrophe to land of Judah announce, impend, disaster.

↓ speak to imaginary audience.

1-7. on mountains were Baal-altars.

5. death in humiliation

6. sun-images - Baal

7. emphasis!!

9. escap, remnant wd remember God wherever they went, know, that God dealt w them w a broken heart. Wd despise selves for prior idolatry

11. addressed to Ezekiel - "Smite", "Stamp".

14. Diblah ~~to~~ wilderness = all the way from S. to N.

Chap. 7 - Israel's doom announced.

A. v.2 the end (of the nation)

A. 7:1 - the land of Israel. The end is come upon it.

B. v.5. the day of judgment is nigh.

C. v.10. the day of judgment is already begun.

D. v.12. " " " " " complete.

13. alive at time of writing.

E. v.14. machinery of destiny / is already at work.

no volunteers to fight; all deserted.

19. & e.g. not deliver - either wealth or idols.

20. beauty of his ornament - the temple.

23. chain (of captivity). 26. seeking vision too late.

Chs. 8 - 11 form one lengthy prophetic vision

I. He views idolatry in the temple. (390 days from 1st date)

image of jealousy. - idol - Ex 20:4,5.

4. the Shekinah.

5,6. driving God out.

7. door of the court (to the holy place)

9. abominations. - idols

10. pictured heathen gods

11f. elders worshipping idols.

14. Tammuz - Babylonian goddess of vegetation

16. Sun-worshippers, backs turned against God.

8:16. sun-worship - Baal, sun-god.

17. branch to the nose - same as thumbing nose; insult. Their idolatry was insult.

II. The slaughter of Jerusalem. ch. 9.

1. destroying weapon - sword.

2. One man different - had writer's inkhorn by his side.

3-8. set a mark on foreheads. cf. Rev. 7:2-4.

remnant to be spared, sent to Babylon.

judgm begin at sanctuary. cf. 1 Pet. 4:17

9-11. land full of blood - innocent blood shed. People say God has forgotten them.

III. Burning of Jerusalem. (still a vision!)

God leaving temple, judgment passed to destroy city by fire.

God in chariot - anthropomorphism (fig. of speech)

Same creatures, wheels, as in ch. 1.

The cherubim likely are representations of God's attributes.

v. 18 - departure of glory of the Lord from the temple. (Ezekiel's vision ca. 591.)

IV. Judgment and mercy promised.

A. judgment on wicked rulers (civil rulers).

2. guilty of devising iniquity, giving wicked counsel.

3. "Time not near to build houses" - cf. Jer. 29:5.

7. only ones left in J. wd be dead ~~ones~~.

5-12. cf. Jer. 52:5, 10

B. 13. death of Pelatiah. Ezekiel thought God was destroying the remnant; ^{maybe his fault.}

C. 14. false conceptions in Jerusalem.

15. inhab. of J. saying to the poor already taken captive.

16. They were taken captive to save (or preserve) them.

18. get rid of idols.

19-20. make hard-hearted soft-hearted; they would then walk acc. to God's will; wd be God's people, and he wd b the God.

12: 597 B.C. vision

7.

B. 8. The prophecy explained. 2 Ki. 25:4,5

13. God takes responsib^y for Zedekiah's imprisonment

16. reason for sparing the remnant: Testimony as to punishment of wicked.

C. 17. the second sign show, the fate of the peopl who wd surv.

12:21-14:11 are 5 oracles against false prophets.

II. ~~18~~ 21. - Skepticism toward new prophecy. cf. 2 Pe. 3:4

23. God's reply.

24, 25. No more false visions ...

B. 26. oracle against those who extended the prophecy into the future

They were saying the vision was for distant future.

C. 13:1 false prophets denounced.

3. foolish prophets!

4. foxes in the desert - sly, crafty.

5. gaps - cp. Ez. 22:30. walls not reinforced

7. descr. ~~the~~ prophecies.

8,9. false ones to be wiped out 1. not in council

2. not in writings (census roll, genealogy)

3. not liv to return to the land.

10-16. false teachers patching things up but not making strong.

walls of state, spir. walls.

D. Sorceresses condemned. 17ff.

pillows on elbows, kerchiefs for heads. - magical charms, "healing cloths."

These were used to hunt souls.

13:20 - condemnation of the prophetesses.

14:1-5. - judg^M on those who had taken idols into hearts.

6-11. Jehovah admonishes to turn from idols.

sign & portent - example, for all to see, of God's judg^M.

Prophet and those who heed him w^l be punished. - "If the blind lead the blind..."

11. objective of punishment - that Israel no more go astray from God; be his people.

12-20. ¹³ famine; no food supply.

¹⁴. Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in Jerusalem, God would still destroy.

15-16. similar thought.

17-18. " "

19-20. " ". Greatness of such righteous men could not save Jerusalem.

21-23. The 4 judg^Ms - sword, famine, evil beasts, pestilence.

22. remnant left to be taken into captivity.

16:44 ^E The allegory of the 2 sisters

Present genera/ like former generations

Hittite - Amorite = lowly Gentiles, heathen.

47. sarcasm!

48. Not actually as bad as Sodom; Jews had sinned against great light & opportunity.

49, 50. The sin of Sodom; environment contrib. to sin. cf. Lev. 20:13

51. Judah more accountable for sins than Samaria. Sodom and Samaria were made to look pretty good by wickedness of Judah.

F. 53. ^{ff} Restora/ wd come, not by merit but by grace.

He is saying, I will restore you even though you're worse than Sodom who was annihilated and Samaria who was taken captive; my grace will take care of you.

G. 60ff. Reconciliation.

covenant which he made w the fathers when he brot them out f Egypt.

God wd renew covenant when they repent (this happened in the restora/ fr Babylon).

61. All the surrounding territories restored under gov't of Judah; not a divided kingdom.

Ch. 17. I. An allegory of 2 eagles, a cedar twig, and a vine.

A. Babylon

1-6. "the great speckled bird." = Babylon.

Lebanon = Jerusalem. cedar = David's dynasty. ^(twig) branch = Jehoiachin.

land of traffic = Babylon. seed of the land = Zedekiah. fruitful soil = Palestine.

vine of low stature = Zed. was puppet king. 2 Chron. 36:9, 10.

B. Egypt.

7-10. "vine" bent toward Egypt.

Babylon would pluck it up, wither it.

II. The allegory explained. 11-

Zedekiah to covenant w Neb., wd die in Babylon. Jer. 52:9-11

19. see 2 Chron. 36:13.

17:11-21. Explanation of the riddle

13. "seed royal" - K. Zedekiah.

15. "he" - Zedekiah - rebelled against Babylon and sought alliance w/Egypt.

God displeased because Zed. broke vow w/Babylon; would die in Babylon.

17. Egypt wd b no help, because Z. had broken covenant. (18)

19. God's covenant - it was made w/God as witness, sworn to by oath to God.

20, 21. The punishment.

22-24. ^{may} refer back to the symbolism of the riddle. See John Waddey's comments.

Ch. 18

2. suffering for sins of their fathers. The proverb is a "half-truth."

4. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." - ea respons^s for own sins.

5-9. The righteous man shall surely live.

11-13. If righteous man's son is a rascal, it is the son who receives death.

14-18. If wicked man's son is righteous, the son will live but father die.

19. "But why doesn't the son bear iniquity of father, and vice versa?"

20. God says it doesn't work that way. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Probably not here concerned w/eternal life & death, but with salvation/^{preserva} of a remnant thru the captiv^y

21-24. explanation of principle in detail.

Ch. 19 a lamentation

2. a lioness - prob. nation of Judah, maybe incl. all of Israel.

3. young lion - prob. Jehoiakim.

5. another young lion - Jehoiachin.

8, 9. Jehoiachin taken captive to the K of Babylon.

10-# the nation like a vine, strong; but was plucked up in fury, transplanted in wilderness.

20:1. seventh year - 591 B.C. (598 - first deportation).

1-4. God wd not answer because of the sins of both them and their ancestors.

This ch. is a rehearsal of the past sins, esp. as regards their abominations and idolatry.

v. 25 difficult.

Ch. 21

Plain language now, rather than allegory as in ch. 20.

v. 3. Indiscriminate destruction

6. breaking of lions - broken heart; Ezekiel emotionally affected by destruct/ of Israel.

7. reply to be given ^{by} Ezekiel.

9-17. "song of the sword."

13. People had ignored purpose of minor punishments; now a greater punishment.

14. the third time - (1) Jehoiachin (2) Jehoiachin (3) Zedekiah

16. Go to left or right - east or west of Jordan.

18-27. Nebuchadnezzar is sword of the Lord.

21. three methods of divination.

27. "until he come whose right it is" - ref. to Shiloh, Gen. 49:10.

28-32. Sword of Ammon. (Ellison disagrees w Blackwood)

28, 29. Ammonites also to be destroyed.

22: Jerusalem, the bloody city, w^l b punished

I. The sins of Jerusalem

2. judge by causing to know sins.

A. 3. shed blood in midst; had made idols

The blood spoken of is innocent blood; metonymy for killing - "blood"

4. end of the road.

B. 6. Judgment on the great men.

10. "father's nakedness" = his wife. To uncover it would be incest. See Deut. 27:20

C. 13. Their just desserts.

13. "smitten the hand" - impatience; gets attention; demands response.

15. purpose was to purify.

1. The Key Verse of Ezekiel is? *3:16-19*
2. Ezekiel did his work in what land? *Babylon*
3. Who prophesied to the men of Jerusalem at the same time? *Jeremiah*
4. List the kings of Jerusalem that followed Josiah, giving length of reign and chief circumstances of their coming to power or falling from it.
Jehoahaz - 3 mo. - imprisoned by Egypt
Jehoiakim - 6 years - sent captive to Babylon
Jehoiachin - 3 mo. - captive to Babylon
Zedekiah -
5. Jehoiachin is also called by two other names. State them.
6. A strong party in Jerusalem clamored for a political alliance with what great nation?
7. At the time Ezekiel began his work, two groups of Hebrews had been taken into exile. When were they taken?
8. The name Ezekiel means what?
9. Of what tribe and office was Ezekiel?
10. Where did the prophet live in Babylon? City and location.
11. What do we know of his marital status?
12. Ezekiel's ministry lasted some _____ years.
13. What is the key phrase of Ezekiel?
14. What was his chief burden to reveal to the captives?
15. Where would one go for parallel historical information?
16. The general theme of the first 24 chapters is _____
17. Chapters 25-32 are prophecies against gentile nations and are intended to teach _____
18. Chapters 33-48 are Prophecies of _____
19. What is the meaning of the thirtieth year of 1:1?
20. What was the month and date of 1:1-2, "fourth month of the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity,"?
21. Really the river Chebar was a _____.
22. Identify the four living creatures of Ch.1:5
23. What is a possible significance of these four different faces?

24. What is the meaning of the creatures and their wheels? 1:15-16

25. What is suggested by the rims of the wheels having eyes all around, 1:18?

26. What New Testament verse helps identify the crystal firmament of 1:22?

27. Above the chariot throne Ezekiel saw the likeness of _____? 1:28

28. What is the significance of the plural "nations" in 2:3?

29. Why does God repeatedly call him "Son of man" 2:1?

30. When called to be a prophet, wherein did he receive his power and message?

31. To what kind of audience did God send him? 2:1-5

32. Explain his eating the book, 2:8-3:2.

33. What is significant about it being written on _____ and back? 2:10

34. What two terms are used to describe the exiles in 3:7?

hard forehead and stiff heart

35. How would God equip Ezekiel to meet this problem? 3:8-9

would make him as tough as they were.

36. Define "Telebib" 3:15.

37. What is a possible reason for his seven days of silence? 3:15.

X - 1
possibly meaning for the condition, or to realize full import of what he saw.

38. Apply 3:16-21 to yourself as a preacher. What is a lesson you drew from it?

the preacher is not a policeman; a proclaimer, not an enforcer!

39. Explain "Lay hands upon thee", 3:25.

bound with ropes

40. How were the four prophecies of Ch.4-5:7 delivered?

as object lessons; acted-out

41. Explain the prophecy of 4:1-3.

pictured the siege of Jerusalem

42. What is the significance of his laying on his side 390 days and 40 days, 4:4-6?

390 = years from Rehoboam to the destruction of Samaria

40 = years of

} symbolically bearing the sins of Israel & Judah.

43. Did he not move at all in this period of time? Explain your answer.

Yes, he moved. He lay on his side at times when public would see him, but also took time out for eating, etc.

44. Explain the prophecy of the mingled food eaten by measure. 4:9

food of low quality, small quantity, rationed because of famine

45. Upon what did he base his objection to cooking with human dung? 4:13-14
This made bread "unclean"
46. Explain the prophecy of shaving with the sword, etc. 5:1-4.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ off shavings - $\frac{1}{3}$ of people to die of pestilence; another $\frac{1}{3}$ by sword; another third scattered among nations
47. State two reasons for the destruction of Jerusalem, 5:13-15.
*? 1. satisfy God's wrath
2. make Israel an example to other nations*
48. Why did he address his threat of disaster against the "mountains" of Israel in 6:1-7? *The Baal altars were on the mountains.*
49. What is the significance of "the end is come upon the four corners of the land", 7:2? *end of the nation, land of Israel*
50. Explain 7:10, "...thy doom is gone forth: the rod hath blossomed..."
day of judgment already began
51. Explain 7:14-15, "They have blown the trumpet, and have made all ready..."
the machinery of destruction already at work.
52. What is "the beauty of his ornament" of 7:20? *the temple*
53. Define "deserts", 7:27. *what is desecrated*
54. What is the significance of the elders sitting before Ezekiel? 8:1
They had come to hear his word
55. Identify the "image of jealousy" in 8:3.
an idol
56. Chapt. 8:11 shows the guilt of which class of Jews?
elders
57. Identify "Tammuz" 8:14.
Babylonian goddess of vegetation
58. Who are the men of 8:16?
sun-worshippers? priests
59. What is the point about their sin? 8:16
had turned their backs on God.
60. Explain, "They put the branch to their nose" 8:17
"thumbed their noses at God!" - their idolatry an insult to God.
61. Explain the mark on the forehead of 9:4.
identification of the remnant; not literal mark.
62. The attitude of the people in Jerusalem is seeing in 9:9. (2 things)
*(1) Jehovah has forsaken the land.
(2) Jehovah is not even looking at our plight.*
63. In ch. 10 we had pictured what event of judgement?
burning of Jerusalem

64. What lesson is presented about the "glory of Jehovah in Ch. 10-11?

*Glory of Jehovah departs the unfaithful; judgment passed on them -
The shekinah left the temple.*

65. Explain the proverb of the "caldron" of 11:3 according to the leaders of Jerusalem and according to God, 11:5-7. *Leaders said the city is a caldron and we are the flesh to be cooked in it. God said the slain are the flesh, and the leaders would be removed from the caldron.*

66. Why was Ezekiel so upset upon the death of Pelatiah? 11:13-14
thought God was destroying the remnant, and perhaps he was at fault.

67. Explain 11:15-17, "Get you far from Jehovah; unto us is this land given for a possession". *remaining inhabitants of Jerusalem saying to the poor who were already taken captive - We're staying here; after all, God gave us this land.*

68. The vision begun in 8:1 ends where? 11:24

69. Give the highlights and explain the acted out prophecy in 12:1-6.

He was to pack his goods as if going into exile; dig through the wall, carry it out. This prophesied exile of the princes of Jerusalem. Fulfillment seen in 2 Ki. 25:4, 5 when princes, the king and men of war fled through a breach in the city wall.

70. What did his walking blindfolded signify? 12:6
that the fleeing ruler would not see the land - Zedekiah's eyes were put out after he had seen the execution of his sons.

71. Where could I read about Zedekiah's capture and punishment?
2 Kings 25:4-6

72. Explain 12:17, Ezekiel eating bread with trembling.
signified fate of the people who would survive.

73. Who said, "The days are prolonged and every vision faileth"? 12:22
This was a proverb in the land, probably begun by the false prophets.

74. What did the proverb mean?
their skepticism toward new prophecy.

75. Describe the walls the prophets had not built up, 13:5.
walls had gaps and were not reinforced

76. What is untempered mortar? 13:10 *whitewash - makes it look good, but has no strength*

77. What was their message that was like untempered mortar? 13:10
proclaimed Peace, when there is no peace.

78. Explain "sew pillows upon all elbows and make kerchiefs for the head" 13:18.
These were magical charms or amulets, something akin to "healing cloths." They were used by the sorceresses to hunt souls.

79. Give some illustrations of idols in hearts, 14:1-5

X-2

80. What is his purpose in mentioning Noah, Daniel and Job in 14:15?
Even if such good men as these were in Jerusalem, God would still destroy it.

81. What are God's four sore judgments, 14:21?
sword, famine, evil beasts, pestilence

82. What is the point of Jerusalem being like dead vine wood? 15:1-8

dead vines are brittle, dry, quick-burning

83. Explain the implication of 16:3, "the Amorite was thy father and thy mother was a Hittite." *Amorites & Hittites were the lowest of the Gentiles.*

84. Note points of the allegory and their explanation. Ch.16

X-6

85. Israel's harlotry was in three areas. State and explain them, 16:15.

X-6

Religious -

Political -

Moral -

86. Israel was worse than a harlot. How? 16:30-34

actually searched for and paid for her fornications

87. Explain how Judah was more corrupt than Sodom, 16:47.

They had sinned against greater light and opportunity.

88. Ch.16:49-50 gives six sins of Sodom. State them

pride, fullness of bread, prosperous ease, did not help the poor and needy, were haughty, committed abomination before God.

89. When was the captivity of Sodom "turned again"? 16:53

when remnant restored from Babylonian captivity to their home in Jerusalem.

90. Who is the great eagle of divers colors, 17:3?

Babylon

91. Who is the cedar twig of 17:4?

~~Lebanon~~ Jehoiachin

92. Who is the seed of the land? 17:5

Zedekiah

93. Identify the second eagle, 17:7.

Egypt.

94. Where would I read of the covenant made between Nebuchadnezzar and Zedekiah?

~~Jer 52:9-11~~ 2 Chron. 36:13.

95. What is the fulfillment of 17:22-24, "I will also take of the lofty top of the cedar"?

X-1

96. Explain the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." 18:20 *Jews thought they were punished for sins of ancestors.*

97. Give the plan and design of his lesson in Ch.18.

Refutation of popular idea - to show that God justly judges each for own deeds.

98. Why did they feel the way of the Lord was not equal? 18:25.
99. Explain the allegory of the lioness and ^{er}his cubs, 19:1-9.
100. Explain the allegory of the vine in 19:10-14.
101. Ch.20-23 state the reasons for_____
102. In Ch.20:5-9 we discover the early roots of idolatry in Israel. Where does he trace its s~~o~~urce?
103. When God chose Israel as his covenant people, upon what basis was the choice made, 20:9?
104. When was the Sabbath law first given, 20:10-13. Cite another O.T.verse to prove this.
105. Why did God not destroy Israel in the wilderness, 20:13-14?
106. Explain 20:25, "I gave them statutes that were not good".
107. What was the meaning of their hills being called Bamah? 20:29
108. Explain the statement of the men of Israel, "We will be as the nations ...to serve wood and stone." 20:32.
109. Explain, "I will cause you to pass under the rod", 20:37.
110. Explain, "Go ye and serve every one his idols," 20:39.
111. In Ch.20:45-21:32 we have four oracles to the _____.
112. To what does the forest of the field in the South refer , 20:46?
11. What was the burning of that forest? 20:47
114. Explain "Sigh...thou Son of Man; with the breaking of thy loins" 21:6.
115. Define "furbished", 21:9.

133. What is the main point of condemnation in the story of the two sisters?
134. What is the meaning of 23:14-16 ~~A~~holibah doting upon the pictures of the Chaldeans portrayed on the walk.
135. Identify, Pekod, Shoa, Koa. 23:23
136. What does 23:25 describe, "they shall take away thy nose and thine ears"?
137. What is the cup of 23:32?
138. 23:36-42 states six crimes Judah committed against God. List them.
139. What was the judgment to be given the lewd women, 23:43-47?
140. What day did Nebuchadnezzar begin the ~~se~~ige of Jerusalem? 24:1-2
141. Give the details and interpretation of the parable of the caldron, 24:3-11.
142. What does the ~~re~~^ust of the caldron signify? 24:6-7
143. What lesson is intended by 24:14?
144. What is the desire of his eyes? 24:15
145. What is significant about his "headtire" 24:17?
146. Why was Ezekiel forbidden to mourn the passing of his wife? 24:15-24
147. What is "their strength, the desire of their eyes", 24:25?
148. What do we need to know about 24:27, "In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him that escaped..."?
149. Ch. 25-32 are designed to teach the Gentiles two lessons about Israel's captivity. State them.

150. What was Ammon's sins? 25:3,6
151. What is the problem about "Moab and Seir" in 25:8?
152. What was Moab's sin? 25:8
153. What was Edom's sin? 25:12
154. What was the Philistine's sins? 25:15
155. Tyre possibly stands symbolically for what nation as well as literally.
156. The seven heathen nations mentioned in Ch.25-32 likely stand for what?
157. What sin is Tyre cited for? 26:2
158. What was the promised doom of Tyre? 26:4-5
159. Describe Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Tyre.
160. In Ch.27 Tyre is pictured under what figure?
161. Identify Senir, 27:5.
162. What is pannag, 27:17?
163. What is described in 27:26-28?
164. To whom is Ezekiel 28:1-19 addressed?
165. Why have many people thought this to refer to Satan?
166. How would you explain, 28:2,13,14,15,18.
167. Who was the prince of Tyre at this time?
168. Who is the Pharaoh of 29:2?

169. What was the sinful boast of Pharoah? 29:3
170. Who are the fish that stuck to the great monster's scales? 29:4
171. Explain Egypt's having been a staff to Israel, but one that broke and pierced their hand. 29:6-7
172. Explain the fulfillment of Egypt becoming an utter waste and desolation. 29:10
173. Describe the steps of Egypt's becoming a base kingdom. 29:14 Four nations and dates.
174. Why was Nebuchadnezzar given Egypt for wages earned at Tyre? 29:17-20
175. Explain, "I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them" 29:21.
176. To what event does "the day of Jehovah" refer in 30:3?
177. Identify Memphis, 30:13.
178. Identify "no", 30:14.
179. Whom did God "break the arm" of Pharoah, 30:21. Give the date, event and Pharoah.
180. The allegory of the cedar in Lebanon was spoken to whom? 31:1ff
181. Who was the cedar in Lebanon?
182. What is the picture painted in 31:15-17.

183. Ch.32 could be described as a _____
184. Who is Asshur? 32:22
185. Where is a parallel to 33:1-9?
186. How might we as watchmen free our hands for blood guiltiness? 33:1-9
187. Why does God often let the wicked live long lives, 33:11?
188. What good lesson theme could one develop from 33:13?
189. What standard does the Lord use for judging sinfulness? 33:10-16
190. How long after Jerusalem's fall was it till the messenger reached the exiles?
191. How long had the prophet remained silent? 33:21-22
192. What work did he do while "dumb"?
193. What was the expressed attitude of those who survived the fall of Jerusalem and stayed in the land? 33:23-24
194. What was the attitude of the people toward Ezekiel? 33:30-33
195. Who are the shepherds of 34:1-ff
196. Who was the last wicked shepherd of Israel? 34:10
197. What period of time is discussed in 34:11-16?
198. Who are the rams and the goats of 34:17?
199. Who is the shepherd, David? 34:22-24
200. One ruler claimed the title of king of Israel between the restoration and Christ's coming. Who was he?

201. How would you describe the promises of 34:25-31?
202. Who are the devouring beasts of 34:25,28?
203. Why is Edom repeatedly held up for condemnation? 34:1ff
204. Give the eight sins charged to Edom, 35:5-13.
205. What is the message of Ch.36?
206. What event does 36:8 refer to, "for they are at hand to come"?
207. Why was Israel called a land that devoured nations? 36:13-15
208. Where would I read the regulations about a woman's impurity? 36:16-17
209. Why did God plan to restore Israel? 36:22-23, 3 reasons
210. To what does he allude in 36:25. "sprinkle clean water upon you" Cite a verse to prove your answer.
211. Explain "stoney heart" and "heart of flesh", 36:26
212. When and how will Israel become like the garden of Eden? 36:35
213. Explain the meaning of the vision of dry bones, Ch.37.
214. What does the Bible say about the "ten lost tribes"? Give some verses to prove your point.
215. How many tribes were represented in the restoration in 536 B.C.?
216. Explain the acted out prophecy of the two sticks, 37:15-23.

217. When was 37:26 fulfilled?
218. What is the sanctuary of 37:26?
219. Likely who does Gog represent?
220. What New Testament verse mentions Gog?
221. What is significant about the nations who follow Gog, 38:1-5?
222. In view of the other parallel verses we studied, when does it seem that this battle with Gog will take place?
223. A key word that would indicate these verses are not to be interpreted literally is _____? 39:9-12
224. What kind of battle would we expect this to be?
225. Ch.40-48 give a description of what?
226. What New Testament passages seem to speak on the same subject?
227. Ch.43:1-9 is the climax of the book, what does it describe?
228. What practice does 43:7-9 describe?
229. What had been their past practice about the servile jobs of the temple, that must be changed? 44:4-14
230. How does he describe the new boundaries of the land compared to the old boundaries? 47:15-20
31. There are eight similarities between Ezekiel's city and John's in Revelation that give us a clue to its meaning. State them.

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FINAL EXAM ON
JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, EZEKIEL

1. Discuss the arrangement of Jeremiah in reference to Chronology.
The book is not chronologically arranged. Only the first 5 chapters are in chronological sequence.
2. Of what tribe was Jeremiah?
Levi.
3. His father was? *Hilkiah*
4. His home town was? *Anathoth*
5. What was his wife's name? *X-1*
6. Describe the relation of Jeremiah and Baruch.
Quite close. Baruch was Jeremiah's amanuensis primarily.
7. Briefly what was his message?
a rebuke to Judah for iniquities; destruction certain.
8. To which kingdom did he prophesy?
Judah
9. What reception did Jeremiah receive from his family and nation?
rejection
10. How did he die?
Tradition says he was stoned to death in Egypt.
11. When did Jeremiah live on earth? *final years prior to Babylonian captivity* What years? *650-560*
12. Who was king of Judah when Jeremiah began his ministry?
Josiah
13. What nation dominated the world political scene in his early years?
Assyria
14. List the 5 kings of Judah in proper order that Jeremiah served under.
Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah
15. In what year did Nineveh fall? *612 X-1*
16. What battle gave Babylon preeminence over Egypt?
Carchemish
17. Who was governor of Judah after 586?
 Gedaliah
18. Name two contemporaries of Jeremiah.
Ezekiel, Daniel
19. What two excuses did he offer when God called him?
1. Not an able speaker 2. X-1
20. Explain Judah committing adultery with stones and stocks. 3:8-9.
Spiritual adultery with idols, which were made of stone and wood.
21. Explain "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family," 3:14.
Lamentable destruction, but not total; a remnant would be spared.
22. How would Jeremiah's words be fire to devour the people? 5:14.
His words such a rebuke as to burn their hearts
23. What was the past role of Shiloh? 7:12.
X-1
24. What was the lesson God made of Shiloh? 7:12-15.
25. Explain, "I will punish them that are circumcised in their uncircumcision," 9:25.
punishment of the Jews in the uncircumcision of their hearts (spiritually uncircumcised).

FINAL EXAM - JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, EZEKIEL, p. 3.

50. What is the key phrase of Ezekiel?

"that they may know that I am Jehovah."

1. What was his chief burden to reveal to the captives?

message of God's wrath; reason for the wrath. X-1

52. Really the river Chebar was a canal.

53. Identify the four living creatures of Ch. 1:5.

cherubim

54. What is the meaning of the creatures and their wheels? 1:15-16.

The wheels suggest their omniscience; the creatures are manifestations of deity. X-1

55. What is suggested by the rims of the wheels having eyes all around, 1:18?

omniscience

56. Above the chariot throne Ezekiel saw the likeness of God? 1:28.

57. To what kind of audience did God send him? 2:1-5.

people with hardened hearts.

58. Explain his eating the book, 2:8-3:2.

devoured the contents

59. What is the significance of his laying on his side 390 days and 40 days, 4:4-6? *each day for a year — 390 years from — to —*

60. Explain, They put the branch to their nose, "8:17.

equivalent to "thumbing the nose."

61. What lesson is presented about the "glory of Jehovah" in Ch. 10-11?

62. What is his purpose in mentioning Noah, Daniel and Job in 14:15?

Even if these righteous men had been in Jerusalem, the city would not have been spared.

63. What are God's four sore judgments, 14:21?

the sword, pestilence, famine, evil beasts

64. What is the point of Jerusalem being like dead vine wood? 15:1-8

dead vines burn fast, almost explosively. Jerusalem could also be quickly consumed.

65. Explain the implication of 16:3, "The Amorite was thy father and thy mother was a Hittite."

These were hated heathen peoples. The expression was an insult to the Jews.

66. Explain how Judah was more corrupt than Sodom, 16:47.

sinned against greater light and opportunity.

67. Explain the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." 18:20.

expresses the popular notion that children were punished for their fathers' sins.

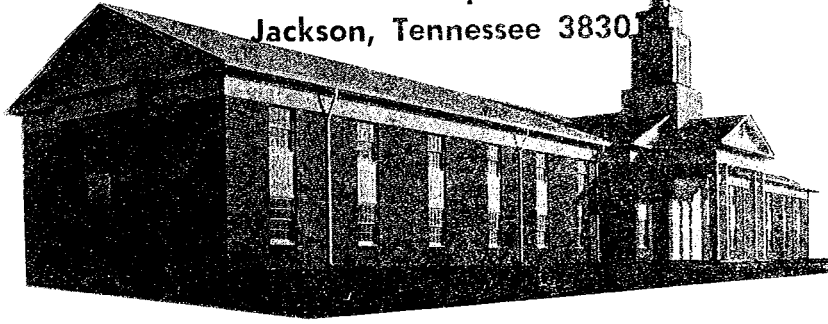
$$\begin{array}{r} 1.22 \\ 16 \\ \hline 732 \\ 122 \\ \hline 19.52 \end{array}$$

The Central Counselor

CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

1490 Campbell St.

Jackson, Tennessee 38301



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Classes 10:00 A.M.
Morning Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening Worship
October-March 6:00 P.M.
April-September 7:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class
September-May 10:30 A.M.
Bible Classes 7:30 P.M.

RADIO

WTJS AM 1390 - WKIR FM 104
"Sunday Morning Bible
Study" 8:30 A.M.

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THAT'S HOW IT WAS (From Ezekiel)

HIS CALL: 3:17, 27; 13:2; 21:2; 33:9

"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me."

"But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house."

"Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places and prophecy against the land of Israel."

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

HIS MESSAGE: 14:6; 16:2; 18:20; 21:24

"Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations."

"Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations."

"The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous

(con't on picture page)

THAT'S HOW IT WAS (From Ezekiel) continued-

shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

"Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgression are discovered, so that in all ye doings your sins do appear; because, I say, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand."

THE RESPONSE: 12:2; 20:32; 22:30; 33:31

"Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house."

"We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone."

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."

"And they came unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their coventousness."

THE RESULT: 12:11; 16:38; 17:20; 21:12; 22:15; 33:28

"They shall remove and go into captivity."

"And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy."

"And I will spread my net upon him (king Zedekiah of Judah, JB) and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylone."

"Cry and howl, son of man, for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh."

"And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee."

"For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through."

--James W. Boyd.



"They Shall Know that

I Am the Lord"

Associate Editorial—Tim Nichols



The exact wording of the title above is used at least twenty-five times in the book of Ezekiel, and words to this effect are found throughout the Scriptures. The various contexts in which this and similar phrases appear seem to indicate that God is giving us more than simply evidences for the existence of a "god." He seems to be revealing some of the defining characteristics of Himself, the only true and living God. This is timely because so many in our subjective world have formed their own private notions of God without considering what God has said about Himself. Many are heard to say, "I like to think that God is...." or "I think that God would not...." or "I think that God would...." When we seriously consider the various ways in which God describes Himself, we can begin to replace our "I think" statements about God with some "God has said" statements about Him. When we truly accept and believe what God has revealed about Himself, the two ought to become one and the same thing. What "I think" about God ought to be what "God has said" about God.

Basic "Christian evidences" are powerful in helping us come to the knowledge of God's existence. Having arrived at that

The true God has the ability and the desire to elevate the truly humble and to humble the proud.

knowledge, let us, however, not rest until we have also come to know of God's nature. Ezekiel allows us to trace this phrase and to be able to say that the true and living God does certain things, has a specific disposition of mind toward men and the affairs of men, and views His statutes, judgments, and institutions in particular ways. While Christian evidences move honest atheists to become theists, Ezekiel will help theists to understand the nature of the God Whose existence they have discovered. Ezekiel, combined with the other books of the Bible, will give the Christian a picture of God that is larger than—and sometimes different from—the

purely sentimental and self-serving conception that many seem to have of Him.

From the book of Ezekiel we notice some of the attributes of God as revealed by God Himself. Notice that what can be known concerning God is a matter of certainty ("They shall **know**..."). What can be certainly known concerning the true and living God provides us with a basis for comparing the God of the Bible with the false "gods" of the world and the false notions concerning God that are held by uninformed people ("...that I am the Lord").

The true God is just, therefore wrathful:

Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them (Eze. 5:13).

Those who are punished by God will know that He is the Lord (5:13; 6:10, 14; 7:27; 12:15; 25:14, 17; 26:6; 28:22; 29:9; 30:19, 25–26; 39:6). Those who see and hear of God's righteous judgment will know that He is the Lord (12:16; 28:23, 26; 29:13–16; 30:8; 38:21–23).

Some of the categories of sin for which God expressly punishes men ought to cause us to understand how seriously He regards disobedience. He will punish idolatry (6:7, 10, 13–14; 14:6–8), abomination (7:4, 9; 33:29), failure to walk in His ways (11:9–11; 12:15–16, 20; 20:38), speaking nonsense and envisioning lies (13:8–14), unfaithfulness (15:6–8), covenant-breaking (17:18–21), mockery of God and His people (25:1–11; 26:1–6; 35:12, 15), and evil-doers (25:15–17; 28:20, 23, 26; 29:6; 35:1–6, 9). In all of this He will punish men only according to what they deserve (7:27).

The true God is also merciful, therefore forgiving of those who will repent according to His terms.

And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I

provide you an atonement for all you have done.... (16:62–63).

His mercy remains with those who will remain mindful of their former evil ways and not return to them (20:41–44; 34:27, 30–31; 36:8–11, 23, 33–38; 37:6, 13–14). He is able to purify by punishment those who will thus be led to repent (22:19–22). Those who see and hear of God's mercy will know that He is the Lord (37:28; 39:27–29).

The actions and judgments of the true God are always right, and His people need to recognize this under all circumstances (24:15–27). Those who say that they could never be happy in Heaven if they have knowledge of loved ones who have been lost ought to read and meditate on these verses very carefully. While there is no Biblical reason for assuming that God will erase our memories of loved ones, there is clearly a need for us, then and now, to recognize that God's actions and judgments are, and will be, perfectly right.

The true God has the ability and the desire to elevate the truly humble and to humble the proud (17:22–24; 22:6–16; 29:13–16, 21; 30:6–8, 19, 25–26; 32:15). We cannot impress Him with our greatness. He is not ashamed of our lowliness. We cannot cause Him to notice the applause that we may receive from men. If we trust Him and let go of all ambition to be anything other than His faithful children, we can rest assured that He can place us where we need to be. He can thwart the greatest scheme we might devise for our own exaltation. He can diminish us. He can also use small, pliable, and humble men to accomplish large aims.

The living God has instituted, under His various covenants with man, distinctive institutions to be honored by His people (20:10–12, 18–20). They are His. They are not ours to modify. Under the law of Moses Israel had statutes, judgments, and sabbaths from God. They also had statutes and judgments of men that were in competition with those of God. They were to "hallow" those from God and refrain from following those of their fathers. We have a

great need to recognize what God has established and simply be the people that He has called us to be.

May we be careful in our thoughts and in our teaching concerning God, to recognize and honor Him as He is and not as we would have Him to be. ✍

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