

Book 26: Ezekiel God Still Speaks in Captivity

- The Prophet Ezekiel was a priest by birth, but he didn't serve as a priest in the Temple.
- His ministry takes place among the captives in Babylon.
- The captivity took place in several stages.
- Ezekiel prophesies from Babylon, but much of that is prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

- His name "Ezekiel" appears twice in the book, but nowhere else in the Bible.
- It means "Strengthened by God" and the Lord certainly strengthened him for his prophetic ministry.
- The time of Ezekiel overlaps that of Jeremiah who was in Jerusalem, and Daniel who served in the government of Babylon.

- Ezekiel must have been a lively character.
- The prophecies of Ezekiel frequently came to Him in the form of bizarre visions.
- He not only spoke his prophecies, but often acted them out, doing little skits or stunts to parallel his messages.

- His prophecies focus on three main themes:
 - The impending judgment upon Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - God's judgment on the Gentile nations.
 - The future restoration of Israel and Judah, especially their ultimate restoration at the Second Coming of Christ.

Ezekiel: A Few Facts

- Like John in Revelation 10, Ezekiel was commanded to eat a scroll (Ezek. 3:1-2).
- A key phrase in Ezekiel is "Then they (or 'you') shall know that I am the Lord," which appears over 60 times.
- God refers to Ezekiel over 90 times as "Son of Man" – the same title Jesus often uses about Himself.

- Ezekiel mentions the prophet Daniel by name three times in this book (14:14, 14:20, 28:3), although Ezekiel is mentioned nowhere else in the Bible.
- Ezekiel and Isaiah are the only two prophets to describe the fall of Satan (Isaiah 14 & Ezekiel 28), also mentioned by Jesus in Luke 10:18.

- Ezekiel also emphasizes the personal responsibility of sin. (18:4, 20-32)

- He refers to the Holy Spirit at least 15 times.
- Seven times it is stated that “the hand of the Lord” was upon the prophet.
- The book of Ezekiel begins with a heavenly vision of the glory of God and ends with a vision of God’s glory on earth.

Ezekiel: Key Concept
The Future Restoration of Israel

- While the nation is in exile, Ezekiel reminds them of God’s promise that they will return and dwell in their own land once more.
- An important prediction is found in Ezekiel 43:4-9 where the glory of the Lord returns to the temple in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel: Key Passage
Ezekiel 36:22-36

This passage is a clear promise to restore the nation both physically and spiritually.

Ezekiel: Key Chapter
Ezekiel 37

- This chapter gives us Ezekiel’s vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, and the Message of the Two Sticks, both of which are central to a literal understanding of the restoration of Israel.
- Importantly, there is nothing conditional about the promise of restoration. It is God’s work and His alone.