

Outline of Ezekiel

1-24	Prophecies Against Judah and Jerusalem
25-32	Oracles Against Gloating Foreign Nations
33	Last Call for Israel to Repent
34-48	Words of Hope

Author

The Prophet Ezekiel is the author of the Book (1:3). He was a contemporary of Daniel and Jeremiah. The book was likely written between 593 and 565 BC which was the period of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. Ezekiel was marched off (second deportation) to Babylon at age 25 (597 BC). For 5 years he languished in despair. At age 30 (592 BC, Ek.1:2; 8:1) he received a vision of Yahweh's glory which begin his ministry. He lived among the Jewish exiles in Babylon at a settlement called Tel-abib along the Chebar river (3:15). It is just under 100 miles south of Babylon. The Babylonians brought about 10,000 Jews to the village around 597BC. This included Ezekiel and Judah's last king, Jehoiachin (2ki.24:8-14).

Summary

Ezekiel ministered to a generation that was exceedingly sinful as well as completely hopeless. So his ministry was to bring repentance for their sinfulness, as well as provide hope and confidence for the distant future. His message of punishment is not an end in itself. God uses punishment as a means to an end, namely, to bring His people to repentance before a

EZEKIEL

Ezekiel announces judgment upon Judah (chaps. 1-32) giving them one more chance to repent (chap. 33). Then after the Fall of Jerusalem he tells of coming deliverance from God through "the Prince" (chaps. 34-48).

holy God (33:11). They had lived so long in sin, confident in their own strength and the neighboring nations, that they needed God to remind them of His holy nature. It was after centuries of warnings, invasions, and prophetic messages, that God had to remove the people from their promised land. Can you imagine the feelings of disorientation and confusion that accompanied these people? He often wrote about the Temple, the Priesthood, the glory of God, and the sacrificial system. Since Ezekiel's message was to those in exile, he communicated judgment for their sins (1:1-32). But he also provided a message of hope for them who were then without a land of their own (33:1-48). Ezekiel provides a vision of the future millennial kingdom which complements other Biblical texts. He gives details of the reconstructed Temple in Jerusalem during that kingdom, where God's glory returns (40:1-48). There is a striking picture of the restoration and resurrection of God's people (Ek.37). Ezekiel reminds us to seek the Lord in those dark times when we feel lost.

Post-Deportation, Pre-Fall (597-586BC)

It seems like the people, now in Babylon, would get the point of their deportation. They knew of the fate of Israel (722BC). Yet they did not make the connection that they were being chastised for their rebellion. They continued to be rebellious (Ek.2:4; 3:7). They

PROPHETS

BOOK 26
Ek.
EZEKIEL
48 CHAPTERS

“And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.”
— Ezekiel 2:3

refused to walk in the statutes of God (Ek.5:6-7). They continued to defile the sanctuary of the Lord with idolatrous paraphernalia (Ek.5:11), and practices (Ek.8). Pagan high places were everywhere (Ek.6:13). With spiritual sophistry the inhabitants of Judah convinced themselves that they were the special favorite of God, and the land was given to them for a possession (Je.11:15) which could not be taken away. Their delusions were stroked by false prophets. In fact, one year before Ezekiel began his ministry, in the fourth year of Zedekiah, a false prophet announced that God will overthrow Babylon's yoke within 2 years (Je.28:1-4). Jeremiah warned in vain of the imminent overthrow of Jerusalem and the final deportation of its population (Je.21:7; 24:8-10; 32:3-5; 34: 2-3).



CHRIST IN EZEKIEL

- Ezekiel describes the figure on the throne as “the appearance of a man” (Ek.1:26). The glory will return in the Person of Christ who will come to save His people.