



## *The Book of EZEKIEL*

- **EZEKIEL** - His name means "**GOD WILL STRENGTHEN!**"

- **DATE:** 592 – 570 BC

- **PLACE:** Babylon

- **KEY WORD:** *Restoration of Israel*

- **THEME:** Ezekiel's ministry was to the Jewish exiles of Judah, the Southern Kingdom as they carried captive off to Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in three stages.

First, in 605 BC, he overcame Jehoiakim and carried off key hostages including Daniel and his friends.

Second, in 597 BC, the rebellion of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin brought further punishment; and Nebuchadnezzar made Jerusalem submit a second time. He carried off ten thousand hostages including Jehoiachin and Ezekiel.

Third, 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city after a long siege and disrupted all of Judah. Ezekiel was twenty-five years old when he was taken to Babylon and thirty years old when he received his prophetic commission. His ministry overlapped the end of Jeremiah's ministry and the beginning of Daniel's ministry. Ezekiel's ministry lasted twenty-years.

> **Ezekiel had a dual message:**

*Chapters 1 – 32 - Condemnation of the Jewish people*

*Chapters 33 – 48 - Consolation for the Jewish people*

- **KEY VERSES:** Ezekiel 36:24-26 - *For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

Ezekiel 36:33-35 - *'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'*

- **KEY CHAPTER: Chapter 37** - The hope of restoration of Israel-  
*vision of the valley of dry bones that come alive!*

- **CHRIST IN EZEKIEL** - Chapter 17:22-24 depicts the Messiah as a tender twig that becomes a stately cedar on a lofty mountain, as He is similarly called the Branch in Isaiah (11:1), Jeremiah (23:5; 33:15), Zechariah (3:8; 6:12). The Messiah is the King who has the right to rule (21:26-27), and He is the true Shepherd who will deliver and feed His flock (34:11-31).

> **C.I. Scofield sets the outline of EZEKIEL as:**

*Section 1 - The call of Ezekiel (Ch. 1-3)*

*Section 2 – Warnings of Judgment on Jerusalem (Ch. 4 – 24)*

*Section 3 – Judgments on the Gentile Nations (Ch. 25 – 32)*

*Section 4 – Ezekiel’s Responsibility as Watchman (Ch. 33)*

*Section 5 – Predictions of Events to Take Place at the End of the Age,  
When Israel is again in Her Own Land (Ch. 34 – 39)*

*Section 6 – The Millennial Temple and Its Worship (Ch. 40:1 – 47:12)*

*Section 7 – The Division of the Land during the Millennial Age (Ch. 47:13  
– 48:35)*

“Ezekiel prophesies among the Jewish exiles in Babylon during the last days of Judah’s decline and downfall. His ministry is in some ways similar to that of his older contemporary, Jeremiah. But while Jeremiah delivers a chilling message of destruction in Jerusalem, Ezekiel brings a warming message of reconstruction in Babylon.

Jeremiah is a man of tears; Ezekiel is a man of visions. And those visions stretch from horror to hope, from condemnation upon Judah’s faithless leaders and godless foes, to consolation regarding Judah’s future. Through it all, mankind would see the glory of Israel’s sovereign God, and “*they shall know that I am the LORD*” (6:10) *(From Talk Thru the Bible - Bruce Wilkenson & Kenneth Boa)*

- **J. Vernon McGee writes about EZEKIEL**, “In many ways, he spoke in the darkest days of the nation. He stood at the bottom of a valley in the darkest corner. He had to meet the false hope given by the false prophets and the indifference and despondency begotten in the days of sin and disaster. The people would not listen to his message. Therefore, he resorted to a new method. Instead of speaking in parables, as the Lord Jesus did, he acted out the parables.”

- **ON THE PERSONAL SIDE OF EZEKIEL**: In his book, Ezekiel identifies himself as a priest, the son of Buzi (1:3). He was married to a woman who was "the desire of his eyes" (24:16). One of the saddest

notes of his life was the death of his wife. In Ezekiel 24:1-2, the prophet was told that on the very day he received this revelation, his wife would die as the armies of Babylon laid siege against the holy city of Jerusalem. Ezekiel's sadness at the death of his wife was to match the grief of God at the sin of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was commanded not to grieve her death; he was to steel himself for this tragedy even as God had prepared Himself for the death of His beloved city (24:15-22). Perhaps no other event in the lives of the Old Testament prophets is as touching as this. The harshness of God's command to His prophet emphasizes the Lord's grief over the fate and sufferings of His rebellious people. Believers in God have been called upon to suffer many indignities through the ages, but in the suffering of Ezekiel, we learn something of the suffering of God Himself. Ezekiel shows us just how ugly and serious our sin is. Our rebellion brings grief and hurt to God, against whom our sin is directed. Perhaps this is why God acted so dramatically in dealing with the human condition-by sending His Son Jesus to die in our place and set us free from the bondage of sin. (From *Nelson's Bible Dictionary*)

- Ezekiel is the prophet of the glory of the LORD. There were three prophets of Israel who spoke when they were out of the land. They are Ezekiel, Daniel, and John (who wrote from the island of Patmos). All three of these men wrote what is called an apocalypse.

- Psalm 137 was written regarding the captivity of Israel/Judah in Babylon, let us read.

### Chapter 1- "The Calling of Ezekiel"

(v1-3) The word of the LORD & hand of the LORD comes to Ezekiel

(v4-14) Ezekiel's first vision:

> Four Living Creatures & the Glory of God (Rev. 4; Is. 6)

- Four faces:            *a man*                      *a lion*                      *an ox*  
*an eagle*

- Christ N.T.: *Son of man*    *Lion tribe of Judah*    *Servant of man*    *Son of God- deity*

- Four Gospels:    *Luke*                      *Matthew*                      *Mark*  
*John*

> **Understanding the CHERUBIM** - (meaning unknown) - winged angelic beings, often associated with worship and praise of God. The cherubim are first mentioned in the Bible in Gen 3:24. When God drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, He placed cherubim at the east of the garden, "and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life."

According to the prophets, cherubim belong to the category of unfallen angels; at one time, however, Satan or Lucifer was a cherub (Ezek 28:14,16), until he rebelled against God (Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:12-19).

Symbolic representations of cherubim were used in the TABERNACLE in the wilderness. Two cherubim made of gold were stationed at the two ends of the MERCY SEAT, above the ARK OF THE COVENANT in the HOLY OF HOLIES (Ex 25:17-22; 1 Chron 28:18; Heb 9:5). Artistic designs of cherubim decorated the ten curtains (Ex 26:1; 36:8) and the veil (Ex 26:31; 2 Chron 3:14) of the tabernacle.

When Solomon built the Temple, he ordered that two cherubim be made of olive wood and overlaid with gold. Each measured ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) high with a wingspread of ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) (1 Kings 6:23-28; 8:6-7; 2 Chron 3:10-13; 5:7-8). These gigantic cherubim were placed inside the inner sanctuary, or in the Most Holy Place in the Temple. Their wings were spread over the ark of the covenant. The woodwork throughout the Temple was decorated with engraved figures of cherubim, trees, and flowers (1 Kings 6:29-35; 7:29,36; 2 Chron 3:7).

A careful comparison of the first and tenth chapters of the book of Ezekiel shows clearly that the "four living creatures" (Ezek 1:5) were the same beings as the cherubim (Ezek 10). Each had four faces-that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (Ezek 1:10; also 10:14) - and each had four wings. In their appearance, the cherubim "had the likeness of a man" (Ezek 1:5). These cherubim used two of their wings for flying and the other two for covering their bodies (Ezek 1:6,11,23). Under their wings the cherubim appeared to have the form, or likeness, of a man's hand (Ezek 1:8; 10:7-8,21).

The imagery of Rev 4:6-9 seems to be inspired, at least in part, by the prophecies of Ezekiel. The "four living creatures" described here, as well as the cherubim of Ezekiel, served the purpose of magnifying the holiness and power of God. This is one of their main responsibilities throughout the Bible. In addition to singing God's praises, they also served as a visible reminder of the majesty and glory of God and His abiding presence with His people.

In some ways, the cherubim were similar to the SERAPHIM, another form of angelic being mentioned in the Bible. Both were winged beings, and both surrounded God on His throne (Isa 6:2-3). But the seraphim of the prophet Isaiah's vision were vocal in their praise of God, singing "*Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts*" (Isa 6:3). Nowhere else in the Bible do the cherubim break forth in such exuberant praise. They apparently played a quieter, more restrained role in worship. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

**(v15-21) Wheels of movement (Ezekiel 10:9- *And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared to have the color of a beryl stone.*)**

(Thoughts regarding UFO's: possible fallen Cherubim, something to think about.)

(v22-28) The appearance of the glory of the LORD.

### **Chapter 2- "The Commissioning of Ezekiel"**

(v1-5) God's plan for Ezekiel

(v6) Do not be afraid

(v7-10) Speak My words

### **Chapter 3- "Ezekiel The Watchman"**

(v1-11) Receive God's Word, digest it, declare it! (v3 - The Apostle John records a similar bittersweet experience with the Word of God in Revelation Ch. 10.)

(v12-15) Allowing God to use him by waiting on God

(v16-21) Ezekiel called to be a watchman!

- Jesus said to us in,

*Mark 16:15-16- "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

*James 5:19-20- Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

*Jude 20-23- But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

### **THE ROMANS ROAD TO SALVATION**

- ROMANS 3:23 - "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"
- ROMANS 5:8 - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
- ROMANS 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- **ROMANS 10:9,10 - “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”**