

Captivity Period: Ezekiel The Glory of the Lord *Ezekiel 1:1-48:35*

Ezekiel, "God strengthens," was a priest (*Ezek 1:3*) and the son of a priest. In addition he was called to be a prophet of the Lord. He was born in 622 B.C. according to *The Reese Chronological Bible* and was deported to Babylon in 598 along with King Jehoiachin. (See **STEPS IN TIME IV**) He was married and his wife died the day the siege of Jerusalem began. (*Ezek 24:1, 15-18*)

His ministry began the 5th year (593 BC) of Jehoiachin's exile (*1:1-2*) making him about 30 years old at the time. The last dated event tells us his ministry lasted until approximately 571 BC, which was at least 22 years.

The key phrase in Ezekiel is, "**know that He is God.**" This occurs some 30+ times from *6:7-39:28*. God wanted Israel to know the reason for the captivity was that they might, "**know that He is God.**"

He has been called *the "Prophet of the Glory of the Lord."* He saw the Shekinah Glory of God depart from the temple. (*10:16-18; 11:23*). He also saw the Glory returning during the millennium (*44:4*).

The events of Ezekiel for the most part are arranged in chronological order. He used parables, visions, drama and the preached word to convey the messages of God.

Allow me to outline Ezekiel for our study:

I- Calling of the Prophet Ezek 1:-3.

II- Glory of God Departs Ezek 4-24.

III- Nations Judgment Ezek 25-32.

IV- Restoring the Glory Ezek 33-48.

I- Calling of the Prophet Ezek 1:-3.

The calling of Ezekiel was typical of the dramatics that characterized his ministry. He saw a vision of four living creatures. (*1:1-28*) These are identified for us in *Ezek 10:20* as Cherubims, an order of angels. Ezekiel was allowed to see the Shekinah Glory of God as part of his calling. Six times he says, "**The hand of Lord was upon him...**" (*Ezek 3:14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1*)

God commissioned him as a prophet *2:1-10* and as a preacher they wouldn't hear *3:1-9*. He would be God's voice to the exiles (*3:10-15*) as well as a watchman to keep guard and lookout *3:16-21*.

II- Glory of God Departs Ezek 4-24.

Perhaps the saddest day in the history of Israel was when God withdrew His Shekinah Glory from them.

The destruction of Jerusalem did not occur for some 10-12 years after the first deportation by Babylon. During this time false prophets were saying Jerusalem would not be destroyed. Both Jeremiah in Egypt and Ezekiel in Babylon were saying it would be. The events recorded in *Ezekiel 4-24* occur between the third and fourth deportation (see **STEPS IN TIME IV**).

Ezekiel used 12 symbolic acts to show this destruction.

a- *Ezek 4:1-3* He drew a flat map of Jerusalem on a soft clay tablet that showed the siege of Jerusalem and the enemies surrounding her.

b- *Ezek 4:4-5* He laid on his left side for a few hours each day for 390 days to show the iniquity of the Northern kingdom.

c- **Ezek 4:6** He laid on his right side a few hours each day for 40 days to show Judah's sin.

d- **Ezek 4:9-17** He prepared bread of mixed grains and baked it over a cow dung fire. This showed the dire situation to come to Jerusalem.

e- **Ezek 5:1-4** He shaved his head and beard with a sword. He divided the hair in 3 piles. One he burned one, one he cut up with the sword and scattered one in the wind. Thus pictured the people of Jerusalem.

f- **Ezek 6:11** He stomped his feet and clapped his hand for attention.

g- **Ezek 12:1-16** He locked himself in a house and dug out and up through the street.

h- **Ezek 12:17-20** He trembled as he ate and rationed his water.

i- **Ezek 21:9-17** He slashed the air with a sword and beat his thighs.

j- **Ezek 21:18-22** He drew a map depicting two possible routes of attack by Nebuchanezzar toward two possible cities (Jerusalem and Rabbath-Ammon). Jerusalem would be the first destroyed.

k- **Ezek 24:1-14** He boiled meat until it fell off the bones and then threw it out and let the pot boil dry.

l- **Ezek 24:15-18** Possibly the most dramatic was when he was not allowed to mourn for his wife after her sudden death. This showed that God would not mourn over the destruction of Jerusalem. Notice the faithfulness of Ezekiel in **Ezek 24:18**, "**So I spoken unto the people in the morning and the evening my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.**"

III- Nations Judgment **Ezek 25-32.**

Ezekiel like most of the prophet had a message to the nations surrounding Israel and Judah. **Ezekiel**

25 concerned Ammon, Edom, Moab and Philistia. **Ezekiel 26** concerned Tyre and **Ezekiel 27-32** was to Egypt.

IV- Restoring the Glory **Ezek 33-48.**

This section can be farther divided into two sections. **Ezek 33-39** is events that occur prior to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel and **Ezek 40-48** describes this restoration.

Ezek 33:1-20 is seen as the recommissioning of Ezekiel to be a "**watchman**" **33:7.**

Ezek 34:23 promises them that they would have one Shepherd over them. Messiah is called, "**a plant of renown**" who would feed them.

Ezek 36:1-38 records the promises of God toward the Promised Land. Remember when the spies went into the land it flowed with milk and honey. Today in Israel the land is flourishing. They are growing fruits and vegetables for Europe and flowers for even Holland. God is literally making the desert bloom. He uses "**I will**" some 18 times in this section.

Of special note is **Ezek 36:24** which tells of the gathering of Israel into the Promised Land. **Ezek 36:33-35** promised the land to be rebuilt.

Ezek 37:1ff is one of the most interesting and graphic sections of the Word of God, the valley of the dry bones. Ezekiel was shown a valley of dry bones without life. The question was ask, "**Son of man can these bones live.**" **Ezek 37:3.** He saw these bones come together with flesh on them but they were without breath. **Ezek 37:8.** He next prophesied and breath came into the dead bones.

The purpose of this was to show Israel there is hope. **Ezek 37:11.** Not to be lost however is the thought *in Ezek*

37:10 where it says, "*an stood upon their feet, and exceeding great army.*" Israel today is a force to be feared militarily.

Ezek 37:15-22 gives us a great picture of the complete healing of the nation. Remember two nations went into captivity but God shows us through the two sticks becoming one that He will weld them together into only one nation at the time of the end. This has happened, literally happened.

Ezek 38-39 are the events of the battle of God and Magog. This pictures the destruction of the armies that will come against Israel to overrun her. This is primarily an invasion from the north that takes place in the middle of the tribulation. Resulting in the destruction of Israel's last foe.

Ezek 40-43 is the new temple of the millennium. There will be a literal future sanctuary build in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel gives the dimensions and describes the outer court, inner court, tables for the offerings and chamber for the inner court as well as the porch of this temple.

The purpose of the temple will be for a dwelling place for the Shekinah Glory of God that will return. **Ezek 43:7**. It will also be a place for the memorial sacrifices offered during the millennium. **Ezek 43:18-27**.

Ezek 44-46 describes the worship services during this time. **Ezek 44** sets forth the matters concerning the priesthood. **Ezek 45** discusses the Passover and the feast of Tabernacles.

Ezek 47-48 deal with the division of the millennial land.

Ezek 47:1-2 tells of the river that flows from Jerusalem.

Ezek 47:13-31 The land will be divided among the 12 tribes of Israel (See **EXTRA STEPS B**).

Ezek 48 John the Revelation saw the eternal city of God but here Ezekiel sees the millennial city.

Application to Life's Steps:

- 1- God is not finished with His nation of Israel and is in fact calling them out of the nations even now.
- 2- God uses many means and methods to get His message across to His people.
- 3- Even events such as death of a loved one all figure in the eternal plans of God and in His grace.
- 4- The promises of God are sure and the Word of His prophecy amazingly accurate.
- 5- The future is a bright one that has a lot of exciting events to come.

Retracing our Steps:

- 1- The name Ezekiel means? _____
- 2- Which of the 12 things Ezekiel did sticks out in you mind the most? _____

- 3- How many years after the first deportation was Jerusalem destroyed? _____
- 4- What is said to stand up exceedingly great in **Ezekiel 37**? _____
- 5- What will be built during the millennial for the worship of God? _____
- 6- What departed from Israel but will return in the future? _____
