

Lesson 1 – Ezekiel

Ezekiel was a priest exiled in the second Babylonian invasion in 598-597 BC along with King Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:10-17). His name means "God strengthens." God called Ezekiel "son of man" 93 times. Ezekiel received the first vision in 592 BC, and the latest date specified in the book is the 27th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (Eze. 29:17), which was about 570 BC. The prophet's career lasted at least 22 years. Specific dates are provided several times to reinforce that the events were not merely chance but were orchestrated and foretold by God. Ezekiel provides abundant, powerful proof that the Bible is divinely inspired.

Through Ezekiel, God used a variety of methods to reveal his message. These included parables, signs (in which the prophet acted out the prophecies), visions, songs, indictments, and conventional sermons. Ezekiel prophesied judgment on several nations: the destruction of Jerusalem, the siege of Tyre, and the conquest of Egypt. The book also records several interactions between God and Ezekiel.

Even in exile, the Jews had not yet turned back to God. God told Ezekiel that his message would not be readily received. Regardless of the reception, he must fulfill his duty in delivering it. Ezekiel opposed and condemned false prophets who were still spreading lies in Babylon, rebuked complaints that the Jews were suffering unjustly for the sins of their ancestors, and provided hope for the future. Chapters 40-48 give a detailed vision of a new temple. This cannot be a literal temple to be constructed in the future. It seems to be a symbolic depiction of the church. Revelation draws heavily from Ezekiel.

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1. What do we know about Ezekiel's background? Where did he preach? When did he receive his first recorded vision? (Eze. 1)
2. What did God tell Ezekiel about the Jews' reception of his message? (Eze. 2)
3. What was Ezekiel's job? What would be the consequence for him if he did not fulfill it? (Eze. 3:16-21; 33:7-9)
4. What three fates awaited the people still living in Jerusalem (Eze. 5:12)
5. What did God show Ezekiel in the 6th month of the 6th year? (Eze. 8)
6. What statement did God repeat about the impending punishment at least six times? (Eze. 5:11; 7:4; 8:18; 9:10)
7. What are cherubim? Locate at least one other place they're mentioned.
8. What designation was used for Ezekiel over 90 times in this book? Who else wore this title? (Eze. 2:1; 13:2; Luke 18:31)

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9. List the groups of people condemned in each chapter:
 - a) Chapter 9
 - b) Chapter 11
 - c) Chapter 13
 - d) Chapter 14
 - e) Chapter 34
10. What did Ezekiel prophesy about the prince in Jerusalem? Who was this ruler? How was this prophecy fulfilled? (Eze. 12:10-14; Jer. 52:7-11)
11. What proverb had the exiles composed? What did it mean? How did God respond? (Eze. 18)
12. What details did God foretell about the siege of Tyre? Briefly explain when and how this was fulfilled? (Eze. 26)
13. Ezekiel 28 has been misinterpreted as a reference to Satan's fall or a future Antichrist by misinterpreting some of the symbolic language. Who does the text specify to be the subject? (Eze. 28:2, 12)

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14. Babylon besieged Tyre for thirteen years, but the Tyrians fled with their treasure to the island city, and Babylon did not have the ingenuity to take it. What did God promise as payment in place of the plunder? (Eze. 29:17-20)

15. What news reached the exiles in the 12th year? (Eze. 33:21)

16. For the following questions, read Ezekiel 36:16-38.
 - a) What did the nations say when they saw the Israelites exiled? (20)

 - b) Why would God restore the house of Israel? (21-23)

 - c) What would God do to their hearts? (26)

 - d) What effect would the restoration of Israel have? (36, 38)

17. Who would rule the restored kingdom? How was this fulfilled? (Eze. 37:24-25)

18. What phrase is found over 80 times in Ezekiel, far more than any other book in the Bible? What is its significance in the context of Ezekiel's preaching? (Eze. 6:7; 12:15; 29:6; 37:14; 39:22)