

VIA EMMAUS: A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

Ezekiel: That You Might Know the Lord (30)

“It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name... I will vindicate the holiness of my great name. ... And the nations will know that I am the Lord” (Ezek 36: 22-23)

INTRODUCING EZEKIEL

Background “In the thirtieth year...” *a reference to his age, the age he would have served as priest 20 years later (40:1) would have marked the close of his service*
“fifth year of the exile...” *Circa 593 BC; This is still before the destruction of the temple Ezekiel’s prophecies last about 20 years (593-573 BC)*
“among the exiles...” *1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1 Ezekiel was in Babylon, exiled with Jehoiachin*
“word... came to him...” *The word and glory of God manifested outside Israel*

His Call Follows a vision of the glory of God (**ch. 1**) – *Likely the description is of God’s chariot-throne*
“Son of man...” (93x) – *Emphasizes the human creatureliness of Ezekiel*
“I send you...” (**2:3-7**) – *Ezekiel given the task of ministering to hardened people (cf. 3:4-11)*
“Hear what I say... eat this scroll” (**2:8ff**) – *Ezekiel receives his oracles from YHWH (cf. 13:1ff)*

THE LITERARY STYLE OF EZEKIEL

Visions *Ezekiel’s ministry was marked by a number of visions... these have apocalyptic symbolism*
1-2 His call to ministry comes via a vision of the glory of God (**cf. 1:22-28**)
8-11 The Spirit took Ezekiel on a tour of the defiled temple in Jerusalem
40-48 The Spirit led Ezekiel on a tour of the restored temple

Oracles *Ezekiel paints vivid word pictures to describe Israel’s rebellious state... later restoration*
15 Jerusalem is a useless vine to be burned
16, 23 Jerusalem is a faithless bride – *uses incredibly graphic/vulgar language*
Tells the story of redemptive history in this extended parable (16:1-22...42-43...59-63)
17 Two Eagles and the Vine

Drama *The most colorful of the prophets, instructed by God to use “street theater” for emphasis*
4:1-3 Ezekiel made a model city and enacted a mock siege
4:4-17 Ezekiel laid on his side for 390 days to enact the years of punishment Israel faced
Ezekiel was told to eat his food over human excrement (**4:12**)
12:1-7 Ezekiel packed his bags for exile and dug through a wall
24:15f Ezekiel’s wife dies and he is forbidden to mourn
37:16f Ezekiel takes two sticks and writes the names of Judah and Israel and reunites them
Should we preachers / churches emulate Ezekiel’s drama? (cf. Ezekiel 33:30-33)
Yes The people came in droves to hear Ezekiel, even though they hated his message
No The people hated his message, and came only to be entertained

Message **Salvation Thru Judgment** = “...that you may know that I am the Lord” (72x)
Ezekiel is arguing glory, holiness, and freedom of YHWH (**Ezekiel 36:22ff**)
Judgment because of Israel’s idolatry (**8-9; 14**)
Salvation comes through a new shepherd (**34**), who will bring a new covenant (**34:25ff**), that will provide a new heart/spirit (**36-37**), which will lead to restoration of the land (**39:25ff; 40-48**)

THE OUTLINE OF EZEKIEL

Prophecies Before the Fall of Jerusalem (1-24) – Inclined towards judgment on Israel's present state

- 1:1-3:27 Inaugural Vision – *Ezekiel is hard-headed prophet and a watchman of Israel*
4:1 5:17 God Against Jerusalem – *Strange ways of communicating judgment*
6:1-7:27 Oracles Against the Land – *Judgment on idolatry...know that I am YHWH*
8:1-11:25 Ezekiel's Temple Vision – *Vision of judgment on Israel's idolatry*
12:1-28 Anticipating Exile – *Packing his bags for exile and breaking thru the walls*
13:1-14:11 False Prophets, Idolatrous Elders – *Lying hearts (13:2); Heart idols (14:1ff)*
14:12-15:8 Consequences of Sin – *Judgment is coming, b/c Israel is a worthless vine*
16:1-63 The Faithless Bride – *Striking story of Israel's call, pride, fall, and restoration*
17:1-24 The Parable of the Eagles and the Vine – *Contrast between Babylon & YHWH*
18:1-32 Individual Moral Responsibility – *How God will judge mankind (18:19-32)*
19:1-14 Lament for the Princes of Israel – *Good beginnings... sad ending*
20:1-44 Learning from History – *Recalls how YHWH dealt with Israel (vv. 9, 22, 42)*
20:45-21:32 Fire and Sword – *Ezekiel warns using another verbal image (the sword)*
22:1-31 A City Defiled – *bloodshed in the city defiles Jerusalem*
23:1-49 Two Sisters – *parabolic judgment on Israel & Judah, much like Ezekiel 16*
24:1-27 Two Losses – *The death of Ezekiel's wife matches the death of YHWH's bride*

Prophecies Against the Nations (25-32) – Judah's Neighbors, Tyre, Egypt

- 25 Against Judah's Neighbors – *Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia*
26-28 Against Tyre – *Is Tyre's King Satan? Or Fallen Adam? (28:1-11, 12-19)*
29-32 Against Egypt – *Egypt is cast into the pit; historical and typological (32:17-32)*

Prophecies After the Fall of Jerusalem (33-48) – Inclined towards restoration in the latter days

- 33-34 Watchman and Shepherds – *God is bringing in new leadership, a new David (34:20-24)*
35:1-36:15 The Mountains of Edom and Israel – *God will adjudicate between the seeds*
36-37 **Restoration for the Glory of God:** Vindication of the Name of God (36:16-23);
New Exodus (36:24-25); New Covenant (36:26-32); New Creation (36:33-38)
New Israel Raised to Life (37:1-14); Restoration of the Kingdom of God (37:15-28)
38-39 Gog and Magog – *An obscure but powerful ruler and his horde contends against YHWH and his people; God destroys Gog and his evil empire. Security is found in God alone.*
40-48 The restoration of the temple (**see diagram**)
(1) Apocalyptic vision is the genre – details should not be pressed (result is a 2-D temple)
(2) The main point is the return of God's presence with his people (cf. 10:18-22 || 43:1-5)
(3) Fusion of the kingdom and the priestly offices shows a new kind of administration
(4) Life flows from the temple (47:1-12)
(5) God's people have a place in God's land with God's blessing – *sounds familiar*

FINAL THOUGHTS

- (1) Ezekiel introduces a new kind of prophecy – *restoration beyond the exile*
- (2) Ezekiel introduces a new kind of genre – *apocalyptic vision* (cf. Daniel, Zechariah, Paul, Revelation)
- (3) Ezekiel advances a number of NT images – *shepherd imagery (34); the temple imagery, New Jerusalem & New Creation (40-48); idolatry of the heart (14); judgment of the individual (18); cleansing by water (36); streams of living water (47); resurrection (37)*