

July 30, 2023

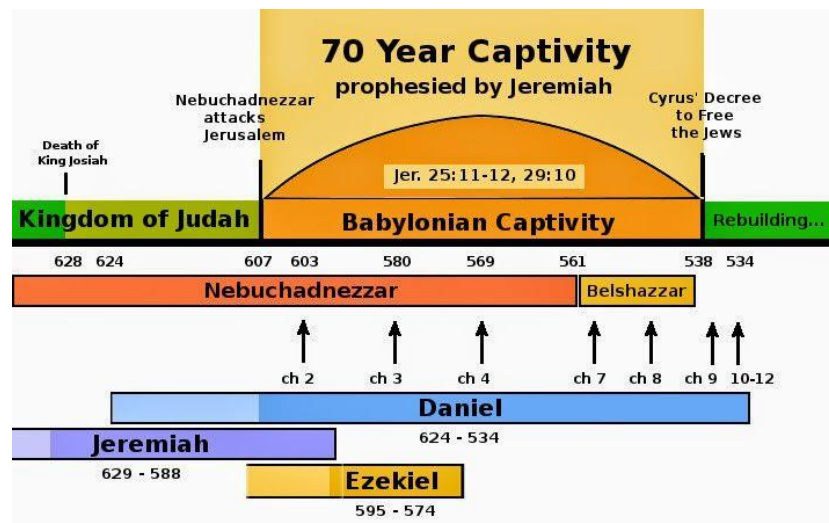
God's Good News Story

Ezekiel: There is Hope

God's Good News Story continues today with our key character – Ezekiel. יְחֶזְקֵאל. Strong's # 3168.

Transliteration: Yechezqel. Phonetic Spelling: (ye-khez-kale') Definition: "God strengthens". Only 3x's in OT.

Ezekiel was the son of a Judean priest named Buzi. The dates for Ezekiel birth was around 623bc during the reign of King Josiah in Jerusalem and while Nebuchadnezzar was King of Babylon. It appears he was alive during the time of Jeremiah and just a **few years older than Daniel**. The Bible does not give indication when and how Ezekiel died.



This was a very tragic and devastating time for Judah. Their continued years of disobedience led to God's judgement upon them and eventual destruction of Jerusalem and deportation and exile into Babylon for the previously prophesied time of 70 years.

If you remember the Northern Kingdom called Israel had broken away from Judah after the death of Solomon in around 933/931bc. About 200 years later their country was destroyed and the people taken captive for their disobedience to God.

- 734 B.C. Galilee and North and East Israel by Tiglath-Pileser.
- 722/21 B.C. Samaria and the rest of Israel by Sargon.
- 701 B.C. 200,000 of the inhabitants of Judah by Sennacherib

There were three major deportations and one minor by the Babylonians for Judah.

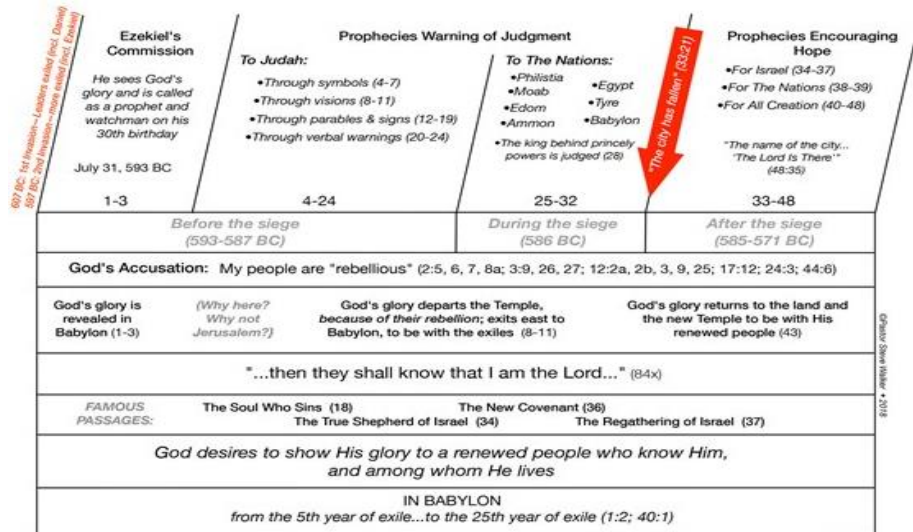
Babylonian Captivity		
Date	Deportation	Captives Taken
605 (first year)*	First	Nobles, Daniel (2 K. 24:1; Dan. 1:1-2)
597 (seventh year)*	Second	Jehoiachin, Ezekiel (2 K. 24:12; Jer. 52:28; Ezk. 1:1-2)
586 (nineteenth year)*	Third	Jerusalem (2 K. 25:8; Jer. 52:29)
582 (twenty-third year)*	Fourth (Minor)	Small Group of 745 Jews (Jer. 52:30)

* Years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar

30

Let's take a quick overview look at the **Book Of Ezekiel**.

Ezekiel is the 4th longest book in the Bible if you use the count of Hebrew words, 29,918 words.



<https://www.preachingtoday.com/exegesis/ezekiel/chart-preaching-through-ezekiel.html>

In @ 597 bc a 25 year son of a priest, Ezekiel and his wife along with around 10,000 Jews was taken by force to Babylon. He wound up at a place called Tel-Abib on the Chebar River Canal. About 5 years into his exile at the age of 30 he received his 1st Vision from God about the future.

Ezekiel 1:1-3... Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. ² (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, ³ the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the LORD came upon him.)

Let's take a quick look at an overview chart from Precept Austin website.

Time Frame in Ezekiel			
1:1 1:2 1:3	June/July	593	1 st dated message: Call to prophetic of his ministry
8:1	Aug./Sept	592	2 nd dated message: the vision of temple abominations
20:1	July/Aug	591	3 rd dated message: response to the elders' inquiry
24:1	Dec./Jan	589/588	4 th dated message: Jerusalem's judgment
FOLLOWING SECTION SHIFTS FROM PROPHECIES OF JUDGMENTS AGAINST JUDAH TO JUDGMENT AGAINST THE NATIONS			
26:1	March/April	587/586	5 th dated message: judgment on Tyre
29:1	Dec/Jan	588/587	6 th dated message: judgment on Egypt
29:17	April	571	7 th dated message: judgment on Egypt (the latest date in Ezekiel)
30:20	March/April	587	8 th dated message: news of Pharaoh's defeat
31:1	June 21	587	9 th dated message: news of Pharaoh's final defeat
32:1	March 3	585	10 th dated message: lament over Pharaoh
32:17	April	585	11 th dated message: funeral dirge for Pharaoh & description of Sheol
33:21	Dec/Jan	586/585	12 th dated message: news of Jerusalem's fall
THE LAST SECTION SHIFTS TO PROPHECIES OF COMFORT, CONSOLATION, COMFORT & COMMUNION FOR JUDAH & ISRAEL			
40:1	April 28	573	13 th dated message: temple vision

Some of the following is taken from:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Book-of-Ezekiel.html>

<https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-major-prophets/ezekiel>

Cooper, Lamar. New American Commentary. Broadman. EZEKIEL.

Ezekiel is the first prophet to use an apocalyptic style in his writing and preaching. The prophets that followed him also used this style, Daniel & Ezekiel and Zechariah. **The message of the book** of Ezekiel can be summarized in four (4) basic themes:

1. The Reality of God – (1:1-3:27) which gives us a vibrant and fresh vision of the character of God.
2. The Reality of Judgment – (4:1-32:32) Judgment for Judah, destruction of Jerusalem as well as the surrounding nations, which teaches us that God is ruler over all the world and He expects obedience and righteousness from all people.
3. The Reality of Restoration – (33:1-46:24) He writes about the promise the power and the prospect of restoration. Not only does the book present a striking picture of the resurrection and restoration of God's people (Ezekiel 37), it also offers readers a picture of the reconstructed temple in Jerusalem, complete with the return of God's glory to His dwelling place (40:1–48:35).
4. The Reality of Redemption – (47:1-48:35) He gives hope for a future redemption for those who return to Him in faith. This latter section of Ezekiel's

prophecy looks forward to the people's worship after Christ's return in the end times, when He will rule Israel and the nations from His throne in Jerusalem during His thousand year reign. (NAC)

What Application Can We Take Away From Ezekiel?

Last week I focused on one passage from Jeremiah about the story of *The Potter and the Clay*. The message is that God desires and will remold and make us into a useful vessel if we let Him, no matter how badly we have failed Him. There is hope and restoration available.

Today I have chosen one well known passage that has a similar theme, one of hope and restoration and redemption. In Ezekiel 37:1-14 we find the story of the Valley of Dry Bones and them coming back to life.

Listen to the first 6 verses:

Ezekiel 37:1-6...¹ *The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones.* ² *He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry.* ³ *He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord God, You know."* ⁴ *Again He said to me, "Prophecy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.'* ⁵ *Thus says the Lord God to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life.* ⁶ *I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the Lord.'"*

Take Away Message from this passage and from the entire Book of Ezekiel.

- (1) God Has A Plan For All People, We Must Commit To Trust And Obey Him. If not, judgment will come
- (2) God's Word is Faithful, Even in the most difficult or dry times of our lives we need to affirm God's sovereignty.
- (3) God is present everywhere and can be worshipped anywhere.
- (4) No matter how dark or troublesome the world may be, God's Kingdom will come. There is always HOPE! We just need FAITH to live VICTORIOUSLY!

SONG: COME ALIVE

then

Invitation :

Choose this Day to Become a Part of God's Good News Story...

Will you seek a new and fresh encounter with God, even in the dark times of life? We must trust, obey and remain faithful no matter what the circumstances, and we must share the hope of redemption to those who are struggling in this life.