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## Article 26: Ezekiel at a Glance

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# EZEKIEL AT A GLANCE

This book records the messages and ministry of Ezekiel, prophet and priest (and associate of Daniel) who was carried from Jerusalem to Babylon as a young man, there to serve as the “watchman on the wall” religious leader to the whole house of Israel, including those Jews still living in the holy city and to the multitudes of his people already in Babylon.

## **BOTTOM LINE INTRODUCTION**

THE ACCOUNT OF A PRIEST FROM THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM WHO BECAME A PREACHER IN THE STREETS OF BABYLON.

Ezekiel was the final one of four Old Testament author-prophets who also had a priestly background. These four are:

Moses (Ex. 2:1, 2; Deut. 18:15)  
Ezra (Ezra 7:1-6)  
Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1)  
Ezekiel (1:3)

There were three distinct phases leading to the eventual destruction of the city Jerusalem.

**First phase:** 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar put Jerusalem to tribute and carried off thousands of hostages, including Daniel and his three friends (Dan. 1:3, 4; 2 Chron. 36:6-7).

**Second phase:** 597 B.C. Again the Babylonians came and carried off more loot and prisoners. On this occasion Ezekiel the prophet was taken to Babylon (2 Kings 24:10-16).

**Third phase:** 586 B.C. At this time the city was burned and the first Temple destroyed (2 Kings 25:1-7). Ezekiel wrote and witnessed and warned during that brief period between phase two and phase three.

## **FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK**

1. Who? **Ezekiel.** He was a married priest (Ezek. 24:18), and friend of Daniel (Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3) who provided the most complete description of the cherubim (Ezek. 1:5-24) and the millennial temple (Ezek. 40-48) in the entire Bible.
2. What? **The Book of Ezekiel.**
3. When and where? 550 B.C., from city of Babylon.
4. Why? Predicting the historical removal and future return of God’s glory cloud.
5. To whom? The whole house of Israel.

## **KEY EVENTS**

1. The official divine call of Ezekiel with angels in attendance

2. He witnesses the divine glory cloud of God departing from the temple
3. The tragic, unexpected death of his wife
4. The amazing prophecy regarding the destruction of Tyre
5. A description of Satan's original existence and fall
6. Prediction of Israel's future restoration
7. Valley of dry bones vision
8. Prediction of the nation Magog's invasion of Israel and subsequent divine destruction
9. Beginning of his description of the future millennial temple (40-48)
10. The glory cloud returns and once again fills the temple
11. Description of a supernatural river that will proceed from the temple and give life to the parched deserts of Israel

### KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Ezekiel:** prophet who ministered to the Jews in Babylon during their captivity who provided the most complete description of the angelic cherubim and the future millennial temple in the entire Bible
2. **Ezekiel's wife:** beloved spouse of the prophet, taken by God in death on the eve of Jerusalem's siege and destruction

### KEY PLACES

1. **Chebar:** a river in Babylon where Ezekiel received his visions and also the location of a colony of Jewish exiles
2. **Jerusalem:** Ezekiel's former city, upon which the broken-hearted prophet predicted its destruction from his home in Babylon
3. **Solomon's temple:** God's sanctuary which was polluted by Jewish religious leaders worshipping pagan gods just prior to its destruction
4. **East Gate:** where the Glory Cloud existed before Jerusalem's destruction and where it will once again enter during the future millennium
5. **Mt. Olivet:** final location of the Glory Cloud before its removal to heaven
6. **Tyre:** Gentile city, predicted by Ezekiel to be destroyed because of its terrible greed, materialism, and pride
7. **Eden the Garden of God:** former home of Satan, prior to his rebellion against God
8. **Valley of Dry Bones:** place where Ezekiel received his vision of Israel's future resurrection and regathering
9. **Land of Magog:** nation that Ezekiel predicted would invade Israel in the latter days
10. **Millennial temple:** final Jewish temple to be built by the Messiah Himself during earth's golden age
11. **Holy Oblation:** a spacious square, 34 miles each way, located on a high mountain overlooking Jerusalem during the Millennium which will serve as the headquarters for the Messiah and his government

## UNIQUE FEATURES

1. His was the first of two Old Testament books to have been written in Babylon (compare Ezek. 1:1, 3 with Dan. 1:2).
2. Ezekiel is the most chronologically arranged major prophetic book in the entire Old Testament, as contrasted to Jeremiah, which book is the least chronologically arranged.
3. He began writing his book at age 30 (see also Num. 4:3; Lk. 3:23) and completed it some 22 years later.
4. No other biblical preacher before or since was so dramatic and illustrative in his preaching as was Ezekiel. Included among his "visual aid" attention-grabbers were maps, drawings, ground-reclining, head-shaving, foot-stomping, hand-clapping, wall-digging, sword-slashing, and pot-boiling activities. Upon the sudden death of his beloved wife, he remained tearless (at God's command) to illustrate a spiritual truth (24:15-18).
5. In addition to various visual aids, he preached 12 messages on God's imminent judgment, illustrated by 6 parables.
6. His was the most impressive ordination call in the entire Bible! (1-3)
7. Ezekiel provides scripture's most detailed account of the angelic cherubims (1, 10).
8. He is the only biblical character, apart from Jesus, to be referred to (some 90 times) as "son of man."
9. Ezekiel saw the glory cloud of the Lord on at least 12 occasions. He records its removal (10:18), and predicts its return (43:20) to the city of Jerusalem. It has been observed that --
  - Isaiah wrote of God's Salvation
  - Jeremiah wrote of God's Judgment
  - Daniel wrote of God's Kingdom
  - Ezekiel wrote of God's Glory
10. Ezekiel viewed some of the worst blasphemous and devilish acts ever done in the Solomonic temple, all of which were performed by apostate Israelite leaders! (8)
11. He was the only Old Testament prophet to mention Noah, Daniel, and Job by name (14:14, 20).
12. Ezekiel's prophecy in regard to the city of Tyre's destruction is probably the greatest non-messianic prediction in the entire Old Testament! (26)
13. His is the final of two Old Testament books depicting the activities of Satan before his fall (compare Isa. 14:12-17 with Ezek. 28:11-19).
14. This book contains the most lengthy description of judgment upon Egypt in the entire Bible (29-32).
15. An apt comparison can be seen between Ezekiel 34 and John 10. Both chapters speak of the characteristics of true and false shepherds.
16. Ezekiel's vision in the Valley of Dry Bones is probably the most vivid vision in the entire Old Testament (37).
17. His book is the only one which describes the future Gog and Magog invasion into Israel (38, 39).
18. Finally, this book describes the last of seven biblical temples. These are:
  - The tabernacle of Moses (Ex. 40)

- The Temple of Solomon (1 Kings 6)
- The Temple of Zerubbabel and Herod (Ezra 6; Jn. 2)
- The temple of Christ's body (Jn. 2)
- The spiritual temple, the Church (Acts 2)
- The tribulational temple (Rev. 11)
- The millennial temple (40-48)

In fact, Ezekiel takes no less than nine chapters in describing the details of the final and fabulous temple!

## COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

### **1 Kings:**

- 1 Kings describes the first temple (6-7).
- Ezekiel describes the second temple (40-48).

### **Jeremiah:**

- Jeremiah writes concerning the New Covenant (31:31-34; 32:39).
- Ezekiel writes concerning the New Covenant (11:19; 36:25-27).

### **Haggai:**

- Haggai foretells regarding the millennial temple (2:6-9).
- Ezekiel fulfills this millennial temple prophecy (40-48).

### **Revelation:**

- Both Ezekiel and John saw visions of future events.
- Both Ezekiel (2:8-3:3) and John (Rev. 10) were instructed to swallow a scroll containing words they were to proclaim.
- Gog and Magog (38-39) provide the imagery for John's description of the final rebellion of God's enemies (Rev. 20:8).
- John's vision of the New Jerusalem and the River of Life (Rev. 21:1-22:5) has marked similarities to some of Ezekiel's visions of the millennial city (48:30-35) and the river flowing out of its Temple (47:1-12).

## TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. The God of Israel (8:4)
2. The God of the Cherubim (10:1-4)
3. The God of the New Covenant (11:19, 20; 36:26, 27). See also Jer. 31:31.
4. The God of Jerusalem (12:19)
5. "Whose Right It Is" (21:27)
6. The Good Shepherd (34:12)
7. The God of Sanctification (36:25)

8. The God of Restoration and Regeneration (36:24, 25)
9. The Holy One in Israel (39:7)
10. The Lord is There (48:35)