

# Ezekiel

## Introduction

In 597 BC, king Jehoiachin and several thousand others including Ezekiel were taken into captivity by Babylon. Jerusalem and the temple had not yet been destroyed. That didn't happen until 586 BC. And so, for the first part of this book, Ezekiel is prophesying among exiles about the destruction of Jerusalem. Then, close to the middle of the book, the temple and city of Jerusalem are destroyed, and then the last part of the book is Ezekiel prophesying to exiles after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The name Ezekiel means "God strengthens me" and his 22 year ministry was entirely to God's people held captive in Babylon. He, like Jeremiah, was the son of a priest. Ezekiel was a powerful preacher and God often instructed Ezekiel to visually act out his messages. Among the prophets:

- Isaiah – Prophet of Faith that exalted the Son
- Jeremiah – Prophet of Love that exalted the Father
- Ezekiel – Prophet of Hope that exalted the Holy Spirit

**Key Word** – The Glory of the Lord (1:28, 10:4 & 18, 43:2)

**Key Theme** – 70 times we read the central message of this Book and it is: They shall know that I am the Lord!

## The Message of Ezekiel

The key to the entire book of Ezekiel can be found in Ezekiel 26:20-23, and answers the question – "Why does God continue to love His people when they continually deny, defile, and disregard Him?" The answer to this question is the central theme of the book – God is ultimately concerned with His glory!

### 1. The glory of God is Revealed – Chapter 1

- **He is omnipresent (15-17)** – "wheels" indicate His glory is now to be every place
- **He is omniscient (18)** – "full of eyes" indicate He sees all things, knows all things
- **He is omnipotent. (22-25)**
- **He is faithful (28)** - In this vision of the glory of God, we see a picture of God's covenant with Noah, this rainbow in the sky, a picture of his faithfulness to his creation. The big difference is that Noah saw the rainbow after the storm. **Ezekiel looks and sees the rainbow in the midst of the storm.** In the darkest of times, God is still faithful!
- **He is personal (28)**– This God of Glory chooses to speak to a man

### 2. The Glory of God is Removed – Chapter 8-11

Chapters 8-11 are a vision in which God leads Ezekiel through the temple. And in every part of his tour of the temple he sees idols. And God reveals that He is a jealous God and will not share His glory with another. This vision leads us to Ezekiel 11:23 – "And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city." The Glory of God just left the building.

This leads us to the important question – “How will and does God restore His glory among His people?”

### **3. The Glory of God is Restored – Ezekiel Chapter 34-43**

#### **a. He will anoint a new king (34:23)**

- **The servant of God** – “My servant”
- **The shepherd of men** – “shall feed them and be their shepherd”

#### **b. He will inaugurate a new covenant (34:25-26)**

The sign of this new covenant will be permanent peace between God and man.

#### **c. He will form a new people (36:25-27)**

- **Forgiven of their sin** – “you shall be clean”
- **Filled with His Spirit** – “I will put my Spirit within you”

#### **d. He will bring them to a new place (36:28)**

This promise was a place where – “you shall be my people, and I will be your God”

#### **For them...**

- This promise was fulfilled when the Glory of God once again returned to the temple of God and dwelled in their presence (43:1-4) – “the glory of the LORD filled the temple”

#### **For us...**

- This promise was fulfilled in John 1:14 – “and the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us, and we beheld His glory.” And in Jesus Christ we have the servant of God who is the shepherd of men who loved and cared for us. And in Luke 22:20 Jesus did inaugurate a new covenant by His blood that did bring permanent peace between God and man. And later that same evening after God’s people once again denied, defiled, and disregarded Him, our divine Shepherd laid down his life for the very sheep that murdered him. And the moment Jesus gave up His Spirit, the curtain that separated man from God, in this rebuilt temple that Ezekiel sees, is ripped in two (Matthew 27:51). Through the blood of Jesus, our sins are forgiven. Through the victory of Christ, we are now filled with His Spirit such that we as the temple are filled with the very Glory of God (1 Cor. 6:19).

### **Personal Application:**

Ezekiel shows us clearly that God saves sinful people for one purpose – for the Glory of His Name. What does an all-knowing God see when He looks around our heart and life? Does He see a clean temple or does He see a temple filled with idols? What is the condition of the place where His glory now dwells?

We have been saved ONLY by the sovereign grace of our God, and we now live ONLY for the supreme glory of our God!