



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

Old Testament Survey

Lesson 37 – The Prophet Ezekiel and His Ministry to the Exiled Jews (Ezekiel)

The Prophet Ezekiel (592-570 BC)

Ezekiel was a Jewish priest who was taken captive to Babylonia in 597 BC together with King Jehoiachin. In 592 BC God called Ezekiel to be His prophet. He labored for 22 years among the Jews who were exiled along the Chebar River (which is most likely the Kabar Canal between Babylon and Nippur). Many of the Jews were becoming prosperous during their exile. It was Ezekiel's duty to call them to repentance, to announce the coming final destruction of Jerusalem (which took place in 586 BC), which was God's judgment on their idolatry, and to counteract the false hopes given by false prophets and prophetesses.

In his later ministry, after Jerusalem had been destroyed, Ezekiel also foretold the glorious days of the coming Messiah, whom he called Prince David or Shepherd David. In this way he comforted the repentant remnant among the people.

Parts of the book of Ezekiel are hard to understand because of the symbolic language he used. Ezekiel worked at the same time as Jeremiah (who was in Jerusalem and Egypt) and Daniel (who was in Babylon).

Read as many chapters of the book of Ezekiel as you can. If you cannot read them all, try to read all of the book as soon as you can. If you have any questions about your reading, do not hesitate ask them.

The Prophecies of 592 BC

1. Ezekiel sees a vision of the glory of the LORD (chapter 1; also 3:23; 8:4; 43:2ff.).
2. God calls Ezekiel to be His prophet (chapters 2-3).
"You shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'" (2: ; 3:_____
"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel" (3:_____
If the wicked sins and you do not warn him, he will die, and it is your fault.
If the wicked sins and you warn him in vain, he will die but it is not your fault.
If the righteous sins and you do not warn him, he will die, and it is your fault.
If the righteous sins and you warn him with success, he will live and so will you.
3. God tells Ezekiel to carry out some actions symbolizing the coming destruction of Jerusalem (chapter 4).
4. God tells Ezekiel to cut his hair as a symbol of Jerusalem's destruction (chapter 5).
Burn a third, cut a third with a knife, and scatter a third.
5. Ezekiel prophesies the total destruction of Jerusalem because of its idolatry (chapters 6-7).
"I will judge you according to your ways... My eye shall not spare, nor will I have pity"
(7:_____

The Prophecies of 591 BC

6. Ezekiel sees in a vision the great sins of Judah and God's punishment (chapters 8-11).

“Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there” (8:___

“My eye will not spare nor will I have pity” (8:___

“The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city” (11:___

Yet there is a promise to the repentant remnant:

“I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh” (11:___

7. Ezekiel prophesies the attempted escape of King Zedekiah (12:1-16).

“I will bring him to Babylon...; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there” (v. ___

This prophecy was fulfilled in 586 BC. See 2 Kings 25:4-6.

8. Ezekiel announces that his prophecies will be fulfilled soon (12:17-28).

“None of My words will be postponed any more” (v. ___

9. Ezekiel denounces the false prophets and prophetesses (chapter 13).

“Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing” (v. ___

10. Ezekiel testifies against the idolatry in Israel (chapter 14).

“Even if...Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves” (v. ___

11. Ezekiel compares Jerusalem to a vine fit for burning (chapter 15).

12. Ezekiel compares Jerusalem to a beautiful bride who commits adultery with others (chapter 16).

“I will judge you as women who break wedlock or shed blood are judged” (v. ___

“Your elder sister is Samaria...and your younger sister...is Sodom” (v. ___

“Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth” (v. ___

13. Ezekiel tells a riddle about the royal house of David (chapter 17).

“I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree” (v. ___

King Zedekiah will be brought down, but the Messiah hidden in Jehoiachin will be exalted.

14. God explains the fairness of His avenging justice (chapter 18).

“The soul who sins shall die, but if a man is just, ...he shall surely live!” (vv. _____

“I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies... Therefore turn and live!” (v. ___

15. Ezekiel laments over the two proud kings: Jehoahaz in Egypt and Jehoiachin in Babylon (chapter 19).

Jehoahaz ruled only three months in 608 BC and was taken to Egypt.

Jehoiachin ruled only a short time in 597 BC and was taken to Babylon.

The Prophecies of 590 BC

16. Ezekiel recalls the history of Israel and its many sins (chapter 20).

17. Ezekiel prophesies that Babylon will strike Jerusalem with the sword (chapter 21).

The crown will be taken from Zedekiah and reserved for the future Messiah (21:26-27).

18. Ezekiel declares that Jerusalem is ripe for God’s judgment (chapter 22).

“I sought for a man among them who would...stand in the gap... but I found no one” (v. ___

19. Ezekiel compares Israel and Judah to two adulterous daughters: Oholah and Oholibah (chapter 23).

The Prophecies of 588 BC

20. God tells Ezekiel that Jerusalem will be cooked as in a pot (24:1-14).
21. Ezekiel's wife dies, and he is forbidden to mourn her death as a sign to Israel (24:15-27).
22. Ezekiel prophesies against Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia (chapter 25).

The Prophecies of 587 BC

23. Ezekiel prophesies the humbling of mighty Egypt, in whom Zedekiah trusted (29:1-16).
24. Ezekiel prophesies God's judgment on Egypt (30:1-19).

The Prophecies of 586 BC (the year of Jerusalem's destruction)

25. Ezekiel prophesies the destruction of Tyre and Sidon (chapters 26-28).
Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon fulfilled part of this prophecy. After Tyre was later rebuilt on an island, Alexander the Great fulfilled the rest of the prophecy and destroyed Tyre.
26. Ezekiel prophesies that Egypt will not prevail against Babylon (30:20-26).
27. Ezekiel prophesies that Egypt will fall, even as Assyria fell (chapter 31).
Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Egypt in 568 BC, fulfilling this prophecy.

The Prophecies of 585 BC

28. God reminds Ezekiel once more of his duty as a watchman (33:1-20)
This section repeats and combines some of the messages of chapters 3 and 18.
29. Ezekiel receives the news that Jerusalem has been destroyed (33:21-29).
30. God tells Ezekiel that many of those who listen to him are really hypocrites (33:30-33).
"They sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them" (v. ____)
31. The LORD rebukes the shepherds who feed themselves instead of the sheep (34:1-10).
32. The LORD will send a true Shepherd to His people (34:11-25).
"I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away" (v. ____)
"I will establish one shepherd over them... – My servant David. He shall feed them" (v. ____
This is a prophecy of the Messiah, the Son of David, **JESUS**, our Good Shepherd.
33. Ezekiel prophesies against Edom and promises future glory to Israel, as in chapter 11 (chapters 35-36).
34. Ezekiel sees the resurrection of dry bones in a vision (37:1-14).
35. Ezekiel sees the joining of two sticks into one in a vision (37:15-28).
"David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd" (v. ____
The Messiah shall unite men from all tribes into one Church.
36. Ezekiel prophesies against Gog of Magog (chapters 38-39).
37. Ezekiel laments the fall of Egypt (chapter 32).

The Prophecies of 572 and 570 BC

38. Ezekiel sees in a vision the new Temple, picturing the spiritual temple of the New Testament Church (chapters 40-46).
39. Ezekiel sees in a vision the Holy Land and the Holy City (chapters 47-48).
40. Ezekiel prophesies that Nebuchadnezzar II will conquer Egypt, even as he took Tyre (29:17-21).

Questions

1. In what way is a Christian leader like a watchman on a tower?
2. What did Ezekiel see when he saw the glory of the Lord in a vision?
3. Why did the prophet Ezekiel compare idolaters to unfaithful wives?
4. How did Ezekiel describe the Good Shepherd whom he called David?
5. Whom did Ezekiel have in mind when he referred to this Shepherd?
6. Ezekiel foretold disaster and defeat for which powerful nations?
7. What is the meaning of the vision of the dry bones?