

Introduction to Ezekiel

1:1-3

By Dr. Dan Lute

Ezekiel's name means "God will _____" or "God strengthens."

Q. Names are always important in the Scriptures. What does his name prophetically suggest the letter is about?

A.

1.

2.

Timeline of the Babylonian Captivity:

612 Babylonians and Medes conquer Assyria

605 Babylonians battle Egyptians at Carchemish

605 Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon

605 The Babylonians invade Judah

605 First wave of deportation of Jews to Babylon

605 Daniel is taken captive and begins to prophesy

601 Babylonians battle Egypt, both sides suffer losses

601 Judah decides to realign itself with Egypt, Jeremiah warns

597 Jehoiachin becomes king of Judah

597 Babylonians capture Jerusalem

597 Second wave of deportation to Babylon from Judah.

597 Ezekiel is taken captive to Babylon

597 Zedekiah becomes king of Judah

593 Ezekiel begins to prophesy

586 The Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and the Temple (9th of Av)

586 Jerusalem's walls and gates are burned with fire

586 Third wave of Jews deported to Babylon

586 Babylonian Exile (Galut Bavel) begins

586 End of Biblical (First Temple) Period

586 The end of the monarchy in Judah

539 The Fall of Babylon 539 Beginning of the Persian Period to 332

539 The Decree of Cyrus II allowing Jews to return

516 The Jews rebuild their Temple (70 years)

v. 1 "In the thirtieth year..."

This is speaking to the age Ezekiel was when he received the vision. Verse 2 will tell us that this was the "fifth year" of King Jehoiachin's exile. He would have been taken captive when he was _____ years old.

Also, thirty years of age would have been the time that Ezekiel would have started to serve in the temple as a _____.

Cp. v. 3, "...the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi.

Notice the _____ of time.

v. 1 "In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day..."

Also, v.2 "On the fifth of the month – it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin – "

Q. Why give us such details?

A. Historical setting, to some degree, _____ the vision. It gives it a specific _____ for examination.

The Place:

v. 1 "I was among the exiles by the Kebar (Chebar) River..."

Note: This was known as "the _____" by the Babylonians as it was the main tributary going southeast from the Euphrates River. It lay between both the Euphrates and the Tigris. It was southeast of Babylon proper and northwest of Ur. It was actually a very _____ place. Ezekiel's home was to be Tel Abib or literally, "Hill of the spring" or "Hill of renewal" near the river (cp. 3:15)

Q. What can we derive from this name and the prophetic plan of God for Israel, both near and for the future?

A. Jeremiah 29:11

Q. What did Ezekiel say happened to him? (v. 1)

A.

1. The _____ opened

Note: Ezekiel is the only O.T. prophet that is said to have seen this.

Q. What is the significance of this in the N.T.?

A. Matthew 3:16

Acts 10:11

2. I saw _____ of God (pl.)

Ezekiel is now in a very unique _____ of people: Those who have seen or seen visions of God, e.g. Adam and Eve, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Isaiah.

Regarding verse 3. Note that the personal pronouns have changed from first person to _____ person singular ("I" to "Ezekiel") either suggesting that someone edited his work or often times one switches to third person as a literary device. It is often used as a source of _____ (as is here) so there is no need for an editor.

3. "There the hand of the LORD was upon him..."

Note: "Every expression of the Hebrew word "_____" in this book or in any prophetic work in the Scriptures is invariably an expression of _____ implying that the prophecy seizes him against his will like a person going mad." (Rashi on Ezekiel) (Cp 2 Pt. 1:20-21) (Ezek. 3:14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1, 40:1)

Note: The word, "yad" or "hand" is used to form a literary _____ encapsulating the call of Ezekiel into prophetic ministry. In other words, 1:3, "The hand of the LORD was upon him..." ends with 3:14, "...with the strong hand of the LORD on me."

Note: All capital letters on LORD implies this has some direct connection to God's _____ promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).

Ezekiel's contemporaries were _____ (in Babylon's court) and _____ (prisoner in Jerusalem). Ezekiel mentions Daniel in 14:14 (Noah, Daniel, and Job) and 28:3.

Per Dr. Charles Feinberg (deceased professor of O.T at Talbot University), the major prophets each have a different focus.

Isaiah = The _____ of the Lord

Jeremiah = The _____ of the Lord

Daniel = The _____ of the Lord

Ezekiel = The _____ of the Lord

Purpose of the book

Ezekiel purpose was to:

1. _____ the Israelites of the sin that brought judgment upon them.
2. To _____ and strengthen their faith by giving prophecies of a future restoration and glory.

Style

Ezekiel uses more _____ and symbolism than any other O. T. prophet.

Common title

Ezekiel uses the title, " _____ " at least one hundred times.

The same phrase was also a popular title that Jesus used for himself in both a similar and different way. Similarly, to describe his _____ to humanity. Differently, in that the phrase used technically speaks to Jesus' _____ (cp. Dan. 7:13)

Common phrase: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says..."

Out of 359 occurrences in the Scriptures, 122 of them are found in Ezekiel.

Q. What does this imply?

A.

Common phrase: "You/They shall know that I am the Lord..."

This is also known as a "_____ formula." It occurs over 60 times in the book and connects the judgments described to the purpose. [see below]

Major Theme: God's _____ over Israel and the affairs of Gentile nations.

Divisions:

Chapters 1-24 = Prophecies of Jerusalem's destruction

Chapters 25-32 = Prophecies Against the Nations

Chapters 33-39 = Prophecies of Israel's Hope

Chapters 40-48 = Prophecies of the Millennial Temple and Sacrifices

Connecting Psalm: Read Psalm 137

Q. List the main ideas of this psalm as it relates to Ezekiel and the exiles.

A.

Tradition: To this day, in a place called "Al-Kifi," near the ancient ruins of Babylon in Iraq, there lies what is claimed to be the burial tomb of Ezekiel.

Q. What does this imply?

A.

Q. How can we apply that to our own day?

A.