

# EXEKIEL

## THE PROPHET

### Part Four :

### Theatrics, Drama and Prophecy

How would you like to be told that your ministry will fail.  
 Ezekiel was told that the people would NOT listen to him. (2:7) . (See 33:3–32)  
 Yet he was to faithfully tell them the words of the LORD.

God always gives warning - even when the people will NOT listen, or change their ways.

We pick up our study with Ezekiel 3:16.

Seven days after his first vision, Ezekiel receives a message, and then another vision from the LORD. It makes me wonder if both the first and second visions were on the Sabbath - just as John the Revelator was “in the Spirit on the LORD’s Day.”

Ezekiel 3:17-21 & 33:1- 20  
 CALLED TO BE A WATCHMAN

gives <b>no warning</b> to <u>the wicked man</u>	who continues in iniquity who then dies in his iniquity	“His blood I will require at your hand.” (3:18)
warns <u>the wicked man</u>	who continues in iniquity who then dies in his iniquity	“You have delivered your soul.” (3:19)
gives <b>no warning</b> to a <u>righteous man</u> who has turned to unrighteousness and finally rejects something important (a stumbling block)	who then continues in sin, and will die in his sin. <b>All his previous righteousness will not be remembered.</b>	“His blood I will require at your hand.” (3:20)
warns the righteous man of impending temptation.	who chooses NOT to sin, and will surely live	“You will have delivered your soul.” (3:21)

A righteous man, turns to sin and for that will die (if he does not repent).  
 No Once-Saved-Always-Saved taught here.

EZEKIEL 3:24 The LORD tells Ezekiel to shut himself up in his house, which would include the courtyard. “They will put ropes on you and bind you so you cannot go out among them.” I’m not sure who “they” refers to, except the fellow captives - who did not want to hear his message. We can expect the same thing in the last days, from a society that does not want to hear the final warning.

V. 26 The LORD then says HE will make Ezekiel “mute” so that he cannot go out to the people to deliver the message. “But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth and you will say to them, ‘thus says the LORD.’” **Keep this in mind. Ezekiel could only speak the words given to him by the LORD.** His condition - mute except when speaking the words of the LORD, would not be reversed until the city of Jerusalem is destroyed (at the end of Chapter 24).

### **EZEKIEL BUILDS A MINIATURE CITY UNDER SIEGE**

Ezekiel Chapter 4 (Remember - the prophet cannot speak.)

First he is to “shut himself up in his house” - just as Jerusalem has been “shut in” by the SIEGE. On a clay tablet he portray’s the city - Jerusalem. He builds a SIEGE wall, and camps of soldiers with battering rams. He sets up an iron plate between himself and the city - symbolizing the separation from the LORD. And he is told to turn his face away from this miniature city.

Then Ezekiel is told to lie on his left side for 390 days (13 months), and then on his right side for 40 days. He is told that each day represents a year of iniquity, first 390 years of iniquity in Israel (the Northern tribes) and then 40 years of iniquity in Judah (the Southern tribes). (Eze 4:5-6). The LORD tells Ezekiel, “I will constrain you, so you cannot turn.”

4:9 His food is prescribed - cakes made of grains/beans/barley to be cooked over a fire using human waste (v9) - changed to cow dung at Ezekiel’s pleading (v12). He is to drink from a vessel holding about 5 quarts (a hin) of water.

Verse 16 explains the meaning: “I will cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread.”

REMEMBER: EZEKIEL CANNOT SPEAK. This is 500BC. These are captives living in very poor circumstances, most of whom are illiterate. But signs and pictures they CAN understand. And Ezekiel’s strange behavior would certainly get attention.

NOTE: The ability to foretell the future, is THE ONLY sign of a true prophet. (Satan can seem to work miracles.) Ezekiel portrays this scene for 1 year and 70 days. By that time, all 10,000 captives know who Ezekiel is , and what he has prophesied. And **when the city falls - Ezekiel is validated.**

**Chapter 5:** Ezekiel shaves his head and beard - divides the hair in thirds - then burns, cuts, and scatters the hair.

But a "small remnant" is saved.

AGAIN: A silent acted prophecy of doom for the people of Jerusalem.

**Chapter 6:** The mountains of Israel to be laid waste - but a remnant to be saved (6:8)

NOTE: There is always a remnant. "I will take you, one from a city and two from a clan, and I will bring you to Zion." (Jeremiah 3:1)

God's grief: (6:9) "I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols."

**Chapters 7 and 8** were covered last week, when we considered the terrible wrath of God, when He withdraws His protection. Remember: Jeremiah did tell the people to surrender to the Babylonians, and they would save their lives. All of the destruction was NOT necessary - but they would not listen.

**Chapter 9&10:** The Man Clothed in Linen, The Mark, Five destroyers, and Coals of Fire

Ezekiel is still "in the Spirit" - in vision

Six men come from the North.

One is clothed in linen (priestly garment)

They go into the courtyard of the Temple and stand by the bronze alter.

The man clothed in linen is told to go thru Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of everyone who sighs and cries for the abominations done in the city.

(Marking the remnant.)

The five are told to follow him and kill without mercy,

but to leave unharmed those who have "the mark."

When the "man clothed in linen" reports back that he is finished -

this same man is then told to take fire from under the cherubim and scatter these live coals over the city of Jerusalem (10:2)

"The cloud filled the inner court." (This is Day of Atonement imagery.)

NOTE: The cherubim are now standing in the Holy Place ("inner court")

There was no "court of women" outside Solomon's Temple.

**The glory of the LORD then departs the Temple. (10:18)**

COMPARE: Revelation 7:1-8 The sealing of the 144,000

NOTE: The golden censor v.3 = Day of Atonement

COMPARE: Revelation 8:1-5 Man Clothed in Linen, who throws live coals over earth, just as the 7 trumpets begin to sound.

COMPARE: Revelation 9:4 The fifth trumpet - the angel and his locusts from the bottomless pit are not allowed to harm those men who have the “seal of God on their foreheads.”

MESSAGE: The LORD knows exactly who you are!! He can and will deliver you.

NOTE: The seven “heads” of the beast of Rev. 13, who seek to destroy the LORD’s people, represent five kingdoms (mountains) who worship the Queen of Heaven (the wicked woman) :

1. Egypt
2. Assyria
3. Babylon
4. Persia (Purim)
5. Greece
6. Rome
7. We just don’t know yet. (Hitler might qualify, or Islam).

In John’s day, the LORD tells him that “five are fallen.” (Rev. 9-10)

[Rome has not yet fallen, in John’s day.]

**In Ezekiel’s day - there are five remaining, because Egypt and Assyria are passed.**

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 11:** Twenty-five of the leading men of Jerusalem, including two of Ezekiel’s personal acquaintance, are seen speaking out against Jeremiah’s word from the LORD concerning a long captivity in Babylon. These are officials, left in the City by the Babylonians after the deportation of 597. The LORD tells Ezekiel that these men will fall by the sword “at the border of Israel.” (11:9-10) We are told in (II Ki. 25:4-7, 18-21) that the puppet King and princes, and some public officials, tried to flee away from Jerusalem, and were caught by Nebuchadnezzar’s forces. Most were executed on the spot, but puppet King Zedekiah was forced to watch his two sons killed by the sword, before his own eyes were put out, and he was then taken to Babylon where he died.

V.14-20 is a promise of return and restoration, which we will cover later. In v.25 Ezekiel speaks to the captives, everything that the LORD had shown him.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 12: ANOTHER ACTED PROPHECY**

Ezekiel is told to prepare his belongings (in their sight) as if going into captivity. He is to dig thru the wall of his courtyard (house) as if to escape, and carry his belongings on his shoulders, but with his head covered so that he cannot see the ground.

The people will later learn that their “king” tried to escape thru a hole in the wall, and was rendered blind (cannot see the ground) before being taken prisoner to Babylon.

**In verse 16, again the promise that the LORD will spare “a few” (a remnant).**

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 13 -** The LORD will tear down every false prophecy, and false prophets will not enter the future land of Israel. Also a very severe prophecy of doom for those who practice witchcraft and sorcery.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 14:** Some of the elders came to inquire of the LORD thru Ezekiel, but the LORD told Ezekiel that they had cherished idols (sins) in their hearts, and HE would not answer them (14:7-8).

LESSON: If you are not ready to repent, surrender, and let the LORD change you - then don't ask for blessings.

Verses 12-20, tell us that righteousness is not transferable. If the LORD has decreed destruction, then ONLY the righteous remnant will be saved, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in the land - they could deliver only themselves by their righteousness. Interesting that Ezekiel mentions Daniel - who was brought a captive to Babylon at approximately the same time as Ezekiel.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 15:** Israel is a "burned vine" which is good for nothing.

THE FIRST 24 CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK, cover a period of 7 years. For 7 years Ezekiel is mute, except when he speaks the words of the LORD, to the captives.

To read through each chapter is exhausting. Over, and over, and over - the sins of Jerusalem and thus the people of Israel and Judah, are chronicled. Over, and over, and over - the prophecy is given - in different ways - that destruction of coming for the city. I frankly don't know how to present this in an interesting, engaging way. It's like a funeral dirge that goes on, and on, and on, and on. So - let's get through it.

Next week we will consider prophecies concerning the neighbors, and enemies of Israel and Judah. And then, the following week, we will get to the promises of return, healing, and restoration. Finally - we will look at the Battle of Gog and Magog.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 16:** THE MOST sexually explicit chapter in all of Scripture.

Israel - The LORD speaks - You (Israel) were like an illegitimate, bi-racial, abandoned child of Canaanites. But I took pity on you. I clothed you and fed you, and finally entered into covenant with you. I, the LORD betrothed you to myself - in a marriage covenant (Jer. 3:14, Jer 3:7-8, Hosea Chapt 2, II Cor 11:2, Rev. 21:9). I put jewels on you and made you royalty. But you played the harlot with idols. You trusted your beauty, instead of me. Finally you sacrificed My children to your idols. Am I supposed to do NOTHING!!! You entered into treaties (harlotry) with Egypt, Assyria, and even Babylon - something I had forbidden. (Eze. 16:39-40, Exo. 23:32, 34:12,15) I will give you into the hands of your lovers. They will turn on you, and burn you with fire. (See Revelation's Harlot, who is burned by the 10 Kings who turn on her. And yes, in the last days, the Harlot of Revelation IS Jerusalem!)

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 17:** A parable about King Jehoiachin - taken to Babylon. Then a Messianic prophecy: The LORD Himself will plant a tender cedar twig on the Mountains of Israel and it will become a great cedar Tree (Christ).

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 18:** Deals with inherited sin, and guilt. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father the guilt of the son. If a righteous man sins and does not repent, he will die in his sin. And if a wicked man turns away from wickedness, and does what is right - he will save his soul alive. The LORD has no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked. V. 4 "The soul who sins shall die."

COMPARE: Deuteronomy 24:16 "The son shall not be put to death for the sin of the father, nor the father for the sin of the son."

COMPARE: Exodus 20:3-5 (The second commandment) 3 "You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, (NKJ)

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 19:** Once again - a lamentation over Israel and the coming destruction.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 20:** A condensed history of Israel  
- from Egypt to the final promised land.

There are several highlights in this chapter, which give us an insight into the reason for the LORD's withholding His full wrath for 800 plus years.

NIV Ezekiel 20:1 In the seventh year, in the fifth month on the tenth day, **some of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and they sat down in front of me.** 2 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 3 "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, '**This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Have you come to inquire of me? As surely as I live, I will not let you inquire of me, declares the Sovereign LORD.**' 4 "Will you judge them? Will you judge them, son of man? Then **confront them with the detestable practices of their ancestors** 5 and say to them:

"This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On the day I chose Israel, I swore with uplifted hand to the descendants of Jacob and revealed myself to them in Egypt. With uplifted hand I said to them, "I am the LORD your God." 6 On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of Egypt into a land I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. 7 And I said to them, "Each of you, get rid of the vile images you have set your eyes on, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God."

8 "But **they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; they did not get rid of the vile images they had set their eyes on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.** So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and spend my anger against them in Egypt. 9 **But for the sake of my name, I brought them out of Egypt. I did it to keep my name from being profaned in the eyes of the nations among whom they lived and in whose sight I had revealed myself to the Israelites.**

HE DOES NOT WANT "THE NATIONS" TO THINK HE DOES NOT KEEP HIS WORD.

NOTE: I had a fellow say to me the other day, that "we are under grace now" so we don't have to keep the law. I agree - we ARE under grace - but so were they. They WERE "under grace." If they had been simply "under the law" they would all have been dead, without hope shortly after they left Egypt. A way of forgiveness was provided - the lamb (sacrificial system). We now have the real thing - THE LAMB - and we are STILL "under grace." But we do not sacrifice lambs - because THE Lamb has been offered "once for all."

10 Therefore I led them out of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. 11 I gave them my decrees and made known to them my laws, by which the person who obeys them will live. 12 Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the LORD made them holy. 13 "Yet the people of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not follow my decrees but rejected my laws--by which the person who obeys them will live--and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and destroy them in the wilderness. 14 But for the sake of my name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

15 Also with uplifted hand I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land I had given them--a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands-- 16 because they rejected my laws and did not follow my decrees and desecrated my Sabbaths. For their hearts were devoted to their idols. 17 Yet I looked on them with pity and did not destroy them or put an end to them in the wilderness.

18 I said to their children in the wilderness, "Do not follow the statutes of your parents or keep their laws or defile yourselves with their idols. 19 I am the LORD your God; follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. 20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God." 21 "But the children rebelled against me: They did not follow my decrees, they were not careful to keep my laws, of which I said, "The person who obeys them will live by them," and they desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. 22 But I withheld my hand, and for the sake of my name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

23 Also with uplifted hand I swore to them in the wilderness that I would disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the countries, 24 because they had not obeyed my laws but had rejected my decrees and desecrated my Sabbaths, and their eyes lusted after their parents' idols. 25 So I gave them other statutes that were not good and laws through which they could not live; 26 I defiled them through their gifts--the sacrifice of every firstborn--that I might fill them with horror so they would know that I am the LORD.'

27 "Therefore, son of man, speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In this also your ancestors blasphemed me by being unfaithful to me: 28 When I brought them into the land I had sworn to give them and they saw any high hill or any leafy tree, there they offered their sacrifices, made offerings that aroused my anger, presented

their fragrant incense and poured out their drink offerings. 29 Then I said to them: What is this high place you go to?" (It is called Bamah to this day.)

30 "Therefore say to the Israelites: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Will you defile yourselves the way your ancestors did and lust after their vile images? 31 **When you offer your gifts--the sacrifice of your children in the fire--**you continue to defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. **Am I to let you inquire of me, you Israelites? As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will not let you inquire of me.**

32 "You say, "We want to be like the nations, like the peoples of the world, who serve wood and stone." But what you have in mind will never happen.

THE FOLLOWING - I BELIEVE - IS A VIEW OF THE FIRST RESURRECTION, A JUDGMENT DAY FOR ISRAELITES, WHEN THE FAITHFUL ARE SEPARATED FROM THE REBELLIOUS. WE WILL STUDY THIS IN A LATER STUDY.

33 As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, **I will reign over you with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath.** 34 **I will bring you from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered--with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath.**

35 **I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations and there, face to face, I will execute judgment upon you.** 36 **As I judged your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will judge you, declares the Sovereign LORD.** 37 **I will take note of you as you pass under my rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.** 38 **I will purge you of those who revolt and rebel against me. Although I will bring them out of the land where they are living, yet they will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.**

39 "As for you, people of Israel, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Go and serve your idols, every one of you!

FUTURE: But afterward you will surely listen to me and no longer profane my holy name with your gifts and idols. 40 For on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD, **there in the land all the people of Israel will serve me, and there I will accept them.** There I will require your offerings and your choice gifts, along with all your holy sacrifices. 41 I will accept you as fragrant incense when **I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will be proved holy through you in the sight of the nations.** 42 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land I had sworn with uplifted hand to give to your ancestors. 43 There you will remember your conduct and all the actions by which you have defiled yourselves, and you will loathe yourselves for all the evil you have done. 44 You will know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you for my name's sake and not according to your evil ways and your corrupt practices, you people of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD. "

HIS "NAME" WILL ULTIMATELY BE HONORED.  
HIS PLAN WILL ULTIMATELY BE SUCCESSFUL.  
DO YOU SEE HIS PATIENCE?

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 21:** Babylon is called "My sword" by the LORD. In v.13 - "the scepter shall be no more" - no other descendant of King David will reign "**Until He comes whose right it is**" (A prophecy of Messiah - Son of David - who will reign forever).

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 22:** Again reviews the sins of Jerusalem and ends with a promise of wrath poured out.

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 23:** Israel (the Northern 10 tribes) is called "Samaria" - the older sister, and Judah (the Southern 2 tribes) is called the younger sister. Both are called harlots, because of their idolatry (brought in from the heathen nations). In verse 18, the LORD says, "Then I alienated Myself from her, (Judah) as I had alienated Myself from her sister (Israel/Sameria). THIS IS GOD'S WRATH - WHEN HE TURNS AWAY. **Child sacrifice to their idols is again highlighted as the worst of their sins.** Your former lovers will destroy you. "You (Judah) will drink of your sister's cup" (v.32-33). V.35 "**Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back.**" V.45-47 This is the penalty for adultery - you will be stoned, and your houses burned. (Revelations "great whore" will be burned with fire.)

**EZEKIEL CHAPTER 24: THE LAST PARABLE - THE COOKING POT**

Ezekiel is told to write down the date - for the siege of Jerusalem has begun.

Ezekiel is told to set a cooking pot on the fire, pick all the choice cuts of meat, build the fire, but not to cut off the fat, or skim off the fat that rises as the pot boils. (The fat was to be discarded. Israel had been told NOT to eat fat or blood.) Then the LORD tells Ezekiel that he has prepared Jerusalem like that pot. He will cook it - and then, after the water has cooked off - he will set the empty pot on the coals until the pot itself melts, along with the "scum" in it. (V.11) HIS wrath will be poured out without mercy.

THE PROPHET'S WIFE - A SYMBOL OF JERUSALEM - The Temple - and their hopes.

Ezekiel 24:16-17 "I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. Sigh in silence. Make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow."

V.18 "And at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded."

V. 26-27 & 33:21-22 On the day that "one who escapes" came to Ezekiel with the news that the City had fallen - **on that day, Ezekiel's mouth was "opened" and he was no longer mute. Seven years had passed since his first vision of the LORD** enthroned above the blue sapphire vaulted firmament.

JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE ARE NOW DESTROYED.

“And when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

Jeremiah 12:7 “I have forsaken My house.

I have left My heritage.

I have given the dearly beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies.”