

EZEKIEL

Written in Babylon by Ezekiel around 571 B.C.

-Contemporary of Jeremiah and Nebuchadnezzar, Habakkuk and young Daniel

His ministry overlaps the last part of Jeremiah's message and the beginning of Daniel's ministry

-While Jeremiah prophesied to those in Judah, Ezekiel spoke to the exiles in Babylon

-as we will see, God called Ezekiel to illustrate his message of pending judgment in some pretty unusual ways

Ezekiel opens with a powerful vision

-no warm up, no waking into it

-the entire first chapter describes Ezekiel's vision angels and the glory of the Lord

-now before we read this, we should consider what we have been taught that angels look like

-years of Sunday school have given us this picture:

-2 wings, a halo, a harp

-maybe a plump body with 2 little wings and a sash or a muscular body with a 2 huge wings and a spear

-Now let's look at what Ezekiel saw while

Eze 1:4 As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire.

Eze 1:5 Within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form.

Eze 1:6 Each of them had four faces and four wings.

Eze 1:7 Their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze.

Eze 1:8 Under their wings on their four sides *were* human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them,

Eze 1:9 their wings touched one another; *their faces* did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward.

Eze 1:10 As for the form of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle.

Eze 1:11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another *being*, and two covering their bodies.

Eze 1:12 And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went.

Eze 1:13 In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire.

Eze 1:14 And the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning.

Eze 1:15 Now as I looked at the living beings, behold, there was one wheel on the earth beside the living beings, for *each of* the four of them.

Eze 1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship *was* like sparkling beryl, and all four of them had the same form, their appearance and workmanship *being* as if one wheel were within another.

Eze 1:17 Whenever they moved, they moved in any of their four directions without turning as they moved.

Eze 1:18 As for their rims they were lofty and awesome, and the rims of all four of them were full of eyes round about.

Eze 1:19 Whenever the living beings moved, the wheels moved with them. And whenever the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose *also*.

Eze 1:20 Wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go in that direction. And the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings *was* in the wheels.

Eze 1:21 Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still. And whenever those rose from the earth, the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings *was* in the wheels.

-ever seen that picture on a greeting card?

-this sounds more like science fiction than a vision of heavenly hosts

-We know that these are angels because in another vision in ch. 10, he describes them again and says:

Eze 10:15 Then the cherubim rose up. They are the living beings that I saw by the river Chebar.

-at the end of this vision he sees someone seated on a throne with the appearance of glowing metal and dressed in fire

-he says this is what the Glory of the Lord looked like

-and he fell on his face

-Seems to be all you can do when you find yourself in the presence of God

Last week I told you about one of the 2 dreams I had in my life that felt like they were from the Lord

-this passage reminds me of the other

The dream was short:

-I dreamt that I woke in the middle of the night while everyone was sleeping

-I made my way through the dark house and into the kitchen

-I remember I could look out of the kitchen window because the moon was full

- then I heard an earth-shaking rumble of thunder and I instinctively knew it was the Lord
- All I could do was lay down on the floor with my face down
- then I woke up
- strange, but after that dream, it makes sense to me why so many people fall on their face before the Lord in the Bible

Ch. 2

-God calls Ezekiel to minister to His people

-[Eze 2:4](#) "I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'

Ch. 3

-God sends him to the Exiles and gives him the responsibility of being a watchman for the people

- like a lookout in the old times

- someone would be stationed on the city wall to watch for trouble

God tells him

[Eze 3:17](#) "Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me.

[Eze 3:18](#) "When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.

Ezekiel winds up having to illustrate his prophecies in some unusual ways:

- writing "Jerusalem" on a brick then laying siege against it

- laying on his left side for 390 days

- laying on his right side for 40 days

- shaving his head and beard

- commanded not to mourn his wife's death

Interesting verse in Ch. 18

[Eze 18:20](#) "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.

-so many people really struggle with this

- many of us have been conditioned to believe that there is a curse on our family

- some speakers even teach that your kids and grand kids are suffering as a result of your past sins

- they justify this by quoting verses like:

Num 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth *generations*.'

I believe that children can be harmed as a result of their parents or grandparents sins

- like it or not, kids learn their behavior from their parents
- If a parent is an alcoholic, druggie or addict, often time's kids will pick up that behavior
- If the husband beats his wife or sexually abuses his kids, like it or not, the kids learn this behavior
 - not all will act on it, but many will
- so how do you stop it before it gets to the 3rd and fourth generation?
 - confess, repent and bring it to the Lord

-One verse taken out of context does not change what we know to be true about God

- God is good and God is fair
- God will not punish you for someone else's sin
- the only person God ever did that to was His son
 - and that was an act of love not discipline

Ch. 28:11-12

Another prophesy with a near and far fulfillment

- the near was referring to the king of Tyre
- the far was referring to Lucifer before his fall

Eze 28:12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

Eze 28:13 "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared.

Eze 28:14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

Eze 28:15 "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you.

Eze 28:16 "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire.

Eze 28:17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you.

Another description of the rebellion and fall of Satan

-what makes these verses so significant in my eyes is V.13

[Eze 28:13](#) "You were in Eden, the garden of God

-referring to Lucifer in his beauty before he fell

-as we discussed in Genesis, this is important because it places Lucifer in the Garden of Eden before his rebellion

-in my eyes, this verse makes the entire "gap theory" irrelevant

-the first creation could not have been destroyed because of Satan's sin if he is found here in the Garden of Eden of the "recreated earth" before he fell

Ch. 33:11

-how many times haven't we heard stories of tragic accidents where the drunk driver lived and the good person died?

-or a life-long addict had time to come to the Lord because of a lengthy illness instead of dying somewhere on the street

-or like the recent story of Scott Stapp (lead singer for Creed)

-raised in a Christian home but let himself go down the path of the rock and roll lifestyle and abandoned God

-in a drug induced frenzy, he fell 40 feet off a hotel balcony and lived

-why is that?

[Eze 33:11](#) "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord GOD, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'

God doesn't want anyone to wind up in hell

-He will allow them to go there but He seems to go out of His way to give us every opportunity

-It is yet another example of the God of love and mercy in the Old Testament

Ch. 37

-The valley of dry bones

-probably the one thing that Ezekiel is most known for

-In short, God gives Ezekiel a vision of a valley filled with dead, dry human bones

-He is asked if these bones can live

-then he is commanded to prophesy to them

-they begin to rattle and to join together

-then comes the tendons, muscles and skin

-now this huge army of people stands before him but they have no life

-He prophesies breath to come into them and they come to life

-of course, this prophesies of the rebirth of the nation of Israel

-but it speaks to us too

-just like the Jews, we can feel discouraged and hopeless

-we can feel that our own spiritual lives or even our church is dry and dead like a valley of lifeless bones

-and we might even wonder "can these bones live again?"

-The answer is "yes", but there is a catch

-the dry bones looked good and healthy after they were covered in flesh

-but they didn't return to life until the breath of god was breathed back into them

-after His resurrection, Jesus met with His disciples and talked to them

-but he also did something very unusual:

[Joh 20:22](#) And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and *said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

-The valley of dry bones was revived

-your spiritual life can be revived

-your church can be revived

-but not without the breath of God, which is the Holy Spirit

- Ezekiel closes with a description of a new temple
 - This vision is given to him by an angelic being on a high mountain
 - whether this is describing a literal or spiritual temple, we aren't sure
 - much of this has not yet been fulfilled literally
 - it is certain that the temples that were built did not match this description
 - but hope was restored to the people of God

Jesus Types:

Eze 17:22 Thus says the Lord GOD, "I shall also take *a sprig* from the lofty top of the cedar and set *it* out; I shall pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I shall plant *it* on a high and lofty mountain.

Eze 17:23 "On the high mountain of Israel I shall plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches.