



## Ezekiel

*Chapters 33-48*

*"And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison<sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.<sup>9</sup> And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,<sup>10</sup> and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur..."*  
--Rev. 20:7-10

# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

## Son of Man, have you seen this!?!

The heart of the message for the exiled Israelites who first received the book of Ezekiel as finished literary scroll in its final arrangement is one of hope and restoration. The recipients of the scroll of prophecy would have already lived through and experienced the judgments on Jerusalem and the Temple which are so vividly displayed and proclaimed in the first 33 chapters. In their day, what remains to be fulfilled from Ezekiel's entire prophetic message are chapters 34-48.

Therefore, the first hearers of the Ezekiel scroll would have understood clearly why they were in Exile, but would have look forward in hope to a restored united kingdom with messianic king David enthroned, a restored Jerusalem and Temple and a New Covenant with God.

Therefore, while many of Ezekiel's individual prophecies were spelled doom and destruction as they were initially delivered, the sum total of his message as it is structured in its final literary form is one of tremendous hope. The fallen Cherub will be destroyed, the enemies of Israel will be judged, Israel will be restored.

Many of the prophecies of this final section of Ezekiel will be reemphasized in last chapters of the book of revelation, including the fall of Satan (the fallen cherub) and the ultimate and final Judgment on Israel's ultimate and final enemies, Gog and Magog, and a new Jerusalem and the river of Life (Ez. 28:11-19, 38:1-39:24, 47:1-12; Cf Rev. 20:7-10, 21-22).

The words of Ezekiel's angelic tour guide challenges him (and the hearer) to: "look with your eyes, hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all I will show you." (Ez. 39:4)

The Israelites in Exile needed a vision for the future. They desperately need to see beyond their present suffering in exile to the glorious future which God has planned. God has kept his word judgment, God will keep his word of restoration and promise. The vision given to Ezekiel is one of hope. The question to Ezekiel at the end of the book rings to all the hearers of the scroll: Son of man, have you seen this!?! (47:6)



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## Literary Structure<sup>40</sup>

	Ezekiel	Chapters 1-48
A	YHWH Comes: Judges Temple and Departs	1-11
B	Oracles of Judgment	12-23
C	Jerusalem Besieged	24
D	Oracles against the Foreign Nations	25-28:10
E	Judgment on the Fallen Cherub	28:11-19
D'	Oracles against the Foreign Nations	29-32
C'	Jerusalem Falls	33
B'	Oracles of Restoration	34-39
A'	YHWH Comes Restores Temple and Remains	40-48

The Prophet is revealing to the exiles in Babylon that there is more to the story than what they currently see. The actions and speech of Ezekiel points beyond their present situation to incredible hope in the Sovereign and reigning King of Heaven is ordering all things in heaven and on earth to submission under one head.

The chiasmic structure of the book gives a literary framework which emphasizes that the judgments will be reversed, the fallen cherub will be judged, the nations will be judged, Israel will be restored. Each section on judgment has its corresponding answer in the promises of God.

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<sup>40</sup> Richard M. Davidson, *The Chiastic Literary Structure of the Book of Ezekiel*, p. 75



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## Jerusalem Falls (33)

In the corresponding verses to this section (chapter 24), Ezekiel was struck mute and told that he would be visited by a fugitive from Jerusalem who would report on its fate.

In Chapter 33, Ezekiel is re-commissioned as the watchman of Israel (33:1-20, cf. 3;16-21) An now the report of the fugitive has come: "The city has been struck down" (33:21). God reverses Ezekiel's condition of muteness.

*Now the hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; and he had opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning, so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute. —Ez. 33:22*

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Ezekiel's call is to repentance that will lead to restoration. To some Ezekiel's message is like musical entertainment--interesting to listen to, but of no import to life application. They hear but they do not do (33:30-33). From this point forward in the Ezekiel, the message turns to the promise of final judgment and restoration. The sin and judgment of chapters 1-23, will find their answer in chapters 34-48. The key for the people is that they hear and respond!

*And behold, you are to them like one who sings lustful songs with a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument, for they hear what you say, but they will not do it.<sup>33</sup> When this comes—and come it will!—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.” —Ez. 33:32-33*

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## Oracles of Restoration (34-39)

The Oracles of restoration are the corresponding answer to the oracles of Judgment of chapters 12-23. The themes and language of these two sections are like a mirror reflection.

*<sup>25</sup> “As for you, son of man, surely on the day when I take from them their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and their soul's desire, and also their sons and daughters,<sup>26</sup> on that day a fugitive will come to you to report to you the news.<sup>27</sup> On that day your mouth will be opened to the fugitive, and you shall speak and be no longer mute. So you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the LORD.” -- Ez. 24:25-27*



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Chapter	Oracle of Restoration	Chapter	Oracle of Judgment
34	<p>Sins of leaders (shepherds):cruelty/ bloodshed (34:1-10)</p> <p>“I will deliver them from all the places where they were scattered” (34:12)</p> <p>“I will gather them...as a shepherd seeks out his flock.”</p>	22	<p>Sins of leaders (princes): cruelty bloodshed (22:1-14)</p> <p>“I will scatter you” (22:15)</p> <p>“I will gather you in my anger as silver and dross in the furnace” (22:17-22)</p>
34	<p>Messianic Reference: “My Servant David” (34:23, 24)</p>	21	<p>Messianic allusion: “Overthrown...until He comes whose right it is” (21:25-27)</p>
35-36	<p>“Son of man, set your face against Mt. Seir and prophecy against it.” (35:2)</p> <p>Mt. Seir will become desolate (35:2-15)</p> <p>The desolate places of Israel will be repopulated. (36:1-15)</p>	21	<p>“Son of man set your face toward Jerusalem...and prophecy against the land of Israel” (21:2)</p> <p>Israel becomes desolate through the divine sword (21:3-25)</p>
36	<p>“I will cause you...to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my judgments” (36:27)</p> <p>“I will gather you” (36:24)</p> <p>“hallowed in you” (36:23)</p> <p>“you will remember your evil ways” ...“you will loath yourselves” (36:31)</p> <p>“for my holy names sake” (36:22,44)</p>	20	<p>Rebellion against YHWH’s “statutes and judgments” (20:1-23)</p> <p>“I will...gather you” (20:34, 41)</p> <p>“hallowed in you” (20:41)</p> <p>“you will remember your ways” ...“you will loath yourselves” (20:43)</p> <p>“for my names sake” (20:44)</p>



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<b>36</b>	<b>Desolate land becomes replanted like the Garden of Eden (36:35, 36)</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Luxurious vine (of land of Jerusalem) becomes uprooted and withered. (19:10-14)</b>
	Call for dry bones to receive the spirit, revive, and live (37:1-14)	18	Call to receive a new spirit, turn and live (18:31, 32)
	Covenant obedience of restored reunited Israel (37:15-24)	17	Covenant –breaking rebellion of Judah’s princes (17:1-20) Israel Scattered (17:21)
	Israel Gathered (37:21)		Messianic allusion: high cedar 17:22-24)
<b>37</b>	Messianic reference: New David (37:24, 25)		
	Faithfulness to divine covenant “They shall not defile themselves any more” (37:23)	16	Unfaithfulness to divine covenant: Jerusalem defilement by spiritual adultery (16:1-59)
	“everlasting covenant” (37:26)		“everlasting covenant” (16:60)
	Fire consumes: Gog and Magog	15	Fire consumes: Jerusalem
<b>38-39</b>	Four Judgments: sword pestilence, wild beasts, famine	14	Four Judgments: sword pestilence, wild beasts, famine
	Divine fury: flooding rain and hail	13	Divine fury: flooding rain and hail
	Return from captivity	12	Judah goes to captivity