



**Theme:** the glory will return... Another supreme thought runs through – that of sovereignty and the glory of the Lord God. God is sovereign in Israel and in the affairs of the nations of the world. Ezekiel uses the term Sovereign Lord throughout the book close to 400 times! Ezekiel as a person stands for reverence above acceptance. It is also the story of how God transforms a priest into a prophet.

Meaning of his name (Yechezkel): God strengthens/strengthened by God.

Who was Ezekiel : Ezekiel was born in the Land of Israel and grew up in Jerusalem where he trained to be a priest like his father Buzi.

Date of Writing: The Book of Ezekiel was written between 593 and 565 B.C. during the Babylonian captivity of the Jews.

Purpose of book : Ezekiel ministered to his generation who were both exceedingly sinful and thoroughly hopeless. By means of his prophetic ministry he attempted to bring them to immediate repentance and to confidence in the distant future. He taught that: (1) God works through human messengers; (2) Even in defeat and despair God's people need to affirm God's sovereignty; (3) God's Word never fails; (4) God is present and can be worshiped anywhere; (5) People must obey God if they expect to receive blessings; and (6) God's Kingdom will come.

Foreshadowing : Ezekiel 34 is the chapter wherein God denounces the leaders of Israel as false shepherds for their poor care of His people. Instead of caring for the sheep of Israel, they cared for themselves. They ate well, were well-clothed and well-cared for by the very people they had been placed over (Ezekiel 34:1-3). By contrast, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep and who protects them from the wolves who would destroy the flock (John 10:11-12). Verse 4 of chapter 34 describes people whom the shepherds failed to minister to as weak, sick, injured and lost. Jesus is the Great Physician who heals

our spiritual wounds (Isaiah 53:5) by His death on the cross. He is the one who seeks and saves that which is lost (Luke 19:10).

### Introduction :

Ezekiel is not one of the easiest books to understand, it is definitely not one of the most widely read books and quite frankly – there are some weird things happening in it! Ezekiel used various methods to convey God's Word to his people as per his instructions from God. He used art in drawing a depiction of Jerusalem, symbolic actions and unusual conduct to secure attention. He cut his hair and beard to demonstrate what God would do to Jerusalem and its inhabitants. These seemingly unorthodox methods should not be questioned. God knew exactly what shock-tactics would be necessary to get through to His people. Ezekiel's example of performing these tasks shows us that he understood just that.

Ezekiel is given 4 visions of which each is a turning point in his life. The most specific vision of God in the Bible is in Ezekiel 1-3. He had to know and trust God unequivocally because he had a very difficult call/task to perform so God reveals Himself to Ezekiel in all His splendour! Another famous vision is the one in Ezekiel 37 of the dry bones that pictures new life being breathed into the nation of Israel. Ezekiel also had detailed visions of a new temple ( 40-43 )and a restored Jerusalem ( 48:30-35 ).The Millennium chapter is 44 and the land in which God's people will reside in 47:13-23. These beautiful visions of Ezekiel concern both the immediate & long-term plans of God.

Ezekiel & Daniel were the last of the so called 'major prophets' of the OT and also the only 2 prophets of the Babylonian exile. Ezekiel differs from prophets like Jeremiah & Isaiah and most of the minor prophets in that he/the book emphasizes the *comforting* of God's people rather than judgement. Ezekiel was Jeremiah's younger contemporary and like Jeremiah, his book consists of verbatim quotations from God Himself. 'The Word of the Lord came unto me saying' or an equivalent form of this phrase occurs some 60 times in Ezekiel. It is likely that they may have known each other and that Ezekiel may even have been taught by Jeremiah. Obviously Ezekiel's ministry would only have been to his fellow captives of the Southern Tribes of Judah and Benjamin (as the 10 Northern tribes had been conquered and exiled into Assyria over a century prior, yet many of his prophecies envision the reunion of these two ( 34 & 36-37 )+ their reconciliation and restoration to the true God in the Millennium.

Ezekiel was taken to Babylon by Nebi with the 2<sup>nd</sup> group of captives ( along with King Jehoiachin + 10,000 of the leaders & skilled craftsmen of Judah- see 2 kings 24:8-17) , 11 years before Jerusalem was destroyed. In Babylon God called him to be a prophet.

The people falsely expected (partly due to false prophets prophesying what people wanted to hear), to return to Jerusalem immediately- but Ezekiel had to 1<sup>st</sup> teach them that they needed to 1<sup>st</sup> *return to the Lord*. They were so far removed from Him that they no longer read the Words of His prophets like Jeremiah- unlike Daniel who knew exactly what and how long to expect the exile to be, as he has read! Ezekiel's prophecy is divided into 3 parts:

1. He rehearses the sins of Judah & warns of God's impending judgement in the captivity of the people & the destruction of the capital. All vividly announced in unusual visions & symbolic acts. A bright shining cloud - a figure of God's presence seen lingering over the temple, then reluctantly departs. This meant that God could no longer dwell among his people because of their sin & his sword of judgement would soon descend on the polluted temple.
2. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> part, Judah's neighbours are condemned because of their idolatry & cruel treatment of God's people – namely the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, Tyrians, Sidonians & Egyptians.
3. In the last part Ezekiel tells of the good news of restoration & the reunion of the entire nation of Israel and Judah at a time when all the Israelites will corporately repent of their sins and God will put His Holy Spirit within them. The Messiah will come to his people & destroy their last

enemies. The temple will be rebuilt & the glory of the Lord will return to it. This will only be fulfilled in the Millennium Reign,

Although the book of Ezekiel is not entirely chronological, it is more so than Jeremiah & Isaiah.

### Quick outline of chapter divisions :

Chapters 1-24: prophecies on the ruin of Jerusalem

Chapters 25-32: prophecies of God's judgment on nearby nations

Chapter 33: a last call for repentance to Israel

Chapters 34-48: prophecies concerning the future restoration of Israel

### More detailed outline of chapter divisions :

Chapters 1-7 take place in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiachin's captivity and covers Ezekiel's call + the prediction of the coming siege of Jerusalem.

8-19 " " " " 6<sup>th</sup> year " " " " an inspection of the whole condition of the people with predictions of coming punishment.

20-23 " " " " 7<sup>th</sup> year " " " " fresh reproofs + predictions of the coming ruin.

24 " " " " 9<sup>th</sup> year " " " " the year in which the siege began that would end in the city being overthrown. Prophecy of his wife's death. Ezekiel's sorrow compounded.

25 " " " " same year " " " " prophecies against Moab, Ammon & the Philistines

26-28 " " " " 11<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " Tyre. Here one of the most important revelations of the fall of satan is given (28:11-19) . In this year Jerusalem was also taken after a siege of 18 months & the temple destroyed.

29 : 1-16 " " " " 10<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " Egypt.

29 : 17-30 " " " " 27<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " "

30: 20- 31:18 " " " " 11<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " "

32 " " " " 12<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " "

33-34 " " " " same year " " " " reproof of unfaithful leaders.

35 " " " " same year possibly " " " judgement of Mount Seir.

36-39 " " " " same year " " " " visions of comfort & the overthrow of Gog in the future.

40-48 " " " " 25<sup>th</sup> year " " " " " vision of the temple.

He dated his prophecies precisely so we know that his ministry lasted at least 22 years. It started in the priestly office when he was 30 years old, so he would have been over 50 with his last prophecy as prophet to his fellow captives in Babylon but he had the ability to communicate God's words over many

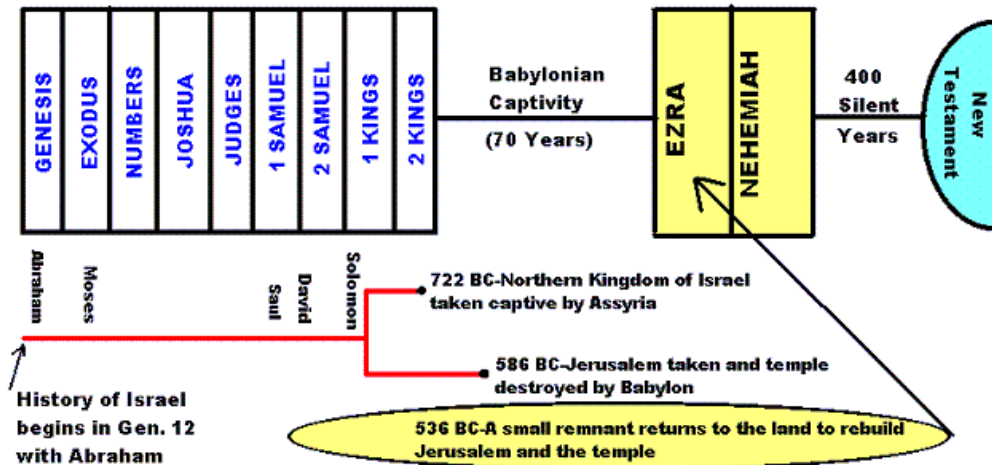
miles between Babylon & Judah as the remaining Jews there also had access to his writings. Prophecy 1 - Chapter 1:2 came in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiachin's exile in 593 BC .Chapter 29:17 was his last prophecy in 571 BC.

Practical Application: The Book of Ezekiel calls us to join in a fresh and living encounter with the God of Abraham, Moses and the prophets. We must be overcomers or we will be overcome. Ezekiel challenges us to experience a life changing vision of God's power, knowledge, eternal presence and holiness; to let God direct us; to comprehend the depth of and commitment to evil that lodges in each human heart; to recognize that God holds His servants responsible for warning wicked men of their peril; to experience a living relationship with Jesus Christ, who said that the new covenant is to be found in His blood and to know for sure that God's promises in His Word will be realized especially as we see now the alliances spoken of ( for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in history ), forming as per this prophet's recorded prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39.... Chapter 37 has in part already been fulfilled. A nation was revived in 1948 and has continued to grow back to life ever since.

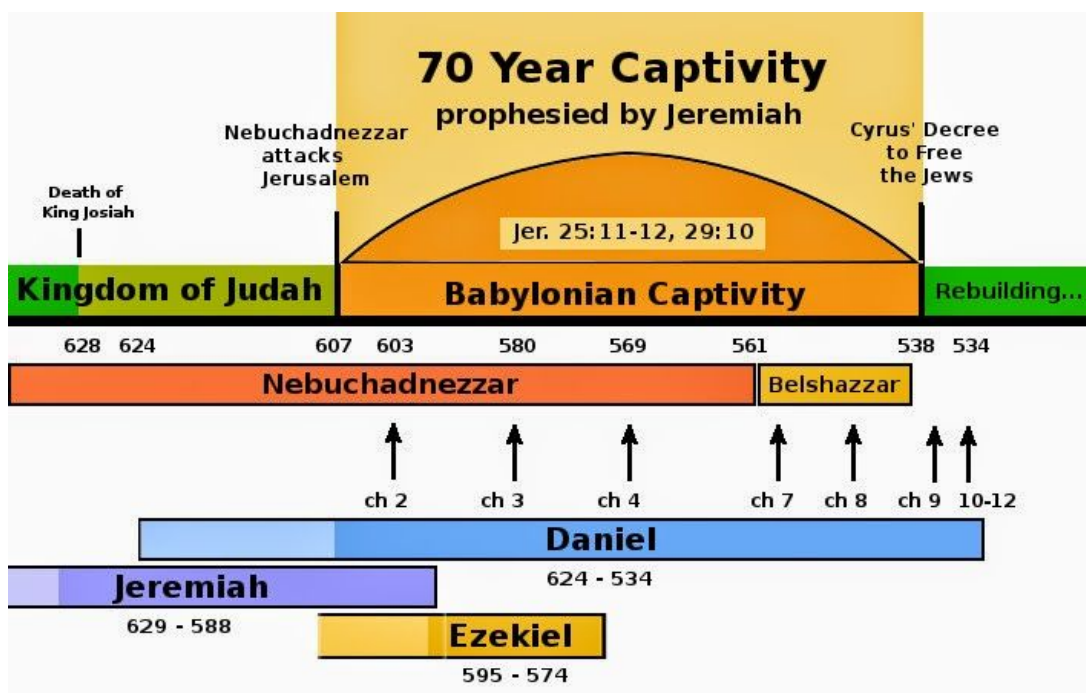
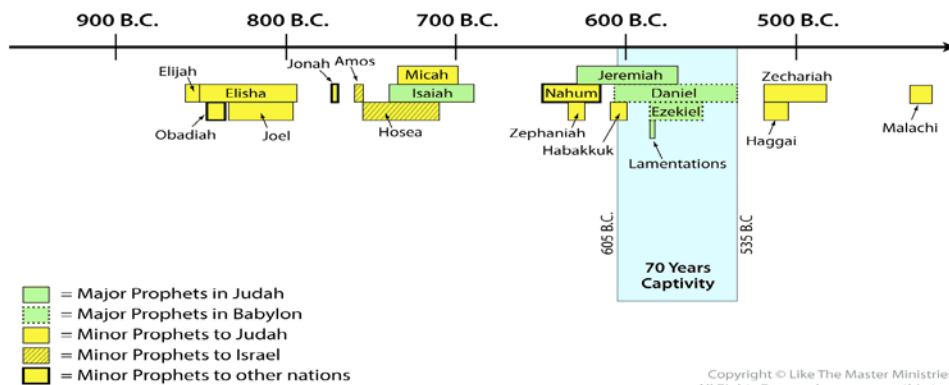
One of the most poignant and convicting verses in this book for me, is found in 33:8-9 : *If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. 9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.*

Ezekiel's message is the same message that we have in our current times: we are to warn of the coming Judgement. It is why we were born specifically for a time like this!

## THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL



## Major and Minor Prophets



## Archaeology

Ezekiel's Tomb, located in Al Kifl, Iraq, is believed by Jews and Muslims to be the tomb of the biblical prophet Ezekiel. Today it forms part of the Al-Nukhailah Mosque complex.[1] For religious Jews, it is the oldest and most important Jewish religious site in Iraq.



## EZEKIEL 1 :

### OUTLINE :

## Ezekiel 1:1 to 3:21 CALL & COMMISSION OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel 1: 1-3 : A description of Ezekiel's circumstances & the Word of The Lord comes to him.

1. The first 24 chapters of Ezekiel are written *before* Jerusalem's fall but *after* the 1st deportations.
2. Ezekiel is in captivity already as the book opens but the destruction of Jerusalem has not yet taken place. He actually prophesies that it will go down 6-7 years prior to it happening!
3. He was 25 when he was taken with King Jehoiachin.
4. He was 30 years old at this time of this vision because we are told that it occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiachin's captivity and that Ezekiel was a priest like his father Buzi at the time. According to Numbers 4:3 you could only be a serving priest at this age.
5. His geographical location when he receives the vision is on the banks of the Chebar River in Babylon/Land of the Chaldees, a navigable canal near the city of Nippur where many of the Jews had been settled.

1:4-28 : Ezekiel's Vision of The 4 living creatures and God's Glory Riding on a throne-chariot



The below video helps in the understanding of the vision.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlxWFLe\\_cks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlxWFLe_cks) Ezekiel 1 | Ezekiel's Inaugural Vision | Four Living Creatures | Cherubim | Wheels with Eyes

The below video clips Dr Randall Smith from GCBI College :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aH9Fcc-uQc> Ezekiel: A Love Story, Pt. 1 (GCBI 107.03)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHmZYZjpPj8> Ezekiel: A Love Story, Pt. 2 (GCBI 107.03)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9dEzUJFCvM> Ezekiel: A Love Story, Pt. 3 (GCBI 107.03)

1. A fierce whirlwind (in fury Jer. 23:19) /storm/fiery cloud comes from the north.
2. 4 living creatures each with **4 different faces**— that of a lion, ox, eagle and man +each with 4 wings and straight legs and calves' feet (later identified as cherubs/cherubim in 9:3 & 10:15). Who are these creatures?

Note that they were 1<sup>st</sup> mentioned ( cher'-u-bim, cher'-oo-bim or kerubhim, plural of cherub, kerubh )as Guardians of Paradise in *Genesis 3:24- the cherubim are placed by God, after the expulsion of Adam from the garden of Eden, at the east thereof, together with the flaming sword 'to keep the way of the tree of life'. Later two images of these were made to cover the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant in Exodus 25:18. In :*

**1 Samuel 4:4** so the people sent *men* to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord of armies who is **enthroned above the cherubim**; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Pinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God. This is the first time when the Lord is not only said to speak from between the cherubim, but is also enthroned above the cherubim — but his is also mentioned elsewhere — in 2 Samuel 6:2, 2 Kings 9:15, Psalm 80:1 and Isaiah 37:16.

**Hebrews 8:4-5** *also comes to mind:4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things by the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain."*

*Hebrews 9:5 says, and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the atoning cover; but about these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

**Hebrews 9:5** says, and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the atoning cover; but about these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Then again in **Revelation 4:6-10**:...and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"<sup>9</sup> And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying.....

**In Ezekiel 28: 1-19** it is undoubtedly Lucifer being referred to as the King of Tyre, who was himself the 5<sup>th</sup> cherub but had fallen from grace – leaving only the 4.

The cherubim seem to be the highest of the angelic hierarchy.

Their faces seem to represent land animals : humans (1) , wild land animals (2) , cattle/domestic animals (3) and birds ( 4) . There could be a deeper meaning – that they together with the 4 wings ( 5) , straight feet ( 6) & hands (7) under the wings are attributes of God seen in creation namely: His majesty, power, swiftness & wisdom. Isaiah 11 ( The Righteous Reign of the Branch) that describes the 7-fold Holy Spirit may have something to do with it : 1 *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*

2 *And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*

Note in the Gospels :

Luke : Jesus is described as the Son of man / the **perfect man** (That was our Lord's favorite title for himself, one he used more frequently than any other name).

Matthew : The Gospel of Matthew reveals Jesus as the **"King of the Jews"**, typified by the face of the **Lion**. Matthew was written to the Jews. His purpose was to clearly present overwhelming evidence that Jesus was Israel's long awaited Messiah: The Lion of Judah, the King of Israel.

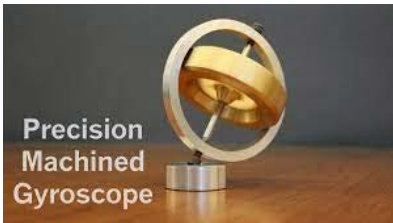
Mark : reveals Jesus as the **"Suffering Servant"**, the face of the **Ox**.

John : Jesus is associated with the **eagle** for two reasons: first, because his Gospel describes the Incarnation of the divine Logos, and the eagle is a symbol of that which comes from above. The second, because like the eagle, John, in his Revelation, saw beyond what is immediately present.

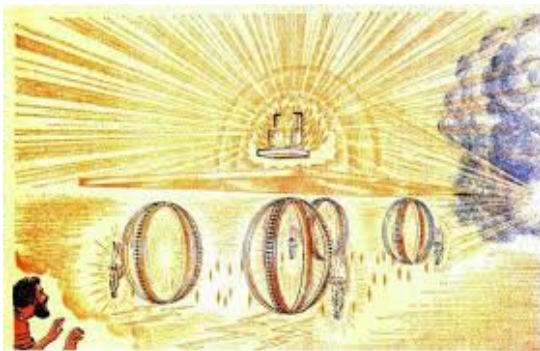




3. The wheels : the wheels within the wheels sounds like a gyroscope



. The whole formation sounds like a throne chariot of sorts.



4. The firmament (verse 22) : Hebrew raqia is defined by God Himself as Heaven ( Gen 1:8 ). It means expanse and there are three : atmospheric( Gen 1:20 ) , stellar ( 1:17 ) & 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven ( 2 Cor 12:2 ) where God's throne is. The 3<sup>rd</sup> one is the particular 'space' mentioned in this passage.

5. Compare verses 22-28( Appearance of a Man ) of Ezekiel, to below :

### **Ezekiel 3:13**

<sup>13</sup> It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake.

### **Ezekiel 8:2**

<sup>2</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a form that had the appearance of a man.<sup>[a]</sup> Below what appeared to be his waist was fire, and above his waist was something like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming metal.<sup>[b]</sup>

### **Ezekiel 10 The Glory of the Lord Leaves the Temple**

**10** Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire,<sup>[a]</sup> in appearance like a throne. <sup>2</sup> And he said to the man clothed in linen, “Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.”

And he went in before my eyes. <sup>3</sup> Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court. <sup>4</sup> And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

<sup>6</sup> And when he commanded the man clothed in linen, “Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim,” he went in and stood beside a wheel. <sup>7</sup> And a cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. <sup>8</sup> The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

<sup>9</sup> And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like sparkling beryl. <sup>10</sup> And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as if a wheel were within a wheel. <sup>11</sup> When they went, they went in any of their four directions<sup>[b]</sup> without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel<sup>[a]</sup> faced, the others followed without turning as they went. <sup>12</sup> And their whole body, their rims, and their spokes, their wings,<sup>[a]</sup> and the wheels were full of eyes all around—the wheels that the four of them had. <sup>13</sup> As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing “the whirling wheels.” <sup>14</sup> And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was a human face, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

<sup>15</sup> And the cherubim mounted up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the Chebar canal. <sup>16</sup> And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them. And when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels did not turn from beside them. <sup>17</sup> When they stood still, these stood still, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them, for the spirit of the living creatures<sup>[a]</sup> was in them.

<sup>18</sup> Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. <sup>19</sup> And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my

eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

<sup>20</sup> These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the Chebar canal; and I knew that they were cherubim. <sup>21</sup> Each had four faces, and each four wings, and underneath their wings the likeness of human hands. <sup>22</sup> And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the Chebar canal. Each one of them went straight forward.

### **Exodus 24:10**

<sup>10</sup> and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness.

### **Job 37:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> After it his voice roars;  
he thunders with his majestic voice,  
and he does not restrain the lightnings<sup>[a]</sup> when his voice is heard.

<sup>5</sup> God thunders wondrously with his voice;  
he does great things that we cannot comprehend.

### **Revelation 4 The Throne in Heaven**

4 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings<sup>[a]</sup> and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

## Revelation 1

- one like a son of man, wearing an ankle-length robe, with a gold sash around his chest
- his eyes were like a fiery flame
- His feet were like polished brass refined in a furnace
- his voice was like the sound of rushing water
- 
- his face shone like the sun at its brightest



## EZEKIEL 2 :

Ezekiel is sent to Israel and the nature of the message is judgement – as indicated by the scroll ( 2:8-3:3)

Ezekiel is commanded to stand on his feet – this is because he had fallen upon his face at the end of the previous chapter- in the awe and wonder of the presence of the Lord. This reaction was commonplace for anyone that had this same encounter. Compare: Rev 1&4, Daniel 10 etc, as per above. We simply cannot stand in the presence of such holiness. God refers to Ezekiel as ‘son of man’- a distinct title

## Daniel 10

- a man dressed in linen with a belt of fine gold around his waist
- his eyes were like fiery torches
- his arms and feet looked like burnished bronze
- the sound of his voice was like the roar of a multitude
- his face shone like lightning

A verse with much controversy is **Genesis 6:1–4**. The debate centres on the interpretation of the phrase “sons of God.” Who are they? The crucial question concerns whether the phrase refers to human beings or to spiritual beings (evil angels/demons).

The full passage reads:

*When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.*

Interestingly some of the newer translations and Afrikaans 83 actually translates :

**GENESIS 6:1-2 AFR83** *Toe die mense baie begin word het op die aarde en daar vir hulle dogters gebore is, het die hemelwesens (?) gesien die dogters van die mense is mooi en het hulle getrou met die dogters van hulle keuse. AFR83:*

that was later applied to Jesus almost 80 times and that just by Himself! For example: Mat.8:20. This title was applied even more than 'Son of God' to Jesus. God addresses Ezekiel more than 90 times as 'son of man' and we can thus deduce that Ezekiel was perhaps being presented as a 'type' of Christ to come to earth as a man. The title was first used by David in a Messianic Psalm: **Psalm 8:4 (and quoted again in Heb 2:6-9)** *What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?* It is good to do a study of the terms "sons of God" and "sons of men" and "son of god" and "son of man" in the Bible. The terms are used interchangeably for **man** (Hos. 1:10, 2 Cor 6:18, John 1:12, 11:52, 1 John 3: 1-3,10 , Rom 8: 14&16, 9:8,26, Gal 3:26, 4:6-7, Heb 12:5, Rev 21:7, Luke 20:36, Mat 5:9) , **Jesus** ( Matt 16:13-17 , John 20:30-31, Matthew 20:28, 9:6,11:19,16:13,18:11,24:27, Mark 8:38, luke 18:8,John 1:51,5:27, 6:53, 12:23, 13:31,Acts 7:56, Rev 1:13 etc ) and **angels** (Job 1:6-12 ,2:1, 38:7, ) The terms cannot always be rendered to have the same meaning. They are used contextually.

**Verse 2** reminds us that in the OT the Spirit of God entered into the prophet and then they spoke. It is very different now in the dispensation after Christ came to earth, because He left the Holy Spirit us to indwell us Who is now always with us.

**Verse 3-10** Ezekiel is sent to a rebellious Israel and warned that there is the possibility of them rejecting his message. The message is from God Himself and not the words of the prophet and so Ezekiel is warned that He too must not be rebellious to relay them. First he must 'eat' the scroll/the Words- basically digest them/understand them in order to relay them correctly/internalize them. The book-roll was written on in the inside and on the outside

**Option 1: Sons of God = Sons of Seth** - One view understands the "sons of God" as descendants of Seth. In this interpretation, Seth's godly descendants were intoxicated by the beauty of women descended from Cain, thus marrying those who'd rejected God and leading to greater wickedness. The strongest evidence for this position is found in Genesis 4–5, which describe two lines of descent from Adam: one through Cain and the other through Seth. In the Old Testament, God's covenant people are sometimes referred to as God's sons (Deut. 14:1; Jer. 3:19), though the precise phrase "sons of God" is never used of them. If the Seth view is correct, this could explain why God later forbade the Israelites from marrying Canaanite women (Ex.34:16; Deut. 7:3).

**Option 2: Sons of God = Fallen Angels** The oldest, and likely the most widely held, interpretation is that the "sons of God" are fallen angels (demons). This was the interpretation most favoured in ancient Judaism and the early church ( 1 Pet. 3:19–20; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). The phrase "sons of God" is clearly used elsewhere of angelic hosts in God's heavenly court (cf. Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). Moreover, the narrator seems to contrast "man" and "the daughters of man" with the "sons of God" in Genesis 6:1–2.

*This position is not without difficulties, however, most substantial of which is the idea of fallen angels having physical relations with women. Scripture gives instances of angels engaging in human activities such as eating (Gen. 18:1–2, 8; 19:1, 5), but surely sexual intercourse is a step beyond! Jesus makes a similar point in Matthew 22:30: "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."*

We must ask for the Lord's leading and decide. Personally I favour **Option 1**.

plus the command to eat it was given to John in Revelation also (5:1 & 10:8-11) . Ezekiel was warned that his ministry wouldn't be popular. Likewise we should also accept that a true representation of the Gospel will be offensive to the unsaved – to them it is the savour of death.

## EZEKIEL 3 :

The scroll is sweet as honey in his mouth ( that Ezekiel was commanded to eat in the previous chapter) , just like it was for John in Rev. 10:8-11.

**Verse 3:4-10 :** is about the Character of the People of Israel. They are called Israel although it is Judah being spoken of here ( probably referring them to a whole as they were, ALL rebellious). Ezekiel is warned that they will not listen to him/ to God through him as they were hard-hearted. God will however help Ezekiel by making him tough/resilient like an adamant stone ( verse 9).The Hebrew word here is 'shamir' which also means diamond or briar which relates to cutting ( Heb 4:12-The Word sharper than any 2-edged sword ) , when it's properly understood and proclaimed it is a powerful tool. In verse 11 we are reminded that we must proclaim the truth regardless of how it is received. Our job is simply to bring the Gospel correctly, how people react to it is not our concern ( **1Cor 3:6-8** *I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour* ).

*A stark reminder : as true servants of Christ we must be tough-minded but not hard-hearted and we must bring the Gospel in such a way that we are sure the hearers understood it.*

**3:11-22 – The role of a watchman :** Ezekiel is transported/translated to where the captives are in Tel-a-bib (today an unidentified tell "hill city" on the Kebar Canal, near Nippur in what is now Iraq) at the River Chebar. He is taken reluctantly-we can

## EZEKIEL 4 :

### The Judgement of Judah and Jerusalem depicted :

#### 1.The sign of the tile, verse 1-3 :

Note that Ezekiel had been taken captive to Babylon after the 1<sup>st</sup> siege of Jerusalem in 597BC ( 2 Kings 24:10-16) but he was writing these prophesies 11 years later before the 2<sup>nd</sup> siege ( 2 Kings 25:1-11) .

Jerusalem was built with stones on a rock foundation. Bricks that were made of clay like tiles are, so the tile could be a symbol of Babylon ( Gen 11:1-4) . It would seem as though Jerusalem had become even worse than Babylon ( 5:7), as it was now being portrayed on a tile/clay tablet. The pan/plate of iron would cut the city off from help. Ezekiel is representing God by putting his face against Jerusalem.

#### 2. Sign of lying on his side in verse 4-8 :

Ezekiel lies on his left side for **Israel** 390 days-representative of their 390 years of iniquity of the Northern Kingdom. This stretched from Jeroboam I : 922 BC the first king of the new state of Israel to Hoshea/ Hosea / Osee, (2 Kings 15:30; 17:1–6), son of Elah and last king of Israel 724 BC. This only amounts to about 198 years but Biblical Chronology is not an exact science so we are not sure what other timeframe the 390 years may also include. It is at least close to when Israel was led into idolatry ( 1 Kings 12: 25-33).

deduce this from verse 14 ( probably really cool in the throne-room 😊 or he just didn't want to go as he knew it would be really hard or he didn't want to leave the comfort of his home). Perhaps this is a similar 'teleport' experience as Philip had in Acts 8:39-40 or Paul in 2 Cor 12:2-4. Here he sits with the captives *in silence* for 7 days in Babylon. Perhaps God wanted him to truly *hear* their plea first and be able to truly sympathize with them. The blood guiltiness of verse 18 always sends chills down my spine. God shocks Ezekiel and the reader here out of the zone of comfort ! Paul declares to the Ephesian Elders in the NT also ( regarding blood guiltiness ) in **Acts 20:26** : *Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you.* Failure to witness as Paul did- to those we are able to reach, could be the hammer blow delivered by us who hold the truth and don't relay it, to declare their death sentence! A scary thought. Lord, on this spot I repent of all the opportunities that I have missed and implore You by Your Holy Spirit to not let me miss another. Help me and every reader be sensitive to your leading!

Verse 23 –27 the Lord appears to Ezekiel again in the plain in overpowering glory and he is instructed by the Spirit to go into his house. He's warned that the people will bind him up. God will also render him unable to speak unless God opens his mouth to do so (basically – he's not allowed to say a word unless they are God's words relayed.....wow, wish I could arrange something similar for myself! ) .

Ezekiel lies on his right side 40 days for Judah. The 40 days could represent 40 years since God said in 2 Kings 23:27 that he would 'remove Judah also out of My sight as I have removed Israel' ( 2 Kings 23:27) . All we know is that the total was 430 days which is the total number of years that Israel had spent in Egypt ( Galatians 3:17) .

Ezekiel also probably didn't lie on his side day and night for this period of time , most likely only when he'd be seen in public.

#### **verse 9-17:**

Famine resulted from the siege – food & water was rationed to the captives. Human excrement was used as fuel for baking but later changed to cow dung. The result of Judah's departure from God – defilement, hunger, human tragedy and dignity lost in their living among the gentiles.

