

Purpose

To announce God's judgment on Israel and other nations and to foretell the eventual salvation of God's people

Meaning of Name

"Strengthened by God"

Date Written

Approximately 571 BC

Setting

Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah. While Jeremiah ministered to the people still in Judah, Ezekiel prophesied to those exiled to Babylonia.

Key Verse

"I will gather you up from the nations and bring you home again. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you. Your filth will be washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. I will give you a new heart with new and right desires, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony heart of sin and give you a new, obedient heart." *Ezekiel 36:24-26*

Key People

Ezekiel, Israel's leaders, Nebuchadnezzar, and "the Prince"

Key Places

Jerusalem and Babylon

An Overview (48 Chapters)

- Messages of Doom (*1:1-24:27*)
- Messages Against Other Nations (*25:1-32:32*)
- Messages of Hope (*33:1-48:35*)

Major Themes

- *Sin*: We cannot excuse ourselves from our responsibilities before God. We are accountable to God for our choices. Rather than neglect Him, we must recognize sin for what it is — rebellion against God — and choose to follow Him instead.
- *Restoration*: Ezekiel consoles the people by telling them that the day will come when God will restore those who turn from sin. He will give His people a new heart to worship Him, and He will establish a new government and a new Temple.
- *Leaders*: Ezekiel condemned the shepherds (unfaithful priests and leaders) who led the people astray. If we are given the responsibility of leading others, we must take care of them even if it means sacrificing personal pleasure, happiness, time, or money.
- *Worship*: God's holy presence had departed from the Temple because of sin. The building of a future Temple portrays the return of God's glory and presence. God will cleanse His people and restore true worship under the rule of the Messiah.