

Ezekiel: From Hellish Circumstances to Heavenly Hope

[1] In the thirtieth year... as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

[2] ...[3] the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal, and the hand of the LORD was upon him there... [28] Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking. [Eze 1:1-3, 28 ESV]

1. "Ezekiel" = "God _____."
2. Time period: 592-570 B.C.
3. Historical setting: Prophesying to the Jews held _____ by Babylon.
4. "The _____ of the Lord came to me..." (approximately 50 times)
5. Ezekiel's twofold purpose:
 - A. Promote _____ and faith.
 - B. Stimulate hope and trust.
6. Overall structure...
 - A. Introduction – God calls Ezekiel (1-3)
 - B. The Judgment against Judah (4-24)
 - C. The Judgment against the Nations (25-32)
 - D. The Restoration of God's People (33-48)

7. Reads like a _____ book – filled with symbolic actions, visions, allegorical pictures.

8. Emphasizes the glory of God in His _____.

9. Ezekiel _____ out his prophecy.

-Examples: Play at war (4:1-3). Lie on his side a certain number of days (4:4-17). Shave his hair and beard (5:1-4). Act like someone fleeing from war (12:1-16). Sit and sigh (21:1-7). Endure the death of his _____ (24:15-27).

[1] And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." [2] And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. [3] And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. [4] The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' [5] And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. [6] And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. [7] And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house. [8] "But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you." [Eze 2:1-8 ESV]

[1] And he said to me, "Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." [2] So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. [3] And he said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it." Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey. [4] And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them. [5] For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel-- [6] not to many peoples of foreign speech and a hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to such, they would listen to you. [7] But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. [8] Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. [9] Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house." [10] Moreover, he said to me, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. [11] And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' whether they hear or refuse to hear." [12] Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of the LORD from its place!" [13] 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. [14] The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the LORD being strong upon me. ... [16] And at the end of seven days, the word of the LORD came to me: [17] "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. [Eze 3:1-14, 16-17 ESV]

[13] "Thus shall my anger spend itself, and I will vent my fury upon them and satisfy myself. And they shall know that I am the LORD--that I have spoken in my jealousy--when I spend my fury upon them. [Eze 5:13 ESV]

[5] And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said to me, "Say, Thus says the LORD: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind. [6] You have multiplied your slain in this city and have filled its streets with the slain. [7] Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it. [8] You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon you, declares the Lord GOD... [Eze 11:5-8, ESV]

[1] The word of the LORD came to me: [2] "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, and say to those who prophesy from their own hearts: 'Hear the word of the LORD!' [3] Thus says the Lord GOD, Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! [4] Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. [5] You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the LORD. [6] They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'Declares the LORD,' when the LORD has not sent them, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word. [7] Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, 'Declares the LORD,' although I have not spoken?" [8] Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord GOD. [9] My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and who give lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord GOD. [10] Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash, ... [22] Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, [Eze 13:1-10, 22 ESV]

[1] Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. [2] And the word of the LORD came to me: [3] "Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by them? [Eze 14:1-3 ESV]

[9] And if the prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. [10] And they shall bear their punishment--the punishment of the prophet and the punishment of the inquirer shall be alike-- [11] that the house of Israel may no more go astray from me, nor defile themselves anymore with all their transgressions, but that they may be my people and I may be their God, declares the Lord GOD." [Eze 14:9-11 ESV]

[15] "But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings on any passerby; your beauty became his.... [30] "How sick is your heart, declares the Lord GOD, because you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute, [31] building your vaulted chamber at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every square. Yet you were not like a prostitute, because you scorned payment. [32] Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! [33] Men give gifts to all prostitutes, but you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side with your whorings. [34] So you were different from other women in your whorings. No one solicited you to play the whore, and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; therefore you were different. [35] "Therefore, O prostitute, hear the word of the LORD: [36] Thus says the Lord GOD, Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whorings with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, [37] therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from every side and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness....

[49] Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy....

[60] yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. [61] Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of the covenant with you. [62] I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD, [63] that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord GOD." [Eze 16:15, 30-37, 49, 60-63 ESV]

[19] "Yet you say, 'Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?' When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. [20] The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.... [30] "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. [31] Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? [32] For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live." [Eze 18:19-20, 30-32 ESV]

[26] Her priests have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things. They have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. [27] Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood, destroying lives to get dishonest gain. [28] And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD has not spoken. [29] The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have oppressed the poor and needy, and have extorted from the sojourner without justice. [Eze 22:26-29 ESV]

[1] The word of the LORD came to me: [2] "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. [3] They played the whore in Egypt; they played the whore in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and their virgin bosoms handled. [4] Oholah was the name of the elder and Oholibah the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.... [35] Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, you yourself must bear the consequences of your lewdness and whoring." ... [39] For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. And behold, this is what they did in my house. [40] They even sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and behold, they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. [41] You sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. [42] The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and with men of the common sort, drunkards were brought from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the hands of the women, and beautiful crowns on their heads. [43] "Then I said of her who was worn out by adultery, Now they will continue to use her for a whore, even her! [44] For they have gone in to her, as men go in to a prostitute. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, lewd women! [45] But righteous men shall pass judgment on them with the sentence of adulteresses, and with the sentence of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands." [Eze 23:1-4, 35, 39-45 ESV]

[1] The word of the LORD came to me: [2] "Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is proud, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god-- [3] you are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you; [4] by your wisdom and your understanding you have made wealth for yourself, and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; [5] by your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud in your wealth--... [11] Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: [12] "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. [13] You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. [14] You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. [15] You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. [16] In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. [17] Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. [Eze 28:1-5, 11-17 ESV]

[1] The word of the LORD came to me: [2] "Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman, [3] and if he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, [4] then if anyone who hears the sound of the trumpet does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. [5] He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But if he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. [6] But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand. [7] "So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. [8] 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.... [11] Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? [Eze 33:1-9, 11 ESV]

[1] The word of the LORD came to me: [2] "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? [3] You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. [4] The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. [5] So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts.... [16] I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.... [23] And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. [24] And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken. [Eze 34:1-5, 16, 23-24 ESV]

[22] "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. [23] And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. [24] I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. [25] I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. [26] And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. [27] And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. [28] You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. [Eze 36:22-28 ESV]

[1] The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. [2] And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. [3] And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." [4] Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. [5] Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. [6] And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD." [7] So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone... [Eze 37:1-7 ESV]

[4] As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east, [5] the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. [Eze 43:4-5 ESV]

[23] They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. [24] In a dispute, they shall act as judges, and they shall judge it according to my judgments. They shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts, and they shall keep my Sabbaths holy.... [28] "This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance: and you shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession. [Eze 44:23-24, 28]

[1] Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing... [12] And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing." [Eze 47:1, 12]

[35] ...And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD Is There." [Eze 48:35 ESV]