

*Study Notes on the
Holy Scriptures*

*Using a Theme-Based Approach
to Identify Literary Structures*

The Book of Ezekiel



Gary H. Everett

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THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL
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All Scripture quotations in English are taken from the *King James Version (Authorized Version)* unless otherwise noted. Some words have been emphasized by the author of this commentary using bold or italics.

All Old Testament Scripture quotations in the Hebrew text are taken from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: with Westminster Hebrew Morphology*. Stuttgart; Glenside PA: German Bible Society; Westminster Seminary, 1996. Logos.

All New Testament Scripture quotations in the Greek text are taken from *Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)*. Eds. Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, M. Robinson, and Allen Wikgren. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 1993; 2006. Logos.

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**The Three-Tiered Thematic Scheme Shaping the Book of Ezekiel:
Foundational, Structural, and Imperative**

Foundational Theme – How to Serve the Lord with All Our Mind

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:
And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart,
and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
Deuteronomy 6:4-5

***Secondary Theme - God Promises Israel's Redemption through the Prophetic Restoration of the Nation
of Israel, the Temple, and the Glory of God***

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart
out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to
walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.
Ezekiel 36:26-27

And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east:
and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.
Ezekiel 43:2

Imperative Theme – Man is Commanded to Love God with All His Mind

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart,
and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
Deuteronomy 6:5

***Imperative Theme - Israel Loved the Lord their God with All of Their Mind by Placing Their Hope in
Ezekiel's Prophecies Concerning the Future Restoration of God's Glory in the Temple***

And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,)
yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.
Ezekiel 2:5

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A GREAT SHAKING!

God is shaking loose the traditions, commandments of men, false doctrines, unholy living, from His church. We are feeling a glorious freedom to follow the true presence of the Holy Spirit. Our souls are restless, yearning, anxious, and excited as we are coming together for the return of the Groom for His Bride (the Church). Now we are free to worship Jesus without the demands that even our forefathers will not be able to stand. Self-called preachers will not be able to stand. Only preachers that are allowing the moving of the Holy Spirit will be able to hold on to God's people. Our hearts are one in the Lord. (Nov-Dec 1987)

(Patricia Ann Everett 1936-2011)

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL¹

The Doctrinal Position on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures - *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures* supports the view of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the biblical text of the Holy Scriptures, meaning that every word originally written down by the authors in the sixty-six books of the Holy Canon were God-breathed when recorded by men, and that the Scriptures are therefore inerrant and infallible. Any view less than this contradicts the testimony of the Holy Scriptures themselves. For this reason, the Holy Scriptures contain both divine attributes and human attributes. While textual criticism engages with the variant readings of the biblical text, acknowledging its human attributes, faith in His Word acknowledges its divine attributes. These views demand the adherence of mankind to the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures above all else. The Holy Scriptures can only be properly interpreted by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, an aspect of biblical scholarship that is denied by liberal views, causing much misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

The Message of the Book of Ezekiel – Based upon the view of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, each volume of *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures* begins with introductory material that develops the central ideas of each book. These introductions present the central message in a three-tiered framework. This framework reveals the literary structure of the book.

The book of Ezekiel offers a three-fold thematic scheme that supports the central claim of the Pentateuch, the claim found in Deuteronomy 6:4 and known to the Jews as “the Shema,” a verse that declares the God of Israel is one, true and living God, a theme that undergirds all of the prophetic books. Thus, the foundational theme of Ezekiel is the central claim of the Pentateuch, a theme shared by all books of the Holy Scriptures. The secondary, structural theme of the book of Ezekiel supports the primary theme of the prophetic books by offering the testimony of God’s covenant love to redeem Israel through the prophetic plan of the restoration of the Temple and the glory of God as supporting evidence that YHWH is the true and living God. The third, imperative theme of the book of Ezekiel states that Israel loved the Lord their God with all of their mind by placing their hope in Ezekiel’s prophecies concerning their future redemption through the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit to restore Temple worship. The application of this third theme for today’s reader is for us to place our hope of redemption in Ezekiel’s prophecies concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification, namely the Holy Spirit in our regeneration at the time of salvation, His empowerment to help us overcome challenges and enemies, and His anointing for divine service in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Eschatological Message of the Book of Ezekiel - God never leaves His people without a voice. When He sent His disobedient children into captivity, in His mercy, He also gave them Ezekiel to proclaim His Word. Thus, Ezekiel became their watchman. This prophet proclaimed to these captive Jews that Jerusalem would certainly be utterly destroyed (1-24), which took place in 586 B.C. After this event, Ezekiel gave only one more dated prophecy. However, he gave them hope, for not only would God judge the nations that supported their destruction (25-32); He would also raise up this nation again and judge their enemies (33-39). He predicted the rebuilding of the Temple more glorious than before (40-48). The Lord proclaimed His faithfulness to Israel, which unending faithfulness was revealed earlier to Abraham and David. Without judgment, the Lord could not bring about healing and restoration. Thus, in the midst of divine judgment, the people were given the words of hope that would give them the strength to endure their captivity.

¹The book introductions in *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures* use a nine-level outline that follows an alphanumeric system: [omit] I. A. 1. a) (1) (a) i) α). While the first heading uses bold capital letters and no designation, the next seven levels follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, while the ninth level incorporates the Greek alphabet. After the main heading, the other eight heading levels use bold and italicized headline style. See *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 1993, 2003), 275.

The fact that divine judgment against Jerusalem (3:22-24:27) preceded divine judgment upon the seven nations (25:1-32:32) reveals to us the truth that the events taking place in the nation of Israel are a forewarning from God, of the events that about to come upon the nations of the world, even taking place today. In other words, we can watch the events taking place in Israel and see events that are to take place upon the earth. For example, the Muslims of Palestine who declared a holy war against Israel in 1998 resulted in this “jihad” spilling over into many other nations of the world. In addition, since Jerusalem is a symbol of the Church, the order of judging Jerusalem first symbolizes the fact that God will judge His Church immediately before He ushers in the Great Tribulation period upon the earth in preparation for His Second Coming. This is seen again in Revelation 2-3 where Jesus judges the seven churches immediately before the Great Tribulation.

For this reason, the book of Ezekiel is well-recognized for its end-time prophecies. It was written during a period of history when the nation of Israel was fading out of the international scene of dominance as its people became scattered into a Babylonian Captivity. From the time of Joseph when Israel was in its infancy as a nation, until their Captivity these people stood at the center of events that made up world history. Israel had been raised to a world power under the reigns of King David and his son Solomon. However, during the time of Ezekiel their hopes as a unified people had now been crushed. The dominance of Babylon ushered in the “Age of the Gentiles,” (Lk 21:24) which would allow a number of Gentile nations to take front and center stage in world history until the times of restoration. Babylon would be followed by the Medes and Persians, which would be followed by the Grecian Empire and finally the Roman Empire. The coming of the Messiah ushered in the Church age in the midst of a world dominated by the Romans. The Church then takes center stage in world events for the next two thousand years and will do so until the second coming of the Messiah. At this time, the nation of Israel would be reborn in preparation for a number of end-time prophetic events to usher the world into the thousand-year Millennial Reign of Christ. A great battle would take place to officially end the Age of the Gentiles. As the time of Gentile dominance comes to an end, having been overwhelmed by the growing power of the Church as prophesied in Daniel 2:31-36, the Temple will be rebuilt in order to receive the Messiah. He will come to this Temple so that He can rule and reign for a thousand years from the holy city of Jerusalem. Israel will again take center stage in world events. Therefore, the book of Ezekiel is a book of hope for the people of Israel that God will one day restore their nation, that He would again fight for them in battle and that the Temple would be restored more glorious than ever, but first, the Messiah must come. The prophecies of Ezekiel are presented to the people of Israel in order to solidify their hope in the God of Israel and to cause them to look forward to Calvary and to the restoration of their nation rather than looking back in despair. However, these prophecies do make the end-time events as clear as we would like them to be. For example, very often when Old Testament prophecy speaks of the coming of the Messiah we find descriptions of Jesus Christ’s first and second comings placed side by side in a passage of Scripture with no distinction between these two events, although they are separated by two thousand years of Church history. It is as if the prophet sees down a long tunnel and only sees one event. This is the reason that we find the Jews during the time of Christ looking for a Messiah would immediately set up an earthly kingdom by throwing off the Roman rule over the Jewish people. They saw nothing in their Messianic prophecies that spoke of two returns. In contrast, the prophecies of the New Testament make this distinction very clear.

We find a good example of this two-fold prophecy in Isaiah 9:6-7 where there is clearly a reference to both the first and second comings of Jesus Christ. This passage tells us of Jesus’ first coming to earth by being born of a woman, and we see a prophecy of His triumphant eternal reign on earth as a reference to His second coming. We understand that the phrase “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,” clearly speaks of Jesus Christ’s birth and earthly ministry up until His crucifixion. Hilton Sutton believes that the rest of the prophecy in Isaiah 9:6-7 speaks clearly of Jesus’ second return at the end of the seven-year Tribulation period in which He sets up an earthly kingdom and reigns in Jerusalem.² This leads us to the question of why no reference is made to the two thousand years of Church history that takes place between these two Comings of the Lord Jesus Christ. The answer lies in the fact that Isaiah is prophesying primarily to the Jews and not to the Church. Although the Old Testament Scriptures are also for the Church to read

²Hilton Sutton, *Revelation: God’s Grand Finale* (Tulsa, Oklahoma, c1984), 31.

and to understand, these prophecies were spoken to the Jewish people as the primary recipients and to the Church as secondary recipients. Thus, Isaiah 9:6-7 only addresses the role that Israel will play during Jesus' first and second coming. Since Israel does not play a vital role in Church history for a period of two thousand years, the prophet leaves out such events.

Another example of this distinction in end-time prophecy can be found by comparing the books of Ezekiel and Daniel and Revelation. The book of Ezekiel was written to the people of Israel to help them persevere through their time of persecutions during the Babylonian Captivity. However, the book of Revelation was addressed to the Church, and not to the Jews, to help them persevere until the end. Therefore, Ezekiel speaks of three major events that relate to the nation of Israel leading up to the ushering in of the Millennial Reign of Christ Jesus, which are the restoration of Israel (36-37), the great battle with Russia and its allies (38-39) and the rebuilding of the Temple with its institution of worship (40-48). These are the three important events that will involve Israel during these last days leading up to and through the seven-year Tribulation Period. The book of Daniel tells of Christ's Second Coming from the perspective of the Gentile nations. The book of Revelation tells of the end-time events from the perspective of the Church. Ezekiel tells of these end-time events from the perspective of Israel.

In contrast, the book of Revelation speaks of many other events that take place during this time from the perspective of someone who is standing in Heaven. This is because the Church is raptured at this time and is watching these events while in Heaven. The book of Revelation opens with a message to the seven churches in Asia Minor by telling them to sanctify themselves. This is a message of preparation for the Rapture, which takes place figuratively in Revelation 4:1-2 with the catching up of John the apostle into Heaven. The rest of the events that unfold in this book are events that one would see if he was in Heaven after having been raptured. These events are not something that the Jewish people would see from their nation on earth while awaiting their Messiah, having rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. This explains why two different biblical writers tell the same story from two different perspectives to two different readers.

The Three-Fold Structure of the Book Introductions – In order to identify the central message of each book as a three-tiered statement, the book introductions in *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures* address three major aspects of approaching the biblical text. These three aspects or sections are entitled (1) the Historical Setting, (2) the Literary Style (Genre), and (3) the Theological Framework.³ These three sections of the book introductions coincide with the chronological development of historical and literary criticism.⁴ More

³Someone may associate these three categories with Hermann Gunkel's well-known three-fold approach to form criticism when categorizing the genre found within the book of Psalms: (1) "a common setting in life," (2) "thoughts and mood," (3) "literary forms." In addition, the *Word Biblical Commentary* inserts sections entitled "Form/Structure/Setting" preceding its comments. Although such similarities were not intentional, but rather coincidental, the author was aware of them and found encouragement from them when assigning the three-fold scheme of historical setting, literary style, and theological framework to his introductory material. See Hermann Gunkel, *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction*, trans. Thomas M. Horner, in *Biblical Series*, vol. 19, ed. John Reumann (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1967), 10; see also *Word Biblical Commentary*, eds. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1989-2007).

⁴Historical criticism, a term often used to encompass the fields of critical studies called source, form, and redaction (composition) criticism, has been an important tool in the effort to bridge the gap between what the ancient author recorded in the biblical text and what the text means to the modern reader. Dissatisfaction with the weaknesses of existing, critical approaches for each generation of critical studies has been the driving force behind the "evolution" of modern biblical scholarship. For example, James Muilenburg's 1968 address to the Society of Biblical Literature expressed the need for a new approach to the biblical text that went "beyond form criticism" because "historical criticism had come to an impasse, chiefly because of the excesses of source analysis." He proposed a new methodology called redaction criticism. See James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 1, 18. With the recent focus upon literary criticism, Paul House says, "[L]iterary criticism arose at least in part because of impasses in older ways of explaining Scripture. Just as scholars began to look for a better way to understand the Scriptures when the various fields of historical criticism appeared to fragment the biblical text rather than reveal its intended meaning, scholars today are searching for new ways to identify hermeneutical sections and their respective meanings." See Paul R. House, "The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament," in *Beyond Form Criticism: Essays in Old Testament Literary Criticism*, ed. Paul R. House, in *Sources for Biblical and Theological Study*, vol. 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 3, 7; Grant Osborne, "Redaction Criticism," *New*

specifically, the twentieth century offered three major approaches to biblical research, generally recognized as source, form, and redaction (composition) criticism. These three approaches developed as scholars searched for better ways to understand the meaning of the biblical text and its application to the modern reader. Over the past three decades, biblical research has adopted a wide array of approaches collected under the field of study called literary criticism.⁵ In the course of biblical scholarship, particularly in the writing of commentaries, book introductions have progressively become more complex through the advancement of critical studies in recent centuries. The book introductions found in *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures* associate source criticism with the advancement of research in the book's historical setting; it associates form criticism with the advancement of research in a book's literary style; and it associates redaction (composition) criticism and literary criticism with the advancement of research in the theological framework of a book. These three aspects of introductory material serve my readers as an important foundation for understanding what the authors of the books of the Holy Scriptures were saying to their audience under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The book summaries within the third section of this introductory material include exegetical, theological, and homiletical ideas for each pericope as a guide for those who desire to preach or teach through this book. These central ideas reflect homiletical research by serving as a summary of the central ideas of the book's theological framework. This framework of a book is the key to bridging the difficult gap between exegesis and homiletics. In other words, these ideas help the student of God's Word to take that final step to not only understand what the ancient author meant to say to his original audience, but to apply the meaning of the biblical text to a modern audience. The appendices contain a collection of these exegetical, theological, and homiletical ideas to serve as an outline for those preparing sermons and lessons.

Testament Criticism and Interpretation, eds. David Alan Black and David S. Dockery (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 199; In summarizing the historical development of critical approaches to Mark's Gospel, Bruce Bain begins by saying, "The apparent lack or sufficiency in one method seems to have given impetus for the birth of the next method." See Bruce Alan Bain, "Literary Surface Structures in Mark: Identifying Christology as the Purpose of the Gospel," PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1997 [on-line]; accessed 29 August 2013; available from <http://search.proquest.com.aaron.swbts.edu/pqdthss/docview/304487757/1402E6CEA4242E4E21D/1?accountid=7073>; Internet, 4.

⁵Jeffery Weima offers an excellent discussion on literary criticism. The surveys of Stanley Porter and Craig Blomberg concerning the various sub-disciplines that make up today's literary criticism expose the reason for such a variety of literary structures found in today's biblical commentaries and studies. In other words, these different approaches of literary criticism are the reason behind the variations in proposed literary structures of a book found in modern commentaries. See Jeffery A. D. Weima, "Literary Criticism," in *Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues*, eds. David Alan Black and David S. Dockery (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2001), 150-151; Stanley E. Porter, "Literary Approaches to the New Testament: From Formalism to Deconstruction and Back," in *Approaches to New Testament Studies*, eds. Stanley E. Porter and David Tombs (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 77-128; and Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 87-96.

HISTORICAL SETTING

“In-depth study of the historical setting is indispensable for sound exegesis.”
(William Warren)⁶

“We dare not divorce our study from understanding the historical setting of every passage of Scripture if we are going to come to grips with the truth and message of the Bible.”
(J. Hampton Keathley)⁷

Each book of the Holy Scriptures is cloaked within a unique historical setting. An examination of this setting is useful in the interpretation of the book because it provides the historical context of a passage of Scripture under examination. However, it helps when reading book introductions to understand that the discussions concerning historical setting for the books of the Bible have evolved through the centuries from simple to complex as biblical research has progressed.

Source critical studies that emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were concerned in its early stages with investigating the sources used by the Gospel writers because of their parallel passages. This interest spread to other relevant books of the Bible as well, such as the Pentateuch. These studies necessitated a re-evaluation of the various aspects of the historical setting of the books of the Bible. Source criticism required biblical scholarship to give greater attention to the book's title, historical background, authorship, date and place of writing, and recipients when searching for the original sources of various passages within the book. Interest in source criticism stimulated more extensive book introductions in commentaries, which became characteristic of this period of biblical research as scholars argued about various proposed views of the historical setting. Prior to this era, the book introductions to biblical commentaries were generally brief because they simply reflected the traditions handed down from the church fathers. Therefore, *source criticism* has made positive contributions to biblical scholarship despite its widespread use by liberal theologians who argued against divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Its positive effects are seen as conservative scholars are able to these various aspects of a book's historical setting to defend the integrity of the Scriptures.

This discussion supports the Jewish tradition that Ezekiel was the author of the book of Ezekiel, with him and others recording his prophecies during his public ministry. As evidence to support this claim, this section on the historical setting addresses the issues of (I) Title, (II) Historical Background, (III) Authorship, (IV) Date and Place of Writing, and (V) Recipients.

I. The Title

Henry Swete groups the Old Testament Scriptures into three classifications when dealing with book titles: (1) books whose titles reflect its theme found in the opening verses [Gen-Deut, Prov, Lam], (2) books whose titles reflect the author or a key individual in the story [the early and latter prophets, Ezra, Neh, Esth], and (3) books whose titles reflect its contents [Ps, Songs, Chronicles].⁸

II. Historical Setting

A. The Prophetic and Historical Times of Ezekiel the Prophet - The book of Ezekiel takes us into the most difficult and dark period in the history of Israel, which is the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the children of Israel into seventy years of Babylonian captivity. It was a time of divine judgment that God promised to a disobedient people, in which there would be faintness of heart in the land of their enemies, when fear would grip their lives, as we see in Leviticus 26:36, “And upon them that are left alive of

⁶William F. Warren, Jr., “Interpreting New Testament Narrative: The Gospels and Acts,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, second edition, eds. Bruce Corley, Steve W. Lemke, and Grant Lovejoy (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 323.

⁷J. Hampton Keathley, III, “Introduction and Historical Setting for Elijah,” (Bible.org) [on-line]; accessed 23 May 2012; available from <http://bible.org/seriespage/introduction-and-historical-setting-elijah>; Internet.

⁸Henry B. Swete, *An Introduction to Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), 214.

you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.” One psalm recorded during this period of time reveals how the hearts of the people were weak to sing and worship before the Lord in Psalm 137:1-2, “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.”

The period of history that Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived in was a time of transition for world power. The Assyrian Empire that had so devastated northern Israel in 722 B.C. had grown weak after two hundred and fifty (250) years of international dominance. The Neo-Babylonian Empire, founded by Nabopolassar, was quickly advancing across Assyria’s old empire. The Babylonian Empire took control of this region in 612 B.C. by defeating the Assyrians. What was left of the Assyrian army retreated to Haran and remained there until 609 B.C., when Neco, Pharaoh of Egypt, came to rescue them. It was during this march northward through Judah that King Josiah came out to resist Pharaoh and was killed in battle. At the decisive battle of Megiddo, Babylon strengthened its position as a world power by defeating both Egypt and the remnant of Assyria’s army.

The deep backslidden state of the nation of Judah brought God’s impending judgment that could not be turned back even under the reforms of Amon’s son Josiah (640-609 B.C.). His reforms were too late. It was during Josiah’s reign that Ezekiel was born in southern Judah as the son of a priest named Buzi. *Josephus* tells us that Ezekiel was taken into Babylonian captivity as a very young man. (*Antiquities* 10.6.3) Yet, he must have felt the impact of Josiah’s efforts to reform the nation. The king’s sudden death in the plains of Megiddo as he opposed the king of Egypt sent the nation of Judah back into idolatry and ultimate judgment. As the sons of Josiah were rotated on the throne by foreign powers, these young kings vacillated in their submission between Egypt and Babylon, while all of them ignored the words of Jeremiah the prophet.

It was Jeremiah who continued to warn his people to submit to Babylonian rule, which message was rejected by the kings of Judah. During the years following 609 B.C., Egypt placed Judah under tribute and replaced King Jehohaz with his brother Jehoiakim, who ruled for eleven years. In what is considered one of the most decisive battles in history, King Nebuchadnezzar confronted the combined forces of Egypt and Assyria in 605 B.C. at the battle of Carchemish on the Euphrates River, and gained an overwhelming victory against two former world powers that would never rise to significance again. The Babylonian forces continued to move southward after this battle, driven by the hunger for more victory. At this time, Judah was invaded and many young men were taken captive by this army. The environment in this region became very unstable during this transition of world powers, being terrorized by roving bands of rebels that refused to come under the subjection of Babylon, Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites all fighting among themselves (2 Kings 24:2). In order to conserve their resources, the king of Babylon attempted to negotiate as many cities into subjection as possible without having to exhaust his energies to destroy them. For these cities was his source of tribute to finance his kingdom.

Jehoiakim became a reluctant vassal of the king of Babylon after Egypt was defeated at the battle of Carchemish. When it appeared that Egypt might have renewed its strength because of a stalemate battle in 601 B.C., the king of Judah revolted and withheld tribute from Babylon. This brought further retaliation and deportation upon the city of Jerusalem. During Babylon’s attempt to regain control of Jerusalem in 598 B.C., Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin. However, the city of Jerusalem fell within three months and this young king was carried off to Babylon along with his entire family.

Zedekiah, his uncle was then appointed as the regent vassal by King Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah’s refusal to hearken unto Jeremiah’s warnings along with the king’s faith in his false prophets who encouraged such rebellion ultimately brought the armies of Babylon down upon Jerusalem for the final blow and destruction of the nation of Judah in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel was led away to Babylon during the earlier captivity of 597 B.C., but it was not until he was thirty years old (1:1) that he entered into the office of the priesthood by a divine vision and commission from the throne of God. Here, by the river Chebar, a canal near Babylon, Ezekiel began to serve as priest to the children of Israel in the Babylonian captivity. He served and prophesied in this capacity for approximately

twenty years, which is the period of time that the Law of Moses appointed the priests to serve in their office. For at the age of fifty, Ezekiel ceased to prophesy, following the period ordained by the Law.

We find a reference to the prophet Ezekiel in one of the New Testament Apocrypha books entitled *The Vision of Paul*. In this ancient document Ezekiel tells Paul the apostle that he was slain by being dragged by his feet over a rock in a mountain until his brains were knocked out.

“When he had spoken thus far, there came other twelve, and seeing me said: Art thou Paul the glorified in heaven and on earth? And I answered and said: What are ye? The first answered and said: I am Esaias whom Manasses cut asunder with a wooden saw. And the second said likewise: I am Jeremias who was stoned by the children of Israel and slain. And the third said: I am Ezekiel whom the children of Israel dragged by the feet over a rock in a mountain till they knocked out my brains, and we endured all these toils, wishing to save the children of Israel: and I say unto thee that after the toils which they laid upon me, I cast myself on my face in the sight of the Lord praying for them, bending my knees until the second hour of the Lord's day, till Michael came and lifted me up from the earth. Blessed art thou, Paul, and blessed the nation which believed through thee.” (*The Vision of Paul*, chapter 49)⁹

B. The Biography of Ezekiel the Prophet - Josephus tells us that Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was a priest by birth (*Antiquities* 10.5.1), who was taken into captivity as a young man (*Antiquities* 10.6.3).

“but so did Ezekiel also, who was the first person that wrote, and left behind him in writing two books concerning these events. **Now these two prophets were priests by birth . . .**” (*Antiquities* 10.5.1)

“Now, a little time afterwards, the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, whom he received [into the city], and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of this prophet, as supposing he should suffer nothing that was terrible, because he neither shut the gates, nor fought against him; yet when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made, but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity, together with their King Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial; and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country, and of the city: he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, **and led them away to Babylon; among which was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young.**” (*Antiquities* 10.6.3)

Ezekiel later began his prophetic ministry at the age of thirty (Eze 1:1), which was the age that a priest began his ministry, as we see in Numbers 4:1-3, “And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.”

The Divine Commissions of the Major Prophets - As we study the life of the three Major Prophets, we see how each of them received a divine visitation from the Lord that launched them into their respective ministries. In these visitations, they received their unique commissions. For example, the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all have a common opening in that each one of them has an encounter with the Lord. Isaiah sees the glory of the Lord upon His majestic throne. Jeremiah was overwhelmed with the word of the Lord as it came to him with visions revealing God's judgment upon Judah and other nations. Ezekiel saw the living creatures going forth before the throne of God, exalted high in the heaven. In contrast, the twelve Major Prophets did not receive such a divine visitation in order to commission them.

One reason why these three prophets received such a mighty visitation is understood in a comment by Kenneth Hagin, who said that when the Lord gives us a vision or a word for the future, it often precedes a

⁹*The Vision of Paul*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 9, ed. Allan Menzies (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), 165.

trial, and is used to anchor our soul and take us through the trial.¹⁰ If we look at the lives of the three Major Prophets, this is exactly what we see. These three men faced enormous trials and objections during their ministries. Their divine commissions certain were the anchor of their souls as it gave them strength and assurance that they were in God's will despite their difficulties. We see such dramatic encounters in the lives of Moses and Saul of Tarsus, as God gave them their divine commissions for a work that was difficult and even cost them their lives.

III. Authorship

A. Internal Evidence - The book itself declares that these are the prophecies of Ezekiel on two occasions: Ezekiel 1:3, "The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him." Ezekiel 24:24, "Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD."

B. External Evidence - Extra-biblical literature offers clues regarding the authorship of the book of Ezekiel. For example, the Babylonian *Talmud* records much Jewish tradition, one of which says that the men of the great assembly wrote the books of Ezekiel, the Twelve Prophets, Daniel, and Esther.

"And who wrote all the books? Moses wrote his book and a portion of Bil'am [Numbers, xxii.], and Job. Jehoshua wrote his book and the last eight verses of the Pentateuch beginning: "And Moses, the servant of the Lord, died." Samuel wrote his book, Judges, and Ruth. David wrote Psalms, with the assistance of ten elders, viz.: Adam the First, Malachi Zedek, Abraham, Moses, Hyman, Jeduthun, Asaph, and the three sons of Korach. Jeremiah wrote his book, Kings, and Lamentations. King Hezekiah and his company wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Songs, and Ecclesiastes. The men of the great assembly wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve Prophets, Daniel, and the Book of Esther. Ezra wrote his book, and Chronicles the order of all generations down to himself. [This may be a support to Rabh's theory, as to which, R. Jehudah said in his name, that Ezra had not ascended from Babylon to Palestine until he wrote his genealogy.] And who finished Ezra's book? Nehemiah ben Chachalyah." (*Babylonian Talmud, Tract Baba Bathra (Last Gate), 1.Mishna 5*)¹¹

Josephus tells us that Ezekiel wrote two books concerning the judgment and destruction of Jerusalem.

"But all the people mourned greatly for him (King Josiah), lamenting and grieving on his account many days; and Jeremiah the prophet composed an elegy to lament him, which is extant till tills time also. Moreover, this prophet denounced beforehand the sad calamities that were coming upon the city. He also left behind him in writing a description of that destruction of our nation which has lately happened in our days, and the taking of Babylon; nor was he the only prophet who delivered such predictions beforehand to the multitude, **but so did Ezekiel also, who was the first person that wrote, and left behind him in writing two books concerning these events.** Now these two prophets were priests by birth, but of them Jeremiah dwelt in Jerusalem, from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, until the city and temple were utterly destroyed. However, as to what befell this prophet, we will relate it in its proper place." (*Antiquities 10.5.1*)

IV. Date

The earliest prophecy that Ezekiel gives is in the opening verses and is dated in "the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin" (593 B.C.). The latest date given to a prophecy is found in 29:17-30:19, which was given in "the twenty-seventh year" (571 B.C.). This gives Ezekiel a period of twenty-two years in the ministry of delivering prophecies to the children of Israel and the surrounding nations. Ralph Alexander gives the

¹⁰Kenneth Hagin, *Following God's Plan For Your Life* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Faith Library Publications, c1993, 1994), 118.

¹¹Michael L. Rodkinson, *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud*, vol. 13 (New York: New Talmud Publishing Company, 1902), 45.

following dates for the thirteen dated prophecies of Ezekiel.¹² Note how all but the seventh dated message falls in chronological order.

	<u>Year</u>
The first year of Jehoiachin's captivity	June 597 (2 Kings 24:12)
Ezekiel's ministry begins (Ezek 1:1-3)	June/July 593
First dated message 1:1-3	June/July 593
Second dated message 8:1	Aug/Sept. 592
Third dated message 20:1	July/Aug. 591
Fourth dated message 24:1	Dec/Jan. 589/588
Fifth dated message 26:1	March/April 587-586
Sixth dated message 29:1	Dec/Jan. 588/687
Seventh dated message 29:17	March/April 571
Eighth dated message 30:20	March/April 587
Ninth dated message 31:1	May/June 587
Tenth dated message 32:1	March 585
Eleventh dated message 32:17	April 585
Twelfth dated message 33:21	Dec/Jan. 586/585
Thirteenth dated message 40:1	March/April 573

The book of Ezekiel clearly states the place where Ezekiel received his prophecies. He was with the captives by the river Chebar. Ralph Alexander tells us that the river Chebar has been identified by scholars “with the ‘naru kabari’ (mentioned in the Nippur cuneiform texts), a southeasterly canal connecting at both ends with the Euphrates River.”¹³

V. Recipients

Ezekiel was taken captive in 597 B.C. along with many other Jews and sent to live in Babylon by the river Chebar. He was called into the priesthood at the age of thirty served in this capacity for the next twenty years. Thus, God used Ezekiel to speak to the captive children of Israel, as we see in Ezekiel 3:11, “And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.” Ezekiel was also taken in the spirit to Jerusalem in order to observe the idolatry of the Jewish priests in that city. But his prophecies were directed to the captives by the river Babylon.

The fact that the book of Ezekiel was written in the Hebrew language while the author was in a faraway land that spoke Aramaic testifies to the fact that its recipients were the Hebrews. In contrast, during this same period of time, and in the same land of Babylon, Daniel wrote a large portion of his material in Aramaic. This testifies to the fact that his initial recipients to the material of his public ministry (2:4b to 7:28) were Chaldeans.

¹²Ralph H. Alexander, *Ezekiel*, in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Revised Edition)*, vol. 7, eds. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 2010), 647-648, Logos.

¹³Ralph H. Alexander, *Ezekiel*, in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Revised Edition)*, vol. 7, eds. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 2010), 648, Logos.

LITERARY STYLE (GENRE)

“Perhaps the most important issue in interpretation is the issue of genre. If we misunderstand the genre of a text, the rest of our analysis will be askew.”
(Thomas Schreiner)¹⁴

Form critical studies followed on the heels of source criticism in the first half of the twentieth century in an effort to identify the evolution of the text from its original form as oral tradition to the stage of canonization. John Hayes and Carl Hallodday describe the four primary aspects of form criticism, which are (1) the *content* “what is said,” (2) the *form* “how it is said,” (3) the *life setting* “in what setting or occasion it is said,” and (4) the *function* “the purpose of what is said.” They believe these aspects of form criticism allow the books of the Bible to be classified into their various genres as well as associate these genres with “sociological realities in the life of ancient Israel and the early church.”¹⁵ In other words, form criticism reveals biblical genres through the book’s content and form; it reveals the occasion of the book through its life setting; and it reveals its purpose through its function. This section of the book introduction will address these four aspects of form critical studies in three sections in the following order:

1. Life Setting – Discussions on the occasion
2. Form and Content – Discussions on the type of genre occasioned by the author and the characteristics of the book in light of its genre
3. Function – Discussions on the purpose

These three categories follow Hermann Gunkel’s well-known three-fold approach to form criticism when categorizing the genre found within the book of Psalms: (1) “a common setting in life,” (2) “literary forms,” and (3) “thoughts and mood.”¹⁶ In addition, the *Word Biblical Commentary* uses “Form/Structure/Setting” preceding each commentary section.¹⁷

I. Occasion

The Law of Moses had given the children of Israel the conditions to serving Him in the Promised Land. There were blessings for serving Him and curses for disobeying him. Six tribes stood on mount Gerizim and six upon mount Ebal to pronounce these divine blessings and curses (Deut 27:11-13). Thus, these Words settled upon the land of Israel and affected every life there for eternity. When the children of Israel rebelled, the curses came, as in the book of Judges. When these people served the Lord, His wonderful blessings abounded, as during the reigns of kings David and Solomon. But there came a time when their sins took them into God’s final phase of judgment, which was their removal from the Promised Land. Moses warned the children of Israel that these harsh judgments were for signs and wonders for themselves and others to know that the Lord was God over the earth, as we see in Deuteronomy 28:46, “And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.”

God fulfilled His promise of removing them from the land during the time of the prophet Ezekiel in fulfillment of the divine judgment prescribed in Deuteronomy 28:49, “The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;” Deuteronomy 28:64-65, “And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of

¹⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, second edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, c1990, 2011), 11.

¹⁵John H. Hayes and Carl A. Hallodday, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook*, revised edition (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1987), 83-84.

¹⁶Hermann Gunkel, *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction*, trans. Thomas M. Horner, in *Biblical Series*, vol. 19, ed. John Reumann (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1967), 10.

¹⁷*Word Biblical Commentary*, eds. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1989-2007).

mind.” This was the most devastating time in the history of their nation. It was only under these conditions that the Jews were ready to listen to the prophets of the Lord.

II. Genre and Characteristics of the Book

Within the historical setting of the kingdom of Israel, the author of the book of Ezekiel chose to write using the literary style of the ancient prophetic literature. Thus, the book of Ezekiel is assigned to the literary genre called “prophecy.” Included in the genre of prophecy are the three books of the Old Testament major prophets and twelve minor prophets.

A. The Phrase “That They May Know That I Am The Lord” - A look at the book of Ezekiel reveals that the phrase “that they may know that I am the Lord” is repeated seventy-six times, thus revealing a major theme woven throughout this prophetic book. Another six times in the book, we find the phrases, “that they may know that a prophet has spoke,” “that they may know their sins,” “that they may know My vengeance,” and “that they may know My deliverance.” Therefore, the theme of Ezekiel’s collection of prophecies is to reveal the Almighty, All-Knowing and Eternal God as the only One who is able to deliver, so that the people of this earth may put their trust in Him. We also see this statement when God sent the Ten Plagues upon Egypt in Exodus 14:4, “And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; *that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD*. And they did so.” The miraculous feats that God performed upon the Egyptians were done so that they, the Egyptians, may know that the Lord is the Almighty God. Judgment always has a divine purpose that is for the good of mankind. This is seen when David asks the Lord to consume his enemies so that all may know that God rules in Jacob in Psalm 59:13, “Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.”

B. The Phrase “Son of Man” - Another common phrase used through the book of Ezekiel is “Son of man”. On ninety-three occasions, God addresses Ezekiel as the “Son of man”, which reveals the frailty of man, who stands in need of an all-knowing, all-powerful God. This book reveals that God has ordained from the foundation of the world a plan for the redemption of mankind, while the children of Israel count the days of their captivity. Although each man will have to live out his part in this great plan of redemption, God continues to dwell in eternity.

C. The Names of God - The names of God that are used in this prophetic book reflect the theme of the book. There are three names used.

1. The Almighty – The Lord revealed Himself to Ezekiel as “The Almighty,” who knows all things, who is able to deliver, who is able to meet every need of His children in Ezekiel 1:24, “And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of *the Almighty*, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.”

2. The Lord – The Lord also revealed Himself to Ezekiel as “The Lord” in Ezekiel 1:28, “As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of *the LORD*. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.” The name “Lord” literally means “the Great I Am,” for His is not bound by time or distance and He is the One who inhabits Eternity (Isa 57:15).

3. The Lord God - Third, the Lord revealed Himself to Ezekiel as the “Lord God” in Ezekiel 2:4, “For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith *the Lord GOD*.” He is the one and only God of all nations.

Therefore, all three of these names reveal an aspect of God’s character that match the theme of this book.

III. Purpose

The Old Testament books of prophecy served a number of purposes for the nation of Israel and for the Gentiles. These books were written primarily to testify that the God of Israel is the true and living God; thus, they served a doctrinal and apologetic purpose. However, the authors chose to frame their testimonies within the genres of Old Testament prophecy; thus, they served an historical and didactic purpose. Finally, the books of prophecy served a hortative and kerygmatic purpose in calling mankind to serve the Lord with all of his mind. Israel was set apart as a holy nation through which God would reveal His divine plan of redemption for mankind through the promises/prophecies of the coming Messiah.

A. The Doctrinal and Apologetic Purpose: To Establish and Defend the Central Claim of that YHWH is the True and Living God - The primary purpose of the prophetic books of the Old Testament is to provide supporting evidence that establishes and defends the claim of the Pentateuch that YHWH is the true and living God through Israel's historical records.

The Testimony of Biblical Scholarship – Charles Elliott provides a lengthy discussion on the doctrines of the prophetic books, saying, “Prophecy is more or less a commentary upon the doctrine of divine providence . . . The doctrinal teaching of the prophets is intermediate between the Law and the Gospel. It is a step in advance of the Law and preparatory to the Christian dispensation. . . . The Law had said: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might’ (Deut. vi. 5). Nothing could go beyond this commandment, in its extent; but where nothing can be added to extend a law, much may be added to expound it, animate its spirit, and direct its practice. It is precisely this that the prophets do.”¹⁸

Conclusion: The Purpose Reflects the Theme – This doctrinal-apologetic purpose of the book of Ezekiel reflects the foundational theme of the historical books, which is the central claim that the God of Israel is the one true and holy God, who is orchestrating a plan of redemption for mankind through the nation of Israel.

B. The Prophetic-Didactic and Historical Purpose: To Reveal Israel's Hope of Redemption through the Return of the Glory of God into the New Temple - The book of Ezekiel serves an historical purpose because it records the events of the nation during the Babylonian Captivity. However, this book also serves a prophetic-didactic purpose by revealing Israel's hope of redemption through the return of the glory of God into the new Temple. It teaches the children of Israel that God is able and faithful to fulfill His promises of their future redemption because He is the true and living God.

Conclusion: The Purpose Reflects the Theme – The historical-didactic purpose of the book of Ezekiel reflects its secondary, structural theme, which is the testimony that God has made provision for Israel's redemption through the return of the glory of God into the new Temple. God is sovereign over all nation and has a plan of redemption for Israel through His covenant love to bring them into their full rest and redemption.

C. The Hortatory and Kerygmatic Purpose: To Exhort the Children of Israel to Place Their Hope in the Divine Power of YHWH to Bring Future Restoration to His People - A third purpose found in the book of Ezekiel is seen in its references to the restoration of God's people. This book provides hope to the Jewish people as it reveals the restoration of God's people and their ultimate victory over sin and oppression. Ezekiel exhorts the children of Israel to place their hope in the divine power of YHWH to bring future restoration to His people. Through these prophecies, Israel was equipped to testify to the nations about the true and living God through their hope of redemption.

The Testimony of Biblical Prophecy – Charles Elliott says, “Before this sad calamity [the destruction of Jerusalem] his chief object was to call to repentance those who were living in careless security; to warn them against indulging the hope that, by the help of the Egyptians, the Babylonian yoke would be shaken off

¹⁸Charles Elliott, *General Introduction to the Prophetic Writings of the Old Testament and Especially to the Minor Prophets*, in *The Minor Prophets, Exegetically, Theologically, and Homiletically Expounded*, in *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical*, ed. John Peter Lange, trans. Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), 11.

(chap. xvii. 15-17); and to assure them that the destruction of their city was inevitable and fast approaching. After the destruction of the city his principal care was to console the exiled Jews by promises of future deliverance and restoration to their own land.”¹⁹

Conclusion: The Purpose Reflects the Theme – The hortatory-kerygmatic purpose of the book of Ezekiel reflects its third, imperative theme, which states that Israel served the Lord their God with all of their mind by placing their faith in God’s promises and redemption from their enemies and eternal rest.

D. Conclusion of the Three-fold Purpose of the Prophetic Books – Having identified three purposes to the Prophetic Books, it is logical to conclude that there are three themes embedded within these writings, with each theme supporting a particular purpose. Therefore, the three-fold thematic schemes of these books will be discussed next.

¹⁹Charles Elliott, *General Introduction to the Prophetic Writings of the Old Testament and Especially to the Minor Prophets*, in *The Minor Prophets, Exegetically, Theologically, and Homiletically Expounded*, in *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical*, ed. John Peter Lange, trans. Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1886), 31.

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

“Scholarly excellence requires a proper theological framework.”
(Andreas Kösenberger)²⁰

Redaction (composition) criticism built upon earlier forms of critical studies known as *source criticism* and *form criticism* to better understand the final composition of a book. This research asks how the literary authors edited and assembled their material into its final form. As a result, scholars began to approach the books of the Bible as independent, literary works rather than a compilation of fragmented parts gathered from various sources. A study in the evolution of the writing of commentaries reveals that extensive book outlines did not find their way into biblical commentaries until this recent era of biblical studies. Such outlines emerged during the trend of *redaction criticism*, so that by the mid-nineteenth century most commentaries offered book outlines in their introductory material. Earlier outlines existed in commentaries, but they were generally simplistic in form because scholarship lacked the necessary hermeneutical tools developed only recently in biblical scholarship.

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, biblical scholarship took a further step, using a number of approaches collectively known as *literary criticism*. This approach allowed modern critical studies and commentaries to propose greater detail in literary structures in an effort to reveal the book’s theological framework. The current trend in *literary criticism* allows greater accuracy in book outlines. As a result, these outlines become valuable tools in exegesis as well as homiletics because of the recognition of a book’s theological framework.

Based upon the historical setting and literary style of the book of Ezekiel, an examination of the thematic scheme and the literary structure with its respective outline to this book of the Holy Scriptures will reveal its theological framework. This introductory section will sum up its theological framework with a set of exegetical-homiletical outlines, which are used to identify smaller units or pericopae within the book of Ezekiel for preaching and teaching passages of Scripture while following the overriding message of the book. By following these outlines, the minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ takes his followers on a spiritual journey that brings them to the same destination that the author intended his readers to reach.

I. Thematic Scheme

David Clines says, “. . . a statement of theme is the first step in formulating the message of the work within its historical context or in setting up guidelines within which future readings or interpretations of the work in different historical contexts may be considered legitimate.”²¹

Introduction - Each book of the Holy Scriptures contains a three-fold thematic scheme in order to fulfill its intended purpose, which is to transform each child of God into the image of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29). The primary, or foundational, theme of a book offers a central claim that undergirds everything written by the author. The secondary, or structural theme, of the book supports its primary theme by offering reasons and evidence for the central “claim” made by the author as it fully develops the first theme. Thus, the secondary theme is more easily recognized by biblical scholars than the other two themes because they provide the literary content of the book as they navigate the reader through the arguments embedded within the biblical text, thus revealing themselves more clearly.²² The third theme is imperative in that it calls the reader to a response based upon the central claim and supporting evidence offered by the author. Each child of God has been predestined to be conformed into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures, and they alone, have the power to accomplish this task. This is why a child of God can read the Holy

²⁰ Andreas J. Kösenberger, *Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2011), 173.

²¹ David J. A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch, second edition* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 2001), 20-21.

²² For an excellent discussion on the use of claims, reasons, and evidence in literature, see Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Scriptures with a pure heart and experience a daily transformation taking place in his life, although he may not fully understand what is taking place in his life. In addition, the reason some children of God often do not see these biblical themes is because they have not fully yielded their lives to Jesus Christ, allowing transformation to take place by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Without a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, a child of God is not willing to allow Him to manage his life and move him down the road that God predestined as his spiritual journey. This journey requires every participant to take up his cross daily and follow Jesus, and not every believer is willing to do this. In fact, every child of God chooses how far down this road of sacrifice he is willing to go. Very few of men and women of God fulfill their divine destinies by completing this difficult journey. In summary, the first theme drives the second theme, which develops the first theme, and together they demand the third theme, which is the reader's response.

The Thematic Scheme of the Books of the Old Testament - The underlying theme of the Old Testament Scriptures is the office and ministry of God the Father as He works out His divine plan of redemption for mankind through His divine foreknowledge and sovereign intervention in the affairs of man. The primary theme of the Pentateuch is the central claim that YHWH is the true and living God. For this reason, man is to love him with all of his heart, mind, and strength. The books of Hebrew poetry emphasize man's love towards God with all of his heart. The prophetic books emphasize loving the Lord with all of one's mind. The historical books emphasize loving the Lord with all of one's strength.

The Three-fold Thematic Scheme of the Prophetic Books - The prophetic books are woven together as a major division of the Holy Scriptures with a three-fold thematic scheme. (A) *Primary Theme* - The primary, foundational theme of the prophetic books is the claim found in Deuteronomy 6:4 and known to the Jews as "the Shema," a verse that declares the God of Israel is one, true and living God, a theme that undergirds all five books of the Pentateuch. (B) *Secondary Theme* - Each one of the prophetic books has a secondary theme that supports this central theme, providing the evidence to prove that the God of Israel is one God, who had dominion over all other gods worshipped by depraved humanity. Collectively, the secondary themes of the prophetic books reveal that YHWH has chosen Israel through His foreknowledge and divine election to be His chosen method of bringing redemption to mankind. These books form a thematic scheme of God's plan of redemption for the kingdom of Israel and for the heathen nations with their secondary themes. This thematic scheme follows the triune God-head, with each book placing an emphasis on the redemptive role of either God the Father, Jesus the Son, or the Holy Spirit. (C) *The Third Theme* - The third theme of the Prophetic books is an imperative theme, and it is also found in the Shema, where Moses commands Israel to love YHWH their God with all of one's mind (Deut 6:5).

The Three-fold Thematic Scheme of the Book of Ezekiel - The book of Ezekiel offers a three-fold thematic scheme that supports the central claim of the Pentateuch, the claim found in Deuteronomy 6:4 and known to the Jews as "the Shema," a verse that declares the God of Israel is one, true and living God, a theme that undergirds all of the prophetic books. Thus, the foundational theme of Ezekiel is the central claim of the Pentateuch, a theme shared by all books of the Holy Scriptures. The secondary, structural theme of the book of Ezekiel supports the primary theme of the prophetic books by offering the testimony of God's covenant love to redeem Israel through the prophetic plan of the restoration of the Temple and the glory of God as supporting evidence that YHWH is the true and living God. The third, imperative theme of the book of Ezekiel states that Israel loved the Lord their God with all of their mind by placing their hope in Ezekiel's prophecies concerning their future redemption through the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit to restore Temple worship. The application of this third theme for today's reader is for us to place our hope of redemption in Ezekiel's prophecies concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification, namely the Holy Spirit in our regeneration at the time of salvation, His empowerment to help us overcome challenges and enemies, and His anointing for divine service in the Kingdom of Heaven.

A. The Primary Theme of the Book of Ezekiel (Foundational): The Central Claim of the Prophetic Books Declares that YHWH is the True and Living God – The Primary Theme of the Holy Bible - The primary theme of the Holy Bible is God's plan of redemption for mankind. This theme finds its central focus in the Cross, where our Lord and Saviour died to redeem mankind. The central figure of the Holy Scriptures is the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, the Cross is the place where man meets God and where we die to our selfish ambitions and yield our lives to the God who created all things. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are not

intended to be a complete or comprehensive record of ancient history. Rather, its intent is to provide a record of God's divine intervention in the history of mankind in order to redeem the world back to Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary. The Holy Scriptures are "Redemptive History."

Every book of the Holy Bible makes a central claim that undergirds one particular aspect of man's redemptive history. For example, the central claim of the Pentateuch is found in Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD," to which all additional material is subordinate. The bulk of the material in the Old Testament is subordinate in that it serves as reasons and evidence to support this central claim. This material serves as the secondary theme, offering the literary structure of the book. In addition, the central claim calls for a response, which is stated in the following verse, "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut 6:5) Such a response is considered the third, imperative theme that runs through every book of the Holy Scriptures.

This central claim is the primary, or foundational, theme and is often obscured by the weight of evidence that is used to drive the central message, which weight of evidence makes up the secondary theme; and thus, it contains more content than the primary theme. Therefore, the secondary themes of the books of the Holy Scripture are generally more recognizable than the primary theme. Nevertheless, the central claim, or truth, must be excavated down to the foundation and made clearly visible in order to understand the central theme driving the arguments contained within the book. Only then can proper exegesis and sermon delivery be executed.

The Testimony of Biblical Scholarship – Charles Elliott says, "The God of the prophets is the Creator of all things (Is. xlii. 5); and the upholder of all things (Jer. x. 23; xviii. 6; Dan. v. 23) . . . These passages teach a universal, particular, and present Providence, controlling all things and directing their issues . . . It is not restricted to man, but extends to the beasts of the field. It is not confined to the Jewish theocracy . . . but it embraces . . . all the nations of the earth . . . Prophecy is more or less a commentary upon the doctrine of divine providence."²³

Literary Evidence for the Primary Theme of the Prophetic Books – The primary theme that YHWH is the true and living God is clearly reflected in the prophetic books by the frequent use of the divine title *The Lord of Hosts* (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) or *The Lord God of Hosts* (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת). Archibald Duff says this title declares that "Jehovah is Supreme Lord over all other gods, powers, and nations."²⁴ Duff notes that this title is very popular with the prophets (Isaiah 60, Jeremiah 79, Hosea 1, Amos 9, Micah 1, Nahum 1, Zephaniah 2, Habakkuk 1, Haggai 14, Zechariah 54, Malachi 24). He says this title is not found in the Pentateuch, Joshua, or Judges; however, it occurs in the historical books (Samuel-Kings 14, Chronicles 3) and one book of poetry (Psalms 16).²⁵ Thus, every divine oracle recorded in the prophetic books, which oracles are often preceded with the phrase, "Thus says the Lord," is founded upon the faith that YHWH is God of all the earth. The prophet books collectively embrace not only the message of Israel's judgment and ultimate restoration, but of the redemption of the nations through Israel's restoration.

Also, the Hebrew phrase *Day of the Lord* (יּוֹם יְהוָה) occurs fifteen times in the Old Testament, being used only in the books of prophecy (Isaiah 2, Joel 5, Amos 3, Obadiah 1, Zephaniah 3, Malachi 1). The phrase

²³Charles Elliott, *General Introduction to the Prophetic Writings of the Old Testament and Especially to the Minor Prophets*, in *The Minor Prophets, Exegetically, Theologically, and Homiletically Expounded*, in *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical*, ed. John Peter Lange, trans. Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), 9-10.

²⁴Other scholars make similar statements. For example, in his commentary on the book of Amos, Douglas Stuart says, "Amos portrays Yahweh as sovereign not only over (northern) Israel, but over all nations of the earth, over all creation, and over all individuals, including specifically Amos himself . . . As יהוה צבאות "Yahweh of the Armies" (3:13, etc.), he is supreme in heaven." See Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, in *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 31, eds. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas: Word Books, Publisher, 1987), 289, Logos.

²⁵Archibald Duff, *Old Testament Theology: The History of Hebrew Religion from the Year 800 B.C.* (London and Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1891), 63-64.

Day of the Lord is associated with God's judgment upon the nations. It is used to reflect the role of God the Father in His plan of redemption for Israel and the nations.

The Primary Theme of the Book of Ezekiel - The foundational, underlying theme of the book of Ezekiel is the central claim of the books of prophecy of the Old Testament, a claim stating that YHWH is the true and living God in Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." He is orchestrating a plan of redemption for mankind. The books of prophecy develop this central claim through the four-fold plan of redemption: predestination, calling, justification, and redemption (Rom 8:29-30). These books collectively reveal God's unfolding plan for mankind as He supernaturally intervenes in the affairs of His people Israel, as we read in Proverbs 16:9, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps." These books require Israel's response to Him.²⁶ Thus, the books of prophecy testify of the office and ministry of the Heavenly Father as the One who has divinely elected His people to salvation from their sins and eternal rest in Heaven through His foreknowledge, which the apostle Peter mentions in 1 Peter 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

B. The Secondary Theme of the Book of Ezekiel (Structural): God Promises Israel's Redemption through the Prophetic Restoration of the Nation of Israel, the Temple, and the Glory of God - The secondary, structural theme of the book of Ezekiel supports the primary theme of the prophetic books by offering the testimony of God's promises of Israel's redemption through the prophetic restoration of the nation of Israel, the Temple, and the glory of God as supporting evidence that YHWH is the true and living God.

1. The Secondary Themes of the Holy Scriptures - The secondary themes of the books of the Holy Scriptures support the primary themes by offering reasons and evidence for the central "claim" of the book made by the author. Thus, the secondary themes are more easily recognized by biblical scholars than the other two themes because they provide the literary structure of the book as they navigate the reader through the arguments embedded within the biblical text, thus revealing themselves more clearly.

The Secondary Themes of the Pentateuch - The central claim of the Pentateuch declares that the Lord God of Israel is the true and living God, a statement found in the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4-5, which is the foundational theme of the Old Testament. The secondary themes of the five books of the Pentateuch provide supporting evidence. In Genesis, God predestined mankind to take dominion upon the earth and He called the patriarchs and commissioned them to fulfill this task. In Exodus, God redeemed Israel and justified them as His people, and He delivered the Law to them in covenant as their foundational doctrine and teaching. In Leviticus, God provided mankind the service of the Tabernacle so maintain fellowship with man. In Numbers, God divinely provided for His people during the wilderness journey. In Deuteronomy, God made a provision for Israel to choose between the blessings and the curses. In Joshua, God brought His people into the Promised Land as their place of rest and redemption, while Judges reveals Israel's failure due to disobedience.

The Secondary Themes of the Historical Books - The historical books provide supporting evidence to the claim that YHWH is the true and living God by creating the nation of Israel and exalting it above all nations. However, the children of Israel disobeyed their God and brought divine judgment upon them. God predestined the Davidic lineage (Ruth), called David to be Israel's king and justified him before the people through divine providence (1-2 Samuel), indoctrinated Israel under the reign of Solomon's (1-2 Kings), instituted Temple service (1-2 Chronicles), restored a remnant of Israel from Captivity (Ezra-Nehemiah) and divinely watched over His people until the coming of the Messiah (Esther).

The Secondary Themes of the Hebrew Poetry - The books of Hebrew poetry provide evidence to the claim that YHWH is the true and living God by expounding upon God's provision for man to love Him with all his heart. God provided wisdom literature to offer the knowledge of God to redeem his mind (Proverbs, Job); God provided the commandments of the Law for the Jews and legal institutions for the

²⁶Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, c2006), 234.

nations to guide man to his destiny and redeem his body (Ecclesiastes, Lamentations); and God offers a personal call to mankind for fellowship and devoted service to redeem man's heart (Song of Solomon, Psalms).

The Secondary Themes of the Prophets - The books of the prophets provide supporting evidence to the claim that YHWH is the true and living God through the testimonies of the later prophets so that Israel could set her hope upon God's future redemption. Isaiah predicts Israel's redemption through the coming of the Messiah. Jeremiah predicts God the Father's time-table of seventy weeks for their redemption. Ezekiel predicts the restoration of the nation of Israel and victory over its enemies. The twelve minor prophets offer supporting testimonies to the three major prophets. Finally, Daniel testifies of God's time frame for Israel's redemption, which Jesus called "the Times of the Gentiles."

The Secondary Themes of the Gospels and Acts - The central claim of the four Gospel writers states that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, which is the foundational theme of this division of the Holy Scriptures. In addition, each Gospel writer offers evidence as its secondary theme to support his claim. The Gospel of John offers the five-fold testimony of God the Father, John the Baptist, the miracles of Jesus, the Old Testament Scriptures, and the testimony of Jesus Christ Himself as its secondary theme. Matthew expounds upon the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures as its secondary theme; Mark expounds upon the testimony of the miracles of Jesus as its secondary theme; Luke expounds upon the testimony of John the Baptist and other eye-witnesses and well as that of the apostles in the book of Acts as its secondary theme.

The Secondary Themes of the Pauline Church Epistles - The central claim of the Pauline Church Epistles states that the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone how the power to redeem and transform man into the image of Jesus. These epistles deliver the doctrine of the Gospel to the New Testament Church. The epistle of Romans supports this claim by offering evidence of mankind's depravity and God's plan of redemption to redeem him as its secondary theme. The epistles of Ephesians and Philippians expound upon the role of God the Father in His divine foreknowledge as their secondary theme; the epistles of Colossians and Galatians expound upon the role of Jesus Christ as the head of the Church as their secondary theme; the epistles of 1, 2 Thessalonians and 1, 2 Corinthians expound upon the role of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying the believers as their secondary theme.

The Secondary Themes of the Pastoral Epistles - The central claim of the Pastoral Epistles states that God calls faithful believers into divine service in order to establish and grow the New Testament Church. The secondary themes of these epistles support their primary theme by giving instructions on the order of the Church. The epistle of 1 Timothy provides instructions concerning structure the offices and ministries of the local church so that believers can serve the Lord within their local church with a pure heart. The epistle of 2 Timothy expounds upon this theme as Paul exhorts Timothy to develop his gifts and calling. The epistle of Titus provides instructions on the importance of establishing the Church doctrines within the local church. The teaching of Church doctrines renews the mind of the believer, providing redemption for the mind. The epistle of Philemon expounds upon the theme of the love walk among fellow believers, providing redemption for men's bodies. Collectively, the secondary themes of the Pastoral Epistles provide redemption for the three-fold make-up of the believer.

The Secondary Themes of the General Epistles - The central claim of the General Epistles states that believers must persevere in the Christian faith in order to obtain eternal redemption. The epistles of Hebrews, James, and 1 Peter modify this theme to reflect perseverance from persecutions from without the Church. The epistle of Hebrews expounds upon the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, which is its secondary theme. The epistle of James expounds upon a lifestyle of perseverance through the joy of the Holy Spirit, which is its secondary theme. The epistle of 1 Peter expounds upon our hope of divine election through God the Father, which is its secondary theme. The epistles of 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3, John and Jude reflect perseverance from false doctrines from within. The epistle of 2 Peter expounds upon growing in the knowledge of God's Word with a sound mind, which is its secondary theme. The epistles of 1, 2, 3 John expound upon walking in fellowship with God and one another with a pure heart, which

is its secondary theme. The epistle of Jude expounds how living a godly lifestyle with our bodies, which is its secondary theme.

The Secondary Theme of the Book of Revelation - The secondary theme of the book of Revelation reveals the judgment upon the earth through the Tribulation Period and Second Coming of Jesus Christ, giving believers a vision of the hope that is laid up before them as a source of encouragement for those who persevere until the end. The primary theme of the book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ, who is coming to take His Bride the Church to Glory. The secondary theme supports this claim with the prophecies concerning the Great Tribulation Period and Second Coming.

2. The Secondary, Structural Themes of the Prophetic Books - The prophetic books provide supporting evidence to the claim that YHWH is the true and living God through the testimonies of the later prophets so that Israel could set her hope upon God's future redemption. Isaiah predicts Israel's redemption through the coming of the Messiah. Jeremiah predicts God the Father's time-table of seventy years for their redemption. Ezekiel predicts the restoration of the nation of Israel, victory over her enemies, and the rebuilding of a more glorious Temple with the return of the glory of God. The twelve Minor Prophets offer supporting testimonies to the three Major Prophets. Finally, Daniel testifies of God's time-frame for Israel's redemption, which Jesus called "the Times of the Gentiles."

a) The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Book of Daniel: The Times of the Gentiles - The theme of the book of Daniel is God's Plan of Redemption during the Times of the Gentiles. The book of Daniel stands alone in the Old Testament in its structure and content in much the same way that the book of Revelation is unique to the New Testament. Both are apocalyptic in nature, using symbolic figures to prophesy of future events. Daniel is structured different from the three major prophets, being similar to the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther in its narrative material, while containing a large amount of prophecy. The book of Daniel takes us through the Times of the Gentiles when God divinely works in this group of people to carry out His divine plan of election and redemption. He makes mention of the Kingdom of Heaven from the view of the ages of the worldly kingdoms. Thus, the theme and prophecies of Daniel focus upon the "Times of the Gentiles" from the fall of Jerusalem until the full restoration of the nation of Israel at Christ's Second Coming. Daniel's prophecies encompass the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, so that it serves as a foundational book of prophecy.

While the other thirty-eight books of the Old Testament focus upon the nation of Israel, the prophecies in the book of Daniel focus upon the period of human history called the "Times of the Gentiles" and upon the destiny of the Gentile nations from the fall of Jerusalem up until the time when the nation of Israel is fully restored at Christ's Second Coming. Thus, its primary theme is about the period of history called the "Times of the Gentiles." The fall of Jerusalem to King Nebuchadnezzar began this period of human history and it will last until the time when Christ returns and usher the world into the thousand-year Millennial Reign. At that time, Christ will rule and reign from the holy city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel will again take center stage and be restored to its fullness. The prophet Daniel ministered directly to the Babylonian kings. As a result, he was given insight into the period known in biblical prophecy as the "Time of the Gentiles." However, this Jewish Old Testament writing ministers to the Jews as well in that it tells them when their nation will be fully restored and when their Messiah will come to deliver them from the oppression of the Gentiles. Thus, we can then see the importance of Daniel's understanding of the seventy-year prophecy of Jeremiah. He understood by a vision that a temporary restoration would take place in a seventy-year period, but that a full restoration would not be accomplished until a seventy-week period was fulfilled.

The book of Daniel weaves the theme of God's sovereign power and destiny for mankind within the revelation of the Times of the Gentiles. Despite the historical setting of the destruction of Jerusalem and enslavement of God's people, these prophecies clearly show that the God of Israel is still on the throne and determining the outcome of mankind. Thus, the foreknowledge of God the Father is the

underlying theme of the Old Testament with the book of Daniel being given special emphasis upon the destiny of the Gentile nations as they are a part of God's redemptive plan for mankind.

The prophet Daniel was a contemporary of Ezekiel. While Daniel was ministering to the kings of the Gentile nations, Ezekiel was providing comfort and hope to the Jews in Babylonian captivity. If we compare their two ministries, we see that they both served to provide to the Jews a hope of future restoration. Daniel's prophecies emphasize their restoration from the period of the Age of the Gentiles, while Ezekiel's prophecies reveal Israel's restoration from the perspective of a clear understanding of divine judgment upon His people Israel, His pending judgment upon their enemies and their future restoration. Although Ezekiel did prophesy about the judgment of those nations surrounding Israel, his primary focus reveals the rebirth and establishment of Israel, while Daniel focused upon the rise and fall of the Gentile nations. In addition, both prophets show us that all nations will one day be made subject to the Ancient of Days, the King of Kings, when Jesus Christ will rule and reign over this earth with His saints. The book of Daniel plays an important role in the books of the prophets in that it sets a framework and timelines for all other prophetic events to take place. Daniel literally predicted the year A.D. 27 as the year of the Messiah's atonement. Although the prophet Isaiah, as well as King David in Psalm 22, described the coming and death of the Messiah, Daniel established the timeline for Christ's first and second Coming.

If we compare the three prophetic books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, we can make the following observations. Regarding the end-time events, Daniel addresses the Gentiles, Ezekiel addresses the Jews on these same events, and the book of Revelation addresses the Church on this subject. The book of Ezekiel was written to the people of Israel to help them persevere through their time of persecutions during the Babylonian Captivity; but the book of Revelation was addressed to the Church, and not to the Jews, to help them persevere until the end. Therefore, Ezekiel speaks of three major events that relate to the nation of Israel leading up to the ushering in of the Millennial Reign of Christ Jesus, which are the restoration of Israel (36-37), the great battle with Russia and its allies (38-39) and the rebuilding of the Temple with its institution of worship (40-48). These three important events will involve Israel during these last days leading up to and through the seven-year Tribulation Period. Thus, Ezekiel tells of these end-time events from the perspective of Israel. In contrast, the book of Daniel tells of Christ's Second Coming from the perspective of the Gentile nations. Finally, the book of Revelation tells of the end-time events from the perspective of the Church.

Finally, it is interesting to note how the prayers of the saints throughout history determined the outcome of many historical events within God's framework of His plan of redemption. This reveals the important role of God's people in shaping history for good by overcoming evil. Thus, both God and men have a role to play in God's eternal plan of redemption for mankind.

b) The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Three Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel): Israel's Redemption through the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – The secondary, structural themes of the three major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) offer supporting prophecies that establish key events during the Times of the Gentiles presented in the book of Daniel.

While the prophetic books share the common literally content of divine prophecies against Israel and Judah because of their disobedience followed by a promise of future restoration, each prophet offer unique perspectives regarding the methods used to accomplish Israel's redemption and restoration.²⁷

²⁷W. G. Moorehead says, "The great theme of these [Minor Prophets] prophets is Israel primarily, then the nations that were either the foes of Israel, or were used by God for the punishment of His disobedient people . . . Israel's relation to God, the binding force of the Mosaic legislation, and the apostasy of the people from the Lord and their transgression of the law given at Sinai—these and the like fundamental truths afford the ground for the indictment against the chosen people . . . But while they denounce sin and announced judgment, they foretold the glory of the latter days, the re-gathering of scattered Israel, the re-erection of David's fallen tabernacle, the coming of Messiah the second

This restoration will be accomplished by the redemptive roles of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The apostle Peter refers to these three roles of the Trinity, saying, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet 1:2) The New Testament citations of the Minor Prophets focus upon prophecies concerning these various roles of the Trinity in God's plan of redemption. Therefore, the distinctive secondary themes of the twelve Minor Prophets can be grouped by their emphasis concerning the redemptive roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Charles Elliott identifies three "classes" of Old Testament prophecies: (1) those prophecies that "disclose God's purposes of grace to men," revealing His "covenant love and faithfulness," (2) those prophecies that "disclose the settled purposes of God," revealing to Israel God destines for other kingdoms that oppose Him, and (3) those prophecies that address men's ethical and moral responsibilities, giving predictions that are often conditional and based upon man's response. The first class often carries Messianic predictions, the second class offers Israel hope in God's eternal plan for the nation's future redemption, and the third class offers man a way to walk in right standing with God.²⁸ In light of this similarity, an effort will be made to classify the three Major Prophet and twelve Minor Prophets into classes based upon the predominance of one of these proposed literary classification.

Jeremiah's seventy-week prophecy establishes a prophetic time frame for the commencement and fulfillment of the Times of the Gentiles and the arrival of the Messiah through the office and ministry of God the Father. Isaiah's Messianic prophecies establish the redemptive work that God will accomplish for Israel during the Times of the Gentiles through the office and ministry of Jesus Christ the Son. Ezekiel's prophecies reveal the key events in the life of the nation of Israel that usher in the end of the Times of the Gentiles and the eternal reign of Messiah through the office and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

(1) The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Book of Jeremiah: Israel's Redemption Through God the Father's Foreknowledge - The prophecies of Jeremiah emphasize God the Father's divine timeline of judgment and redemption for the nation of Israel and Gentile nations, as stated in its opening passage of Jeremiah 1:10, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Jeremiah's prophecy of Israel's seventy-year captivity serves as God's remedy for divine judgment upon His people Israel before He can bring about their restoration. God also called Jeremiah to judge the nations (Jer 1:10) in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Thus, we can see how Jeremiah's prophecies ushered in the "Times of the Gentiles."

Jeremiah also spoke of the rise and fall of Babylon and gave prophecies of other nations besides Israel. The prophecy of Israel's seventy-year Captivity was perhaps the most important prophecy he made because it dealt with the nation of Israel and gave us a timeline of the Last Days. We find a two-fold fulfillment in this prophecy when studying Daniel 9. Jeremiah was speaking of the Jews returning to Jerusalem after a literal seventy-year period. The angel explained to Daniel that this prophecy also served as a prediction of the time of the Messiah's First and Second Coming. Thus, Jeremiah places emphasis upon God the Father's foreknowledge of Israel's redemption as well as the Gentile nations in that he shows us a timetable for God's plan of redemption. Thus, God's remedy for divine judgment is to bring about full redemption to Israel and the nations through the First and Second Coming of the

time, and the blessedness of the millennial age . . . It is impossible to read it with any attention without perceiving this central truth." See W. G. Moorehead, *Outline Studies in the Books of the Old Testament* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1893), 297-298.

²⁸Charles Elliott, *General Introduction to the Prophetic Writings of the Old Testament and Especially to the Minor Prophets*, in *The Minor Prophets, Exegetically, Theologically, and Homiletically Expounded, in A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical*, ed. John Peter Lange, trans. Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), 13-14.

Messiah. In addition, Zechariah asked the angel of the Lord about this seventy-year period (Zech 1:12). Thus, Jeremiah's prophecy was well-known among the Jews during and after the Babylonian Captivity.

(2) The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Book of Isaiah: Israel's Redemption Through Jesus the Son's Justification - The prophecies of Isaiah emphasize the cleansing of the rebellious nation of Israel, as stated in its opening verses (Is 1:2). The prophet calls them to repentance by saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," (1:18). He will explain how this cleansing works later in chapters 52-53 by giving them a lengthy description of Christ's sacrificial death on Calvary as a reference to Jesus' first coming. This is because the remedy for rebellion is reconciliation, and God chose Calvary as the means of reconciling Israel and the Gentiles back unto Himself. We may be able to say that Isaiah focuses upon the justification of God's people, which was accomplished by Jesus' work on Calvary.²⁹

In his commission, Isaiah found himself unclean before the throne of God and received cleansing by the angel from the live coals of fire being placed upon his tongue. He was then told to preach a message of conversion and healing to a rebellious people. We see this message in the preaching of Jesus Christ. Thus, in this vision we see the theme of justification.

God then told Isaiah to speak to a rebellious people that will reject his message so that they are scattered and a remnant allowed to remain (Is 6:9-13). Isaiah's prophecies were two-fold in application also. They were fulfilled by the carrying away of the Babylonian Captivity. They were also prophetic of the Messiah's First Coming. Thus, they had a two-fold application. Isaiah places emphasis upon Jesus' work of Calvary, which offers justification to a sinful world. Thus, the remedy for Israel's rebellion is provided for in justification through the coming Messiah.

(3) The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Book of Ezekiel: Israel's Redemption through the Holy Spirit's Sanctification and Future Glorification - Ezekiel emphasizes Israel's future restoration through the rebirth of the nation and building of the new temple that will allow God to dwell once again with men. At his commission, the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of four creatures that were sent from the throne of God to set in motion God's divine plan of the restoration of the nation of Israel. This is why God gave to Ezekiel three major prophecies regarding the role of Israel's during the times leading up to Christ Jesus' Second Coming. He closes his prophecies by telling about God's three-fold method of restoring Israel to its fullness through (1) the restoration of the nation, (2) the battle of Armageddon and (3) the rebuilding of the Temple, for this is the method in which God has chosen to restore His people. In this vision we see the theme of glorification emphasized as Ezekiel seems to focus upon the glorification of God's people Israel at the time of Christ's second coming.

c) The Secondary, Structural Themes of the Twelve Minor Prophets - The twelve Minor Prophets support the themes of the three Major Prophets by further revealing the office and ministry of the Trinity in God's plan of redemption. Four of the prophets emphasize the role of God the Father, showing how His righteousness demands judgment upon the nations in the Day of the Lord (Nahum, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Habakkuk). These four prophets expound upon God's divine commission to Jeremiah, saying, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." (Jer 1:10) Four of the

²⁹The book of Isaiah is sometimes referred to as "the Gospel of the Old Testament" or "the Gospel of Isaiah" because the emphasis upon the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is well recognized. Literary evidence is offered by Davies and Allison, who note that half of the Old Testament quotes found in the Gospel of Matthew come from the book of Isaiah. See W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew: Commentary on Matthew XIX-XXVIII*, vol. 3, in *The International Critical Commentary* (London: T. & T. Clark Ltd, 1988), 575, Logos.

prophets emphasize the role of Jesus Christ, showing God's love and mercy through the passion and exaltation of the Messiah (Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah). These four prophets expound upon God's divine commission to Isaiah to proclaim Israel's atonement through the Messiah (Is 6:1-10; 53:1). Four of the prophets emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit, showing how God seeks a dwelling place for His glory in the Temple (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel). These four prophets expound upon God's divine commission to Ezekiel preach to Israel concerning the restoration of Israel and the Temple where the glory of God will dwell among men.

(1) *God the Father - God's Righteousness Demands Judgment upon the Nations in the Day of the Lord (Nahum, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Habakkuk)*³⁰ - John Lange distinguishes the four minor prophets Nahum, Zephaniah, Obadiah, and Habakkuk with the common characteristic as prophets of judgment.³¹ God will begin Israel's redemption by vindicating them through divine judgment upon Assyria (Nahum). The prophets Zephaniah, Obadiah, and Habakkuk develop the theme of the Day of the Lord, in which God will judge the pagan nations, fully redeem His people, and restore His glory upon the earth. God will judge the nations and restore the nation of Israel and its Hebrew language, appointing a King over them (Zephaniah). God will restore the land to Israel and establish Mount Zion as a place of deliverance and holiness (Obadiah). His glory will fill the earth (Habakkuk).

(a) *Nahum: God Vindicates His People* - The prophet Nahum reveals the divine nature of YHWH as a righteous God, who will begin Israel's redemption by avenging her enemy Assyria (Nah 1:2) and restore His people to their former glory (Nah 2:2).

(b) *Zephaniah: The Restoration of Israel* - The prophet Zephaniah reveals that God will judge the nations in the "Day of the Lord." After judging Israel's enemies, He will gather a remnant of His people (Zeph 3:19-20) and appoint a King over Israel (Zeph 3:15-18), and restore them to a "pure language" (Zeph 3:8-9).

(c) *Obadiah: Zion, the City of Holiness* - The prophet Obadiah declares that the Day of the Lord has come upon the nations, demonstrated first with Edom. The Lord will establish Mount Zion as a city of deliverance, a place of holiness, and Israel shall possess the entire land promised to them by Moses (Obad 1:17-21). The sign of God's promise is divine judgment upon the nation of Edom.

(d) *Habakkuk: The Glory of God upon the Earth* - The prophet Habakkuk reveals that the Lord God, who is from Everlasting, will fill the earth with His glory (Hab 2:14; 3:3); in the presence of the knowledge of this glory, the just will live by faith (Hab 2:4).

(2) *Jesus Christ - God's Love Offers Mercy and Redemption through the Reign of the Messiah (Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah)* - The prophets Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Micah share the common distinction of containing Messianic prophecies. Hosea reveals God's covenant love for His people Israel, a love that will move Him to offer His Son to pay for their redemption. The prophets Amos, Jonah, and Micah develop the theme of the Messianic kingdom. The Messiah will conquer Israel's enemies and bring them back from captivity to establish His Kingdom (Amos). He will offer salvation to the Gentiles on the third day through the resurrection of the

³⁰Johannes Bleek notes that Nahum and Zephaniah make no distinct Messianic prophecies. The books of Habakkuk and Obadiah also contain no specific Messianic prophecies. See Johannes Bleek, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. 2, eds. Adolf Kamphausen and Edmund Venables, trans. G. H. Venables (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), 150, 156.

³¹John Lange says, "Its [the epistle of Jude] more definite analogies in the Old Testament as revelations of the judgment are the books of Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah." See J. P. Lange and J. J. van Oosterzee, *The Epistle of James*, trans. J. Isidor Mombert, in *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical*, ed. John Peter Lange and Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1867), 7.

Messiah (Jonah). God will raise up a Ruler who will gently shepherd His children with forgiveness and compassion (Micah).

(a) *Hosea: God's Redemption Price Paid Love for His People* - The prophet Hosea accused Israel of spiritual adultery against the Lord; yet, He loves His people unconditionally. Based upon His unending love towards Israel, God calls His people to return to Him and know Him so that they walk in truth and mercy towards one another (Hos 6:6, Matt 9:13; 12:7). God's promise to redeem Israel in this manner is a demonstration of His eternal, covenant love for His people. In order to accomplish this act of redemption, Hosea predicted the calling of the Messiah out of Egypt (Hos 11:1, Matt 2:15). Hosea predicts Israel's restoration through the grafting in of the Gentiles (Hos 1:10; 2:23, Rom 9:25-26), which provokes them to jealousy (Rom 11:11, 15, 30-31). In His great love for Israel, God purchased a backslidden people through the blood of His Son Jesus Christ as Hosea purchased his wife out of harlotry and slavery, a redemption price that delivered them from death (Hos 13:14, 1 Cor 15:55).

(b) *Amos: The Messiah Establishes His Kingdom* - The prophet Amos reveals God's plan to conquer Israel's enemies and bring back the a remnant from captivity to establish His Kingdom. He will raise up the Tabernacle of David to establish His kingdom and offer redemption to the Gentiles (Amos 9:11-12, Acts 15:16-17). According to Acts 15:16, the Church understood the prophecy of Amos as the grafting in of the Gentiles through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(c) *Jonah: The Messiah Offers Redemption to the Gentiles* - The prophet Jonah emphasizes God's compassion to offer redemption to the Gentiles. God will accomplish their redemption through the resurrection of the Messiah on the third day Israel salvation on the third day (Jonah 1:17, Matt 16:4).

(d) *Micah: The Messiah Reigns as the Shepherd and Ruler over Israel* - The prophet Micah predicts the restoration of Israel as a kingdom (Mic 2:12-13) with a King whose dominion brings peace in Israel (Mic 4:1-8). The birth of this Ruler will come from the city of Bethlehem (Mic 5:1-4, Matt 2:6), who will shepherd Israel, forgiving their iniquities and showing mercy (Mic 7:14) as all nations come to worship Him in Zion (Mic 4:2, 7-8). The book of Amos characterizes the Messiah as a Shepherd feeding His flock Israel. God will raise up a Ruler who will gather the remnant of Israel and gently shepherd them with forgiveness and compassion.

(3) *The Holy Spirit: God's Glory Seeks a Dwelling Place in the Temple of the Lord (Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, Joel)* - The prophets Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, and Joel share the common distinction of emphasis upon the Temple, its priesthood, and the role of the Holy Spirit in Israel's Redemption. The prophets Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, and Joel develop the theme of the restoration of the Temple as a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit among men. The Lord will send His Messenger to restore the priesthood as His messengers to Israel (Malachi), appoint a High Priest to cleanse the people and restore the nation of Israel (Zechariah), rebuild the Temple (Haggai), and pour out the Holy Spirit to dwell in men, who serve as the Temple of the living God (Joel). Ezekiel served as the Lord's messenger to Israel and the nations (Eze 1-32). As His messenger, he predicted that God would raise up a true Shepherd to institute a new covenant with Israel and saw in a vision the restoration of their nation through divine judgment upon their enemies (Eze 33-39). He saw in a vision the rebuilding of a more glorious Temple (Eze 40-42), resulting in the return of the glory of God into the Tabernacle of the Lord and its ministry to Israel and the Gentiles (Eze 43-48). While the prophet Ezekiel addressed various aspects of the role of the Holy Spirit in the restoration of Israel and Temple worship, the four Minor Prophets Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, and Joel give specific prophecies concerning how these particular events will take place.

(a) *Malachi: The Office of the Priest as God's Messengers* - The prophet Malachi rebukes the priests as messengers of the Lord for failing in their office. He predicts the coming of John the Baptist to announce the arrival of the Messiah (Mal 3:1, Matt 11:1-19, Mk 1:2, Lk 7:27), who will purify Temple worship as God's true Messenger. The prophet Malachi gives two distinct prophecies of John the Baptist as the priestly herald of the coming Messiah (Mal 3:1; 4:5).

(b) *Zechariah: The Office of the High Priest as the Lord's Anointed* - The prophecy of Zechariah declares that God Himself will send His servant the Branch to remove Israel's sin in a single day (Zec 3:8-9). This Messiah will serve the dual role as priest-king to atone for sin and reign over the nations to bring peace upon earth.

(c) *Haggai: The Rebuilding of the Temple* - The prophet Haggai exhorts Israel to build the Temple (1:8) because the Lord is with them (1:13). He explains that the latter Temple will be more glorious than the former (2:9). With the laying of the foundation, God will begin to bless Israel again (2:19) as a demonstration of His coming restoration, and the Lord will choose His servant to be the high priest (2:23).

(d) *Joel: The Day of the Lord and the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* - The prophecy of Joel promises the restoration of Israel and the judgment of the nations in the Day of the Lord. The sign that Israel's restoration has come will be the outpouring of God's Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Joel 2:28-29).

3. The Secondary, Structural Theme of the Book of Ezekiel - The secondary theme of each book of the Holy Scriptures can be found in its opening passages. The opening passage of the book of Ezekiel describes a vision of God's living creatures going forth from eternity where God dwells onto the earth where man dwells. These creatures have been sent forth from the throne of God to put His divine plans into motion. Man lives in the realm of time, but God inhabits eternity. The little wheel within a wheel in this opening vision represents the realm of time that man lives in, while the larger wheel represents eternity where God dwells.

In contrast to God's eternal dwelling place, there are thirteen of Ezekiel's recorded visions are dated with specific days, months and years, telling us that God is intervening in the affairs of man in order to bring about His eternal plans and purposes. Calamities tend to cause man to focus in the realm of time, on his circumstances, waiting anxiously for the day of deliverance. Many sick patients can tell you the exact length of their illnesses, to the year, month and day that such illness came upon them. Such near sightedness causes man to miss the bigger picture of God's divine plan in his life. We see in the book of Job that when God revealed Himself to this righteous saint in the last section of the book, Job responded by worshipping God and humbling himself in the presence of Almighty God. It was then that God delivered Job. It was the vision of the bigger wheel representing eternity that brought Job out of his calamities.

God is giving these collections of prophecies to Ezekiel in order to reveal to us His divine plan for mankind, which will surely come to pass. Thus, Ezekiel's emphasis on days, months and years reveals man's limitations and inability to alter his own eternal destiny while the revelations of the eternal God reveal His power to control the entire destiny of His creation.

We find in the book of Ezekiel that in the midst of the most devastating period of Israel's history, God reveals Himself to His people as the Almighty God, who will bring them into His eternal rest. This is because He controls the destiny of His very own creation. Even the name Ezekiel means, "God strengthens", which supports the theme of this book. It is during our deepest sorrows that God reveals Himself to us as the One who is in control of the present situation and as the One who is going to bring good things out of the midst of tragedy. God's revelation to His people in the book of Ezekiel as the Almighty God is intended to encourage them to place their trust in Him despite their present circumstances in the Babylonian captivity. Note that Ezekiel sought the Lord before the terrible calamity

befell Jerusalem. Thus, when the event took place, Ezekiel was able to understand why it happened and to put his trust in God in the midst of a great trial. When we seek the Lord in our lives, we too are able to put our trust in the Lord during the midst of great trials.

Some of the prophecies of Ezekiel are addressed to other nations, seven in fact. As the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 could represent all churches, so could these seven nations represent all nations. Therefore, God is telling all peoples of all places and in all periods of history that everything God does in His divine plan for mankind, whether by blessing or by cursing, is done for the purpose of bringing them all into His eternal rest, which He describes in chapters 40-48.

The four living creatures in the first vision of chapter one were being sent forth from the presence of God to perform His divine will. Their straight, unaltered path signifies the fact that God's plans and purposes are predetermined and planned. It also signifies that God's plans are unaltered and will surely come to pass. However, what was this predetermined, divine plan of Almighty God? This plan will be found in the rest of the visions contained in the book of Ezekiel.

C. The Third Theme of the Book of Ezekiel (Imperative): Israel's Charge to Love the Lord Their God with All of Their Mind – The imperative theme of the book of Ezekiel reflects the third theme of the Pentateuch, which is the command to love the Lord God with all of one's mind.

1. The Third, Imperative Themes of the Holy Scriptures - The third theme of each book of the Holy Scriptures is a call by the author for the reader to apply the central truth, or claim, laid down in the book to the Christian life. It is a call to a lifestyle of crucifying the flesh and taking up one's Cross daily to follow Jesus. Every child of God has been predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29), and every child of God faces challenges as well as failures in the pursuit of his Christian journey. For example, the imperative theme of the Old Testament is that God's children are to serve the Lord God with all of their heart, mind, and strength, and love their neighbour as themselves (Deut 6:4-5).

The child of God cannot fulfill his divine destiny of being conformed into the image of Jesus without yielding himself and following the plan of redemption that God avails to every human being. This 4-fold, redemptive path is described in Romans 8:29-20 as predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. The phase of justification can be further divided into regeneration, indoctrination, divine service, and perseverance. Although each individual will follow a unique spiritual journey in life, the path is the same in principle for every believer since it follows the same divine pattern described above. This allows us to superimpose one of three thematic schemes upon each book of the Holy Scriptures in order to vividly see its imperative theme. Every book follows a literary structure that allows either (1) the three-fold scheme of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: or (2) the scheme of spirit, soul, and body of man; or (3) the scheme of predestination, calling, justification (regeneration, indoctrination, divine service, and perseverance), and glorification in some manner.

2. The Third, Imperative Theme of the Prophetic Books - While the book of Psalms and other Hebrew poetry move us to worship God with all of our hearts and the historical narratives and writings inspire us to serve the Lord with all of our strength, the prophets stir us up to seek God with all our mind as they reveal to us God's eternal plan and destiny for Israel and the Gentiles. The prophets teach us the future so that we will serve the Lord now in hope of obtaining our eternal, divine destiny. We find several examples in the New Testament as to the purpose of the books of prophecy. In 1 Peter 1:10-12, we are told that these Old Testament prophets did a mental search in order to understand the meaning of their prophecies of the future. They realized that they were speaking of events that would not happen to themselves, but to a future generation.

One story that illustrates the theme of prophetic literature is found in Acts 8:30-31, in which Philip the evangelist meets the Ethiopian eunuch in the desert while reading the book of Isaiah. This eunuch was inspired by this book to seek a deeper understanding of its meaning and of the ways of God. Philip then took the opportunity to instruct him in the ways of righteousness by faith in Christ Jesus (Acts 8:30-31).

We see how the Holy Spirit brought the Old Testament prophecies to the remembrance of the early Church so that they could understand the events that took place in the life of Jesus Christ in John 12:14-16, “And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.” In these three New Testament passages, the prophetic books were used to stir up the minds of men to seek God. In other words, it inspired men to seek God with all of their minds.

3. The Third, Imperative Theme of the Book of Daniel: Israel Loved the Lord their God with All of Their Mind by Placing Their Hope in Ezekiel’s Prophecies Concerning the Future Restoration of God’s Glory in the Temple - The third, imperative theme of the book of Ezekiel states that Israel loved the Lord their God with all of their mind by placing their hope in Ezekiel’s prophecies concerning their future restoration of God’s glory in the Temple.

D. Summary of the Three-fold Thematic Scheme of the Book of Ezekiel – The foundational, underlying theme of the book of Ezekiel is the central claim of the Pentateuch, a claim stating that the God of Israel is the one true and holy God, who is orchestrating a plan of redemption for mankind. The secondary, structural theme of the book of Daniel supports the primary theme of the prophetic books by offering the testimony of God’s promises of Israel’s redemption through the prophetic period called the “Times of the Gentiles” as supporting evidence that YHWH is the true and living God. The third, imperative theme of the book of Daniel states that Israel loved the Lord their God with all of their mind by placing their hope in Daniel’s prophecies concerning their future redemption in the fulfillment of the Times of the Gentiles.

Nahum Zephaniah Obadiah Habakkuk	Hosea Amos Jonah Micah	Haggai Zechariah Malachi Joel
Jeremiah – Israel’s Redemption thru God the Father	Isaiah – Israel’s Redemption thru God the Son	Ezekiel – Israel’s Redemption thru God the Holy Spirit
Daniel		

Thematic Scheme of the Prophetic Books

II. Literary Structure

Ezekiel’s emphasis upon the Temple and the work of the Holy Spirit is seen in the book’s literary structure. Ezekiel served as the Lord’s messenger to Israel and the nations (Eze 1-32). As His messenger, he predicted that God would raise up a true Shepherd to institute a new covenant with Israel and seeing in a vision the restoration of their nation through divine judgment upon their enemies (Ez 33-39). He saw in a vision the rebuilding of a more glorious Temple (40-42), resulting in the return of the glory of God into the Tabernacle of the Lord and its ministry to Israel and the Gentiles (43-48). While the prophet Ezekiel addressed each aspect of the role of the Holy Spirit in the restoration of Israel and Temple worship, the four Minor Prophets

Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, and Joel give specific prophecies concerning how these particular events will take place.

The literary structure of the book of Ezekiel reflects God's plan of redemption for His people Israel in its simple form: predestination-calling-justification-glorification. This book can be divided into five major sections.

The first section records God's divine commission to Ezekiel as His prophet and messenger to Israel and the nations (1:1-3:21).

The second section records the events concerning Israel's predestination through the office and work of the Holy Spirit (3:22-32:32). In this section, God judges His people Israel (3:22- 24:27) as well as the seven nations that surround their land (25:1-32:32).

The third section records the events concerning Israel's calling through the office and work of the Holy Spirit (33:1-33). In this section, God calls the nation to repentance.

The fourth section records the events concerning Israel's justification through the office and work of the Holy Spirit (34:1-39:29).³² The shepherds of Israel had failed to lead God's people in righteous (34:1-19). Therefore, He appoints a shepherd who will feed His flock, which is prophetic of Jesus Christ as their Messiah ruling over Israel (34:20-31).

The fifth section records the events concerning Israel's glorification through the office and work of the Holy Spirit (40:1-48:35).³³

Finally, the restoration of Israel is seen in 35:1-48:35. As the fullness of the Times of the Gentiles closes (Lk 21:24), God will restore the nation of Israel and usher in the Thousand-Year reign of Christ. The valley of dry bones symbolizes the restoration of Israel as a nation (Ez 37:1-28), followed by the great battle against Gog and its allies (Ez 38-39), both events immediately preceding the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. After His Coming, the Lord will rebuild a more glorious Temple in Jerusalem (40:1-46:24) as well as restore the land to its glory (47:1-48:35).

The three sets of prophecies of (1) divine judgment upon Jerusalem, (2) divine judgment upon the nations, and (3) Israel's restoration, reveal God's divine plan of redemption for mankind. It tells us that the period of Israel as a nation will soon cease, and the "Times of the Gentiles" will be ushered in until their fullness brings them to an end under God's wrath.

Once the city of Jerusalem is destroyed in 586 B.C. (Ez 1-24), then the words of the prophet turn to comfort and hope (Ez 25-48), just as in the book of Isaiah when the Lord told the people, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." (Isa 40:1) Thus, the book of Ezekiel can be divided into Judgment (1-24) and Hope (25-48).

1. Predestination: Ezekiel's Commission (1:1-3:21)

2. Call to Repentance: Divine Judgment (3:22-32:32)

³²Using similar wording, Daniel I. Block describes the central theme of Ezekiel 34:1-39:29 as "salvation." See Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48*, in *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), v, Logos.

³³Using similar wording, Daniel I. Block describes the central theme of Ezekiel 40:1-48:35 as "restoration." See Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 1-24*, in *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 15, Logos; Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48*, in *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), v, Logos.

a) Prophecies of Judgment upon Jerusalem (3:22-24:27)

b) Prophecies of Judgment upon Seven Nations (25:1-32:32) – Ezekiel 25:1-32:32 consists of a collection of seven prophecies against the nations immediately surrounding the land of Israel. As a part of God’s plan of redemption for mankind, judgment preceded redemption. Divine judgment ultimately fell upon Jesus Christ on Calvary, opening the door for the Gospel to bring redemption to the nations. However, prior to Calvary, divine judgment was God’s method of redemption as revealed in Ezekiel 25:1-32:32. The fact that God pronounces judgment upon these nations arouses hope of their redemption through the restoration of Israel. We see this hope revealed in the book of Jonah when Nineveh repented and the Lord withheld divine judgment.

3. Justification (33:1-33) – The book of Ezekiel reveals God’s plan to redeem His people Israel back unto Himself. The theme of Ezekiel 33:1-20 is God’s plan to justify Israel in righteousness. Ezekiel has prophesied of judgments upon Judah and other nations in the preceding chapters. Now God is telling this prophet how the Jewish people are to respond to such prophecies of future judgments. These destructions are intended to bring repentance and righteousness to Judah and the nations; for God takes no pleasure in their destruction (Ez 33:11), but rather in their repentance, in the way the Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah. The phrase, “When I bring the sword upon a land” (Ez 33:2) refers to the time when these prophecies of judgment come to pass. God’s statement that He has placed Ezekiel as a watchman over the house of Israel (Ez 33:7) means that God will divinely place His watchmen amongst the people in a position where they will be heard as proclaim the truth to the people. The people should recognize them as a fulfillment of God’s prophecies and repent; for this is God’s plan to redeem His people Israel. In the case of Ezekiel, God divinely placed him in the office of a priest over the Jews in Captivity so that he would be heard, because it was the Jewish tradition to assemble together on the Sabbath and to hear the Scriptures being taught by the priests. However, they justified themselves as God’s people because their father was Abraham (Ez 33:21-29). When they did assemble to hear the local priest exhort them from the Law, they did not obey what they had heard (Ez 33:30-33).

4. Sanctification (34:1-31) – The theme of the preceding passage (Ez 33:1-33) was on restoring righteousness to the children of Israel. For those who would repent and obey God’s word, there was the need for sanctification; and this is the theme of Ezekiel 34:1-31. God’s divine plan to sanctify His people was to place shepherds among them to lead and guide them daily. Because these shepherds failed to strengthen God’s people, He was going to judge them and place a true shepherd over them, which is a prophecy of the coming of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Israel’s Glorification (35:1-48:35) – Ezekiel 35:1-48:35 deals with the topic of Israel’s glorification. The description of the restored land of Israel and the new Temple and its worship (36-48) reveals a building and nation more majestic and beautiful than that found during the time of Solomon. These passages reveal the glorification that God has in planned for His people Israel. This glorification is different from what He has planned for the Church. The prophecies of this passage signify the fact that God has a much greater blessing in store for His people than any earthly kingdom in the past, even greater than Israel in its golden age of King Solomon. The future glories of the heavenly kingdom will far exceed the earthly. *The Book of Jubilees* (4.26-27) tells us that this Mount Zion will be sanctified in the new creation for a sanctification of the earth; through it will the earth be sanctified from all (its) guilt and its uncleanness throughout the generations of the world.

From these last chapters in the book of Ezekiel we know that the full restoration of Israel involves three key events that will take place in order to make their restoration complete and everlasting. These events will involve the restoration of Israel as a nation (36-37), the battle against Gog and its allies (38-39), and the restoration of the Temple and its worship (40-46) and its land (47-48).

III. Outline of the Literary Structure

The reason for preparing an outline of the literary structure of a book is to visualize its theological framework at a glance. This brevity allows one to look at the book's framework from beginning to end in order to understand the author's purpose.

Here is a proposed outline of the book of Ezekiel:

1. Predestination: Ezekiel's Commission	1:1-3:21
a) The Vision	1:1-28
b) The First Charge	2:1-3:21
2. Call to Repentance: Divine Judgment	3:22-32:32
a) Prophecies of Judgment upon Jerusalem	3:22-24:27
(1) First Prophecy (Demonstration)	3:22-5:17
(2) Second Prophecy	6:1-14
(3) Third Prophecy	7:1-27
(4) Fourth Prophecy (6 th year)	8:1-11:25
(5) Fifth Prophecy	12:1-28
(6) Sixth Prophecy	13:1-23
(7) Seventh Prophecy	14:1-23
(8) Eighth Prophecy	15:1-8
(9) Ninth Prophecy	16:1-63
(10) Tenth Prophecy	17:1-19:14
(11) Eleventh Prophecy (7 th year)	20:1-49
(12) Twelfth Prophecy	21:1-17
(13) Thirteenth Prophecy	21:18-32
(14) Fourteenth Prophecy	22:1-16
(15) Fifteenth Prophecy	22:17-22
(16) Sixteenth Prophecy	22:23-31
(17) Seventeenth Prophecy	23:1-49
(18) Eighteenth Prophecy (9 th year)	24:1-14
(19) Nineteenth Prophecy	24:15-27
b) Prophecies of Judgment upon Seven Nations	25:1-32:32
(1) Ammon	25:1-7
(2) Moab	25:8-11
(3) Edom	25:12-14
(4) Philistia	25:15-17
(5) Tyre	26:1-28:19
(a) First Prophecy (11 th year)	26:1-21
(b) Second Prophecy	27:1-36
(c) Third Prophecy	28:1-19
(6) Zidon	28:20-26
(7) Egypt	29:1-32:32
(a) First Prophecy (10 th year)	29:1-16
(b) Second Prophecy (27 th year)	29:17-21
(c) Third Prophecy	30:1-19
(d) Fourth Prophecy (11 th year)	30:20-26
(e) Fifth Prophecy (11 th year)	31:1-18
(f) Sixth Prophecy (12 th year)	32:1-16
(g) Seventh Prophecy (12 th year)	32:17-32
3. Israel's Justification (A Call to Repentance)	33:1-33
4. Israel's Sanctification (A Call for a Shepherd)	34:1-31
5. Israel's Glorification	35:1-48:35
a) Judgment upon Edom	35:1-15
b) Restoration of Israel as a Nation	36:1-37:28
c) The Battle against Gog	38:1-39:28
d) Restoration of Temple (25 th year of captivity)	40:1-46:24

e) Restoration of the Land of Israel

47:1-48:35

EXEGESIS AND COMMENTS

Chapter 1

1:1-3:21

Ezekiel's Commission (Comparison with John the Apostle on the Isle of Patmos) - In Ezekiel 1:1-3:21 we are given a description of Ezekiel's supernatural vision and divine commission to be a witness to the Jews in Captivity. In a similar way that John the apostle was banished on the isle of Patmos and had a heavenly vision, so does Ezekiel have a vision in his banishment by the river Chebar. The Lord gave both of them a tremendous revelation using symbols of future events. Both of their books open with a vision. Both visions begin with a visitation from the throne of God. Jesus Christ, who has now ascended to this heavenly throne, visited John the apostle. Ezekiel simply saw the throne with its glory, for Jesus Christ had not yet taken upon Himself the form of man. Both apocalyptic visions end with a description of heaven, where those who are faithful will abide eternally. Both men are given symbolic revelations of those events that will lead up to the fulfillment of all things.

Both prophets are given books to eat. They both experienced the books to taste like honey. John says that it became bitter to his belly, while Ezekiel says that he went in bitterness of spirit (Eze 3:1-3, 14, Rev 10:9).

While John seems to emphasize the role of the Church in the last days, Ezekiel places emphasis upon the role of the nation of Israel.

1:1-3:21

Ezekiel's Divine Commission (Comparison with Other Divine Commissions) – Ezekiel 1:1-3:21 describes the prophet Ezekiel's divine commission to be a witness to the Jews in Captivity. We often find a divine commission at the beginning of the story of God's servants in the Scriptures. We see in the book of Genesis that Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob each received their commissions at the beginning of their genealogies, which divide the book of Genesis into major divisions. We also see how Moses received his divine commission near the beginning of his story found within Exodus to Deuteronomy. Joshua received his commission in the first few verses of the book of Joshua. In addition, we see that Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel each received a divine commission at the beginning of their ministries. The book of Ezra opens with a divine call to rebuild the Temple and the book of Nehemiah begins with a call to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which callings Ezra and Nehemiah answered. In the New Testament, we find Paul the apostle receiving his divine commission in Acts 9:1-22 at the beginning of the lengthy section on Paul's life and ministry.

Each of these divine callings can be found within God's original commission to Adam in the story of Creation to be fruitful and multiply. For these men were called to bring about the multiplication of godly seeds. The patriarchs were called to multiply and produce a nation of righteousness. Moses was called to bring Israel out of bondage, but missed his calling to bring them into the Promised Land. Joshua was called to bring them in to the land. Esther was called to preserve the seed of Israel, as was Noah, while Ezra and Nehemiah were called to bring them back into the Promised Land. All of the judges, the kings and the prophets were called to call the children of Israel out of sin and bondage and into obedience and prosperity. They were all called to bring God's children out of bondage and destruction and into God's blessings and multiplication. The stories in the Old Testament show us that

some of these men fulfilled their divine commission while others either fell short through disobedience or were too wicked to hear their calling from God.

The awesome vision of God in the opened heavens would leave a deep impression on Ezekiel throughout his entire life as a priest to the children of Israel. This vision of God's holiness would always stand as a measuring rod for Ezekiel as he spoke to the corrupt and wicked hearts of God's people.

Moses had such an experience at the burning bush to launch him into his ministry (Ex 3-4). God gave the children of Israel a similar vision as they stood before Mount Sinai and beheld God's descent upon the mount (Ex 19). We see Isaiah being given a vision of God on His throne (Is 6). Jeremiah received his calling and a vision in the opening chapter of his book. Paul the apostle was struck down on the road to Damascus with a vision by which God called him into his ministry (Acts 9:1-22).

1:1-28 **Ezekiel's Vision** - The description of God coming down from Heaven to intervene in the affairs of man in this passage is very similar to the vision that David recorded in Psalm 18:7-12 when the earth shook and trembled. In addition, both David and the children of the Babylonian captivity were experiencing distress during this heavenly visitation.

1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

1:1 **“Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month”** – *Comments* - While many of the other prophet books date their collection of prophecies by the names of the ruling kings of Judah and Israel, Ezekiel give a unique introduction. He describes an event that takes place in the thirtieth year (1:1), which corresponds to the fifth year of their captivity (1:2). Many different suggestions have been given as to meaning of the phrase “thirtieth year.” However, scholars have not been able to associate the thirtieth year with a royal date. For example, this date could not refer to the reign of the Jewish King Josiah (640-609 B.C.), since the deportation of King Jehoiachin was approximately 597 B.C., which serves as a reference point mentioned in Ezekiel 1:2. Neither can this date refer to the thirtieth year of the reign of the Babylonian King Nabopolassar (626-605 B.C.), the first king of Babylon because the numbers again do not accurately correspond to the fifth year of Jecoiachin's deportation. The two most plausible interpretations among scholars today suggest the phrase “thirtieth year” either refers to the date of the closing of the prophecies and publication of his book, or to the age of the prophet, with the latter being the most popular view.

(1) *The Date of the Babylonian Captivity* – Efforts have been made to associate the thirtieth year with the other twelve chronological dates that Ezekiel places within his collection of prophecies (1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 40:1), beginning from the fifth year to the twenty-seventh year of his captivity, as stated in the first and final date (1:2; 40:1). This would mean that Ezekiel received his opening vision at the end of his ministry in the thirtieth year of his captivity. However, most scholars have a difficult time corresponding this opening date with the chronological dates placed throughout the book. For example, a prophet receives his divine commission at the beginning of his ministry and not at the end.

(2) *Ezekiel's Age when Called into the Prophetic Ministry* – The most popular view is to associate the thirtieth year with the age of the prophet Ezekiel when God commissioned him into the prophetic ministry because it is the easiest interpretation to work with in the biblical text. According to Jewish historian Josephus, Ezekiel was a priest by birth (*Antiquities* 10.5.1), and from the Law of Moses we know that a priest began his duties at the age of

thirty (Num 4:1-49, 1 Chron 23:3). Thus, the opening verse of the book of Ezekiel indicates that Ezekiel probably received his commission at the age of thirty because he then was able by the Mosaic Law to serve as a priest to the children of Israel who were in exile. In this commission, he became a “watchman” for Israel and for the surrounding nations.

An additional support for this view of Ezekiel’s age can be found in the Old Testament. Noah’s age is recorded in reference to the event of the flood in Genesis 8:13-14, “And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.” This is similar to the way Ezekiel’s age is described in Ezekiel 1:1.

1:1 **“as I was among the captives”** – *Comments* - God has a divine way of intervening in the history of man to deliver His redeeming word to him. He placed Ezekiel among the captives of Israel in a distant land. He allowed Ezekiel to go through the same trials that backslidden Israel experienced so that he would be there to speak words of hope and redemption. We sometimes do not understand why our circumstances are difficult when we have lived godly. Ezekiel must have questioned the cause of his difficulties; but the Lord gave him understanding in these things.

1:1 **“by the river of Chebar”** – *Comments* - Ralph Alexander says the river Chebar has been identified by scholars “with the ‘naru kabari’ (mentioned in the Nippur cuneiform texts), a southeasterly canal connecting at both ends with the Euphrates River.”¹

1:1 **“that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God”** – *Comments* - The book of Ezekiel is similar to the book of Revelation in that both men saw apocalyptic visions of future events. Ezekiel saw future events in Israel’s redemption, while John the apostle saw future events in the Church’s redemption.

1:1 *Comments – The Manner in which Divine Oracles were Delivered unto the Prophets* - God spoke through the Old Testament prophets in various ways, as the author of the epistle of Hebrews says, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets . . .” (Heb 1:1). The Lord spoke divine oracles (אִצְוָה) through the Old Testament prophets in three general ways, as recorded in the book of Hosea, “I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions; I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets.” (Hos 12:10) (NKJV) In other words, the prophets spoke to Israel through the words they received, they described divine visions to the people, and they acted out as divine drama an oracle from the Lord.

(1) *The Word of the Lord Came to the Prophets* - God gave the prophets divine pronouncements to deliver to the people, as with Hosea 1:1. The opening verses of a number of prophetic books say, “the word of the Lord came to the prophet . . .” Thus, these prophets received a divine utterance from the Lord.

(2) *The Prophets Received Divine Visions* - God gave the prophets divine visions (רָאוּ), so they prophesied what they saw (הִרָאוּ) (to see). Thus, these two Hebrew words are found in Isaiah 1:1, Obadiah 1:1, Nahum 1:1, and Habakkuk 1:1. Ezekiel saw visions (מַרְאֵה) of God.

(3) *God Told the Prophets to Deliver Visual Aids as Symbols of Divine Oracles* - God asked the prophets to demonstrate divine oracles to the people through symbolic

¹Ralph H. Alexander, *Ezekiel*, in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary (Revised Edition)*, vol. 7, eds. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 2010), 648, Logos.

language. For example, Isaiah walked naked for three years as a symbol of Assyria's dominion over Egypt and Ethiopia (Is 20:1-6). Ezekiel demonstrated the siege of Jerusalem using clay tiles (Ez 4:1-3), then he laid on his left side for many days, then on his right side, to demonstrate that God will require Israel to bear its iniquities.

1:2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,

1:2 *Comments* - Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, begin his reign in Jerusalem in 597 B.C. The fifth year of his captivity would be 593 B.C.

1:3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

1:3 *Comments* – The name “Ezekiel” means “God strengthens” (*PTW*), which meaning summarizes the theme of this great prophetic book.

1:4 And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

1:5 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.

1:5 “Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures” – *Comments* - The fact that the living creatures came forth from the midst of the fiery whirlwind signifies that they are coming from the presence of God. These creatures are later be identified as cherubim in Ezekiel 10:15, “And the cherubims were lifted up. This is the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar.”

1:6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

1:7 And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.

1:8 And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

1:8 “and they four had their faces and their wings” – *Comments* - The *NIV* reads, “All four had faces and wings.”

1:9 Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

1:9 “Their wings were joined one to another” – *Comments* - The *RSV* says, “their wings touched one another.” The fact that their wings touched as they flew signifies their unity in executing their divine ministries, just as flocks of birds fly in formation.

1:9 “they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward” – *Comments* - These creatures were sent forth from the presence of God to perform His will. Their straight, unaltered path signifies the fact that God's plans and purposes are predetermined and planned. It also signifies that God's plans are unaltered and will surely come to pass.

1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.

1:10

Comments - The four faces of the four living creatures in Ezekiel 1:10 represent the redemptive office and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The face of a man symbolizes the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The face of the lion symbolizes Jesus as the King of Kings, the highest office over mankind. The face of the ox represents the most expensive offering that an Israelite can bring from the flock, and symbolizes Jesus as the sacrifice for sins of mankind at His altar on the Cross. The face of the eagle symbolizes the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His exalted position at the right hand of the Father in the fullness of His deity as the Son of God. The eagle's association with heaven is captured in Proverbs 23:5, "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; *they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*"

These creatures that appeared to Ezekiel are very similar to the four creatures that the apostle John saw in his vision. John writes, "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." (Rev 4:6-7) There is much symbolism around the throne of God. The four living creatures, perhaps cherubim, standing before the throne of God in the book of Revelation symbolize the character, or person, of the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, the twenty-four elders represent the saints of God. Twelve elders represent the twelve tribes of Israel and twelve elders represent the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Thus, these twenty-four elders represent the nation of Israel as well as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Daniel records his visions about this same time in Israel's history of Babylonian captivity. He also sees a four-headed beast with four wings. These creatures have symbolic meaning by representing the empires that rise up to make war with nations and attempted to oppress God's people.

Paul opens his epistle to the Romans by presenting three key attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ, defining his three-fold role in redemption through His humanity, deity, and royalty (Rom 1:3-4). The opening prologue of the Gospel of Matthew presents these attributes in the same order: His humanity (Matt 1:1-17), His deity (1:18-25), and His Lordship as King (2:1-12). These attributes are repeated when John the Baptist testifies of Jesus' Lordship as the Judge of mankind (3:1-12), when God the Father testifies of His deity as the Son of God in perfect union and fellowship with Him (3:13-17), and when the Scriptures (specifically, the Deuteronomic Law) testifies of His humanity as sinless regarding the Law (4:1-11).

Summary – In summary, the primary redemptive attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ are reflected throughout the Scriptures. Mankind must place his faith in these attributes of Jesus Christ in order to obtain eternal life.

1:11 Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

1:11

Comments – The wings stretched upward for flight, representing their purpose and plan to set in motion God's plan of redemption for Israel, as reveals in Ezekiel's later prophecies. The wings of these creatures touched one another as they flew, representing their unity in obeying their mission. The creatures covered themselves with their wings in a gesture of humility.

1:12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.

1:12

Comments - These four living creatures were being sent forth from the presence of God to perform His divine will. Their straight, unaltered path signifies the fact that God's plans and

purposes are predetermined and planned. It also signifies that God's plans are unaltered and will surely come to pass. The spirit here most likely represents the Holy Spirit of God, which leads and empowers these creatures to perform God's will just as the Holy Spirit guides each believer. The fact that they turned not when they went indicates their total obedience and submission to the Holy Spirit. The four heads going straight forward signifies that they were of one mind and one purpose. We can contrast these creatures to the multi-horned beast in Revelation 17:12-13, "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. *These have one mind*, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." The angel interpreted this vision for John by saying the multiple horns were symbolic, having one mind.

If we believe that demons can trouble mankind and devise wicked plans to hinder them, then how much more should God's holy angels be able to go forth to implement good plans from the hand of God.

1:13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

1:13 *Comments* - The element of fire in the midst of the creatures is very significant. Fire often represents divine judgment and purging in the Scriptures. Ezekiel later explains later that these coals of fire will be taken from between the wheels and dispersed over the city of Jerusalem as a symbol of God's coming judgment in Ezekiel 10:2, "And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight."

It is interesting to note that these coals of judgment were not scattered upon the seven surrounding nations that God also judged. Perhaps because the judgment upon Jerusalem overflowed into these surrounding nations since they promoted and delighted in the fall of Jerusalem.

1:14 And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

1:15 Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.

1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

1:16 *Comments* - "The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl" – The *ISBE* and *Smith* say the color "beryl" perhaps refers to a chrysolite, a yellow jasper, or some other yellow or green-coloured stone.² This was one of the precious stones sewn in the breastplate of the priest as recorded in Exodus 28:20, "And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings." Therefore, Ezekiel the priest would have easily compared the color of the wheels to a mineral and color with which he was already.

"and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel" – The Hebrew word (אֵיפֹן) literally means, "a wheel." *Strong* says this word comes from an unused Hebrew root that means, "to revolve."

²Lazarus Fletcher, "Stones, Precious," in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2859.

Therefore, this word can also be used figuratively, or symbolically, to refer to the realm of “time.” It is translated thirty-six times in the Old Testament as “wheel”; but, this same Hebrew word (אֵרֶבֶן) is used on one occasion to signify the realm of time, as Solomon writes, “Apples of gold in imagery of silver, Is the word spoken at its fit times.” (YLT) (Prov 25:11)

The inner wheel that Ezekiel saw in his vision represents time as man is able to measure it, and the outer wheel represents eternity where God dwells. Note how Ezekiel acknowledges man’s temporal existence throughout his public ministry by associated his prophecies with days, months, and years. Man lives in the realm of time. In contrast, God, who is working out His plan of redemption for mankind, lives in eternity, where time does not exist, as the prophet Isaiah writes, “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Is 57:15)

Note a comment from Frances J. Roberts, which illustrates this symbolism of the wheel within a wheel found in the vision of Ezekiel:

“My ageless purposes are set in Eternity. Time is as a little wheel set within the big wheel of Eternity. The little wheel turneth swiftly and shall one day cease. The big wheel turneth not, but goeth straight forward. Time is thy responsibility – Eternity is Mine! Ye shall move into thy place in the big wheel when the little wheel is left behind. See that now ye redeem the time, making use of it for the purposes of My eternal kingdom, thus investing it with something of the quality of the big wheel. As ye do this, thy days shall not be part of that which turneth and dieth, but of that which goeth straight forward and becometh one with My great universe. Fill thy days with light and love and testimony. Glorify and honor My Name. Praise and delight thyself in the Lord. So shall eternity inhabit thy heart and thou shalt deliver thy soul from the bondages of time.”³

If we realize that man’s days, months, and years are determined by the rotation of the earth, moon, and planets, we can easily see how the Hebrew word (אֵרֶבֶן) “wheel,” which is derived from the verb “to rotate” figuratively denote time.” As we reach out further into the universe, which represents eternity, we see that the planets rotate within their solar system. Man has recently discovered that these solar systems rotate within their respective galaxies. The sun is located within the Milky Way Galaxy, which contains between 200 to 400 billion other stars. The diameter of the Milky Way is approximately 100,000 light years across. These stars are rotating around the galactic center of the Milky Way. In addition, several smaller galaxies are rotating around the Milky Way in billions of years, creating a galactic cluster, a structure commonly found throughout the universe. Scientists estimate that there are about 10 billion large galaxies with their clusters within the universe, with a grand total of 2,000 billion billion stars contained in these galaxies. Scientists believe that the entire mass of the universe is either rotating or in motion of expansion in some manner.⁴ At some point in eternity, God may allow man to see that all of the universe, or eternity, in its rotation. This type of rotation is beyond man’s comprehension, and thus, dwells in the realm of the divine, where God inhabits eternity. The outer wheel represents this eternal rotation.

Thus, the little wheel represents the rotation that determines man’s time measured by days, months and years, while the outer wheel represents time on a much greater scale, in which

³Frances J. Roberts, *Come Away My Beloved* (Ojai, California: King’s Farspan, Inc., 1973), 31-2.

⁴Hartmut Frommert and Christine Kronberg, “The Milky Way Galaxy,” [on-line]; accessed 1 September 2009; available from <http://www.maths.tcd.ie/~powersr/New/notes/3rd%20%20year%20misc/3013%20galaxies/The%20Milky%20Way%20Galaxy.htm>; Internet.

only God can see and understand. The eyes on the outer wheel symbolize the fact that only God knows the eternal realm of time. The fact that these two wheels spin together symbolizes the fact that God, who dwells in eternity, is working through man, who lives in the realm of time, to bring about His divine plan of redemption. The fact that the inner wheel of time is spinning within the outer wheel of God's eternity symbolize the fact that man's plans are carried out within the greater plan of Almighty God and that God's plans will determine the outcome of man's plans. These angels have been sent forth from eternity to invade mortal man's world of time in order to set in motion his redemption. Thus, they move between the inner and outer wheels, between time and eternity to fulfill their ministries.

Therefore, we can say that as believers, we walk by God's time frame and not by man's time frame. Paul reflects this thought in 2 Corinthians 5:7, by saying, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." We as believers look towards the eternal things, while the world looks at the temporal things of this earth. Paul said the same thing several times in his epistles. He wrote to the Corinthians saying, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor 4:18) He wrote to the Colossians saying, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." (Col 3:2)

The secret to perseverance in the Christian life is to focus upon the eternal aspect of things. For example, Abraham's perseverance involved living in a tent all of his life. Therefore, he looked for a heavenly city as the author of Hebrew writes, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb 11:10)

Job's revelation of God in Job 38-41 helped him to focus on heavenly things and to look beyond his suffering. Note Job 42:1-3, "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." With this mindset, he stopped praying for the deliverance of himself and was able to pray for the deliverance of his friends, thus receiving deliverance for himself.

Paul the apostle was looking for a heavenly crown rather than earthly rewards, so he ran his race as an apostle to the Gentiles as if to win. Thus, he writes, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim 4:8)

Even Jesus Christ Himself endured the Cross because He focused on the eternal aspects of His calling. Jesus accepted shame in this life because He knew His Father would reward Him with glory and honor at His right hand. The author of Hebrews writes, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2)

Illustration - As children of God, we occasionally move into this eternal realm where time and space cannot dictate the limitations and outcome. For example, Moses was on Mount Sinai for forty days without food or water as the Scriptures record, "And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water." (Ex 34:28). Philip the evangelist was caught up into the eternal realm and translated from one physical location in Samaria to another (Acts 8:39-40). In addition, several saints walked in supernatural youth and strength and age. For example, Abraham (175 years), Isaac (180 years), and Jacob (147 years) lived well beyond God's age limits for mankind (Gen 12:4; 35:28; 47:28); Sarah retained her youthful beauty (Gen 12:11, 14); Moses lived to be one-hundred and twenty years old with youthful vigor and health (Ex 34:7); Caleb retained his

youthful vigor at the age of eighty-five (Josh 14:11). All of these saints walked in the eternal realm while serving the Lord on earth. As a young seminary student, I remember driving from Alabama to Texas in a single day. I spent much of this journey talking about the Lord and His Word to another student in the car. When we arrived on campus in Fort Worth, Texas, we both realized that the journey seemed to have taken only an hour or so, although it was a 12-hour drive. In addition, we felt fresh and renewed, despite the long drive. We must have moved into the eternal realm as we exalted the Lord during that drive.

1:17 When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went.

1:18 As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.

1:18 “and their rings were full of eyes round about them four” – *Comments* - The eyes in the wheels signify that God has seen the wickedness in the hearts of Israel. He sees what goes on behind closed doors. God will show these hidden sins to Ezekiel so that he can speak against them to the children of captivity.

1:19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

1:20 Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

1:20 “for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels” – *Comments* - This signifies that the living creatures were moving in the realm of man’s time as well as dwelling in eternity. In other words, they were able to transcend and move into both realms at one time.

1:21 When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

1:19-21 *Comments – The Living Creatures and the Wheels* - The spirits of these living creatures were within the wheels, and wherever the spirits of the creature went, the wheels followed. These verses describe the movement of the living creatures in relation to their wheels. Emphasis is placed upon the fact that the wheels always follow these creatures. The movement of these living creatures signifies the fact that they have been sent forth to set in motion the eternal plans and purposes of Almighty God. The straight movement represents the unaltered plans and purposes of Almighty God. The eyes represent God’s all-knowing nature of eternal things. The wheels represent God’s eternal timetable to accomplish His divine will. The fact that the wheels go with these creatures everywhere they go indicates that these living creatures are implementing God’s plans on His eternal time scale.

1:22-28 **The Four Living Creatures** - The description of four living creatures carrying the throne of God is found in other passages of Scripture. In the wilderness, four Levites carried the Ark of the Covenant through the desert, which David understood as a symbol of God’s throne in 2 Samuel 6:2, “And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.”

David had a similar vision as Ezekiel and recorded it in a Psalm 18. The description of God coming down from Heaven to intervene in the affairs of man in this Psalm is very similar to the vision that the prophet Ezekiel received in the first chapter of his writings (see Eze 1:4-28). The earth shook and trembled, he saw fire and smoke, and he saw the cherubim, and the thick clouds (Ps 18:6-12). In addition, both David and the children of the Babylonian

captivity were experiencing distress during this heavenly visitation. Therefore, the Temple of Solomon contained a resemblance to these “chariots” of the cherubims that David has seen in a vision, as we see in 1 Chronicles 28:18, “And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of *the chariot of the cherubims*, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.”

1:22 And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

1:23 And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies.

1:24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

1:25 And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.

1:26 And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

1:27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

1:28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

1:26 **“This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD”** – *Comments* - Ezekiel summed up this vision as a description of the glory of the Lord. This is an important phrase, as it is used to bring unity to the book. For this glory will depart from the Temple (10:18-29) and will then be restored when God restores his people as a nation (43:1-6).

1:26-28 *Comments* - The description of God’s throne is similar to the one that John gives to us in Revelation 4:2-3, “And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”

Daniel the prophet gave a similar description in Daniel 10:5-6, “Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.”

Chapter 2

2:1 And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

2:2 And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

2:4 For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

2:5 And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

2:6 And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

2:6 *Comments* - While Ezekiel was prophesying to the children of the Captivity, Jeremiah was speaking to the children of Judah in Jerusalem. God gave Jeremiah a similar charge during the inauguration of his ministry in Jeremiah 1:8, "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD."

2:7 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.

2:8 But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.

2:9 And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein;

2:10 And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

Chapter 3

3:1-43 **Ezekiel Eats the Book** – Ezekiel 3:1-43 records the story of Ezekiel being commanded to eat a book. John also is commanded to eat a book in Revelation 10:9-11 for same purpose. Also, they experienced the same taste in their mouths. Perhaps the symbolism of the sweet and the bitter is found in the comments of Sadhu Sundar Singh:

“The cross is like a walnut whose outer rind is bitter, but the inner kernel is pleasant and invigorating. So the cross does not offer any charm of outward appearance, but to the cross-bearer its true character is revealed, and he finds in it the choicest sweets of spiritual peace.”⁵

3:1 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel.

3:2 So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll.

⁵Sadhu Sundar Singh, *At the Master's Feet*, trans. Arthur Parker (London: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1922), 71..

3:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

3:4 And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

3:5 For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel;

3:6 Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

3:7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted.

3:7 *Comments* – Jesus warned His disciples that there will be resistance and persecutions when preaching the Gospel to the world (Matt 10:24-26, Jn 15:18-20).

3:8 Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

3:9 As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

3:8-9 *Comments* – While Ezekiel was prophesying to the children of the Captivity, Jeremiah was speaking to the children of Judah in Jerusalem. God gave Jeremiah a similar charge during the inauguration of his ministry in Jeremiah 1:10, “See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”

3:10 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

3:11 And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

3:12 Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place.

3:13 I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing.

3:14 So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.

3:15 Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

3:15 *Comments* – The Hebrew name “Telabib” (תֵּל אֲבִיבִי) literally means, “a mound of green growth” (*Strong*), or “a hill of corn” (*Easton*). Easton says it refers to “a city in Babylon, the home of the prophet Ezekiel, located on the river Chebar which was probably a branch

of the Euphrates.”⁶ This Hebrew word occurs only once in the Old Testament. Scholars tell us that its exact location is unknown today.

The Hebrew word (תַּבַּיִשׁ) means, “to stun, to devastate, to stupefy” (*Strong*).

Ezekiel 3:15 tells us how the prophet sat among his people the Jews by the river Chebar in silence for seven days. We are reminded of Zechariah’s vision in the Temple, how he also was speechless after his divine visitation from an angel (Lk 1:5-25).

My brother Steve told me that after he had been taken up to Heaven and seen Jesus he could not speak about it to his wife for three days.

3:16-21 **Ezekiel’s Charge as a Watchman over Israel** – In Ezekiel 3:16-21 we have the Lord’s charge to Ezekiel as a watchman over His people Israel. His duty was to tell the people what he saw and heard from the Lord. Immediately after this charge, God is going to give Ezekiel prophecies of the impending judgment upon Judah (3:22-24:27) as well as seven nations (25:1-32:32). These are the words of warning that Ezekiel is to deliver to Israel. At the end of these prophecies, the Lord restates His divine charge to Ezekiel to be a watchman over Israel (Ez 33:7).

3:16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

3:20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

3:21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

3:22 And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee.

3:23 Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: and, behold, the glory of the LORD stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face.

3:24 Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house.

3:25 But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them:

⁶Matthew George Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1893), s.v. “Telabib.”

3:26 And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house.

3:27 But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

Chapter 4

4:1 Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem:

4:2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

4:3 Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

4:4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

4:4 “Lie thou also upon thy left side” – *Comments* - Note that people in this ancient, oriental culture did lay on their left side to dine, because they were usually right-handed, thus freeing their right hand to eat.

4:5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

4:6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

4:7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

4:8 And, behold, I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.

4:9 Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof.

4:10 And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day: from time to time shalt thou eat it.

4:11 Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to time shalt thou drink.

4:12 And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight.

4:13 And the LORD said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.

4:14 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth.

4:15 Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.

4:16 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment:

4:17 That they may want bread and water, and be astonied one with another, and consume away for their iniquity.

Chapter 5

5:1 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair.

5:2 Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

5:3 Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts.

5:4 Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

5:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.

5:5 *Comments* - The "Promised Land" was strategically located where three continents join, Europe, Asia and Africa. It was to be a land where God's people were to dwell forever, at the crossroads of all civilizations. God had literally set Israel "in the midst of the nations," as we see in Ezekiel 5:5, "Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."

This means that when other nations traveled the long trade routes, they very often would need to pass through the land where God's people dwelt. They would see the people of the covenant living in peace and prosperity and would hear the message of God's covenant which brought this about. In this way, the Gospel could be more quickly spread throughout the inhabited world.

Not only did God use the central location of Israel to testify of God's blessings. He also used it to demonstrate His judgment for all nations to see (Ez 5:8). God told Ezekiel that Jerusalem would be judged in the sight of all that "pass by" (Ez 5:14).

5:6 And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them.

5:7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you;

5:8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

5:9 And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.

5:10 Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.

5:10 **“Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers”** – *Comments* – The vile act of cannibalism was prophesied by Moses and Jeremiah as a punishment for their sins: Deuteronomy 28:53, “And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:” Jeremiah 19:9, “And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.”

This prophecy actually happened on more than one occasion to the children of Israel. For example, it happened during the time of Elisha the prophet in 2 Kings 6:28-29, “And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.”

5:11 Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

5:12 A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

5:13 Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

5:14 Moreover I will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by.

5:15 So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken it.

5:16 When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread:

5:17 So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

Chapter 6

6:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

6:2 Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,

6:3 And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.

6:4 And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols.

6:5 And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

6:6 In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

6:7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

6:8 Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

6:9 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

6:10 And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

6:11 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

6:12 He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.

6:13 Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

6:14 So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 7

7:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

7:2 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land.

7:3 Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations.

7:4 And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

7:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

7:6 An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come.

7:7 The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.

7:8 Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

7:9 And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth.

7:10 Behold the day, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.

7:11 Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be wailing for them.

7:12 The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

7:13 For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.

7:14 They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

7:15 The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

7:16 But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

7:17 All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water.

7:18 They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

7:19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

7:20 As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and of their detestable things therein: therefore have I set it far from them.

7:21 And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.

7:22 My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret place: for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.

7:23 Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

7:24 Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled.

7:25 Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none.

7:26 Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.

7:27 The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 8

8:1 And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me.

8:2 Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber.

8:3 And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

8:4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.

8:5 Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry.

8:6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.

8:7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

8:8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

8:9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

8:10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

8:11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

8:12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

8:13 He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.

8:14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

8:15 Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

8:16 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

8:17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

8:18 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

Chapter 9

9:1 He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.

9:2 And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar.

9:3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

9:4 And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

9:4 “and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof” - *Comments* - The Lord once told Benny Hinn that He sets a mark upon those who are intercessors and that this mark gave

intercessors divine protection. Benny Hinn found this verse as Scriptural evidence to what the Lord told him.⁷ Here, we have a description of what an intercessor does.

The Lord set a mark upon Cain, so that no one would kill him (Gen 4:15). It is therefore logical to conclude that this mark was not apparent physically, but was a spiritual mark that gave angelic protection against demonic forces, just as with the intercessors mentioned in Ezekiel 9:4. Also, the Lord again sets a seal on the forehead of his saints during the Tribulation Period in order to give them divine protection from angelic warfare (Rev 7:3; 94). In the book of Revelation, Satan tries to counterfeit this mark with the mark of the beast. However, it becomes a mark of destruction by God.

9:5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

9:6 Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

9:7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.

9:8 And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

9:9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.

9:10 And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.

9:11 And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

Chapter 10

10:1 Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

10:2 And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

10:3 Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

10:4 Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory.

⁷Benny Hinn, *This is Your Day* (Irving, Texas), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), television program.

10:5 And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh.

10:6 And it came to pass, that when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels.

10:7 And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen: who took it, and went out.

10:8 And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings.

10:9 And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone.

10:10 And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel.

10:11 When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

10:12 And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had.

10:13 As for the wheels, it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.

10:14 And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

10:15 And the cherubims were lifted up. This is the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar.

10:16 And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

10:17 When they stood, these stood; and when they were lifted up, these lifted up themselves also: for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

10:18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.

10:19 And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD'S house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

10:20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims.

10:21 Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings.

10:22 And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.

Chapter 11

11:1 Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

11:2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

11:3 Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.

11:4 Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

11:5 And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.

11:6 Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

11:7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this city is the caldron: but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

11:8 Ye have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord GOD.

11:9 And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and will execute judgments among you.

11:10 Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

11:11 This city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; but I will judge you in the border of Israel:

11:12 And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you.

11:13 And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

11:14 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

11:15 Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.

11:16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.

11:17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

11:18 And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.

11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:

11:20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

11:21 But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.

11:22 Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

11:23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.

11:24 Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.

11:25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me.

Chapter 12

12:1 The word of the LORD also came unto me, saying,

12:2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.

12:3 Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight: it may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious house.

12:4 Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, as they that go forth into captivity.

12:5 Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby.

12:6 In their sight shalt thou bear it upon thy shoulders, and carry it forth in the twilight: thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel.

12:7 And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity, and in the even I digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought it forth in the twilight, and I bare it upon my shoulder in their sight.

12:8 And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

12:9 Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou?

12:10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that are among them.

12:11 Say, I am your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove and go into captivity.

12:12 And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes.

12:13 My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

12:14 And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

12:15 And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.

12:16 But I will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

12:17 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

12:18 Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness;

12:19 And say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.

12:20 And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

12:21 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12:22 Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?

12:23 Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.

12:24 For there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.

12:25 For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD.

12:26 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

12:27 Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.

12:28 Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 13

13:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

13:2 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

13:3 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!

13:4 O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts.

13:5 Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.

13:6 They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word.

13:7 Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith it; albeit I have not spoken?

13:8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord GOD.

13:9 And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

13:10 Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar:

13:11 Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it.

13:12 Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?

13:13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in my fury to consume it.

13:14 So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

13:15 Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it;

13:16 To wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD.

13:17 Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them,

13:18 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you?

13:19 And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies?

13:20 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make them fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, even the souls that ye hunt to make them fly.

13:21 Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

13:22 Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:

13:23 Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 14

14:1 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

14:2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

14:3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

14:4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

14:5 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

14:6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

14:7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

14:8 And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

14:9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

14:10 And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him;

14:11 That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

14:12 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,

14:13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

14:14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

14:14 *Comments* - When we read about the lives of Noah, Daniel and Job, we find three men in the Scriptures with which no fault could be found. All other individuals in the Scriptures reveal some form of sin and human failure. A second observation that we can make is that these men lived about fifteen hundred years apart. Noah lived during the pre-flood age and may serve to represent the standard of righteousness from the time of creation until the Flood. Job lived in the age when the nation of Israel was born, matured and fallen. Thus, Job represents the standard of righteousness for this period of human history. Daniel's fame had spread rapidly among the Chaldeans as well as among the Jewish captives in this foreign land. Daniel may represent the standard of righteousness for the age called the "Times of the Gentiles," (Lk 21:24) which began with the fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel 14:14 refers to judgment and deliverance of righteous men. We may note that each of these ages ended with divine judgment and destruction. Noah's age ended with the Flood. Job's age ended with the fall of Jerusalem. Daniel's age will end with the seven-year Tribulation Period, which he prophesied about in his writings. Thus, these three men may serve to represent true righteousness in each of their times.

14:15 If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:

14:16 Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.

14:17 Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it:

14:18 Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves.

14:19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:

14:20 Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

14:21 For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

14:22 Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.

14:23 And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 15

15:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

15:2 Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest?

15:3 Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?

15:4 Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work?

15:5 Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?

15:6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15:7 And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them.

15:8 And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 16

16:1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

16:2 Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,

16:3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.

16:3 IN the phrase, "thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite, God is saying that Israel has walked after their wicked ways. The Lord says this clearly in Ezekiel 16:45-47, "Thou art thy mother's daughter, that lotheth her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, which lothed their husbands and their children: your mother was an Hittite, and your father an Amorite. And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways."

16:4 And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.

16:5 None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.

16:6 And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.

16:7 I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare.

16:8 Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

16:8 *Comments* - The phrase "I spread my skirt over thee" is used in Ruth 3:9, "And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman." God claimed Israel, and betrothed her as His bride.

16:9 Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil.

16:10 I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

16:11 I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.

16:12 And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.

16:13 Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

16:14 And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.

16:15 But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.

16:15 *Comments* - Abandoning a child is a common practice in underdeveloped and impoverished nations. Even then, a mother with a small measure of pity leaves the child at a hospital or in an open place for others to rescue. In Ezekiel 16:15 the description of casting a newborn baby in the open field is on the analogy of a baby being left with absolutely no pity regarding its rescue.

16:16 And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so.

16:17 Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them,

16:18 And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.

16:19 My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and thus it was, saith the Lord GOD.

16:20 Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter,

16:20 **“whom thou hast borne unto me” - Comments -** The firstborn of the children of Israel were given to the Lord (Lev 12:2-6).

16:21 That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them?

16:22 And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast polluted in thy blood.

16:23 And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD;)

16:24 That thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high place in every street.

16:25 Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms.

16:26 Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

16:27 Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary food, and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way.

16:28 Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied.

16:29 Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith.

16:30 How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord GOD, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman;

16:31 In that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire;

16:32 But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!

16:33 They give gifts to all whores: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom.

16:34 And the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

16:35 Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD:

16:36 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with all the idols of thy abominations, and by the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them;

16:37 Behold, therefore I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou hast hated; I will even gather them round about against thee, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness.

16:38 And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy.

16:39 And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places: they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare.

16:40 They shall also bring up a company against thee, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords.

16:41 And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.

16:42 So will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.

16:43 Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these things; behold, therefore I also will recompense thy way upon thine head, saith the Lord GOD: and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.

16:44 Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.

16:45 Thou art thy mother's daughter, that lotheth her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, which lothed their husbands and their children: your mother was an Hittite, and your father an Amorite.

16:46 And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters.

16:46 *Comments* - Sodom's daughters would be the other smaller cities of the plains, which includes Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim. The city of Zoar was spared because of Lot.

16:47 Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways.

16:48 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

16:49 *Comments* - Many people today have too much pride to find a job which society considers lowly.

When I used to drive a garbage truck, I often emptied grocery store compactors. Tremendous amounts of food are thrown away daily in America. This is typical of America's fullness and wastefulness.

Many Americans thrive on pleasure, tourism, and leisure activities. They have an "abundance of idleness."

16:50 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

16:51 Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done.

16:52 Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.

16:53 When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them:

16:54 That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them.

16:55 When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.

16:56 For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride,

16:57 Before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of thy reproach of the daughters of Syria, and all that are round about her, the daughters of the Philistines, which despise thee round about.

16:58 Thou hast borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, saith the LORD.

16:59 For thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant.

16:60 Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.

16:61 Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant.

16:62 And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD:

16:63 That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 17

17:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17:2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;

17:3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar:

17:4 He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.

17:5 He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree.

17:6 And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

17:7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.

17:8 It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

17:9 Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.

17:10 Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.

17:11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17:12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

17:13 And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:

17:14 That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

17:15 But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

17:16 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

17:17 Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounds, and building forts, to cut off many persons:

17:18 Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape.

17:19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

17:20 And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.

17:21 And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

17:22-24 **Prophecy of the Exalted Tree** – In Ezekiel 17:22-24 the Lord gives Ezekiel a prophecy of a cedar tree being planted on a high mountain and exalted above all other trees. The analogy of a great tree providing shelter for the animals is used a number of times in Scriptures. In the book of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has a dream of a great and majestic tree providing shelter and shade for the beasts and the birds, as we see in Daniel 4:12, “The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.” This tree was suddenly cut down, representing his own fall from power.

In the New Testament, Jesus tells the Parable of the Mustard Seed, which grew to be the greatest herb, providing shelter for the birds in Matthew 13:32, “Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. “

17:22 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

17:23 In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

17:24 And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

Chapter 18

18:1 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

18:2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

18:2 *Comments* – The Hebrew word (בִּטָּר) means, “sour and unripe grapes” (*Gesenius*), or “an immature grape” (*Strong*). The Hebrew word (קָהָה) means, “to be blunt” (*Gesenius, Strong, HALOT*) or “blunt, dull” (*BDB*). My wife and children love to eat unripe mangos and soy sauce. They are so sour they make the teeth feel sticky and “dull.” Evidently, some people in ancient times ate unripe grapes for the simple reason that they liked the taste. As with my wife, they may have added something like salt to reduce the sour taste.

18:3 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

18:5 But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

18:6 And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,

18:7 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

18:8 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

18:9 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.

18:10 If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,

18:11 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

18:12 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,

18:13 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

18:14 Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,

18:15 That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,

18:16 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

18:17 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

18:18 As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity.

18:19 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

18:21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

18:22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

18:23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

18:24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

18:25 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

18:26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

18:27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

18:28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

18:29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

18:31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Chapter 19

19:1 Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,

19:2 And say, What is thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions.

19:3 And she brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men.

19:4 The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt.

19:5 Now when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion.

19:6 And he went up and down among the lions, he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men.

19:7 And he knew their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.

19:8 Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: he was taken in their pit.

19:9 And they put him in ward in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.

19:10 Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters.

19:11 And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.

19:12 But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them.

19:13 And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.

19:14 And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

Chapter 20

20:1 And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me.

20:2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

20:3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you.

20:4 Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

20:5 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD your God;

20:6 In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

20:7 Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

20:8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

20:9 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

20:10 Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

20:11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.

20:12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

20:13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

20:14 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.

20:15 Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands;

20:16 Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.

20:17 Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness.

20:18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols:

20:19 I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;

20:20 And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.

20:21 Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

20:22 Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

20:23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries;

20:24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.

20:25 Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live;

20:26 And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

20:27 Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Yet in this your fathers have blasphemed me, in that they have committed a trespass against me.

20:28 For when I had brought them into the land, for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered there their sacrifices, and there they presented the provocation of their offering: there also they made their sweet savour, and poured out there their drink offerings.

20:29 Then I said unto them, What is the high place whereunto ye go? And the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day.

20:30 Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations?

20:31 For when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and shall I be enquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you.

20:32 And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

20:33 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you:

20:34 And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

20:35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.

20:35 *Comments* - God spoke to Moses face to face during their wilderness journey (Ex 33:11, Num 14:14, Deut 5:4; 34:10).

20:36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD.

20:37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:

20:38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

20:39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

20:40 For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

20:41 I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.

20:42 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.

20:43 And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

20:44 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

20:45 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

20:46 Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field;

20:47 And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein.

20:48 And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched.

20:49 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?

Chapter 21

21:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21:2 Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel,

21:3 And say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.

21:4 Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh from the south to the north:

21:5 That all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it shall not return any more.

21:6 Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.

21:7 And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord GOD.

21:8 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21:9 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD; Say, A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished:

21:10 It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter: should we then make mirth? it contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree.

21:11 And he hath given it to be furbished, that it may be handled: this sword is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer.

21:12 Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh.

21:13 Because it is a trial, and what if the sword contemn even the rod? it shall be no more, saith the Lord GOD.

21:14 Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, and smite thine hands together, and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword of the slain: it is the sword of the great men that are slain, which entereth into their privy chambers.

21:15 I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their heart may faint, and their ruins be multiplied: ah! it is made bright, it is wrapped up for the slaughter.

21:16 Go thee one way or other, either on the right hand, or on the left, whithersoever thy face is set.

21:17 I will also smite mine hands together, and I will cause my fury to rest: I the LORD have said it.

21:18 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

21:19 Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come: both twain shall come forth out of one land: and choose thou a place, choose it at the head of the way to the city.

21:20 Appoint a way, that the sword may come to Rabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the defenced.

21:21 For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.

21:22 At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to appoint battering rams against the gates, to cast a mount, and to build a fort.

21:23 And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, to them that have sworn oaths: but he will call to remembrance the iniquity, that they may be taken.

21:24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, I say, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand.

21:25 And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end,

21:26 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.

21:27 I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.

21:28 And thou, son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; even say thou, The sword, the sword is drawn: for the slaughter it is furbished, to consume because of the glittering:

21:29 Whiles they see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine a lie unto thee, to bring thee upon the necks of them that are slain, of the wicked, whose day is come, when their iniquity shall have an end.

21:30 Shall I cause it to return into his sheath? I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy nativity.

21:31 And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hand of brutish men, and skilful to destroy.

21:32 Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the LORD have spoken it.

Chapter 22

22:1-33 **God Reveals to Ezekiel the Bloody City of Jerusalem** - The leaders of God's children (prophets, priests, princes in this passage of Scripture) are held in heavy responsibility for not fulfilling their offices.

22:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

22:2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations.

22:3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

22:4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years: therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.

22:5 Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous and much vexed.

22:6 Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood.

22:7 In thee have they set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow.

22:8 Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths.

22:9 In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness.

22:10 In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution.

22:11 And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter.

22:12 In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

22:13 Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.

22:14 Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it.

22:15 And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee.

22:16 And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

22:17 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

22:18 Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver.

22:19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

22:20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you.

22:21 Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

22:22 As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

22:23 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

22:24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.

22:25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

22:26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

22:27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

22:28 And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.

22:29 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

22:30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

22:30 *Comments* - The Hebrew word (פְּרֹץ) means, “a rupture or a breach” (*Gesenius*). A man standing in the breach and repelling the enemy would be the act of the bravest soldiers, as he would expose his life to the most imminent peril. The prophet Ezekiel referred to these gaps or breaches in Ezekiel 13:5, “Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.”

22:31 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 23

23:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

23:2 Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother:

23:3 And they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity.

23:4 And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah.

23:5 And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours,

23:6 Which were clothed with blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses.

23:7 Thus she committed her whoredoms with them, with all them that were the chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted: with all their idols she defiled herself.

23:8 Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt: for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the breasts of her virginity, and poured their whoredom upon her.

23:9 Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted.

23:10 These discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword: and she became famous among women; for they had executed judgment upon her.

23:10 *Comments* - God’s judgment was to slay His people with the sword.

23:11 And when her sister Aholibah saw this, she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms more than her sister in her whoredoms.

23:12 She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours, captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men.

23:13 Then I saw that she was defiled, that they took both one way,

23:14 And that she increased her whoredoms: for when she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion,

23:15 Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity:

23:16 And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, and sent messengers unto them into Chaldea.

23:17 And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and her mind was alienated from them.

23:18 So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister.

23:19 Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.

23:20 For she doted upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses.

23:21 Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth.

23:22 Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side;

23:23 The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses.

23:24 And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, and with an assembly of people, which shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments.

23:25 And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee: they shall take away thy nose and thine ears; and thy remnant shall fall by the sword: they shall take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire.

23:26 They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes, and take away thy fair jewels.

23:27 Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.

23:28 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest, into the hand of them from whom thy mind is alienated:

23:29 And they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour, and shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

23:30 I will do these things unto thee, because thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols.

23:31 Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her cup into thine hand.

23:32 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision; it containeth much.

23:33 Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria.

23:34 Thou shalt even drink it and suck it out, and thou shalt break the sherds thereof, and pluck off thine own breasts: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

23:35 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

23:36 The LORD said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, declare unto them their abominations;

23:37 That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them.

23:38 Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths.

23:39 For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

23:40 And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments,

23:41 And satest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it, whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil.

23:42 And a voice of a multitude being at ease was with her: and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the wilderness, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.

23:43 Then said I unto her that was old in adulteries, Will they now commit whoredoms with her, and she with them?

23:44 Yet they went in unto her, as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot: so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah, the lewd women.

23:45 And the righteous men, they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; because they are adulteresses, and blood is in their hands.

23:46 For thus saith the Lord GOD; I will bring up a company upon them, and will give them to be removed and spoiled.

23:47 And the company shall stone them with stones, and dispatch them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire.

23:48 Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.

23:49 And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your idols: and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

Chapter 24

21:1-44 The Siege of Jerusalem - Ezekiel's prophecy recorded in Ezekiel 24:1-14 describes the two-year siege of Jerusalem and its destruction.

21:1 Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21:1 Comments – The date described in Ezekiel 24:1 follows the same wording in 2 Kings 25:1, “And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.” Thus, Ezekiel received a word from the Lord on the day that Nebuchadnezzar encamped against Jerusalem to begin a two-year siege.

21:2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

21:3 And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it:

21:4 Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones.

21:5 Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.

21:6 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it.

21:7 For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;

21:8 That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.

21:9 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great.

21:10 Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned.

21:11 Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed.

21:12 She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum shall be in the fire.

21:13 In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.

21:14 I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD.

21:15 Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21:16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.

21:17 Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.

21:18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

21:19 And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?

21:20 Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21:21 Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword.

21:22 And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men.

21:23 And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another.

21:24 Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

21:25 Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

21:26 That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?

21:27 In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 25

25:1-32:32 Prophecies against the Nations - Ezekiel 25:1-32:32 contains prophecies against seven nations that surround the country of Israel. These seven nations have hated and persecuted Israel over the centuries. Therefore, God will judge them.

25:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

25:2 Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them;

25:3 And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity;

25:4 Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

25:5 And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

25:6 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel;

25:7 Behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

25:8 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen;

25:9 Therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Bethjeshimoth, Baalmeon, and Kiriathaim,

25:10 Unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations.

25:11 And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

25:12 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

25:13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

25:14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

25:15 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred;

25:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.

25:17 And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

Chapter 26

26:1-21 First Prophecy against Tyre – Ezekiel 26:1-21 records the first of three prophecies against the coastal city of Tyre and its leadership, each ending in the refrain, “I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more forever.” (26:21; 27:36b; 28:19b)

26:1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

26:1 *Comments* – Ezekiel 26:1 introduces the prophecy with a word formula that the prophet uses throughout his book. Daniel Block dates this prophecy as February 585 B.C., coinciding with the same year of the commencement of Nebuchadnezzar’s thirteen-year siege of Tyre (585-573/2 B.C.).⁸ Other scholars offer dates of 586 and 587 B.C., which is several years prior to the siege of Tyre.

26:2 Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste:

26:3 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

26:3 *Comments* – History records the nations that came up against the city of Tyre after the time of Ezekiel’s prophecy: the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, etc.⁹

26:4 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.

26:4 “**And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers**” – *Comments* – Citing the ancient records of Philostratus, Josephus says King Nebuchadnezzar launched a siege against the coastal city of Tyre that lasted for thirteen years (585-573/2 B.C.).¹⁰

“**I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock**” - *Comments* – The ancient classical Greek and Roman authors Diodorus,¹¹ Arrian,¹² and Curtius Rufus,¹³ as well as Josephus,¹⁴ record the account of Alexander the Great laying siege to the island refuge of the Tyrians a short distance off of the coast where the ruins of their destroyed city lay in 332 B.C. The city of Tyre that was situated on the mainland has been destroyed and reduced to rubble. During this six month siege, Alexander carried the stones and rubble of the original city of Tyre and built a land bridge to the island, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Ezekiel that says, “I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.”

26:5 It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

⁸Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48*, in *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 35, Logos.

⁹Wallace B. Fleming, *The History of Tyre* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915).

¹⁰Josephus writes, “Nabuchodonosor besieged Tyre for thirteen years in the days of Ithobal, their king.” (*Against Apion* 1.21) He again writes, “as does Philostratus, in his *Accounts* both of India and Phoenicia, say, that this king besieged Tyre thirteen years, while at the same time Ethbaal reigned at Tyre.” (*Antiquities* 10.228)

¹¹See Diodorus of Sicily, 17.4 in G. Booth, *The Historical Library of Diodorus the Sicilian, in Fifteen Books*, vol. 2 (London: W. McDowall, 1814), 191-198.

¹²See Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 2.18-24 in Rooke, *Arrian’s History of Alexander’s Expedition*, vol. 1 (London: T. Worrall, J. Gray, L. Gilliver, and R. Willock, 1739), 109-125.

¹³See Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History, Life, and Reign of Alexander the Great* 4.2-4 in P. Pratt, *The History of, the Life and Reign of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius Rufus*, vol. 1 (London: Samuel Bagster, 1809).

¹⁴See *Antiquities* 11.321.

26:6 And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

26:7 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.

26:8 He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee.

26:9 And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

26:10 By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach.

26:11 With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.

26:12 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

26:13 And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard.

26:14 And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

26:14 *Comments* – In the twelfth century, a Jew named Benjamin Tuledo travelled throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa. He later published a diary of his travels in which he comments on the ruins of Tyre, saying, “If you mounts the walls of New Tsour, you may see the remains of ‘Tyre the crowned’ which was inundated by the sea, it is about the distance of a stones - throw from the new town; and whoever embarks may observe the towers, the markets, the streets and the halls on the bottom of the sea.”¹⁵

26:15 Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

26:16 Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee.

26:17 And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it!

26:18 Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.

¹⁵A. Asher, ed. and trans., *The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela*, vol. 1 (New York: “Hakesheth” Publishing Co., n.d.), 63.

26:19 For thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee;

26:20 When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living;

26:21 I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 27

27:1-36 Second Prophecy against Tyre – Ezekiel 27:1-36 records the second of three prophecies against the coastal city of Tyre and its leadership, each ending in the refrain, “I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more forever.” (26:21; 27:36b; 28:19b)

27:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

27:2 Now, thou son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyrus;

27:3 And say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty.

27:4 Thy borders are in the midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty.

27:5 They have made all thy ship boards of fir trees of Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee.

27:6 Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim.

27:7 Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee.

27:8 The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise men, O Tyrus, that were in thee, were thy pilots.

27:9 The ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof were in thee thy calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise.

27:10 They of Persia and of Lud and of Phut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.

27:11 The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they have made thy beauty perfect.

27:12 Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.

27:13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market.

27:14 They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules.

27:15 The men of Dedan were thy merchants; many isles were the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony.

27:16 Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and broidered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate.

27:17 Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants: they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm.

27:18 Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool.

27:19 Dan also and Javan going to and fro occupied in thy fairs: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market.

27:20 Dedan was thy merchant in precious clothes for chariots.

27:21 Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these were they thy merchants.

27:22 The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.

27:23 Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants.

27:24 These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes, and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise.

27:25 The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas.

27:26 Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas.

27:27 Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin.

27:28 The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

27:29 And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land;

27:30 And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes:

27:31 And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing.

27:32 And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?

27:33 When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise.

27:34 In the time when thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall.

27:35 All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in their countenance.

27:36 The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more.

Chapter 28

28:1-19 **Third Prophecy against Tyre** – Ezekiel 28:1-19 records the third of three prophecies against the coastal city of Tyre and its leadership, each ending in the refrain, “I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more forever.” (26:21; 27:36b; 28:19b)

28:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

28:2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

28:3 Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

28:4 With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

28:4 *Comments* – Wisdom and understanding are prerequisites for prosperity. Ignorance keeps people in poverty. Undeveloped nations are poor because they are undeveloped in wisdom and understanding.

28:5 By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

28:4-5 *Comments* – Wealth and financial prosperity are gained by wisdom and understanding. The Lord was not condemning Tyre for its acquisitions. He was condemning Tyre because this people’s heart became lifted up with pride in the midst of their prosperity.

28:6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;

28:7 Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.

28:8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.

28:9 Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

28:10 Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

28:11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

28:12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

28:13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

28:14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

28:15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

28:16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

28:18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

28:19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

28:20 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

28:21 Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it,

28:22 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her.

28:23 For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

28:24 And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

28:25 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

28:26 And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

Chapter 29

29:1-32:32 Judgment upon Egypt - Ezekiel 29:1-32:32 records Ezekiel's prophecy of divine judgment upon the nation of Egypt. This passage is the lengthiest prophecy of the seven nations that God judges in this book, perhaps because Egypt was a strong nation at the time of Judah's fall to Babylon, and many of the Jews looked to Egypt for help. In fact, a group of Jews fled for exile into Egypt and took Jeremiah with them after killing the governor of Jerusalem.

29:1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

29:2 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt:

29:3 Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.

29:4 But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales.

29:5 And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open fields; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven.

29:5 "I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven" – *Comments* - Goliath told David that he would feed his flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field in 1 Samuel 17:44, "And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field." This was one of the most dishonorable ways to die in this Oriental culture.

29:6 And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel.

29:7 When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.

29:8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee.

29:9 And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it.

29:10 Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.

29:11 No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years.

29:12 And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

29:13 Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered:

29:14 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom.

29:15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

29:16 And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

29:17 And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

29:18 Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it:

29:19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army.

29:20 I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.

29:21 In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 30

30:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

30:2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Howl ye, Woe worth the day!

30:3 For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

30:3 *Comments* - The phrase “the time of the heathen” (עַתַּת גּוֹיִם) can be translated “the time of the Gentiles.” Jesus uses this phrase to refer to a time when Rome will destroy Jerusalem, and the Gentile nations will take center stage in God’s plan of redemption until the nation of Israel is reborn and the Second Coming takes place in Luke 21:24, “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

30:4 And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down.

30:5 Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

30:6 Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

30:7 And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.

30:8 And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.

30:9 In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.

30:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon.

30:11 He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain.

30:12 And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken it.

30:13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

30:14 And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No.

30:15 And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No.

30:16 And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily.

30:17 The young men of Aven and of Pibeseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity.

30:18 At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.

30:19 Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

30:20 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

30:21 Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword.

30:22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand.

30:23 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

30:24 And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man.

30:25 But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt.

30:26 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 31

31:1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third month, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

31:2 Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; Whom art thou like in thy greatness?

31:3 Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs.

31:4 The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field.

31:5 Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth.

31:6 All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations.

31:7 Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters.

31:8 The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty.

31:9 I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

31:10 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height;

31:11 I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.

31:12 And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

31:13 Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches:

31:14 To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs, neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

31:15 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

31:16 I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

31:17 They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.

31:18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 32

32:1 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

32:2 Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou art like a young lion of the nations, and thou art as a whale in the seas: and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers.

32:3 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people; and they shall bring thee up in my net.

32:4 Then will I leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee forth upon the open field, and will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee.

32:5 And I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height.

32:6 I will also water with thy blood the land wherein thou swimmest, even to the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of thee.

32:7 And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.

32:8 All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord GOD.

32:9 I will also vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations, into the countries which thou hast not known.

32:10 Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them; and they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall.

32:11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.

32:12 By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, the terrible of the nations, all of them: and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed.

32:13 I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters; neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them.

32:14 Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord GOD.

32:15 When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, then shall they know that I am the LORD.

32:16 This is the lamentation wherewith they shall lament her: the daughters of the nations shall lament her: they shall lament for her, even for Egypt, and for all her multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

32:17 It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

32:18 Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit.

32:19 Whom dost thou pass in beauty? go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised.

32:20 They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword: she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes.

32:21 The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

32:22 Asshur is there and all her company: his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword:

32:23 Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living.

32:24 There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit.

32:25 They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all her multitude: her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit: he is put in the midst of them that be slain.

32:26 There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude: her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living.

32:27 And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

32:28 Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie with them that are slain with the sword.

32:29 There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes, which with their might are laid by them that were slain by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to the pit.

32:30 There be the princes of the north, all of them, and all the Zidonians, which are gone down with the slain; with their terror they are ashamed of their might; and they lie uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword, and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit.

32:31 Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over all his multitude, even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

32:32 For I have caused my terror in the land of the living; and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that are slain with the sword, even Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 33

33:1-33 **Justification** – The book of Ezekiel reveals God’s plan to redeem His people Israel back unto Himself. The theme of Ezekiel 33:1-20 is God’s plan to justify Israel through repentance and obedience to Him. Ezekiel has prophesied of judgments upon Judah and other nations in the preceding chapters. Now God is telling this prophet how the Jewish people are to respond to such prophecies of future judgments. These destructions are intended to bring repentance and righteousness to Judah and the nations; for God takes no pleasure in their destruction (Ez 33:11), but rather in their repentance, in the way the Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah. The phrase, “When I bring the sword upon a land” (Ez 33:2) refers to the time when these prophecies of judgment come to pass. God’s statement that He has placed Ezekiel as a watchman over the house of Israel (Ez 33:7) means that God will divinely place His watchmen amongst the people in a position where they will be heard as proclaim the truth to the people. The people should recognize them as a fulfillment of God’s prophecies and repent; for this is God’s plan to redeem His people Israel. In this passage of Scripture God makes a provision for escape from divine judgment and forgiveness of sins. Thus, God’s judgment serves a redemptive purpose.

In the case of Ezekiel, God divinely placed him in the office of a priest over the Jews in Captivity so that he would be heard, because it was the Jewish tradition to assemble together on the Sabbath and to hear the Scriptures being taught by the priests. They justified themselves as God’s people because their father was Abraham (Ez 33:21-29). When they did assemble to hear the local priest exhort them from the Law, they did not obey what they had heard (Ez 33:30-33).

33:1-20 **Ezekiel’s Charge as a Watchman Over Israel** – Ezekiel 3:16-21 records the Lord’s charge to Ezekiel as a watchman over His people Israel. His duty was to tell the people what he saw and heard from the Lord. Immediately after this charge, God is going to give Ezekiel prophecies of the impending judgment upon Judah (3:22-24:27) as well as seven nations (25:1-32:32). These are the words of warning that Ezekiel is to deliver to Israel. At the end of these prophecies, the Lord restates His divine charge to Ezekiel as a watchman over Israel (Eze 33:7).

33:1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

33:2 Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

33:3 If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

33:4 Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

33:5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

33:6 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

33:7 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

33:7 *Comments* - There were three watchmen of the Old Testament, Enoch, who prophesied of the coming of the Lord and a day of judgment (Jude 1:14-15), Noah, a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet 2:5), and David, who said, "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation" (Ps 40:9-10)

33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

33:9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

33:6-9 *Comments – The Watchman's Duty* - Kenneth Hagin tells the story of the time he sensed danger when driving in a car, but he did not take the time to pray through. His niece died in an automobile accident at this time, simply because there was no one to intercede in the spiritual realm.¹⁶ He later tells of a vision the Lord gave him in 1970 of three spirits coming up out of the sea and moving across the United States. The Lord came to him in 1979 and rebuked him for not praying properly in order to prevent certain troublesome situations from taking place in America. The Lord told him that He would hold Hagin and the church responsible.¹⁷

33:10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?

33:10 *Comments* - How often we have heard the despairing cry of the lost man with no hope of being able to come out of his sins. As we tell him of Jesus, it is his only hope to see deliverance.

33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

33:12-16 **Repentance Offered** - Ezekiel 33:12-16 is similar to Romans 11:22-23, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again."

33:12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he

¹⁶Kenneth Hagin, *The Art of Intercession* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Faith Library Publications, c1980, 1984), 102-4.

¹⁷Kenneth Hagin, *The Art of Intercession* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Faith Library Publications, c1980, 1984), 131-3.

shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.

33:13 When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

33:14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

33:15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

33:16 None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

33:17 Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

33:18 When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

33:19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

33:20 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

33:21-29 **Justification** – In Ezekiel 33:21-29 the Lord tells the prophet that the people were seeking their justification by their birthright as Jews. In addition, they were hearing God's Word, but not obeying it (Ez 33:30-33). True justification before God comes when the people hear and obey His Word.

33:21 And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.

33:22 Now the hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

33:23 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

33:24 Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance.

33:25 Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land?

33:26 Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

33:27 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence.

33:28 For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.

33:28 **“and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through” –**
Comments - Two major highways that passed through the land of Palestine in ancient times and served as trading routes were the “King’s Highway” and the “Way of the Sea.”¹⁸ The Lord says in Ezekiel 33:28 that this land will become so desolate that no one will pass through it. A desolate land becomes a dangerous place for travelers. It becomes a place where thieves to hid and await those passing by. It is a place where there is no sense of security.

33:29 Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed.

33:30 Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

33:31 And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

33:32 And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

33:33 And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

Chapter 34

34:1-31 **Sanctification** – The theme of the preceding passage (Ez 33:1-33) was on restoring righteousness to the children of Israel. For those who would repent and obey God’s word, there was the need for sanctification; and this is the theme of Ezekiel 34:1-31. God’s divine plan to sanctify His people was to place shepherds among them to lead and guide them daily. Because these shepherds failed to strengthen God’s people, He was going to judge them and place a true shepherd over them, which is a prophecy of the coming of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

34:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

34:2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

34:2 *Comments* – Jeremiah the prophet used the analogy of Israel being sheep and their leaders being shepherds in Jeremiah 23:1, “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.”

34:3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.

¹⁸Avraham Negev, *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice Hall Press, c1990, 1996), comments on “Roads.”

34:4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

34:4 *Comments* - A shepherd's duty is to minister to the flock fervently (Matt 10:8, Lk 4:18, Jn 14:12): Matthew 10:8, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." John 14:12, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." We can do this because of 1 John 4:4, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Jesus was a Shepherd to Israel in Luke 8:1, "And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God."

34:5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

34:5 *Comments* - Matthew uses this analogy for Israel in Matthew 9:36, "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."

34:6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

34:7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

34:8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

34:10 *Comments* - God will deliver His flock from the mouths of these corrupt shepherds by feeding them with judgment (34:16), and He will raise up a new shepherd, "David" (34:24).

34:11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

34:12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

34:13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

34:14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

34:15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.

34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

34:16 *Comments* - The shepherds' food is judgment from above, from God Almighty.

34:17 And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats.

34:18 Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?

34:18 *Comments* - The shepherds lusted after the best, and did not want the sheep to have anything good.

34:19 And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

34:20 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.

34:21 Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad;

34:22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.

34:20-22 *Comments* – *God Himself Will Judge* - Ezekiel 34:20-22 makes the last mention of the shepherds. God's judgment is hard and sure.

34:23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

34:24 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.

34:24 *Comments* - The Jews were looking for a restored kingdom and a king of the lineage of David who would again rule over them. Therefore, the title "My servant David, a prince among them" is given to Jesus Christ so that they can identify with the Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He comes to be their king. In contrast, to the Gentiles the Messiah was not the son of David, but rather, the Saviour of the World.

34:25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

34:26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

34:27 And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.

34:28 And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.

34:29 And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

34:30 Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord GOD.

34:31 And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 35

35:1-48:35

Israel's Glorification – Ezekiel 35:1-48:35 deals with the topic of Israel's glorification. The description of the restored land of Israel and the new Temple and its worship (36-48) reveals a building and nation more majestic and beautiful than that found during the time of Solomon. These passages reveal the glorification that God has in planned for His people Israel. This glorification is different than what He has planned for the Church. The prophecies of this passage signify the fact that God has a much greater blessing in store for His people than any earthly kingdom in the past, even greater than Israel in its golden age of King Solomon. The future glories of the heavenly kingdom will far exceed the earthly. *The Book of Jubilees* (4.26-27) tells us that this Mount Zion will be sanctified in the new creation for a sanctification of the earth; through it will the earth be sanctified from all (its) guilt and its uncleanness throughout the generations of the world.

From these last chapters in the book of Ezekiel we know that the full restoration of Israel involves three key events that will take place in order to make their restoration complete and everlasting. These events will involve the restoration of Israel as a nation (36-37), the battle against Gog and its allies (38-39), and the restoration of the Temple and its worship (40-46) and its land (47-48).

Here is a proposed outline:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Judgment upon Edom | 35:1-15 |
| 2. The Restoration of Israel as a Nation | 36:1-37:28 |
| 3. The Battle against Gog and its Allies | 38:1-39:23 |
| 4. The Restoration of the Temple and its Worship and Land | 40:1-48:35 |

35:1-15

Judgment upon Edom – In Ezekiel 35:1-15 God speaks words against the nation of Edom. This people seem to have stood out in their efforts to mock against Israel's destruction. Ezekiel 36:5 says that the nations and Edom appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with spiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. Israel's neighbouring countries stood the most to gain by expand their territories into the country of Israel.

35:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

35:2 Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it,

35:3 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

35:4 I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

35:5 Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end:

35:5 *Comments* - This ancient and perpetual hatred began between Jacob and Esau and it has continued since.

35:6 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

35:7 Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.

35:8 And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword.

35:9 I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

35:10 Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there:

35:10 “These two nations and these two countries shall be mine”- *Comments* - Grant Jeffrey understand these two nations to be a reference to northern Israel and southern Judah.¹⁹

35:10 “whereas the LORD was there” – *Comments* - The Lord’s presence was with the nation of Israel in former times before it fell into sin and idolatry under King Solomon. His presence will return when God’s plan to restore Israel is fulfilled, as prophesied in Ezekiel 48:35, “It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, *The LORD is there.*”

35:11 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee.

35:12 And thou shalt know that I am the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume.

35:13 Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them.

35:14 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.

35:15 As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

35:15 *Comments* – The Hebrew name “Idumea” (אֱדוּמָה) is actually “Edom” in the Hebrew text. The

¹⁹Grant Jeffrey, *The Next World War* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Waterbrook Press, 2006), 14.

region of Edom came to be known by the name “Idumea” during the time of the Greeks. With the fall of Judah under the Romans, the name Idumea disappeared from history.

Chapter 36

36:1-37:28 The Restoration of Israel – Ezekiel 36:1-37:28 tells us about the time when the nation of Israel will be restored. This event took place in 1948 when Israel was officially recognized as a nation again.

36:1 Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD:

36:2 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession:

36:3 Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people:

36:4 Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about;

36:5 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey.

36:5 “Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea” – *Comments* – The Hebrew name “Idumea” (אֲדוּמָה) is actually “Edom” in the Hebrew text. The region of Edom came to be known by the name “Idumea” during the time of the Greeks. With the fall of Judah under the Romans, the name Idumea disappeared from history.

The Lord has just spoken against the heathens in Ezekiel 25:1-32:32, and against Edom in Ezekiel 35:1-15.

36:6 Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen:

36:7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame.

36:8 But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.

36:9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown:

36:10 And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded:

36:11 And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

36:12 Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men.

36:13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations;

36:14 Therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD.

36:15 Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord GOD.

36:16 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

36:17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.

36:18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:

36:19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

36:20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.

36:21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

36:22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

36:23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

36:26 *Comments* - Ezekiel 36:26 reflects the fact that the Mosaic Law and the Levitical priesthood with its Temple services had failed to produce a people of righteousness. Therefore, Jeremiah was sent to prophesy the doom of the nation of Israel, judged by God because of their disobedience and idolatry; and Ezekiel prophesies of their future restoration. The covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai had failed. Because the Law could not bring redemption to men, a new way was found. In His divine foreknowledge, God was preparing to make a new and better mankind covenant with men, which would be through the blood of

His Son Jesus Christ. This time, the Holy Spirit would be poured out in the men's hearts, so that the Law could be written in their hearts, transforming them from within, enabling them to stand righteous before Him in the heavenly Tabernacle.

36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

36:28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

36:29 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.

36:30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

36:31 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

36:32 Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

36:33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded.

36:34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

36:35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.

36:36 Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.

36:37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

36:38 As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 37

37:1-28

The Restoration of Israel as a Nation – Ezekiel 37:1-28 tells us of the first of three end-time prophetic events that will usher Israel back into the forefront of world history. Ezekiel 37:1-28 describes the restoration of Israel, which prophecy was fulfilled in 1948 when Israel was officially recognized as a nation again. This event was also prophesied in Joel 3:1 "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem."

Here is a proposed outline:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Ezekiel Prophecies to the Valley of Dry Bones | 37:1-14 |
| 2. The Prophecy of Northern Israel Reuniting with Southern Judah | 37:15-25 |
| 3. The Restoration of the Temple and Its Services | 37:26-28 |

37:1-14 **Ezekiel Prophecies to the Valley of Dry Bones** – In Ezekiel 37:1-14 Ezekiel is taken in the spirit to a valley which was full of dry bones. He is commanded to prophesy to the bones so that they will be resurrected as the nation of Israel.

37:1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

37:2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

37:2 *Comments* - John Hagee understands the phrase “and, lo, they were very dry” to mean that the nation of Israel has been dead for a very long time. They were dispersed two thousand years ago. In 1948 the nation of Israel was reborn.²⁰

37:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

37:4 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

37:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

37:6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

37:8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

37:9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

37:10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

37:11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

37:11 *Comments* - Ezekiel 37:11 interprets the dry bones to symbolize the hopelessness of the children of Israel.

37:12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

37:13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

²⁰John Hagee, *John Hagee Today* (San Antonio, Texas: John Hagee Ministries), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), 24 November 2008, television program.

37:14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

37:15-25

The Prophecy of Northern Israel Reuniting with Southern Judah - Comments - Ezekiel 37:15-25 tells us that God will reunite northern Israel with the southern kingdom of Judah when the nation of Israel is reborn (37:22). This has taken place in 1948 in fulfillment of this prophecy. God will appoint David as king over all twelve tribes (37:24).

37:15 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

37:16 Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

37:17 And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

37:18 And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these?

37:19 Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

37:20 And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.

37:21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

37:22 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:

37:23 Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

37:24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

37:24

Comments – Jesus reveals the fulfillment of this prophecy in John 10:16, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; *and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*”

37:25 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

37:25

“And David my servant shall be king over them” - Comments - The Jews were looking for a restored kingdom and a king of the lineage of David who would again rule over them. Therefore, the title “David my servant” is given to Jesus Christ so that they can identify with the Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He comes to be their king. In contrast, to the Gentiles the Messiah was not the son of David, but rather, the Saviour of the World.

37:26-28

The Restoration of the Temple and Its Services - The Sanctuary, or Tabernacle, that is referred to in Ezekiel 37:26-28 will soon be described in the upcoming chapters (40-46).

37:26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

37:27 My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

37:28 And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

37:28

Comments – Although Gog and its assembly of nations will try to destroy the re-established nation of Israel (Ez 38-39), the Lord will destroy their armies and glorify Himself in their midst (38:16, 23; 39:7, 13, 21).

38:1-39:29

The Battle against Gog and its Allies – Ezekiel 38:1-39:28 tells us of the second of three end-time prophetic events that will usher Israel back into the forefront of world history. Within the context of the three major events that bring Israel back into full restoration with the Lord (Ez 37-48), the great battle described in Ezekiel 38-39 must be a great and final battle in which all nations are placed in subjection to the God of Israel. It cannot be a battle that leads to further battles, for after this event Israel will fight no more wars. The Battle of Armageddon is popularly understood to take place at the end of the seven-year Tribulation Period when Jesus Christ will return a second time and fight Israel's enemies with the Word of His mouth and set up His thousand-year reign from the holy city Jerusalem. The passage of Scripture in Ezekiel 38:1-39:29 describes Israel's great and final battle with Russia, Iran, Libya, and Ethiopia. It may be the same event described in Revelation 16:16-21; 19:11-21 in which we have a description of an event popularly called the Battle of Armageddon, a term taken from Revelation 16:16, a battle that scholars believe will be fought in the plain of Megiddo. However, Gog and Magog are again gathered for battle against Israel after the thousand-year Millennial Reign of Christ on earth (Rev 20:7-9), an event that may be referenced in Ezekiel 38-39 as well because Old Testament prophecies often merge more than one future event into a single prophecy.

We learn from these two chapters of Ezekiel that the nations that make up modern day Russia will lead in this battle, and will be joined by the modern day countries of Iran, Ethiopia, and Libya (38:2-7). The land of Ethiopia may refer to the nations of northern Africa, or even Arabia. The restoration of the nation of Israel will precede the Battle of Armageddon (38:8-9). It will take place during the "latter years" (38:8-9). Bible scholars believe that this refers to the time of the Great Tribulation period that immediately precedes the thousand-year Millennial Reign of Christ. We also learn from these two chapters that Gog will gather against Israel during a time of apparent peace when the Jews seem to be living safely (38:10-13). Some scholars believe that this refers to the first three and a half years of the Tribulation Period when the Antichrist will enter into a covenant of peace with Israel, before breaking it by defiling the sacred Temple in Jerusalem in the midst of the Tribulation (Dan 9:27). When God fights against Gog and his allies, He will do so in three ways (Ez 38:18-22). He will bring a great earthquake upon the land (38:19-20), then He will bring confusion so that every man will turn his sword against his brother (38:21), followed with a great rain of fire, hail and brimstones (38:22). This seems to describe the period of the Great Tribulation Period. We read how there will be slain all but one sixth of the armies (39:2) and those carcasses will become a feast for the birds and beasts of the field (Ez 39:4). This feast is very likely described in Revelation 19:17-19.

Chapter 38

38:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

38:2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,

38:2 **“Son of man, set thy face against Gog” - Comments** – The name “Gog” (גֹּג) means, “high, mountain” (*BDB, PTW*), referring to the “prince of the land of Magog” (*Gesenius*). However, this word appears to be used in Revelation 20:8 as the name of a place and not a proper name, which says, “And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” *BDB* suggests that it was “the prophetic prince of Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, and Magog.”

Perry Stone suggests that Gog is a demonic angel that rules over the north country rather than a people group or a man. He bases this conclusion upon two observations. First, the description given to Gog in Ezekiel 38:2 as the “chief prince” is also used of Michael the archangel in Daniel 10:13, “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, *one of the chief princes*, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Stone’s second basis is the fact that Gog comes back onto the prophetic scene at the end of the thousand-year Millennial Reign of Christ Jesus in Revelation 20:8, “And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”²¹

38:2 **“the land of Magog” – Comments** - The Hebrew name “Magog” (מָגוֹג) means, “the land of Gog,” and refers to “the mountainous region between Cappadocia and Media and habitation of the descendants of Magog, son of Japheth and grandson of Noah” (*BDB*).

Magog is listed in the early genealogies as the son of Japheth, the son of Noah (Gen 10:2, 1 Chron 1:5). This group of people is also mentioned in the end-time prophecies of Ezekiel and of the apostle John (Ez 38:2-3; 39:6, Rev 20:8). Josephus tells us the Magogites were the Scythians (*Antiquities* 1.6.1). *Smith* believes these are the Scythians. A. H. Sayce says they refer to the people of Lydia of West Asia Minor.²²

38:2 **“the chief prince of Meshech” - Comments**– The Hebrew name “Meshech” (מֶשֶׁךְ) means, “drawing out” (*BDB*). Scholars believe that Meshech was located in the area of Armenia (*Histories of Herodotus* 3.94).²³ One popular view associates the ancient name Meshech with modern-day Moscow.²⁴ The *ISBE* says Meshech is associated with Tubal in ancient writings:

²¹Perry Stone, interviewed by Benny Hinn, *This is Your Day*, on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), television program.

²²A. H. Sayce writes, “. . . the Heb. name corresponds with that of the Lydian king who is called Gyges by the Greeks, and Gugu in the cuneiform inscriptions. Gyges was the first king of W. Asia Minor who became known to the Assyrians, and consequently his name may perhaps have become a title applied by them to the subsequent kings of that part of the world.” (*Hastings Bible Dictionary*, “Gog”)

²³Herodotus writes, “The Matienians, Saspirens, and Alarodians were taxed at two hundred talents; this was the eighteenth division. From the Moschians, Tibarenians, Macronians, Mosyncecians, and Marsians, three hundred talents were demanded; this was the nineteenth division.” See Henry Cary, trans., *The Histories of Herodotus* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899), 190.

²⁴This view is reflected in Scofield’s notes on Ezekiel 38:2, which says, “The reference to Meshech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification.” See C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1909), 883; Mark Ruthven and Thab Griess, *The Prophecy that is Shaping History: New Research on Ezekiel’s Vision of the End* (Longwood, Florida: Xulon Press, 2003), 12, 40, 100.

“It is thought that the ‘Tibareni and Moschi’ of the classical writers refer to the same people. Doubtless they appear in the annals of Assyria as enemies of that country under the names Tabali and Mushki--the latter the descendants of Meshech and the former those of Tubal to whom the term ‘Tibareni’ may refer in the clause above. This juxtaposition of names is in harmony with practically every appearance of the word in Scripture.”²⁵

38:2 “**and Tubal**” - *Comments* - The Hebrew name “Tubal” (תּוּבַל) refers to “the Tibareni, a nation of Asia Minor” (*Gesenius*). Scholars note that there is a city in Russia called “Tobolsk,” which is a major city located on the Tobal River.²⁶

38:2 *Comments* - Scholars are generally agreed that Gog and the land of Magog mentioned in Ezekiel 38:2 refer to modern-day Russia. Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were three of the seven sons of Japheth, the son of Noah in Genesis 10:2, “The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.” According to *The Book of Jubilees* the sons of Japheth migrated to the north after the flood.

“And in the sixth year [1567 A.M.] thereof, she bare him son, and he called his name Peleg; for in the days when he was born the children of Noah began to divide the earth amongst themselves: for this reason he called his name Peleg. And they divided (it) secretly amongst themselves, and told it to Noah. And it came to pass in the beginning of the thirty-third jubilee [1569 A.M.] that they divided the earth into three parts, for Shem and Ham and Japheth, according to the inheritance of each, in the first year in the first week, when one of us who had been sent, was with them. And he called his sons, and they drew nigh to him, they and their children, and he divided the earth into the lots, which his three sons were to take in possession, and they reached forth their hands, and took the writing out of the bosom of Noah, their father. And there came forth on the writing as Shem's lot the middle of the earth which he should take as an inheritance for himself and for his sons for the generations of eternity, from the middle of the mountain range of Rafa, from the mouth of the water from the river Tina, and his portion goes towards the west through the midst of this river, and it extends till it reaches the water of the abysses, out of which this river goes forth and pours its waters into the sea Me'at, and this river flows into the great sea. **And all that is towards the north is Japheth's**, and all that is towards the south belongs to Shem.” (*The Book of Jubilees* 8.8-13)

Note a more detailed description of the land of Japheth that lay to the north of the Middle East recorded in *The Book of Jubilees*.

“And for Japheth came forth the third portion beyond the river Tina to the north of the outflow of its waters, and it extends north-easterly to the whole region of Gog, and to all the country east thereof. And it extends northerly to the north, and it extends to the mountains of Qelt towards the north, and towards the sea of Ma'uk, and it goes forth to the east of Gadir as far as the region of the waters of the sea. And it extends until it approaches the west of Fara and it returns towards 'Aferag, and it extends easterly to the waters of the sea of Me'at. And it extends to the region of the river Tina in a north-easterly direction until it approaches the boundary of its waters towards the mountain Rafa, and it turns round towards the north. This is the land which came forth for Japheth and his sons as the portion of his inheritance which he should possess for himself and his sons, for their generations for ever; five great islands, and a great land in the north.

²⁵Henry Wallace, “Meshech, Mesech,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2038.

²⁶Mark Ruthven and Thab Griess, *The Prophecy that is Shaping History: New Research on Ezekiel's Vision of the End* (Longwood, Florida: Xulon Press, 2003), 12, 101.

But it is cold, and the land of Ham is hot, and the land of Shem is neither hot nor cold, but it is of blended cold and heat.” (*The Book of Jubilees* 8.25-30)

In a further detailed description of the land to the north, we read in *The Book of Jubilees* that Noah placing a curse upon any of his sons that attempted to seize the inheritance of another, saying that God would destroy these intruders with the sword and with fire. This type of destruction is exactly the way Ezekiel describes that manner in which God will destroy Gog and his allies when they come against the nation of Israel (see Ezekiel 38:18-22).

“And Japheth also divided the land of his inheritance amongst his sons. And the first portion came forth for Gomer to the east from the north side to the river Tina; and in the north there came forth for Magog all the inner portions of the north until it reaches to the sea of Me'at. And for Madai came forth as his portion that he should possess from the west of his two brothers to the islands, and to the coasts of the islands. And for Javan came forth the fourth portion every island and the islands which are towards the border of Lud. And for Tubal there came forth the fifth portion in the midst of the tongue which approaches towards the border of the portion of Lud to the second tongue, to the region beyond the second tongue unto the third tongue. And for Meshech came forth the sixth portion, all the region beyond the third tongue till it approaches the east of Gadir. And for Tiras there came forth the seventh portion, four great islands in the midst of the sea, which reach to the portion of Ham [and the islands of Kamaturi came out by lot for the sons of Arpachshad as his inheritance]. And thus the sons of Noah divided unto their sons in the presence of Noah their father, and he bound them all by an oath, imprecating a curse on every one that sought to seize the portion which had not fallen (to him) by his lot. And they all said, ‘So be it; so be it.’ for themselves and their sons for ever throughout their generations till the day of judgment, on which the Lord God shall judge them with a sword and with fire for all the unclean wickedness of their errors, wherewith they have filled the earth with transgression and uncleanness and fornication and sin.” (*The Book of Jubilees* 9.7-15)

Ezekiel 38:2-3 declares that a prince by the name of Gog who lives in the land of Magog will rule over his brothers Meshech and Tubal at this time in prophetic history.

Regarding the other three sons of Japheth who are not listed in this coalition of armies, scholars believe that they are able to identify them. The *ISBE* says Javan is considered by scholars as being identical with the name “Ion,” who was the father of the Ionians. These were the ancestors of the region of Greece.²⁷ Tiras refers to Tarshish, the Thracians (Thrakes) or the Tursenioi, a race of Pelasgian pirates, “who left many traces of their ancient power in the islands and coasts of the Aegean, and who were doubtless identical with the Etruscans of Italy.”²⁸ Madai refers to the Medes.²⁹ These three areas are considered to be land to the north of the Middle East and was part of the inheritance of the sons of Japheth. Gomer, the seventh son of Japheth, is referred to in Ezekiel 38:6. His descendants are believed to be a reference to a barbaric horde of Aryans who in the seventh century B.C. left southern Russia and poured through the Caucasus into western Asia.

38:3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

²⁷David Francis Roberts, “Javan,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 1572.

²⁸Horace J. Wolf, “Tiras,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2986.

²⁹W. St. Clair Tisdall, “Madai,” and “Medes,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 1961, 2017-2018.

38:4 And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

38:5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

38:5 *Comments* - The Hebrew name “Persia” (פָּרַס) is of uncertain origin, being used twenty-eight times in the Old Testament. *Strong* says it may be derived from (פָּרַס), which means, “to split, divide.”

Persia is better understood as a reference to the Persian Empire. *BDB* says, “Persia proper was bounded on the west by Susiana or Elam, on the north by Media, on the south by the Persian Gulf and on the east by Carmania Persian”; however, the territory that the Persian empire controlled “encompassed the territory from India on the east to Egypt and Thrace on the west, and included, besides portions of Europe and Africa, the whole of western Asia between the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian and the Jaxartes on the north, the Arabian desert, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean on the south.”

The Hebrew name “Ethiopia,” or “Cush,” (כּוּשׁ), means, “black” (*BDB*), being used thirty times in the Old Testament. The *BDB* says that Ethiopia refers to “the son of Ham and grandson of Noah and the progenitor of the southernmost peoples located in Africa,” and “the land occupied by the descendants of Cush was located around the southern parts of the Nile (Ethiopia).” John Hagee says Ethiopia refers to the Sinai Peninsula.³⁰

The Hebrew name “Libya” (לִיבְיָהוּ) means, “a bow,” referring to “a nation and people of north Africa, probably Libya” (*BDB*). This word is used seven times in the Old Testament. *Smith* says, “It is applied by the Greek and Roman writers to the African continent, generally, however, excluding Egypt.”

These armies are well prepared for battle in the phrase “all of them with shield and helmet.”

38:6 Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.

38:6 *Comments* – The Hebrew name “Gomer” (גֹּמֵר) means, “complete” (*BDB*). The *ISBE* says that Gomer is believed to be a reference to “a barbaric horde of Aryans who in the seventh century B.C. left Southern Russia and poured through the Caucasus into Western Asia.”³¹ *BDB* says Gomer was “the progenitor of the early Cimmerians and other branches of the Celtic family.” Gomer was one of the seven sons of Japheth, the son of Noah. This also was a northern tribe that joins itself with Gog, its brother and the prince of Magog. The Hebrew word (אֲגַרִי) means, “wings (of an army), crowds (of troops)” (*Strong*).

The Hebrew name “Togarmah” (תּוֹגַרְמָה) means, “thou wilt break her” (*BDB*). Togarmah was the son of Gomer and grandson of Japheth. *BDB* says these descendants dwelt in the area of Armenia, since we can see the letters “armah” within the name. There are only four references to this name in the Old Testament (Gen 10:3, 1 Chron 1:6, Eze 27:14; 38:6).

³⁰John Hagee, *John Hagee Today* (San Antonio, Texas: John Hagee Ministries), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), 24 November 2008, television program.

³¹George Ricker Berry, “Gomer,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 1276.

John Hagee says that Gomer is Germany, and that Togarmah is Turkey. This passage tells us that they will ally with Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya (38:5), with Russia being their commander (38:7).³²

38:7 Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

38:7 *Comments* - Today, Russia is emerging as the “commander” of the Islamic nations that are gathering against Israel.

38:8 After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.

38:8 *Comments* - Ezekiel 38:8 tells us that the restoration of the nation of Israel will precede the Battle of Gog and Magog. Israel’s restoration in 1948 takes place “after many days” and “in the latter days,” a period two and a half thousand years after this prophecy. Israel will be “brought back from the sword,” a reference to the Hitler’s genocide against the Jews during WWII. The new Israel is nation that has been “gathered out of many people.” This land, which was destroyed by the Babylonians and Romans, laid waste for centuries, has now been “brought fourth out of the nations,” referring to the fact that Jews have gathered in Israel from many nations. These great armies of the north will gather during a time when Israel appears to “dwell safely all of them.” During this season of Israel’s restoration, the battle of Gog and Magog will take place, which is popularly believed to be during the time of the Great Tribulation period that immediately precedes the thousand-year Millennial Reign of Christ.

38:9 Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

38:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:

38:11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

38:12 To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

38:13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

38:13 *Comments* - The Hebrew name “Sheba” (שֶׁבַע) means, “seven” or “an oath or covenant” (BDB), occurring twenty-three times in the Old Testament. However, there are five different individuals by this name in the Old Testament.

In the Table of Nations (Gen 10:1-32) there are two individuals named Sheba listed in this genealogy as the sons of Noah. The first Sheba was the son of Raamah the son of Cush who was the son of Ham (10:7). The second individual named Sheba (Gen 10:28) was the son of

³²John Hagee, *John Hagee Today* (San Antonio, Texas: John Hagee Ministries), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), 24 November 2008, television program.

Joktan son of Eber who was a descendant of Shem. Some scholars, such as *Gesenius*, suggest that Sheba the Hamite of 10:7 is twice identified with his brother Dedan (see Ez 38:13) in an effort to make him a distinct individual from Sheba the Shemite of Genesis 10:28. *Gesenius* suggests that Sheba the Hamite lived in northern Arabia “near the Persian Gulf and near the mouth of the Euphrates,” while Sheba the Shemite would be a reference to the country of Sheba in southern Arabia.

Regarding this south Arabian country of Sheba, the Old Testament refers to the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-13, 1 Chron 9:1-12), which scholars recognize as a country in southern Arabia from whom come the Sabaens. These people are referred to as traders in gold and spices who inhabited a land remote from Palestine (Ps 72:15, Is 60:6, Jer 6:20, Eze 27:22). Jesus referred to the queen of Sheba as the queen of the south (Matt 12:42). Joel refers to the Sabeans as “a people afar off” who will purchase the Israelites as slaves. In Job 1:15 the Sabeans fell upon Job’s possessions and took them. The *ISBE* says the Arab genealogists tell us that “Saba is represented as the great-grandson of Qachtan (= Joktan) and ancestor of all the South-Arabian tribes. He is the father of Chimyar and Kahlan. He is said to have been named Saba because he was the first to take prisoners (shabhah) in war. He founded the capital of Saba and built its citadel Marib (Mariaba), famous for its mighty barrage.”³³ Its capital was Marib, located in modern day Yemen.³⁴ The *ISBE* says we can also find the names of other brothers to Sheba the Shemite in southern Arabia, giving the modern example of the name Hazarmaveth = Hadhramaut (Gen 10:26) in this region.³⁵

The Hebrew name “Dedan” (דדן) means, “low country” (*BDB*). Dedan was the brother of Sheba and the son of Raamah the son of Cush who was the son of Ham. This name is mentioned fifteen times in the Old Testament in reference to two different individuals.

A reference to this people in Isaiah 21:13 called them the inhabitants of Arabia who traveled in caravans. This is one reason why some scholars suggest that Dedan’s brother Sheba the Hamite (Gen 10:7) is identical with Sheba the Shemite (Gen. 10:28), since Sheba the Shemite clearly inhabited southern Arabia. *Gesenius* says this name can still be identified on the island of Daden, “an island of the Persian Gulf.” This individual is not to be confused with Dedan the son of Jokshan and grandson of Abraham and Keturah who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Edom.

John Hagee says that “Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish” refer to Europe. He teaches that the young lions are a reference to England and the U.S.A. He explains that the emblem of the U.K. is the lion. Therefore, the phrase “young lions” would be a reference to all those nations who have come forth out of the U.K., which includes the U.S.A.³⁶ However, it may also refer to the Middle Eastern nations that have descended from the nations of Sheba and Dedan of Arabia.

38:10-13 **Comments - Gog’s Reason for Waging War against Israel Is Economic Gain** – Ezekiel 38:10-13 tells us that the reason Gog (modern Russia) and its allies wage war against the restored nation of Israel is for economic gain. The economy of the Middle East is driven by oil. It would make sense for Russia to see this war as an opportunity to gain its position as the leading world power by controlling the Middle East. It would please the Arabs to

³³Thomas Hunter Weir, “Sheba,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2752.

³⁴David J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20*, in *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 17, eds. Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas: Word Books, Publisher, 1989), 31, Logos.

³⁵Thomas Hunter Weir, “Sheba,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 2752.

³⁶John Hagee, *John Hagee Today* (San Antonio, Texas: John Hagee Ministries), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), 24 November 2008, television program.

destroy the Jews and recover their land. It would give Russia favor among the Arabs and their oil reserves. It is oil that brings much wealth and prosperity to a nation. Without oil, a nation remains deprived of most luxuries.

38:14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?

38:15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

38:16 And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

38:17 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?

38:18 And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face.

38:19 For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

38:20 So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

38:20 *Comments* – Ezekiel 38:20 follows the same division of the animal kingdom that is presented in the Creation Story (Gen 1:1-2:3). This verse also presents these divisions (fish, birds, beasts, creeping things, man) in the same order as they are presented in the Creation Story.

38:19-20 *Comments* – Ezekiel 38:19-20 describes a great earthquake that shakes the entire earth and its inhabitants, an event that is used to destroy the invading armies encamped against the re-born nation of Israel. The book of Revelation refers to a great earthquake that takes place during the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:16, 18).

38:21 And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

38:22 And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

38:22 *Comments* – Ezekiel 38:22 refers to a great rain of hail upon the armies, a description also found in Revelation 16:21, “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

38:18-22 *Comments - Three Methods of Destruction* – Ezekiel 38:18-22 describes three ways in which God will fight against Gog and its allies. He will bring a great earthquake upon the land (38:19-20), then He will bring confusion so that every man will turn his sword against his brother (38:21), followed with a great rain of fire, hail, and brimstones (38:22). This seems to describe the period of the Great Tribulation Period.

It is interesting to note a comment in *The Book of Jubilees* (9:15), which gives the description of the allotment of Japhath, the son of Noah, which lay to the North. We read that Noah ended this allotment by placing a curse upon any of his sons that attempts to seize the inheritance of another. This curse that Noah pronounced was that God would destroy them with the sword and with fire, which is exactly the way Ezekiel describes that manner in which God destroys Gog and his allies in Ezekiel 38:18-22.

38:23 Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Chapter 39

39:1 Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

39:2 And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:

39:2 *Comments* - Why would God leave a sixth part alive. John Hagee suggests that He will do it to leave some people who would take back a testimony to their nations that the God of Israel is the true God.³⁷

39:3 And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.

39:4 Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured.

39:4 *Comments* - Ezekiel 39:4 refers to the birds and beasts of the field feasting upon the carcasses of those enemies slain in battle. In the Eastern mindset honor is everything. The most dishonorable thing to happen to a person is to lie in the field without an honorable burial and their bodies be feed to the birds and beasts of the field. Scholars believe a parallel reference to the same event is found in Revelation 19:17-19, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."

39:5 Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

39:6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

39:7 So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

³⁷John Hagee, *John Hagee Today* (San Antonio, Texas: John Hagee Ministries), on Trinity Broadcasting Network (Santa Ana, California), 24 November 2008, television program.

39:7 *Comments* - Why is God displaying His wrath at the Battle of Armageddon; so that Israel will know that YHWH is their God, and the Jews will accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah? It is a part of His work of redemption for God's people. In addition, this great display of God's wrath will serve as a testimony to the Gentile nations that God is Lord over the nations as well, so that they will repent and embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

39:8 Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken.

39:8 *Comments* - God, who "callesth those things which be not as though they were . . ." (Rom 4:17), has made the decree that these prophetic events will take place.

39:9 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years:

39:10 So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD.

39:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog.

39:12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.

39:13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.

39:14 And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

39:15 And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog.

39:16 And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

39:17 And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.

39:18 Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan.

39:19 And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

39:20 Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD.

39:17-20 *Comments* – In Ezekiel 39:17-20, he fowls and beasts are called to devour the slain. We find a parallel passage in Revelation 19:17-18, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and

gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

39:21 And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.

39:22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward.

39:22 *Comments* - The God of Israel allowed these mighty armies to gather and come against Israel for the purpose of displaying His Almighty providence and rule over His people, so that Israel will turn back to Him.

39:23 And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.

39:24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.

39:25 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

39:26 After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

39:27 When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

39:28 Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

39:29 Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

39:25-29 *Comments – The Establishment of the Nation of Israel* – When God destroys the armies that have gathered against the newly gathered Israel, He will establish Himself as their God and they will acknowledge and serve Him, thus, the need for the restoration of the Temple in the following chapters of Ezekiel.

Chapter 40

40:1-46:24 **The Restoration of the Temple** – Ezekiel 40:1-46:24 deals with the issue of the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

40:1 In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.

40:2 In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.

40:3 And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

40:4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

40:5 And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

40:6 Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, and went up the stairs thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad; and the other threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad.

40:7 And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers were five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed.

40:8 He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.

40:9 Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate was inward.

40:10 And the little chambers of the gate eastward were three on this side, and three on that side; they three were of one measure: and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side.

40:11 And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

40:12 The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side, and the space was one cubit on that side: and the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side.

40:13 He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth was five and twenty cubits, door against door.

40:14 He made also posts of threescore cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate.

40:15 And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate were fifty cubits.

40:16 And there were narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the arches: and windows were round about inward: and upon each post were palm trees.

40:17 Then brought he me into the outward court, and, lo, there were chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement.

40:18 And the pavement by the side of the gates over against the length of the gates was the lower pavement.

40:19 Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court without, an hundred cubits eastward and northward.

40:20 And the gate of the outward court that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof.

40:21 And the little chambers thereof were three on this side and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate: the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

40:22 And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, were after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches thereof were before them.

40:23 And the gate of the inner court was over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east; and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits.

40:24 After that he brought me toward the south, and behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these measures.

40:25 And there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about, like those windows: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

40:26 And there were seven steps to go up to it, and the arches thereof were before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof.

40:27 And there was a gate in the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

40:28 And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these measures;

40:29 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

40:30 And the arches round about were five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad.

40:31 And the arches thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it had eight steps.

40:32 And he brought me into the inner court toward the east: and he measured the gate according to these measures.

40:33 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, were according to these measures: and there were windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

40:34 And the arches thereof were toward the outward court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

40:35 And he brought me to the north gate, and measured it according to these measures;

40:36 The little chambers thereof, the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, and the windows to it round about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

40:37 And the posts thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

40:38 And the chambers and the entries thereof were by the posts of the gates, where they washed the burnt offering.

40:39 And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering and the sin offering and the trespass offering.

40:40 And at the side without, as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, were two tables; and on the other side, which was at the porch of the gate, were two tables.

40:41 Four tables were on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew their sacrifices.

40:42 And the four tables were of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

40:43 And within were hooks, an hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables was the flesh of the offering.

40:44 And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north.

40:45 And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house.

40:46 And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him.

40:47 So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar that was before the house.

40:48 And he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.

40:49 The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

Chapter 41

41:1 Afterward he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle.

41:2 And the breadth of the door was ten cubits; and the sides of the door were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits: and the breadth, twenty cubits.

41:3 Then went he inward, and measured the post of the door, two cubits; and the door, six cubits; and the breadth of the door, seven cubits.

41:4 So he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, This is the most holy place.

41:5 After he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of every side chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side.

41:6 And the side chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which was of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house.

41:7 And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst.

41:8 I saw also the height of the house round about: the foundations of the side chambers were a full reed of six great cubits.

41:9 The thickness of the wall, which was for the side chamber without, was five cubits: and that which was left was the place of the side chambers that were within.

41:10 And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side.

41:11 And the doors of the side chambers were toward the place that was left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about.

41:12 Now the building that was before the separate place at the end toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits.

41:13 So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;

41:14 Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

41:15 And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which was behind it, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court;

41:16 The door posts, and the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, cieled with wood round about, and from the ground up to the windows, and the windows were covered;

41:17 To that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure.

41:18 And it was made with cherubims and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces;

41:19 So that the face of a man was toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about.

41:20 From the ground unto above the door were cherubims and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple.

41:21 The posts of the temple were squared, and the face of the sanctuary; the appearance of the one as the appearance of the other.

41:22 The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me, This is the table that is before the LORD.

41:23 And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.

41:24 And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door.

41:25 And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubims and palm trees, like as were made upon the walls; and there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without.

41:26 And there were narrow windows and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch, and upon the side chambers of the house, and thick planks.

Ezekiel 42

42:1 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place, and which was before the building toward the north.

42:2 Before the length of an hundred cubits was the north door, and the breadth was fifty cubits.

42:3 Over against the twenty cubits which were for the inner court, and over against the pavement which was for the utter court, was gallery against gallery in three stories.

42:4 And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors toward the north.

42:5 Now the upper chambers were shorter: for the galleries were higher than these, than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building.

42:6 For they were in three stories, but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts: therefore the building was straitened more than the lowest and the middlemost from the ground.

42:7 And the wall that was without over against the chambers, toward the utter court on the forepart of the chambers, the length thereof was fifty cubits.

42:8 For the length of the chambers that were in the utter court was fifty cubits: and, lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits.

42:9 And from under these chambers was the entry on the east side, as one goeth into them from the utter court.

42:10 The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, over against the separate place, and over against the building.

42:11 And the way before them was like the appearance of the chambers which were toward the north, as long as they, and as broad as they: and all their goings out were both according to their fashions, and according to their doors.

42:12 And according to the doors of the chambers that were toward the south was a door in the head of the way, even the way directly before the wall toward the east, as one entereth into them.

42:13 Then said he unto me, The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be holy chambers, where the priests that approach unto the LORD shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; for the place is holy.

42:14 When the priests enter therein, then shall they not go out of the holy place into the utter court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they are holy; and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to those things which are for the people.

42:15 Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house, he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east, and measured it round about.

42:16 He measured the east side with the measuring reed, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.

42:17 He measured the north side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.

42:18 He measured the south side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed.

42:19 He turned about to the west side, and measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed.

42:20 He measured it by the four sides: it had a wall round about, five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.

Chapter 43

43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:

43:2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

43:3 And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

43:4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

43:5 So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

43:6 And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me.

43:7 And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.

43:8 In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.

43:9 Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

43:10 Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern.

43:11 And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

43:12 This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

43:13 And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the altar.

43:14 And from the bottom upon the ground even to the lower settle shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; and from the lesser settle even to the greater settle shall be four cubits, and the breadth one cubit.

43:15 So the altar shall be four cubits; and from the altar and upward shall be four horns.

43:16 And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof.

43:17 And the settle shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof; and the border about it shall be half a cubit; and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; and his stairs shall look toward the east.

43:18 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon.

43:19 And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.

43:20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

43:21 Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary.

43:22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock.

43:23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

43:24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the LORD.

43:25 Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

43:26 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

43:27 And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 44

44:1 Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut.

44:2 Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.

44:3 It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.

44:4 Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face.

44:5 And the LORD said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary.

44:6 And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations,

44:7 In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.

44:8 And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves.

44:9 Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.

44:10 And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity.

44:11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them.

44:12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity.

44:13 And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed.

44:14 But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.

44:15 But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD:

44:16 They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge.

44:17 And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.

44:18 They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with any thing that causeth sweat.

44:19 And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments.

44:20 Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

44:21 Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.

44:22 Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before.

44:23 And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

44:24 And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.

44:25 And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves.

44:26 And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.

44:27 And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord GOD.

44:28 And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession.

44:29 They shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs.

44:30 And the first of all the firstfruits of all things, and every oblation of all, of every sort of your oblations, shall be the priest's: ye shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

44:31 The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

Chapter 45

45:1 Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the LORD, an holy portion of the land: the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand. This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about.

45:2 Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth, square round about; and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof.

45:3 And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place.

45:4 The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary.

45:5 And the five and twenty thousand of length, and the ten thousand of breadth, shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves, for a possession for twenty chambers.

45:6 And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy portion: it shall be for the whole house of Israel.

45:7 And a portion shall be for the prince on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy portion, and of the possession of the city, before the oblation of the holy portion, and before the possession of the city, from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward: and the length shall be over against one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border.

45:8 In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

45:9 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord GOD.

45:10 Ye shall have just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.

45:11 The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

45:12 And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs: twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.

45:13 This is the oblation that ye shall offer; the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley:

45:14 Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, which is an homer of ten baths; for ten baths are an homer:

45:15 And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD.

45:16 All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel.

45:17 And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

45:18 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary:

45:19 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put it upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.

45:20 And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house.

45:21 In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.

45:22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering.

45:23 And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering.

45:24 And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah.

45:25 In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil.

Chapter 46

46:1 Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

46:2 And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

46:3 Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

46:4 And the burnt offering that the prince shall offer unto the LORD in the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish.

46:5 And the meat offering shall be an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs as he shall be able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

46:6 And in the day of the new moon it shall be a young bullock without blemish, and six lambs, and a ram: they shall be without blemish.

46:7 And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

46:8 And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof.

46:9 But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it.

46:10 And the prince in the midst of them, when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.

46:11 And in the feasts and in the solemnities the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and an ephah to a ram, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

46:12 Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the LORD, one shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate.

46:13 Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD of a lamb of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it every morning.

46:14 And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.

46:15 Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning for a continual burnt offering.

46:16 Thus saith the Lord GOD; If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance.

46:17 But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them.

46:18 Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; but he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

46:19 After he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there was a place on the two sides westward.

46:20 Then said he unto me, This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the meat offering; that they bear them not out into the utter court, to sanctify the people.

46:21 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court.

46:22 In the four corners of the court there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four corners were of one measure.

46:23 And there was a row of building round about in them, round about them four, and it was made with boiling places under the rows round about.

46:24 Then said he unto me, These are the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.

Chapter 47

47:1-48:35 **The Restoration of the Land of Israel** – Ezekiel 47:1-48:35 deals primarily with the restoration of the land of Israel to the twelve tribes.

47:1 Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

47:2 Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

47:3 And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

47:4 Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

47:5 Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

47:6 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

47:7 Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

47:8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

47:9 And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

47:10 And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

47:10 “they shall be a place to spread forth nets: their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the Great Sea, exceeding many” - *Comments* - Jimmy Swaggart says Ezekiel 47:10 refers to the spread of the Gospel to many kinds of nations across the earth, with multitudes being saved.³⁸

47:11 But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

47:12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

47:13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions.

47:14 And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance.

47:15 And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad;

47:16 Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazarhatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran.

47:17 And the border from the sea shall be Hazarenan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And this is the north side.

47:18 And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And this is the east side.

47:19 And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh, the river to the great sea. And this is the south side southward.

47:20 The west side also shall be the great sea from the border, till a man come over against Hamath. This is the west side.

47:21 So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.

47:22 And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

47:23 And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.

Chapter 48

³⁸Jimmy Swaggart, “Amazing Answers To Prayers,” in *The Evangelist* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, February 1988).

48:1 Now these are the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazarenan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east and west; a portion for Dan.

48:2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.

48:3 And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Naphtali.

48:4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Manasseh.

48:5 And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Ephraim.

48:6 And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Reuben.

48:7 And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Judah.

48:8 And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the offering which ye shall offer of five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth, and in length as one of the other parts, from the east side unto the west side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.

48:9 The oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD shall be of five and twenty thousand in length, and of ten thousand in breadth.

48:10 And for them, even for the priests, shall be this holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof.

48:11 It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray.

48:12 And this oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy by the border of the Levites.

48:13 And over against the border of the priests the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand.

48:14 And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the firstfruits of the land: for it is holy unto the LORD.

48:15 And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, shall be a profane place for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof.

48:16 And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred.

48:17 And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty.

48:18 And the residue in length over against the oblation of the holy portion shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be over against the oblation of the holy portion; and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that serve the city.

48:19 And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.

48:20 All the oblation shall be five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.

48:21 And the residue shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city, over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation; and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof.

48:22 Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.

48:23 As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side unto the west side, Benjamin shall have a portion.

48:24 And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon shall have a portion.

48:25 And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a portion.

48:26 And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a portion.

48:27 And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a portion.

48:28 And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea.

48:29 This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these are their portions, saith the Lord GOD.

48:30 And these are the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures.

48:31 And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi.

48:32 And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan.

48:33 And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun.

48:34 At the west side four thousand and five hundred, with their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali.

48:35 It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.

48:35

“The LORD is there” – *Comments* - ‘Jehovah Shammah’! What a wonderful name for God to reveal to His children when Israel was at their most spiritual low and further from the Temple than they had ever been in their history. In fact, the Temple was destroyed at this time in history. God is telling His people that He has not abandoned them, and is in fact working to restore their fellowship with Him.

The Lord’s presence was with the nation of Israel in former times before these people fell into sin and idolatry under King Solomon. They will once again be united as one people and service to the Lord, as we see in Ezekiel 35:10, “Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there.” His presence will return when God’s plan of restoration for Israel is fulfilled, as prophesied in Ezekiel 48:35.

APPENDIX 2: THEMATIC SCHEME OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew – Testimony of Scripture	Ephesians – His Role	Philippians - Our Role	Colossians -- His Role	Galatians -- Our Role	1 & 2 Thessalonians -- His Role	1 & 2 Corinthians -- Our Role	1 & 2 Timothy – Role of Our Spirit	Titus – Role of Our Mind	Philemon - Role of Our Body	Hebrew – The High Priesthood of Jesus Christ	James – Our Sanctification by the Holy Spirit	1 Peter – Our Divine Election by God the Father	2 Peter - Mind	1, 2, 3 John - Spirit	Jude - Body	The Book of Revelation										
																	Foreknowledge of the Father	Justification Thru Jesus Christ	Sanctification by Holy Spirit	Romans - Justification thru God the Father (Rom. 8:28-30)	Pastoral Epistles - Church Order & Discipline	Persecutions From Without (1 Pet. 1:2)	False Doctrines From Within	Glorification of the Church		
																									Church Epistles - Doctrine	General Epistles - Perseverance in the Faith
John - Testimony of Jesus as the Son of God	Sanctification by the Holy Spirit - New Testament Epistles																									
Justification in Jesus Christ																										
Foreknowledge of God The Father																										

APPENDIX 3: CENTRAL IDEAS FOR SERMON PREPARATION

“An exegetical outline displays a passage’s thought flow; a homiletical outline organizes a preacher’s explanation, development, application, and communication of a passage’s truths.”
(Bryan Chapell)⁷²

The introductory material of this bible commentary searches for the theological framework of the book in order to identify the author’s thought flow, allowing for more accurate exegesis of the biblical text. The following collection of central ideas of the text has come out of this research to aid the preacher in sermon preparation. The three-fold sets of central ideas in this collection attempt to identify the ideas the writer intended for his original readers (exegetical ideas), the enduring and timeless doctrinal statements that remains true throughout history (theological ideas), and the Gospel’s call towards men for a particular response to the text (homiletical ideas). As such, the following exegetical, theological, and homiletical ideas provide an outline that endeavours to shape the flow of thought of the biblical text into messages that can be clearly communicated to a modern audience. In this way, the preacher/teacher of this book of the Bible can lead his audience towards the intended destination of the author.⁷³ These central ideas are an effort to understand what the author meant to say to his original recipients and to communicate this message to a modern audience.

Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures defines ‘exegetical idea’ as the main idea of a block, a section, a subsection, or a pericope of the text within the theological framework of a book that best expresses what the writer intended for his original readers. Therefore, this idea is written using verbs in the past tense. For example, the exegetical idea of Matthew 1:1-2:12 says ‘The Old Testament Scriptures testify that Jesus Christ was predestined to be the Messiah, having fulfilled the Messianic prophecies concerning His humanity, deity, and Davidic kingship’.

Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures defines ‘theological idea’ as the primary theme of a block, a section, a subsection, or a pericope of the text within the theological framework of a book that best reflects and supports its primary theme. The theological idea is an enduring and timeless, doctrinal statement that remains true throughout history. Therefore, this idea is written using verbs in the present perfect tense. This idea uses the evidence of the exegetical idea to reflect the primary theme of the book. For example, the theological idea of Matthew 1:1-2:12 says ‘Because He has proven to be both fully man and fully God, destined to reign as Lord over all (secondary theme), Jesus Christ is the Messiah and the Son of God (primary theme)’.

Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures defines ‘homiletical idea’ as the imperative theme of a block, a section, a subsection, or a pericope of the text within the theological framework of a book that best reflects the required response of the reader. The homiletical idea reflects the Gospel’s call towards men for a particular response based upon the theological idea. This idea best expresses what the book means for today’s readers.

⁷²Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching – Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 129.

⁷³The advantage of this three-fold approach to biblical studies has been recognized by the authors of *Theologisch-homiletisches Bibelwerk: Die Heilige Schrift. Alten und Neuen Testaments mit Rücksicht auf das theologisch-homiletische Bedürfniss des pastoralen Umtes in Verbindung mit namhaften evangelischen Theologen* (Bielefeld: Belhagen und Klasing, 1857-77), edited by Johann Peter Lange. This work was later translated into English as *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical with special reference to ministers and students* in twenty-five volumes (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1865-80) under the general editorship of Philip Schaff. The commentary notes in this series are divided into the same three categories: (1) exegetical and critical, (2) doctrinal and ethical, and (3) homiletical and practical. Later biblical commentary series can be grouped into three major categories: critical, devotional, and homiletical. These groups also reflect the exegetical-theological-homiletical approach used in *Study Notes on the Holy Scriptures*.

Therefore, this idea is written using verbs in the present tense. For example, the homiletical idea of Matthew 1:1-2:12 says, 'Because Jesus is the Son of God (primary theme), as testified through His predestined birth as the Messiah (secondary theme), the Gospel calls men to place their faith in Jesus Christ as both the Son of man and Son of God, destined to reign as Lord over all (imperative theme)'.

This collection of central ideas provides a theme-based approach for crafting exegetical studies on a book into a cohesive, text-driven, expository sermon series with a clear destination for its hearers. This approach to the biblical text follows the book's theological framework, which is the key to avoiding fragmentation. Crafting sermons around the book's framework aids the expository preacher in the delivery of a sequence of connected sermons/teachings with a clearly defined destination for the hearers.⁷⁴

A sermon series requires theological cohesion at its macro and micro-levels if the expository preacher is to take his congregation on the spiritual journey shaped from a book of the Bible. Each sermon of this spiritual journey should continually echo the book's central theme within its theological framework throughout the series. A clear, central theme supported by secondary themes allows the congregation to follow the preacher's messages as he leads them toward the spiritual transformation specific for that book. Therefore, an individual sermon text should hinge upon the central idea of its context, and this context should reflect the theological framework of the book itself.⁷⁵

In addition, the preacher should design the sermon series within the Christocentric framework of the Scriptures themselves. Specifically, the book's theological framework should support the central theme of the book itself, as well as the overarching theme of the major division of the Bible into which it is placed. Therefore, every sermon should reflect an aspect of the central theme of the book, and this central theme must fit properly within the theme of its major division in reflecting the overarching, Christocentric theme of the Holy Scriptures.⁷⁶ In order to design a sermon series into this type of cohesive unity at all levels, the preacher needs a theological, or theme-based approach that effectively identifies the central ideas at the macro-level as well as micro-level of the book's sermon pericopae.⁷⁷

This approach allows the text-driven preacher to follow the book's theological framework when preparing sermon outlines that reflect a clear and focused set of connected messages. He is able to develop a sermon series that clearly navigates through the biblical text and presents a clear destination for the congregation. This theme-based approach serves to bridge the gap between exegesis and homiletics by revealing a book's theological framework. A book's theological framework is the 'bridge' between exegesis and homiletics.

⁷⁴Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), xiv. Graeme Goldsworthy says, "In my experience the preaching of a series of sermons, say, from an epistle, easily leads the preacher to fragmentation. . . ." He says fragmentation disconnects Paul's doctrinal message in the first part of the epistle from his practical message in the last part.

⁷⁵For this reason, homileticians recommend reading the entire book numerous times in several versions in preparation for exegesis of its individual passages.

⁷⁶Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 57. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix echo the view of modern, conservative biblical hermeneutics by saying, "From beginning to end, the Bible has one overarching theme: the redemption of God's creation."

⁷⁷Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching—Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 16. Bryan Chapell discusses the need for preachers to find a place for each passage of Scripture in "the historical sweep of God's redemptive plan." He believes a preacher will find more success in preaching sermons as he discovers the redemptive message of Scriptures at both the micro and macro-levels.

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