

Notes and Observations from the Book of Ezekiel

1. The Book of Ezekiel's Storyline

- 1.) Ezekiel's vision and call (1-3)
- 2.) The coming judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (4-24)
- 3.) Oracles against the nations (25-32)
- 4.) Hope amid Jerusalem's fall (33-39)
- 5.) Ezekiel's vision of restoration (40-48)

2. The Book of Ezekiel's message:

Out of the sin and unfaithfulness of Israel and the godlessness and violence of the nations emerges a future of ultimate hope and restoration. People will be redeemed and restored in a new world animated by God's life-giving Spirit and permeated with God's love and justice.

3. Key Verses in the Book of Ezekiel:

"My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. When my sanctuary is among them forever, the nations will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel." (37:27-38)

4. Implied question throughout Ezekiel: "Where is God?"

Although God has abandoned the Temple in Jerusalem...

"Then the glory of the Lord moved away from the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. The cherubim lifted their wings and ascended from the earth right before my eyes; the wheels were beside them as they went. The glory of the God of Israel was above them, and it stopped at the entrance to the eastern gate of the Lord's house." (10:18-19)

5. Implied question throughout Ezekiel: "Where is God?"

His dwelling is with his people...

"Therefore say, 'This is what the Lord God says: Though I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet for a little while I have been a sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.' (11:16)

"The glory of the Lord entered the temple by way of the gate that faced east.⁵ Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the inner court, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple." (43:4-5)

*“The perimeter of the city will be six miles, and **the name of the city from that day on will be The Lord Is There.**”* (48:35)

6. God’s Prophet-Ezekiel---One weird dude
 - 1.) He lies on his side for over a year...he cooks his food over cow dung (Ch. 4)
 - 2.) Ezekiel cuts off his beard, weighs it, burns the hair, and sews it to his coat (Ch. 5)
 - 3.) Ezekiel is transported (levitated?) to Jerusalem (from Babylon) (Ch. 8)
 - 4.) Ezekiel digs a tunnel to exit his house, instead of using the front door (Ch. 12)
7. God’s Prophet Ezekiel—A tough job, but somebody’s got to do it
 - 1.) The people to whom he would preach and minister will ignore him (2:5; 3:7-8)
 - 2.) Ezekiel will be mute, able to speak only when God gives him something to say (3:26-27)
 - 3.) He will be confined to his house unless God instructs him to leave (3:24-25)
 - 4.) Ezekiel’s beloved wife will suddenly die as a sign that Israel will lose its beloved Temple (Ch. 24). (And he is not permitted to show his grief.)
8. Bizarre symbols and metaphors in the Book of Ezekiel
 - 1.) A “chariot” with wheels within wheels vision of God’s glory and presence surrounded by “four living creatures”/hybrid animals (Ch. 1)
 - 2.) The sweet and savory “eating” of God’s Word (Ch. 3)
 - 3.) The valley of dry bones (Ch. 37)
9. Benefits and gleanings from the Book of Ezekiel
 - 1.) It has personal mirror-like qualities (that I may see myself and my sin vividly, and be called to respond appropriately in repentance and faith) (18:30-32)
 - 2.) It serves as a map (to help us understand what God is doing in and for the world and his people. He has a plan and through the power of the Spirit and the work of his Son the New Covenant will be established. Though our present world is entrenched in corruption and systemic injustice, God is in charge and has a plan to bring light to our darkness, order to our chaos.)
 - 3.) It can be an anchor as we find hope amid our circumstances and sufferings. (Though we may ask, “Where is God?” we can rest assured that God is with his people: “The Lord is there.”)