

Ezekiel

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Fr Daoud Lamei

Introduction + Ezekiel 1:1-10

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/8rQS1F0hza0?si=6QgAw5fpo-16dBdl>

Introduction

- Ezekiel is one of the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel)
 - Length of time prophesying
 - Length of book
 - Written Prophets vs. Spoken Prophets
- History of the Old Testament
 - Pre-History: Creation, Adam/Eve, Cain/Abel, Noah, the Flood
 - Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Twelve Tribes (70 individuals) ~ 2000 BC
 - Law: Moses, Exodus, Passover, Red Sea, Tabernacle, Law (600,000 families) ~ 1500 BC
 - Judges: Colonizing Promised Land, Joshua, Judges, Samuel the Prophet
 - United Kingdom: Saul, David, Solomon, Temple ~1000 BC
 - Divided Kingdom
 - Idolatry entered into the kingdom (there was idolatry before e.g. golden calf, time of judges, but now it becomes part of life esp. in the Northern Kingdom)
 - From 900-400 BC
 - The Books of the Prophets take place during this period
 - The Prophets overlapped time periods, but not always geographically
 - Most of the Prophets were killed in Jerusalem ("Oh Jerusalem Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets")
 - Prophets' message was to repent and to point to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Even the last prophet - St John the Baptist - preached repentance and pointed to the Messiah Who was near
 - The Kings were mostly evil, the Southern Kingdom had some good kings
 - Assyrians took over the whole world and came to Israel and overtook it. Then they attempted to take Judah but failed (Sennacherib + Isaiah + Hezekiah)
 - Babylonians came and overtook Assyria and Egypt and the whole world and proceeded into Judah as well
 - Daniel and Ezekiel were taken during the Babylonian Captivity
 - They witnessed to the Lord to the non-Jews
 - Ezekiel is taken in the Babylonian Captivity, and despite being from a priestly line, was never able to serve as a priest because he lived in captivity where there was no Temple

- Daniel became a high rank in the government
- Daniel lived the entirety of the captivity (that's why he's last in the four major prophets)
- Prophet Categorization
 - Pre-Captivity
 - Captivity
 - Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - Post-Captivity
 - Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi
- Ezekiel
 - Approximately 600 BC
 - Two messages: Repent and Christ is coming
 - His main theme is HOPE
 - The most difficult book in the Old Testament to study because it's mostly visions (like Revelation)
 - Some people even accuse John of copying Ezekiel - in reality, they both saw the same heaven!
 - Name: God strengthens
 - From a Priestly Family
 - 30 Years old is the beginning of the priestly service and the first time he would offer a sacrifice
 - He was taken to captivity BEFORE he was 30
 - It's VERY HARD for a priest to be away from the altar (even in the NT)

Chapter 1

¹ Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, *that* the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. ² On the fifth *day* of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, ³ the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.

- "thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month"
 - Thirtieth year of his life
 - Prophets have to give their timeline based on the current ruler
- The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God
 - This is the most comforting thing for anyone - heaven!
 - Nothing gives more comfort or hope than eternal life and heavenly reward
 - God is telling him "why are you upset? Here, let me show you the heavens"
- The son of Buzi
 - Because he is a priestly line, it's important for him to mention his father's name
- Land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar
 - A small river in Babylon that was known
- The hand of the Lord was upon him there
 - These words of prophesy are from the Lord

⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. ⁵ Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. ⁶ Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. ⁷ Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. ⁸ The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. ⁹ Their wings touched one another. *The creatures* did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.

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

- Whirlwind
 - “ree7” and “ro7” in Arabic, and in the old language they are the same word
 - Whirlwind typically refers us to the Holy Spirit
 - cf. John 3 (Christ with Nicodemus)
 - cf. Pentecost
 - cf. Job (God speaks from a wind)
 - cf. Elijah (Wind, Earthquake, Fire, small voice)
 - cf. Moses when God was going to speak to the people
- Great Cloud
 - Also the Holy Spirit
 - Cf. The Cloud that moved 40 years with the Israelites
 - Cf. The Cloud of the Transfiguration
 - Cf. Cloud that filled the Tabernacle
 - Cf. 1 Kings 8 - Cloud that filled the Temple
- Raging Fire
 - Also the Holy Spirit!!!
- Brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire
 - His feet are like brass (Revelation)
- The Chariot of God
 - Carried by four incorporeal creatures of light, constantly moving (not just parked on the land)
 - Kingship of God
 - Not “animals” (7ayawanat) but “creatures” (ka-enat) and even the word 7ayawanat in its old meaning “has 7ay” has life.
 - Each creature has four faces
 - In Revelation its one face each!
 - That’s a perspective or what you would say from one angle or from far away!
 - Each creature has four wings
 - Elsewhere it’s six wings...
 - They have two wings on the top which make a dome over them, so Ezekiel only discusses the four wings
 - Legs feet and soles of feet; The hands of a man were under the wings

- Hands and legs = service
- Wings = prayer
- Spirits that serve humanity
- They all moved straight forward
 - They are working together
- Their wings are touching
 - God told Moses when he makes the mercy seat to have the wings of the two cherubim touch each other
- The likeness of their faces: man, lion, ox, eagle
 - Each face
 - Eagle: Divinity (high up, can't see him in heaven)
 - Man: Christ the Human
 - Ox: Christ the Sacrifice
 - Lion: Christ the King
 - Another interpretation
 - Man: Incarnation
 - Ox: Crucifixion
 - Lion: Resurrection
 - Eagle: Ascension
 - Another Interpretation
 - Gospel of Mark: Lion - Christ who is mighty
 - Gospel of John: Eagle - meanings that are high and heavenly
 - Gospel of Matthew: Man - focus on His humanity
 - Gospel of Luke: Ox - Christ offers Himself as a sacrifice
 - Another interpretation
 - Intercessors for the creation
 - Man - Humanity
 - Eagle - For the birds
 - Lion - The Beasts
 - Ox - The Cattle
 - Another Interpretation
 - The components of man
 - Man - Mind
 - Eagle - Spirit
 - Ox - Body
 - Lion - Strength
 - Consecration of my mind and my spirit and my body and my actions
 - As Christ said that we would be like the angels in the end of days
- The Chariot of God is an icon of the Church
 - St Macarius writes about how each Christian should be like these Creatures
 - Do you have zeal like fire?
 - Do you have the wind and cloud?
 - Do you have the hand that serves?
 - Do you have the prayer that doesn't stop?
 - Do you have the ox that would die for someone?
 - Do you have the man in his perfection?

- Do you have the wind, fire, cloud that guide you or you move in your own way?
- Etc.

Ezekiel 1:11-28, 2:1-5

<https://youtu.be/hXe5oFu6VAU?si=vjkpljDkvqoGZwIP>

Chapter 1

¹⁰ As for the likeness of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. ¹¹ Thus *were* their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two *wings* of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. ¹² And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.

- Six wings
 - Upwards: Spiritual Life
 - Touched each other: Love and Virtue
 - Bodies: Service

¹³ As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. ¹⁴ And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.

¹⁵ Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel *was* on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. ¹⁶ The appearance of the wheels and their workings *was* like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings *was*, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. ¹⁷ When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. ¹⁸ As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* full of eyes, all around the four of them. ¹⁹ When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. ²⁰ Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels. ²¹ When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels.

²² The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. ²³ And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. ²⁴ When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵ A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.

²⁶ And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. ²⁷ Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. ²⁸ Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

So when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

Chapter 2

¹ And He said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.” ² Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. ³ And He said to me: “Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. ⁴ For *they are* impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ ⁵ As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for *they are* a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

⁶ “And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns *are* with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though *they are* a rebellious house. ⁷ You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for *they are* rebellious. ⁸ But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.”

⁹ Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. ¹⁰ Then He spread it before me; and *there was* writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it *were* lamentations and mourning and woe.