

OT-OV

Lesson 117

1. Last week I finished an overview of the book of Lamentations. When time expired we were about to overview the book of Ezekiel.

2. Ezekiel was written by Ezekiel from the banks of the Chebar in about 597 B.C. The prophet provides first a prediction of a further exile to Babylon, details of the exile, several prophecies about the return of Christ and a description of the Devil and his fall. The prophet Ezekiel, from Babylon was given a series of visions.

2.1 The information in the book of Ezekiel place the prophet's ministry in the early years of his Babylonian exile. While the prophet Ezekiel, envisaged the fall and restoration of the house of Israel; his older contemporary, Jeremiah, in Jerusalem, taught of the dying gasps of the kingdom of Judah.

2.2 While Jeremiah was ministering in Judah, and Daniel (deported in 606) was serving at the court of Nebuchadnezzar, Ezekiel was preaching to the Jewish captives in Babylonia and the remnant left in the land.

3. Ezekiel and many others had been taken to Babylon along with King Jehoiachin. (Eze 1:2 and Eze 33:21)

3.1 In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar the city of Jerusalem was besieged and many of its citizens were taken hostage to Babylon. (2Ki 24:10-16).

4. Ezekiel shows a closer relationship in concept and message to Jeremiah than to Daniel. As we saw in our overview of Jeremiah, much of his prophecies were written while enduring great persecution. Ezekiel likewise prophesied while experiencing the events themselves. Daniel probably did not write down any of his prophecies until after the fall of Babylon in 539 .

5. Ezekiel's name signifies "God strengthens." He was a priest (Eze 1:3) of the family of Zadok.

5.1 There is no evidence that Ezekiel had performed priestly functions in Jerusalem before he was exiled to Babylon, even though he seems to have been thoroughly familiar with the temple of Solomon and its liturgy.

6. Nothing is known of the personal history of Ezekiel beyond what is found in his book. He is not mentioned in any Old or New Testament books.

7. Ezekiel is supposed to have been a young man at the time of the Exile, but his writings imply a maturity beyond his youth. A number of his prophecies are carefully dated in the

time of Jehoiachin's captivity.

8. The date in Eze 1:1 ("in the thirtieth year"), which has been the cause of much difference of opinion among commentators, must refer to Ezekiel's own age of 30, the age when Levites began their priestly duties.

Eze 1:1 In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

Chart Map of Babylon

9. Ezekiel was married (Eze 24:18) and lived probably in the village of Tel-abib near Nippur in Babylonia (Eze 3:15), in his own house.

Eze 24:16 "Son of man, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes. Yet do not lament or weep or shed any tears.

Eze 24:17 Groan quietly; do not mourn for the dead. Keep your turban fastened and your sandals on your feet; do not cover the lower part of your face or eat the customary food of mourners."

Eze 24:18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded.

Eze 3:15 I came to the exiles who lived at Tel Abib near the Kebar River. And there, where they were living, I sat among them for seven days--overwhelmed.

Eze 3:24 Then the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet. He spoke to me and said: "Go, shut yourself inside your house.

9.1 It is to Ezekiel's house the elders of Israel would come to consult. (Eze 8:1; 14:1; 20:1)

Eze 8:1 In the sixth year, in the sixth month on the fifth day, while I was sitting in my house and the elders of Judah were sitting before me, the hand of the Sovereign LORD came upon me there.

Eze 14:1 Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me.

Eze 20:1 In the seventh year, in the fifth month on the tenth day, some of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and they sat down in front of me.

10. Most of the captives were settled along the river Chebar, now identified as a royal canal of Nebuchadnezzar, flowing from the vicinity of Babylon to Erech.

10.1 It was there that Ezekiel saw some of his visions (Eze 1:3; 3:15 and 23).

Eze 1:3 the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him.

Eze 3:23 So I got up and went out to the plain. And the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown

11. The book is full of many personal experiences of the prophet like the death of his wife. God intended the prophet to be a sign to Israel in the experiences of this life.

12. He began his prophetic work in 592 B.C., in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity when he was 30 years old. He prophesied for at least 22 years. (Eze 29:17). Nothing is known concerning the end of his ministry.

Eze 29:17 In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month on the first day, the word of the LORD came to me:

Eze 29:18 "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon drove his army in a hard campaign against Tyre; every head was rubbed bare and every shoulder made raw. Yet he and his army got no reward from the campaign he led against Tyre.

Eze 29:19 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will carry off its wealth. He will loot and plunder the land as pay for his army.

Eze 29:20 I have given him Egypt as a reward for his efforts because he and his army did it for me, declares the Sovereign LORD.

13. At first Ezekiel's messages were not well received (Eze 14:1-14), but with the passing of time his prophecies began to bear fruit, and finally the nation was cleansed of its idolatry but only after 70 years of captivity.

Eze 14:1 Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me.

Eze 14:2 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

Eze 14:3 "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?

Eze 14:4 Therefore speak to them and tell them, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: When any Israelite sets up idols in his heart and puts a wicked stumbling block before his face and then goes to a prophet, I the LORD will answer him myself in keeping with his great idolatry.

Eze 14:5 I will do this to recapture the hearts of the people of Israel, who have all deserted me for their idols.'

Eze 14:6 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices!

Eze 14:7 "'When any Israelite or any alien living in Israel separates himself from me and sets up idols in his heart and puts a wicked stumbling block before his face and then goes to a prophet to inquire of me, I the LORD will answer him myself.

Eze 14:8 I will set my face against that man and make him an example and a byword. I will cut him off from my people. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

Eze 14:9 "'And if the prophet is enticed to utter a prophecy, I the LORD have enticed that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and destroy him from among my people Israel.

Eze 14:10 They will bear their guilt-- the prophet will be as guilty as the one who consults him.

Eze 14:11 Then the people of Israel will no longer stray from me, nor will they defile themselves anymore with all their sins. They will be my people, and I will be their God, declares the Sovereign LORD."

14. He began in a time of spiritual declension and uprooting. The prophet saw clearly that conditions among his people called for further judgment from the Lord. Further judgment would come in 586.

15. Many have conjectured Ezekiel suffered from a form of catalepsy on the basis of such passages as Eze 3:23-4:8.

15.1 Catalepsy is a condition characterized by lack of response to external stimuli and by muscular rigidity so that the limbs remain in whatever position they are placed. It is known to occur in a variety of physical and psychological disorders and can be induced by hypnosis.

Eze 3:23 So I got up and went out to the plain. And the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown.

Eze 3:24 Then the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet. He spoke to me and said: "Go, shut yourself inside your house.

Eze 3:25 And you, son of man, they will tie with ropes; you will be bound so that you cannot go out among the people.

Eze 3:26 I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent and unable to rebuke them, though they are a rebellious house.

Eze 3:27 But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you shall say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says.' Whoever will listen let him listen, and whoever will refuse let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house.

Eze 4:1 "Now, son of man, take a clay tablet, put it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it.

Eze 4:2 Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it.

Eze 4:3 Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

Eze 4:4 "Then lie on your left side and put the sin of the house of Israel upon yourself. You are to bear their sin for the number of days you lie on your side.

Eze 4:5 I have assigned you the same number of days as the years of their sin. So for 390 days you will bear the sin of the house of Israel.

Eze 4:6 "After you have finished this, lie down again, this time on your right side, and bear the sin of the house of Judah. I have assigned you 40 days, a day for each year.

Eze 4:7 Turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm prophesy against her.

Eze 4:8 I will tie you up with ropes so that you cannot turn from one side to the other

until you have finished the days of your siege.

16. Such a position arises from a failure to understand the nature of the visions and experiences of the prophet. His life and ministry were entirely under God's appointment. He has been called "the father of Judaism" because of the influence he is said to have exercised on the later worship of Israel.

17. A comparison may be drawn between the apostle John on the island of Patmos and Ezekiel at Chebar, both in a place of isolation and oppression by forces of the present evil world system.

18. In the 28th chapter of Ezekiel we find a description of Satan and a prediction of his ultimate defeat.

Eze 28:11 The word of the LORD came to me:

Eze 28:12 "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

Eze 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.

Eze 28:14 You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones.

Eze 28:15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.

Eze 28:16 Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.

Eze 28:17 Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.

Eze 28:18 By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries. So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching.

19. Ezekiel foretold of a day when Israel would be revived and their old dry bones will come alive. The story of the dry bones is a reference to the Second Advent and the implementation of the four unconditional covenants.

The Valley of Dry Bones

Eze 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,

Eze 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.

Eze 37:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

Eze 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.

Eze 37:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

Eze 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.

Eze 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.

Eze 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.

Eze 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.

Eze 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.

Eze 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.

Eze 37:12 Therefore prophecy 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.

Eze 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,

Eze 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.

20. So much for the book of Ezekiel. Now let's look at an overview of the book of Daniel.

The Book of Daniel

1. Daniel was written by Daniel from Babylon in about 534. Daniel, from Babylon tells of the struggles of the exile while providing remarkable prophecies of four world empires and their relationship to Israel.

2. There is a great deal about the latter day circumstances of Israel in the future land.

3. Our Lord's testimony about Daniel is not simply that the book was named after Daniel, but that its prophecies were written by him and often about him.

4. Evangelical scholars usually identify the author of our book with the Daniel of Eze 14:14 and 20, the Daniel of Eze 28:3 and the prophetic Daniel of Mat 24:15 and Mar 13:14.

Eze 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 destroy both man and beast which are in it:

Eze 14:14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, reside in that land ... saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 14:19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, and remove from the land both man and beast:

Eze 14:20 Though Noah, Daniel, and Job reside there, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, neither son nor daughter will be spared; only Noah, Daniel and Job will be delivered because of their righteousness.

Eze 28:3 Behold, Satan you are wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can keep from you ...

Mat 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Mar 13:14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

4.1 Daniel's righteousness, wisdom and gift of prophecy are documented in these passages.

4.2 In the 2nd century there were those who attempted to deny the authenticity of Daniel claiming that the book was written much later than purported and claiming its author was an unknown person who took the name Daniel as a pseudonym.

4.3 To deny Daniel however one must deny Ezekiel, Jesus and a large number of Jews who long before the 2nd century determined Daniel as part of the early canon.

4.3.1 This to include not only the many carefully copied manuscripts but also the formidable LXX.

4.4 We may therefore safely assume that Daniel is the author of the book and a historical prophet who lived during the reigns of four gentile Kings.

5. In modern times theological liberals have resurrected the arguments of the earlier unbelieving skeptics. In fact liberal Bible schools and seminaries spend significant time pontificating whether there was one Daniel or two Daniels.

5.1 As earlier noted with reference to Jeremiah, the basic reason why liberals deny the genuineness of Jeremiah and Daniel is that they have previously rejected the possibility of predictive prophecy.

5.2 This, though usually left unstated, is sometimes frankly admitted.

6. Let's look at several arguments in support of the genuineness of Daniel:

End Lesson