

A LOOK AT THE BOOK EZEKIEL

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AUTHOR AND DATE

Internal testimony and tradition credit the book to Ezekiel, son of Buzi, who ministered in the 6th century B.C.

He combined the office of priest and prophet and therefore paid special attention to the details concerning the temple and the priestly character of Messiah.

A summary statement of the life of Ezekiel may be found in the meaning of His name: "strengthened by God."

His call to minister among the exiles in Babylon was received in 593 B.C.

His last dated prophecy was given 22 years later in 571 B.C.

BACKGROUND

Ezekiel was taken captive in the 2nd deportation to Babylonia in 598 B.C. with Jehoiachin.

He wrote the first 32 chapters as a pre-exilic book, before the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

The people developed a hard attitude toward the message of the prophets.

They were warned of a coming judgment until they lost their fear of it.

Now the judgment was to come at last.

Preliminary judgment has come as a sign of what will yet come.

The emphasis of this prophecy is from the perspective of the captivity.

He uses the pre-exilic focus as part of his attempt to comfort them by explaining again why they are in the captivity.

He then proclaimed a message of future restoration under the leadership of their Messiah.

PURPOSE AND THEME

God is about to glorify His name which Israel has ignored and cheapened.

He tells them how He is going to teach them Who He is.

Repeated theme: "*And you shall know that I am the Lord!*"

The book foretells the means by which this will be accomplished.

God will defeat His people, destroy His city, and send them into captivity.

Following this judgment, He will restore them again.

They will learn Who He is because of all that He is going to do in their presence, both in judging them, as well as in restoring them.

Prior to the destruction of the city, the purpose is to call the people to repentance.

Following that judgment, the purpose is to encourage the people.

Both aspects reveal God's holiness, His love, and His mercy.

Both aspects reveal the totality of Who God is.

The entire program revealed demonstrates God's sovereign control over His people and over the nations of the world.

EZEKIEL

"You shall know that I am the Lord!"

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