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- Howdy, Prisca

Blessed be the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Welcome again to our Bible study journey.

This is part eight in our ongoing exploration of the books of the Bible. So far, we've covered the first 17 books, including significant ones like *Ezra* and *Jeremiah*. Today, by the grace of

God, we continue with the next book in line the prophetic book of Ezekiel.

Before we begin, if you haven’t yet gone through the earlier books we studied, I encourage you to do so at your own pace and in a prayerful, reflective manner. This teaching is intended to build upon your personal study, not replace it.

Overview of the Book of Ezekiel

- Book number: 26th in the Bible
- Chapters: 48
- Author: The prophet Ezekiel
- Name Meaning: *Ezekiel* means “God strengthens” or “God will strengthen.”

- Estimated date of writing: Between 593–570 BC

- Written during the Babylonian exile, particularly after the second wave of deportation of Jews to Babylon.

The Three Exiles to Babylon

The deportation of the Jews to Babylon occurred in three major waves, each connected to a different king:

1. First Exile Under King Jehoiakim (around 605 BC):
   Notable captives included Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 1:1–6).

2. Second Exile Under King Jehoiachin (a.k.a. Jeconiah or Yekoniah):
   This is when Ezekiel was taken into captivity (2 Kings 24:10–17).

3. Third and Final Exile Under King Zedekiah:
   Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, resulting in the complete destruction of Jerusalem, including the burning of the Temple. He was captured, had his eyes gouged out, and was taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:1–7).

At this point, Jeremiah, still in Jerusalem, mourned deeply for the people and warned them of the coming judgment, but they refused to listen (Jeremiah 25; Lamentations 1).

Ezekiel’s Calling and Initial Vision

Ezekiel began receiving visions while still on the journey into exile, around the River Kebar. His first vision is powerful and mysterious:

> *“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.”*

> Ezekiel 1:1, NIV

Like Isaiah (Isaiah 6) and John in Revelation (Revelation 4), Ezekiel saw the heavens opened, God's throne, and cherubim (angelic beings).

In the vision, God gave him a scroll, not to read, but to eat a symbolic act that represents internalizing God's message:

> *"Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll... and on both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe."*Ezekiel 2:9–10, NIV

This scroll symbolizes God's prophetic message filled with warnings, judgment, and sorrow.

God's Commission to Ezekiel

Ezekiel was called to speak not to foreign nations, but to the house of Israel specifically, those still remaining in Jerusalem and

the broader Jewish exilic community.

> *“He said to me, ‘Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel.’”*Ezekiel 3:1, NIV

> *“You are not being sent to a people of obscure speech and strange language... If I had sent you to them, they would have listened to you.”*Ezekiel 3:5–6, NIV

Here we see a painful truth: those closest to God’s covenant often reject His messengers, even more than outsiders might.

Structure of the Book of Ezekiel

The book of Ezekiel can be broken into four major sections:

1. Chapters 1–24: Judgment on Jerusalem and Judah

These chapters contain prophecies against the sinful practices of

Judah and Jerusalem including idolatry, injustice, and hypocrisy. Ezekiel warns them of the coming destruction of the Temple and the city.

Ezekiel’s message parallels that of Jeremiah, who remained in Jerusalem. While Jeremiah preached within the city, Ezekiel prophesied from among the exiles in Babylon. They both delivered the same warning impending judgment.

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2. Chapters 25–32: Judgment on the Surrounding Nations

After Jerusalem’s fall, Ezekiel shifts to prophesy against neighboring nations like Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt. These nations had mocked or harmed Israel and would now also experience judgment from God.

This fulfills God’s word that He is sovereign over all nations, not just Israel.

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3. Chapter 33: A Renewed Call to Repentance

Following judgment, God gives a renewed appeal for repentance.

He affirms personal responsibility and the need for each individual to turn from sin and live.

> *“As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.”*Ezekiel 33:11, NIV

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4. Chapters 34–48: Future Restoration and Hope

These final chapters are filled with hope and prophecy. God promises to restore His people, shepherd them Himself (Ezekiel 34), and eventually rebuild the Temple.

One of the most profound prophecies includes a future third temple, described in great architectural detail (Ezekiel 40–48). Many scholars and theologians believe this refers to an end times structure not yet built.

> *“And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD Is There.”*Ezekiel 48:35, ESV

Themes in Ezekiel

1. God’s Holiness and Justice

God demands purity in worship and conduct. He will not tolerate idolatry or compromise (Ezekiel 8, 14).

2. Personal Responsibility for Sin

Each soul is accountable before God. Salvation is not based on the righteousness of others.

> *“The soul who sins shall die.”*Ezekiel 18:4, 20, ESV

3. The Role of the Watchman

God calls His messengers to warn others. Failure to do so brings guilt.

> *“If you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way… his blood I will require at your hand.”*Ezekiel 33:8, ESV

4. False Prophets

God rebukes those who claim to speak for Him but speak from their own imagination:

> *“Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing!”*
> Ezekiel 13:3, ESV

5. Future Warfare Gog and Magog

In chapters 38–39, Ezekiel prophesies about a massive war involving nations around Israel many interpret this as an end times battle, possibly involving modern day Russia.

Relevance to Today’s Church

We now live in what Revelation 3 calls the Laodicean church age a lukewarm spiritual era.

> *“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot... So,*

> *because you are lukewarm… I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”*Revelation 3:15–16, NIV

This is not about a specific denomination. It’s a warning to the global body of Christ to wake up spiritually, return to holiness, and prepare for Christ’s return.

Call to Repentance and Salvation

If you have not yet surrendered fully to Christ if you are still caught in sin (sexual immorality, pornography, lying, slander, profanity) repent today. Jesus offers complete forgiveness and a new beginning. Salvation is free, but it requires a surrendered heart.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us… and to cleanse

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