

EZEKIEL

(This is a study in progress, so it is unfinished. Please use what you find at any stage to help in your Bible study and preparation of messages.)

A former colleague who went to be with the Lord, Nigel Lee, once said that Ezekiel reached the age of 30 when he could exercise as a priest but found himself in exile in Babylon with no temple and no sacrifices ... and probably in deep depression. The Lord met him through a vision of creatures and wheels above which the Lord himself appeared and spoke to Ezekiel calling him as a prophet to Israel.

All the things a priest counted dear in Jerusalem were to be destroyed and in exile he had no access to them anyway. His ministry was gone, his temple was gone, his sacrifices were gone, his teaching ministry as a priest was gone.

Actually, Ezekiel had been returned to the basics, the Lord himself. The priests and Levites were not given tribal territory in Israel when Joshua divided the land of Canaan. They were given 48 Levitical cities, with a bit of pasture land around them, scattered throughout Israel. The Lord was to be their inheritance.

On the banks of the Chebar River in exile Ezekiel was alone with God. God had not abandoned him. He appeared to him, spoke to him and gave him a ministry to Israel, and to the nations. He was to give God's pronouncements to Israel and the nations.

God had more than one way to appear to Ezekiel. At the end of his prophecy God showed Ezekiel his plans for the land from which he had been exiled, and his plans for the temple and sacrifices there! What a contrast to what Ezekiel was experiencing at that moment!

There are even two rivers, one is the Chebar River, where he sits with the rest of the captives, and the other is the river which flows out of the temple area to the east in the land and temple he saw a vision and recorded in the last chapters of his prophecy.

All this tells us that whoever we are and whatever our ministry is it all depends on the Lord! Without the Lord all the trappings around us, the "stage" and the "accompanying actors" can be swept away by the Lord. But the Lord can bring all that back too. He must get through to us that the gifts are far less important than the Giver.

All this also tells us that God's future plans are greater, more impressive and more beautiful than what we have experienced already.

Something else ... in that future land there is a place for the prince. At the beginning of Ezekiel, Jeconiah, Israel's prince (king), has been five years in

bondage to Nebuchadnezzar. God had to remove the leadership of Israel because although their authority derived from him they had rejected the Lord, and the Lord, after centuries of patiently calling them back to himself, had to abandon them.

DIVISIONS OR MOVEMENTS WITHIN EZEKIEL

Ezekiel is a long book. Chapters and verses are not original to the Bible text. How or at what points can we divide the book to study it and see the flow of thought throughout it? Some of Ezekiel is narrative but much of it is pronouncements or prophecies. However it is a book keyed to history. Throughout Ezekiel we have historical points of reference. Perhaps this is the way Ezekiel is divided and studied more easily. Let's look at those.

EZEKIEL: HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Bible references are from the Authorized Version (KJV).

I. *Eze 1:1 Ora aconteceu no trigésimo ano, no quarto mês, no dia quinto do mês, que estando eu no meio dos cativos, junto ao rio Quebar, se abriram os céus, e eu tive visões de Deus. Eze 1:2 No quinto dia do mês, já no quinto ano do cativo do rei Joaquim, Eze 1:3 veio expressamente a palavra do Senhor a Ezequiel, filho de Buzi, o sacerdote, na terra dos caldeus, junto ao rio Quebar; e ali esteve sobre ele a mão do Senhor. (7 chapters, Eze 4:6 E quando tiveres cumprido estes dias, deitar-te-ás sobre o teu lado direito, e levarás a iniquidade da casa de Judá; quarenta dias te dejes, cada dia por um ano. Why 40 years?)*

II. *Eze 8:1 Sucedeu pois, no sexto ano, no mês sexto, no quinto dia do mês, estando eu assentado na minha casa, e os anciãos de Judá assentados diante de mim, que ali a mão do Senhor Deus caiu sobre mim. (12 chapters Does this reference refer to the 6th year of their captivity or to the 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity? Were these two events the same?)*

III. *Eze 20:1 Ora aconteceu, no sétimo ano, no mês quinto, aos dez do mês, que vieram alguns dos anciãos de Israel, para consultarem o Senhor; e assentaram-se diante de mim. (4 chapters)*

IV. *Eze 24:1 Demais veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, no ano nono, do décimo mês, aos dez do mês, dizendo: (2 chapters)*

V. *Eze 26:1 Ora sucedeu no undécimo ano, ao primeiro do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (3 chapters)*

VI. *Eze 29:1 No décimo ano, no décimo mês, no dia doze do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (16 verses, 1/2 chapter's length)*

VII. *Eze 29:17 E sucedeu que, no ano vinte e sete, no mês primeiro, no primeiro dia do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (1 chapter)*

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VIII. *Eze 30:20 E sucedeu no ano undécimo, no mês primeiro, aos sete do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (6 verses, ¼ chapter's length)*

IX. *Eze 31:1 Também sucedeu, no ano undécimo, no terceiro mês, ao primeiro do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (1 chapter)*

X. *Eze 32:1 Sucedeu que, no ano duodécimo, no mês duodécimo, ao primeiro do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (16 verses, ½ chapter's length)*

XI. *Eze 32:17 Também sucedeu que, no ano duodécimo, aos quinze do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (36 verses, 1 chapter's length)*

XII. *Eze 33:21 No ano duodécimo do nosso cativo, no décimo mês, aos cinco dias do mês, veio a mim um que tinha escapado de Jerusalém, dizendo: Caída está a cidade. (6½ chapters)*

XIII. *Eze 40:1 No ano vinte e cinco do nosso cativo, no princípio do ano, no décimo dia do mês, no ano catorze depois que a cidade foi conquistada, naquele mesmo dia veio sobre mim a mão do Senhor (9 chapters)*

Maybe reading through the historical references does not say much to you. However using these as dividing points we will begin to build an outline of the major sections under each of these divisions represented by the historical references. We will begin to look for themes and symbols that are repeated, paralleled, contrasted, follow a progression or are related in other ways.

EZEKIEL: HISTORICAL REFERENCES AND OUTLINE

Bible references are from the Authorized Version (KJV).

I. *Eze 1:1 Ora aconteceu no trigésimo ano, no quarto mês, no dia quinto do mês, que estando eu no meio dos cativos, junto ao rio Quebar, se abriram os céus, e eu tive visões de Deus. Eze 1:2 No quinto dia do mês, já no quinto ano do cativo do rei Joaquim, Eze 1:3 veio expressamente a palavra do Senhor a Ezequiel, filho de Buzi, o sacerdote, na terra dos caldeus, junto ao rio Quebar; e ali esteve sobre ele a mão do Senhor. (7 chapters, Eze 4:6 E quando tiveres cumprido estes dias, deitar-te-ás sobre o teu lado direito, e levarás a iniquidade da casa de Judá; quarenta dias te dei, cada dia por um ano. Why 40 years?)*

A. The vision of the living creatures with wings, the moving wheels full of eyes, the expanse, the glory of the Lord and the Lord's voice appeared. 1:1-28

B. Ezekiel's call to speak to the rebellious house of Israel, the scroll to eat, and the Spirit transport to the exiles, where he sat 7 days overwhelmed is given. 2:1-3:15

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C. After the 7 days, Ezekiel was set as a watchman to deliver a warning to the rebellious house of Israel. 3:16-27

D. The siege of Jerusalem is symbolized by a tablet, siege works, battering ram, ramp, iron pan, lying on left side 390 days and right side 40 days, preparing measured food over burning manure. The sharp sword, scales, and his hair cut off in thirds, a third to burn, a third to cut up and third to blow in the wind symbolizing the end of Israel, except for a few strands saved in the folds of his garment. 4:1-5:17

E. Prophecy against the mountains of Israel, told them of their punishment, communicated to the mountains, hills, ravines and valleys. Many were to die and some given to captivity where they will remember the Lord and all their detestable practices. 6:1-14

F. The end has come, disaster for their conduct. They will throw away their silver and gold and the jewelry they used to make idols. Chains will take the place of jewelry. Vision from prophet, teaching from priest and counsel from elders will be lost. King, prince, and people will mourn, despair and tremble for the Lord will judge them by their own standard. 7:1-27

II. *Eze 8:1 Sucedeu pois, no sexto ano, no mês sexto, no quinto dia do mês, estando eu assentado na minha casa, e os anciãos de Judá assentados diante de mim, que ali a mão do Senhor Deus caiu sobre mim.* (12 chapters. Does this reference refer to the 6th year of their captivity or to the 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity? Were these two events the same?)

- A.
- B.

III. *Eze 20:1 Ora aconteceu, no sétimo ano, no mês quinto, aos dez do mês, que vieram alguns dos anciãos de Israel, para consultarem o Senhor; e assentaram-se diante de mim.* (4 chapters)

- A.
- B.

IV. *Eze 24:1 Demais veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, no ano nono, do décimo mês, aos dez do mês, dizendo:* (2 chapters)

- A.
- B.

V. *Eze 26:1 Ora sucedeu no undécimo ano, ao primeiro do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo:* (3 chapters)

- A.
- B.

VI. *Eze 29:1 No décimo ano, no décimo mês, no dia doze do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (16 verses, ½ chapter's length)*

- A.
- B.

VII. *Eze 29:17 E sucedeu que, no ano vinte e sete, no mês primeiro, no primeiro dia do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (1 chapter)*

- A.
- B.

VIII. *Eze 30:20 E sucedeu no ano undécimo, no mês primeiro, aos sete do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (6 verses, ¼ chapter's length)*

- A.
- B.

IX. *Eze 31:1 Também sucedeu, no ano undécimo, no terceiro mês, ao primeiro do mês, que veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (1 chapter)*

- A.
- B.

X. *Eze 32:1 Sucedeu que, no ano duodécimo, no mês duodécimo, ao primeiro do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (16 verses, ½ chapter's length)*

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- B.

XI. *Eze 32:17 Também sucedeu que, no ano duodécimo, aos quinze do mês, veio a mim a palavra do Senhor, dizendo: (36 verses, 1 chapter's length)*

- A.
- B.

XII. *Eze 33:21 No ano duodécimo do nosso cativeiro, no décimo mês, aos cinco dias do mês, veio a mim um que tinha escapado de Jerusalém, dizendo: Caída está a cidade. (6½ chapters)*

- A.
- B.

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XIII. *Eze 40:1 No ano vinte e cinco do nosso cativeiro, no princípio do ano, no décimo dia do mês, no ano catorze depois que a cidade foi conquistada, naquele mesmo dia veio sobre mim a mão do Senhor (9 chapters)*

- A.
- B.