



Week 23

Ezekiel

Every Sunday evening at [Bible Explorer](#) we will explore the question

'What does this book from the Bible mean for us today?'

Ezekiel 2:9-10

Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel was one of those exiled from Jerusalem early on as part of the Babylonians process for destroying the city and its people. All leading citizens were removed leaving only the poorest and least skilled. The apocalyptic language he uses to convey God's message is very visual, full of symbolism and drama. He was able to see things from God's perspective – both seeing what was happening in Jerusalem even though he was in Babylon and seeing into the future.

Retribution (chapters 4-24)

God judges his people

The people had been repeatedly warned to change their ways or they would no longer be able to count on God's protection from their enemies. When they were first deported from Jerusalem the city remained standing and this led some to claim that judgement was not as bad as Jeremiah had claimed... so if he had exaggerated the problem of their sin and the disaster that would fall perhaps he had exaggerated on other things too. People's hearts were stubbornly closed to God's message to them that they needed to reform so God gets Ezekiel to use clear visual displays to make things plain.

- Slabs of clay
- Lying on his left side for 390 days and right side for 40 days
- Diet
- Shaving his head and beard
- Digging a hole in the wall and creeping out at night
- Not mourning the death of his wife (which occurred at the same time as Jerusalem was destroyed). NB The cooking pot (chapter 24) speaks of God's judgement on his people and is precisely dated so that people can see it coincided with the events taking place in Jerusalem.

Revenge (chapter 25-32)

God will be the judge of others actions not us

These chapters contain specific prophecies for specific nations who had exploited the fall of Jerusalem. They can seem heavy and don't sit comfortably with us today and yet they show God still has his own people at his heart, if only they would listen and turn to him.

St Paul's Dorking

Exploring the Bible Together!



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Return from Exile (chapters 33-39)

God will restore his people

Ezekiel is appointed Watchman – to help God's people understand that God does not break his promise and will keep the covenant he made with Israel.

Restoration of the temple (chapters 40 –end) *God's name rests in our hands*

The temple described by Ezekiel has never been built.

Questions for us today:

1. Prophecies and visions. How ready are we to hear prophetic words for us today? This morning we had a word given for people at our 10.30 service. Last week at Bible Explorer we touched on God's sorrow for things taking place around the world and in our nation. Do we hear people who speak out against injustice and behaviour patterns that are far from God or are we too unyielding and hardened?
2. Have we allowed people's faith to dry out like the bones that need God to breathe new life into them? If we are being Good News for people we need to ask God to fill us with his Holy Spirit so that we can be part of the life-giving process of hearing the Gospel message.
3. Living water can cleanse and restore. The trickle that left the temple in Ezekiel's vision had grown and gathered pace as it flowed out towards the sea. Ezekiel was specific in that it was the Dead Sea it flowed into and that as it did so it brought life to an otherwise lifeless place. Can we be part of that river of living water flowing out and bringing hope to others?