

# EZEKIEL

## Introductory Issues

### Authorship

The book twice identifies Ezekiel the son of Buzi as its author (1:3; 24:24). The first person singular is also used throughout and the style, language, and content suggest a single author. Although there have been a few who have called this identification into question, there is general agreement that Ezekiel wrote much, if not all, of the book.

### Ezekiel the Man

The name Ezekiel means something like “God will strengthen” and in 1:3 he is identified as a priest and the son of Buzi. According to 1:1–2, Ezekiel (who would have been about twenty-five) was among some ten thousand Jews, including King Jehoiachin, whom Nebuchadnezzar exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. Ezekiel’s ministry began on his “thirtieth year”<sup>1</sup> (see discussion of date below) which coincided with the fifth year of the aforementioned exile, or 593 B.C. (1:1–2). This means that Ezekiel was born around 623/622. According to 24:15–24, he was married, though his wife died in exile when Nebuchadnezzar began his final siege on Jerusalem. YHWH did not permit him from mourning publicly for her as a sign to Judah. Ezekiel’s final vision can be dated to 571 B.C. (29:17). Ezekiel would have been fairly close in age with the prophet Daniel and the time of his ministry overlapped with Jeremiah.

### Date

The issue of dating Ezekiel really involves two issues: (1) the date of the events, and (2) the final compilation of Ezekiel’s prophecies. Concerning the date of the events there is a fair amount of agreement that Ezekiel began his ministry in 593 B.C. However, the referent of the “thirtieth year” (1:1) is debated. Iain Duguid has identified three major possibilities: (1) “It is the thirtieth year since a specific event,” “It is the thirtieth year in the reign of a specific king,” “It is the thirtieth year of the prophet’s life.”<sup>2</sup> We suggest that the third view, which goes as far back as Origen, is correct, although it is not without difficulty.<sup>3</sup> We have already noted that Ezekiel’s final vision can be dated to 571 B.C. (29:17). So the date of the prophecies span about twenty-two years (593–571 B.C.). The date of Ezekiel’s death is unknown, but his last dated prophecy would have been given while Ezekiel was in his fifties. Since the concept of retirement is more of a modern than an ancient one, it may be that Ezekiel died shortly after 571 and his prophecies

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<sup>1</sup> According to Numbers 4:3 a person entered the Levitical priesthood at thirty.

<sup>2</sup> Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIV Application Commentary, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 45–6.

<sup>3</sup> See the discussion in Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. Robert L. Hubbard Jr. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 82.

were compiled either shortly before his death, perhaps by Ezekiel himself, or by some unknown editor, shortly after his death.

## **Historical Setting**

Ezekiel was born at about the time that the Babylonians were becoming the dominant power in the region. In 612 B.C. Nineveh, the Assyrian capital would fall to the combined forces of the Babylonians and Medes. He would have also lived during the time of Josiah's religious reforms (622-609 B.C.). Unfortunately, the religious reforms did not last and God judged His people by using the Babylonians. The continuous rebellion of the Judean vassal kings would prompt Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king to make three incursions into Israel. In the first incursion in 605 B.C., Daniel and others were taken captive to Babylon. In the second incursion in 597 B.C., King Jehoiachin and about ten thousand Jews (cf. 2 Kgs 24:14) which including Ezekiel, were also taken to Babylon. Five years after this event, Ezekiel began his ministry. Finally, in 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem after besieging it and killed or took many of those who survived into captivity. Among those taken was the prophet Jeremiah.

## **Original Audience**

The original recipients of Ezekiel individual prophecies were Jews living in exile. The original audience of the completed book would also presumably be Jews in exile.

## **Purpose**

In discussing the purpose of the Book of Ezekiel we must distinguish between the original purposes of the individual messages versus the purposes of the book as a compilation of the individual messages. For example, the individual messages contained in chapters 1–24 were originally given as warnings about the coming judgment of Judah. However, the completed book would have been read after these judgments had taken place and would thus serve a different purpose. Our concerns here are primarily the purposes of the completed book.

The original purposes of Ezekiel are at least threefold. First, Ezekiel was written to remind Judean exiles that YHWH had provided sufficient warning for the circumstances that they were now experiencing. As such Ezekiel is a vindication of God's justice. Second, and related to the first purpose, the messages of Ezekiel reminded the exiles that they needed to avoid the covenant unfaithfulness that had led to the demise of Judah.<sup>4</sup> As such this warning does not look forward but backward. Third, the messages in the book are a reminder that Israel's covenantal relationship has been damaged not destroyed, and that there is a future restoration and blessing. This would provide hope in the midst of defeat, disappointment, and discouragement.

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<sup>4</sup> H. F. Freeman notes, "The author's purpose throughout the entire prophecy was to keep before the exiles the sins of the nation which were the grounds for her punishment, and to sustain and encourage the faithful remnant concerning future restoration and blessing (cf. 14:21-23)" (Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* [Chicago: Moody, 1968], 297).

## Literary Features, Genre, and Structure

### *Literary features*

Ezekiel is rich in literary features. It is a book rich in literary form. Indeed, Hill and Walton suggest that it is “one of the richest anthologies or collections of Hebrew literary forms in the Old Testament.”<sup>5</sup> A prominent literary feature is the repetition of key phrases including, the “son of man” as a reference to Ezekiel (over ninety times),<sup>6</sup> “that you/they will know that I am YHWH” (sixty times), “then the word of YHWH came to me saying” (about forty-six times), “I YHWH have spoken” (around fourteen times), and the scripturally rare “the hand of YHWH fell upon me” (1:3; 3:22; 33:22; 37:1; cf. 1 Kgs 18:46; 2 Kgs 3:15). One can also note the extensive use of the first person with almost all of the oracles except for 1:2–3; 24:24). Other literary features include symbolic acts (3:22–26; 4:1–3; 4:4–8; 4:9–11; 4:12–14; 5:1–3; 12:1–16; 12:17–20; 21:6–7; 21:18–24; 24:15–24; 37:15–28), parables or allegories (chps. 15; 16; 17; 19; 23), proverbs (12:22–3; 16:44; 18:2–3).

### *Genre*

It is commonly noted that parts of Ezekiel (particularly chapters 37–48) appear to fall within the genre of apocalyptic. Daniel 7–12, Zechariah 1:7–7:8 and the Book of Revelation are also considered to be apocalyptic.<sup>7</sup> The definition of apocalyptic literature is much debated. Probably the most frequently quoted definition comes from John J. Collins who states: “Apocalypse is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.”<sup>8</sup> However, we prefer Ralph Alexander’s definition which holds that apocalyptic literature is “symbolic visionary prophetic literature, composed during oppressive conditions, consisting of visions whose events are recorded exactly as they were seen by the author and explained through a divine interpreter, and whose theological content is primarily eschatological.”<sup>9</sup>

### *Structure*

The structure of Ezekiel is both chronological and thematic. It is chronological in that, the material is presented in almost absolute chronological order except for 29:17–30:19, which is arranged topically among the prophecies against the nations. Thematically, it is generally

<sup>5</sup> Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 344. See Appendix B.

<sup>6</sup> The title “Son of Man” is Jesus of Nazareth’s most common self-designation. However, Jesus’ usage probably owes more to the use of this title in Daniel 7:13–14 and 8:17 than Ezekiel’s usage.

<sup>7</sup> There is some debate as to whether apocalyptic literature is a genre in its own right or a sub-genre of prophetic literature.

<sup>8</sup> John J. Collins, “Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre,” *Semeia* 14 (1979): 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ralph Alexander, *Ezekiel*, Everyman’s Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 115.

recognized that Ezekiel can be divided into three major sections: (1) judgments on Judah and Jerusalem (1:1–24:27), judgment on the foreign nations (25:1–32:32), and future restoration and blessing for Israel and Judah (33:1–48:35).

## Message

The message of the book is, “The transcendent glory of YHWH<sup>10</sup> is expressed through judgment of His people and the world in order to purify a people and prepare a land with whom and in which He is able to dwell.”

## Basic Outline

- I. Ezekiel is called as a prophet and he prophesies judgment against Judah and Jerusalem (1:1–3:27).
- II. Ezekiel proclaims prophetic messages against Judah and Jerusalem (4:1–24:27).
- III. Ezekiel provides consolation to Israel by prophesying judgment against the nations (25:1–32:32).
- IV. Ezekiel provides consolation for Israel by prophesying blessing and restoration (33:1–48:35).

## Exposition

- I. **Ezekiel is called as a prophet and he prophesies judgment against Judah and Jerusalem (1:1–3:27).**
  - A. YHWH transcendent and glorious calls Ezekiel to faithfully proclaim His message to the sons of Israel concerning Judah and Jerusalem (1:1–3:21).
    1. Ezekiel’s call to ministry is established chronologically in the context of exile (1:1–3).
    2. Ezekiel experiences a vision of the transcendent and glorious God (1:4–28).

Five Major Elements of the Vision <sup>11</sup>
1. The windstorm (v. 4)
2. The four living creatures (vv. 5–14)
3. The wheels (vv. 15–21)
4. The platform (vv. 22–27)
5. The prophet’s response (v. 28)



<sup>10</sup> For references to YHWH’s glory see 1:28; 3:12, 23; 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18–19; 11:22–23; 39:11, 21; 43:2–5; 44:4.

<sup>11</sup> Lamar Eugene Cooper, Sr., *Ezekiel*, New American Commentary 17, ed. E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 62

Four Characteristics of the Vision <sup>12</sup>
1. Glory/Transcendence
2. Motion/Activity
3. Judgment
4. Creation imagery

3. Ezekiel is called to faithfully proclaim the message that YHWH gives him (2:1–3:15).

Ezekiel's Act of Obedience <sup>13</sup>	
2:1	Stood and received God's message
3:24-27	Shut himself inside his house
3:27	Faithfully proclaimed God's message
4:1ff.	Drew a map of Jerusalem on a large brick (clay tablet)
4:4-5	Lay on his left side for 390 days
4:6	Lay on his right side for 40 days
4:9-17	Followed specific cooking instructions
5:1-4	Shaved his head and beard
12:3-7	Left home to demonstrate exile
13:1ff.	Spoke against false prophets
19:1ff.	Sang a funeral song concerning the leaders
21:2	Prophesied against Israel and the Temple
21:19-23	Marked out two routes for Babylon's king
24:16-17	Did not mourn wife's death

4. Ezekiel is appointed to be a watchman to warn the house of Israel (3:16–21).
- B. Ezekiel encounters YHWH's glory again and is given further instructions concerning his prophetic ministry (3:22–27).

## II. Ezekiel proclaims prophetic messages against Judah and Jerusalem (4:1–24:27).

- A. Ezekiel performs and proclaims prophecies of destruction against Judah and Jerusalem (4:1–7:27).
1. Ezekiel performs symbolic acts prophesying the coming siege of Jerusalem (4:1–5:17).
- a. Ezekiel uses a brick to illustrate Jerusalem under siege (4:1–3).

<sup>12</sup> The first three are identified by L. Cooper (*Ezekiel*, 62) and the fourth has been identified by Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIV Application Commentary, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 58-9.

<sup>13</sup> Neil S. Wilson and Linda K. Taylor, *Tyndale Handbook of Bible Maps and Charts* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 2001), 209.

- b. Ezekiel lays on his left and right sides to portray years of iniquity and punishment (4:4–8).
    - c. Ezekiel makes an unclean meal as a sign of fear and famine during the siege of Jerusalem (4:9–17).
    - d. Ezekiel shaves his head and beard and divides it to portray the coming destruction of the people by fire, sword, and scattering in exile although a few hairs (a remnant) would be spared (5:1–17).
  - 2. Ezekiel proclaims oracles concerning YHWH's coming judgment (6:1–7:27).
    - a. Israel will be judged for their idolatry although a remnant will be spared (6:1–14).
    - b. YHWH's coming judgment against the Israel is imminent and comprehensive (7:1–27).
- B. Ezekiel sees a prophetic vision of judgment for Judah's corruption of the temple (8:1–11:25).
  - 1. Ezekiel sees four abominations related to the temple (8:1–18).
  - 2. Ezekiel sees the divine judgment of Jerusalem (9:1–11).
  - 3. Ezekiel sees the beginning of the departure of YHWH's glory from the temple (10:1–22).
  - 4. Ezekiel sees the wicked men of Jerusalem and is told to prophesy against them but Ezekiel is also assured that a remnant will be preserved (11:1–21).
  - 5. Ezekiel sees YHWH's glory depart to the east and reports the vision to exiles in Babylon (11:22–25).
- C. Ezekiel pictures and prophesies judgments coming upon Judah and Jerusalem (12:1–19:14).
  - 1. The rebellion of Judah leads YHWH to command Ezekiel to perform two sign-actions portraying Jerusalem's exile (12:1–20).
  - 2. Ezekiel prophesies of the imminence of YHWH's judgment (12:21–28).
  - 3. Ezekiel prophesies against false prophets and prophetesses (13:1–14:11).

4. Ezekiel prophesies against Jerusalem which is an unprofitable vine and a prostitute (15:1–16:63).
    - a. Jerusalem is an unprofitable vine (15:1–8).
    - b. Jerusalem is an orphan turned prostitute (16:1–63).
  5. Ezekiel prophesies against Israel noting that Egypt will not be able to deliver them, only YHWH will be able to deliver a remnant (17:1–24).
  6. Ezekiel prophesies concerning individual responsibility for righteousness (18:1–32).
  7. Ezekiel laments the princes of Israel (19:1–14).
- D. Ezekiel prophesies against Judah by juxtaposing YHWH's concern for His name with the sins of Judah's leaders (20:1–24:27).
1. Ezekiel reviews the history of Israel's rebellion and YHWH's concern for His name among the nations (20:1–44).
    - a. Israel rebelled in Egypt (20:1–9).
    - b. Israel rebelled in the wilderness (20:10–26).
    - c. Israel rebelled in the conquest and settlement (20:27–29).
    - d. Israel is still rebelling in the present day (20:30–44).
  2. Ezekiel prophesies against Judah, Jerusalem and her leaders using parables of fire and a sword (20:45–21:32).
    - a. Ezekiel prophesies of Judah and Jerusalem's judgment with a parable of a burning of the southern forest (20:45–21:7).
    - b. Ezekiel prophesies of Judah, Jerusalem's slaughter with a parable of a sword (21:8–17).
    - c. Ezekiel prophesies of the imminent judgment by Babylonia (21:18–27).
    - d. Ezekiel prophesies of the postponement of judgment on Ammon (21:28–32).
  3. Ezekiel prophesies against Judah and her leaders for their immorality and idolatry (22:1–31).

4. Ezekiel prophesies against Judah Jerusalem and her leaders using a parable of two sisters: Jerusalem must be judged because her faithless sister Samaria had been (23:1–49).
5. Ezekiel prophesies against Jerusalem using a parable of a boiling pot (24:1–14).
6. Ezekiel prophesies against Jerusalem using the death of his wife (24:15–27).

### III. Ezekiel provides consolation to Israel by prophesying judgment against the nations (25:1–32:32).

Prophecies Against Foreign Nations		
Prophecies against foreign nations appear in every prophetic book except Hosea, but the following books contain significant sections of these prophecies (over 630 vv).		
Passage	Date	Nations
Amos 1:3–2:3	c. 760–750	Aram (Damascus), Philistia (Gaza), Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab
Isaiah 13–23	c. 740–680	Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Damascus (Aram), Cush (Ethiopia), Egypt, Dumah (Edom), Arabia, Tyre
Ezekiel 25–32	c. 593–571	Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon (or Phoenicia), Egypt
Jeremiah 46–51	c. 627–580	Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus (Aram), Kedar and Hazor (2 Arabian tribes), Elam, Babylon
Zephaniah 2:4–15	c. 622	Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, Assyria

<p><b>Common Elements of the Oracles Against the Nations<sup>14</sup></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They express the universal rule of Yahweh.</li> <li>2. They express the outworking in Israel of the Abrahamic Covenant: "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse" (Gen. 12:3).</li> <li>3. They reflect the involvement of Israel's prophets in Holy War as the messengers of the Divine Warrior.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Other Common Elements:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The oracles often contain identification of specific sins and the announcement of specific judgments.</li> <li>2. The oracles often evaluate the nations in relation to their treatment or mistreatment of Israel.</li> <li>3. The oracles sometimes contain promises of salvation and restoration for, or, including the nations (e.g., Isa 16:4b–5; Jer 8:47; 49:6, 39).</li> </ol>

<sup>14</sup> Tremper Longman III and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, rev. ed (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 440.



**Additional Observations:**

1. Interpreters generally conclude that the oracles against the nations were written *about* the nations, not *to* the nations. But see C. H. Bullock, p. 30.
2. Gottwald has argued that the oracles against the nations might be one of the oldest prophetic forms.
3. The oracles demonstrate that retribution and judgment are necessary corollaries to redemption and restoration.
4. Nations addressed follow a generally geographical order moving from west to east.

A. Ezekiel prophesies judgment against the nations to the east and west of Israel (25:1–17).

1. Ezekiel prophesies against Ammon (25:1–7).

Relationships Between the Israelites and the Nations	
Ammon	Related to Israel through Abraham's nephew Lot (Gen 19)
Moab	Related to Israel through Abraham's nephew Lot (Gen 19)
Edom	Related to Israel through Jacob's brother Esau (Gen 25; 32)

2. Ezekiel prophesies against Moab (25:8–11).
3. Ezekiel prophesies against Edom (25:12–14).
4. Ezekiel prophesies against Philistia (25:15–17).

B. Ezekiel prophesies judgment against the nations to the north of Israel and prophesies a regathering and restoration for Israel (26:1–28:26).

1. Ezekiel prophesies against Tyre (26:1–19).
  - a. Tyre will be judged because they rejoiced in Jerusalem's fall (26:1–6).
  - b. Tyre will be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (26:7–14).
  - c. The coastal nations will fear and lament Tyre's fall (27:1–36).
  - d. The king of Tyre is indicted, punished, and lamented (28:1–19).

The Identity of the “King”(מֶלֶךְ) in 28:11–19
<b>Problematic Descriptions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “You were the model of perfection” (v. 12)</li> <li>• “You were in Eden, the garden of God” (v. 13)</li> <li>• “You were anointed as a guardian cherub” (v. 14)</li> <li>• “You were on the holy mount of God” (v. 14)</li> <li>• “You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found” in you.” (v. 15)</li> <li>• “So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.” (v. 16)</li> <li>• “So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.” (v. 17)</li> </ul>
<b>Major Views</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The literal king of Tyre presented in hyperbolic or mythical language</li> <li>• The literal king of Tyre discussed in Adamic terms Satan/Lucifer</li> <li>• The literal King of Tyre but with the true “king” or god behind him (i.e., Baal)</li> <li>• The literal King of Tyre but with the true “king” or god behind him (i.e., Satan)</li> <li>• Refers strictly to Satan/Lucifer</li> </ul>

2. Ezekiel prophesies against Sidon (28:20–24).
3. Ezekiel prophesies a regathering and restoration for Israel (28:25–26).

C. Ezekiel prophesies judgment against the nation to south of Israel: Egypt (29:1–32:32).

1. Egypt, a monster who mistreated Israel will be cut conquered and taken captive by Babylon (29:1–30:26).
2. Egypt will be cut down as a cedar (31:1–18).
3. Ezekiel offers a lament over Pharaoh (32:1–16).
4. Egypt is consigned to Sheol among the uncircumcised nations that preceded her (32:17–32).

#### IV. Ezekiel provides consolation for Israel by prophesying blessing and restoration (33:1–48:35).

- A. Ezekiel prophesies concerning the restoration of Israel to the Land (33:1–39:29).

1. Ezekiel is recommissioned as a watchman to call Israel to repentance which is first step to restoration (33:1–20).
2. Jerusalem’s fall is reported and explained with the implication that Israel needs to repent (33:21–33).
3. Restoration includes judging the false shepherd, YHWH Himself coming to be true the Shepherd of the sheep, establish His servant David, and make a covenant of peace with them (34:1–31).
  - a. Israel’s false shepherds will be judged (34:1–10).
  - b. YHWH himself will come to shepherd His people, establish His David, and make a covenant of peace with them (34:11–31).
4. Restoration includes judging Israel’s enemies, in this case, Edom (35:1–15).
5. Ezekiel provides consolation by noting that Israel will be restored physically (the land) and spiritually (cleansing) (36:1–38).

New Covenant Feature	Jeremiah 31	Ezekiel 36
Regathering to the Land	Regathering to the land (vv. 8-17)	Regathering to a fruitful land (vv. 24, 28-30)
Israel's sin addressed	Forgiveness of their iniquities (v. 34b)	Sprinkled for their cleansing (v. 25)
Israel's obedience facilitated by	God's law put in the heart (v. 33)	A new heart and new spirit are given and heart of stone exchanged for heart of flesh (vv. 26-27)
Israel's relationship to God	I will be their God / they will be My people (v. 33)	They will be My people / I will be their God (v. 28)

6. A vision of dry bones and a sign of two sticks point to a national revival and restoration for Israel living under a New Covenant (37:1–28).
  - a. A vision of dry bones point to a national revival for Israel (37:1–14).
  - b. A sign of two sticks point to a national restoration for Israel living under a New Covenant (37:15–28).
7. In the future, a final threat to Israel by God and his allies will be defeated by YHWH Himself (38:1–39:29).

- a. In the future, Gog and his allies will attack and threaten Israel (38:1–16).
  - b. YHWH will demonstrate that He is God by defeating this threat (38:17–39:29).
- B. Ezekiel prophesies concerning the restoration of the community (40:1–48:35).
- 1. Ezekiel sees a vision of a restored temple (40:1–42:20).
    - a. Ezekiel sees a vision of the wall around the temple (40:1–47).
    - b. Ezekiel sees a vision of the temple exterior (40:48–41:26).
    - c. Ezekiel sees a vision of the temple interior (42:1–20).
  - 2. Ezekiel sees a vision of the return of YHWH to His temple (43:1–12).
  - 3. Ezekiel sees a vision of restored temple instructions and practices (43:13–46:24).

<b>Similarities between Millennial and Levitical Sacrifices<sup>15</sup></b>	
1. Altar	7. Morning sacrifices
2. Sprinkling of blood	8. Laws of inheritance
3. Offerings (burnt, sin peace, meal, drink)	9. Passover
4. Priests	10. Feast of tabernacles
5. Ritual cleansings	11. Year of Jubilee
6. Sabbaths and new moon offerings	12. Temple is a place of glory
<b>Differences between Millennial and Levitical Sacrifices</b>	
The Millennial sacrifices will <b>not</b> have the following, which the Levitical system did have.	
1. Feast of Pentecost	5. Veil
2. Day of Atonement	6. Candlestick
3. High Priest	7. Table of Showbread
4. Ark of the Covenant, mercy seat, cherubim	Evening sacrifice
<b>Purposes of the Millennial Temple (M. Unger)</b>	
1. To demonstrate God's holiness	
2. To provide a dwelling place for God's glory	
3. To provide a memorial for sacrifices	
4. To provide a center for God's millennial government	

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<sup>15</sup> Source unknown.

- a. Ezekiel is instructed regarding the altar of sacrifice (43:13–27).
  - b. Ezekiel is instructed regarding regulations for the eastern gate (44:1–3).
  - c. Ezekiel is instructed regarding the priests and the service of the temple (44:4–14).
  - d. Ezekiel is instructed regarding the ordinances for the Zadokian priesthood (44:15–31).
  - e. Ezekiel is instructed regarding the sacred precinct (45:1–8).
  - f. Ezekiel is instructed regarding the sin of Israel’s “princes” and the role of the Prince in the new worship (45:9–46:18).
  - g. Ezekiel is instructed regarding cooking the sacrifices in the temple kitchen (46:19–24).
4. Ezekiel sees a vision of the river flowing from the throne (47:1–12).
  5. Ezekiel sees a vision of the boundaries of Israel and the naming of the city gates and the city (47:13–48:35).

Table 1: Dated Prophecies in Ezekiel<sup>16</sup>

PASSAGE	EVENT	EZEKIEL'S DATE			JULIAN CALENDAR
		MONTH	DAY	YEAR	
1:1–2	Ezekiel's call to be a prophet	4	5	30[5]*	July 593 B.C.
3:16	Ezekiel's commission in exile	4	12	30[5]*	Aug. 593 B.C.
8:1	Visions of judgment for polluting the temple	6	5	6	Sept. 592 B.C.
20:1	Inquiry of the elders	5	10	7	Aug. 591 B.C.
24:1	Siege of Jerusalem begins	10	10	9	Jan. 588 B.C.
26:1	Prophecy of Tyre's destruction	?	1	11	Feb. or Mar.(?) 586 B.C.
29:1	Prophecy of Egypt's destruction	10	12	10	Jan. 587 B.C.
29:17	Prophecy of Tyre and Egypt reinforced	1	1	27	Apr. 571 B.C.
30:20	Prophecy of Pharaoh's destruction	1	7	11	Apr. 587 B.C.
31:1	Prophecy of Pharaoh's destruction	3	1	11	June 587 B.C.
32:1	Lamentation of Pharaoh	12	1	12	Mar. 585 B.C.

<sup>16</sup> Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 54.

32:17	Pharaoh in Sheol	12	15	12	Apr.(?) 585 B.C.
33:21	Lament over fall of Jerusalem	10	5	12	Jan. 585 B.C.
40:1	Vision of the new temple/Jerusalem	1	10	25	Apr. or Oct. 573 B.C.
*The thirtieth year probably refers to elapsed time since the discovery of the law in 622–21 B.C. and resulting reforms of Josiah. Bracketed years and all years in this column refer to the years of captivity beginning with 598/597 B.C. <sup>17</sup>					

### Speech Types in Ezekiel's Message<sup>18</sup>

Judgment Oracle	Usually introduced by formula, "I am against you"	21:1–5
Aftermath or restoration oracle	Reversing judgment formula, "I am for you"	34:11–15
Command formula	Especially "Son of man set your face"	6:2–3; 20:46–47
"Woe" oracle of indictment		13:3–7; 34:2–6
Demonstration oracle	Usually containing "because ... therefore" clauses	13:8–9; 16:36–42
Disputation oracle	In which popular Proverb is recited and then but prophetic discourse (e.g., the "sour grapes" proverb)	18:1–20 cf. 12:22–25
Lament Over Tyre Over pharaoh		26:15–18 32:1–16
Wailing lament	Introduced by "wail"	30:1–4; 32:17–21
Riddles, parables, allegories	E.g., parable of the vine Allegories of eagle and cedars, lion, boiling pot, etc.	15 Chaps. 17, 19, 23, 24, 27

<sup>17</sup> We differ from Cooper in that we associate the thirtieth year (1:1) with Ezekiel's birth.

<sup>18</sup> Hill and Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 345.