

Ezekiel

The Glory of God



A BIBLE STUDY



Introducing Ezekiel ...

These eight studies are designed to accompany the 10-week sermon series at 5/7 in Term 3, 2011. The table on the following page shows how the talks and studies fit together. There is also a reading guide to enable you to read the whole of Ezekiel during this time.

Each Bible study has an **appetizer** to get you thinking, a **main course** to help you engage with the text, and some **dessert** to drive application. They can be done on your own, with a friend, or in your homegroup.

Three bits of background information will help orientate you to Ezekiel's world:

The date (and location) of Ezekiel:

The book opens in the fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin King of Judah to Babylon (Ezekiel 1:1-3 compared with 2 Kings 24:8-12). That dates Ezekiel between the first deportation of Judah in 597BC (presumably when Ezekiel was also taken to Babylon) and the final fall of Jerusalem in 587BC at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. Most of Chapters 1-39 is set during this period, although there are some passages that are dated later (eg 29:17). Ezekiel's final vision (40:1) comes after the fall of Jerusalem in 573BC.

How the book fits together:

The book can be loosely divided into three main sections:

- God's judgment of Judah/Israel (Chapters 1-24)
- God's judgment of the surrounding nations (Chapters 25-32)
- God's promise of restoration (Chapters 33-48)

Reading Ezekiel as Christians

Although God's word is unchanging, we Christians have a fuller revelation of God than God's people in the Old Testament did. It's important for us to always be seeing how the Old Testament Scriptures testify about Jesus (John 5:39), otherwise our studies will have been in vain.

Ezekiel: The Glory of God

Talks		Section	Bible Studies	
Passage	Title		Passage	Title
1	God's glory revealed	1-24	1:1-3:15	Ezekiel's call
2-3	God's call		4-5	The siege of Jerusalem
8-10	God's glory departs		11	Judgment (and hope) Part 1
15-16	God's judgment of Jerusalem		22	Judgment (and hope) Part 2
18	God's justice			
21	God's agent			
(from) 25-32	God's judgment of the nations	25-32	25-26	The fall of the nations
34	God's rule	33-48	33:1-20	The watchman
37	God's restoration		35-36	A new hope
43	God's glory returns		40-48	A new beginning

Reading Guide

By reading approximately one chapter six times per week, you can cover the whole of Ezekiel in eight weeks. If you miss a day, it's not too much to catch up! Why not give it a go ...

Day	Passage	Tick when done	Day	Passage	Tick when done
1	1:1-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	25	25:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	2:1-3:15	<input type="checkbox"/>	26	26:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	3:16-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	27	27:1-36	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	4:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	28	28:1-26	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	5:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	29	29:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	6:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	30	30:1-26	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	7:1-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	31	31:1-18	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	8:1-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	32	32:1-32	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	9:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	33	33:1-33	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	10:1-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	34	34:1-31	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	11:1-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	35	35:1-15	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	12:1-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	36	36:1-38	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	13:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/>	37	37:1-28	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	14:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	38	38:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	14:12-23	<input type="checkbox"/>	39	39:1-29	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	15:1-16:63	<input type="checkbox"/>	40	40:1-47	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	17:1-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	41	40:48-41:26	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	18:1-32	<input type="checkbox"/>	42	42:1-20	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	19:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	43	43:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	20:1-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	44	43:13-44:31	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	21:1-32	<input type="checkbox"/>	45	45:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	22:1-31	<input type="checkbox"/>	46	45:13-46:24	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	23:1-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	47	47:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	24:1-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	48	47:13-48:35	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Ezekiel's Call
Chapters 1:1-3:15

Appetizer

1. What do you find hardest about sharing your faith with unbelievers? What could help you to overcome those difficulties?

Main Course

2. Read 1:4-28. Either draw or describe what Ezekiel saw. How would you have felt if you'd seen this?
3. Read 2:1-3:9. What is the Sovereign LORD telling Ezekiel to do? What is likely to happen? Why does God still send Ezekiel on this quest?
4. Read 3:10-11. What do we learn about the situation of Ezekiel's hearers? What does this say about their likely response?
5. Read 3:12-15. How does Ezekiel feel about his commission? Do you empathize with him; and if so, why?

Dessert

6. How is Ezekiel's vision in Chapter 1 related to Ezekiel's commission in Chapters 2-3? Why does God act in this way? How might this have helped Ezekiel?
7. How is our situation different from, and similar to, Ezekiel's? How might John 1:14-18 shape our witness to unbelievers?

2**The Siege of Jerusalem
Chapters 4-5****Appetizer**

1. An unbeliever asks you why Christians believe in hell. How do you respond?

Main Course

2. How is Jerusalem's fate described in these two chapters? Which of the images affect you most?
3. What are the various sins that Jerusalem is guilty of? How does her sin compare to the nations around? Why is it more (or less) bad? Do you think that the punishment fit the crime?
4. What does 5:13 say is the point for the inhabitants of Jerusalem to learn from their eventual destruction? Why is that important?
5. Is there any hope in these chapters? (hint: see 5:3)

Dessert

6. On the basis of Ezekiel 4-5, how would you communicate to an unbeliever the "rightness" of God's judgment against humanity?
7. Read Romans 8:31-39 and reflect on how fortunate we are to have God on our side, and why we know that He is not against us.

Judgment and Hope Part 1 Chapter 11

Appetizer

1. What qualities and characteristics do you look for in our Christian leaders?

Main Course

2. Read verses 1-4. Given that the first deportation to Babylon has already occurred, what are the leaders trying to say to the people who have been left behind in Jerusalem?
3. Read verses 5-12. Why will God punish the leaders of those who are still in Jerusalem?
4. Read verse 13. What is the significance of Pelatiah's immediate death? How does Ezekiel react?
5. Read verses 14-25. Is there any hope for Israel? On what basis? Will anything be different the next time, and if so, how?

Dessert

6. How are the great promises of verses 19-20 fulfilled in Romans 8:1-17?
7. Pray for our leaders, and all of God's people, in light of Ezekiel 11.

4**Judgment and Hope Part 2
Chapter 22****Appetizer**

1. Why do Christian communities lapse into sinfulness?

Main Course

2. Read verses 1-12. List all the sins that God's people are guilty of. Are any worse than others? What are our modern-day equivalents?
3. Read verses 13-22. How will God respond? What will happen to the people? What is the ultimate result, and how is that significant in understanding the cause of their original sinfulness?
4. Read verses 23-31. What does God say to each group in Israeli society?

Dessert

5. How might you explain this passage to an unbeliever? What would you emphasize?
6. Who could avert God's wrath for us (verse 30)? Spend time looking up passages in the New Testament that describe how Jesus "saves us from the coming wrath" (1 Thessalonians 1:10). Why is He entitled to do so?
7. Thank God for showing us His mercy even when we don't deserve it.

**The Fall of the Nations
Chapters 25-26**

Appetizer

1. An unbeliever asks why the Bible says that God will judge those who've never heard of Him. How do you respond?

Main Course

2. Read each of the prophecies in Chapters 25-26. What are the nations guilty of? How do you feel about God's response?
 - Ammon
 - Moab
 - Edom
 - Philistia
 - Tyre
3. Read the prophecy in 28:1-10. What is the King of Tyre also guilty of? Is God's response appropriate?

Dessert

4. Read Romans 1:18-23. What is the basis of God's judgment even of those who have not heard about Jesus?
5. Pray for family and friends who are not yet saved

6**The Watchman
Chapters 33:1-20****Appetizer**

1. "If God must reveal Himself before we can have a relationship with Him, then why do we still bother with evangelism?" Discuss.

Main Course

2. Read verses 1-9. What is God charging Ezekiel to do? What is Ezekiel accountable for - and what is he not responsible for? What's at stake for Ezekiel in all this?
3. Read verses 10-11. What does this tell us about God's essential character, and how does that affect our attitude to evangelism?
4. Read verses 12-20. What is the principle being established here? How do you find this challenging and comforting?

Dessert

5. How does this passage help you better understand the nature of evangelism?
6. Read Matthew 9:35-38, and pray the prayer that Jesus teaches us to pray.

A New Hope Chapter 36

Appetizer

1. What is the basis of Christian hope? What is the basis of YOUR hope?

Main Course

2. Read verses 1-7. Whatever happens to God's people, the enemies of God's people are not spared either. What does that tell you about God?
3. Read verses 8-15. For the first time we see a picture of hope! What is the picture that is being painted? How would this have been significant to those in exile in Babylon (remember that Jerusalem has fallen)?
4. Read verses 16-23. Why will God save Israel?
5. Read verses 24-37. Will anything be different if God gives Israel another chance?

Dessert

6. Read Romans 5:1-11. How is our hope as Christians even greater?

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Appetizer

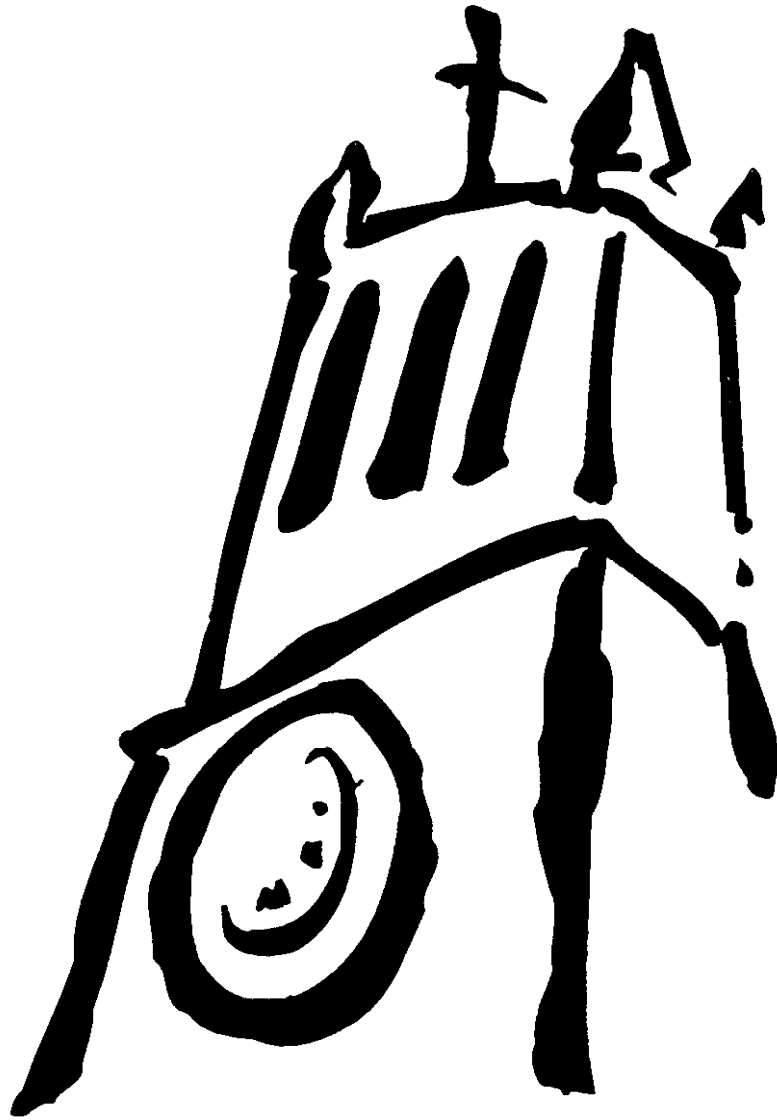
1. An unbeliever asks you what heaven will be like. How do you respond?

Main Course

2. Read Chapters 40-48 out aloud. Without getting stuck on the details, try and visualize what Ezekiel saw. What stands out to you? What do you think Ezekiel would have felt (remembering that he is still in exile in Babylon - 40:1-2)? How do these chapters summarize the themes of the whole book?
3. What do the following passages say about the future that Ezekiel is seeing?
 - 43:10-11
 - 43:6-9
 - 47:21-23

Dessert

4. Read Ezekiel 48:35, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and Revelation 21:1-5 and reflect on our situation.
5. Spend time sharing and praying about what you've learned from this whole series on Ezekiel.



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