

# Ezekiel: Introduction

Ezekiel was a priest and prophet who was among one of the earliest groups taken into Babylon (along with King Jehoiachin in 597 BC). As an exile speaking to fellow exiles, his words give us a unique perspective on life for God's people as they lived away from their home.

Over the course of about 20 years, God spoke through Ezekiel to remind His exiled people— even in their hopelessness—of His sovereignty and glory and presence.

More than any other prophetic book, Ezekiel is full of symbols. Through a series of fantastical visions and symbolic actions, God promised judgment and hope to His people in exile.

**Ezekiel 1–3** — First Vision

**Ezekiel 4–24** — Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

**Ezekiel 25–32** — Judgment on Foreign Nations

**Ezekiel 33–48** — Visions of Restoration

The book is loosely chronological, and it hinges on the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which Ezekiel learns of in chapter 33.

Here are some guiding ideas for reading Ezekiel:

- Ezekiel's **identity as a priest** is essential for understanding his words. Pay attention to the priestly things that he seems preoccupied with, especially the temple.
- Ezekiel is very concerned with **the glory of God**; all that God has done and will do is so that people will see His glory. Some variation of the phrase “then they will know that I am the Lord” occurs more than 50 times in the book. Trace this idea as you read.