

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

INTRODUCTION



EZEKIEL INTRODUCTION

- **Ezekiel ministered to the Jews in exile, in Babylon.**
- **Ezekiel chapters 1-3 is God preparing Ezekiel for his ministry.**
- **Ezekiel's two-fold Purpose:**
 - 1. To remind them of the sins which had brought judgment including exile upon them.**
FORTHTELLING.
 - 2. To encourage and strengthen their faith by prophecies of future restoration and glory.**
FORETELLING.



EZEKIEL INTRODUCTION

- **The Jews were in exile because they had proved unfaithful to the Mosaic Covenant God made with them.**
- **That covenant had warned the Israelites that if they proved unfaithful they could expect the divine discipline (Lv.26, “I will”; Du.28, “Blessed... Cursed shall you be”).**
- **The purpose of the Exile was to turn God's people away from their sins and back to their Sovereign.**



EZEKIEL INTRODUCTION

- **The discipline they experienced was an evidence of God's love (He.12:6, “For whom the LORD loves He chastens”).**
- **Ezekiel, as a watchman for Israel, warned her of the judgment that was imminent and stressed the need for individual responsibility as well as national accountability before God.**
- **Ezekiel uses visions, prophecies, parables, signs, and symbols to proclaim and dramatize the message of God to His exiled people.**



EZEKIEL INTRODUCTION

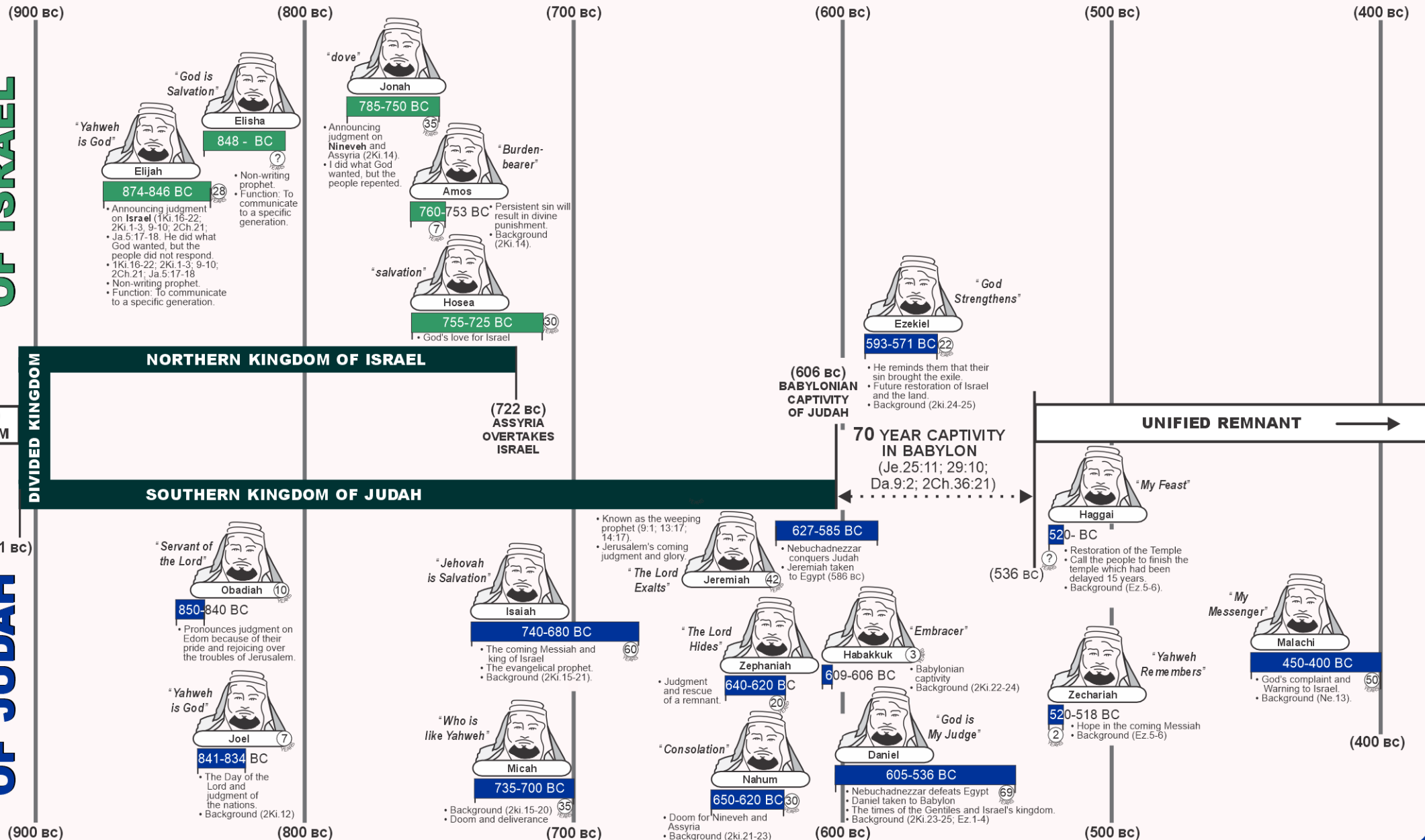
- **The people of Israel (Judah) have profaned the Temple of God with their idols and abominations, thinking God did not know (Ezekiel 8).**
- **The Temple became a sign of the nation's relationship with God.**
- **If the Temple was destroyed and the people cut off from the land it was because they turned away from God.**
- **Ezekiel lived at such a time, when the people turned away from the Lord.**



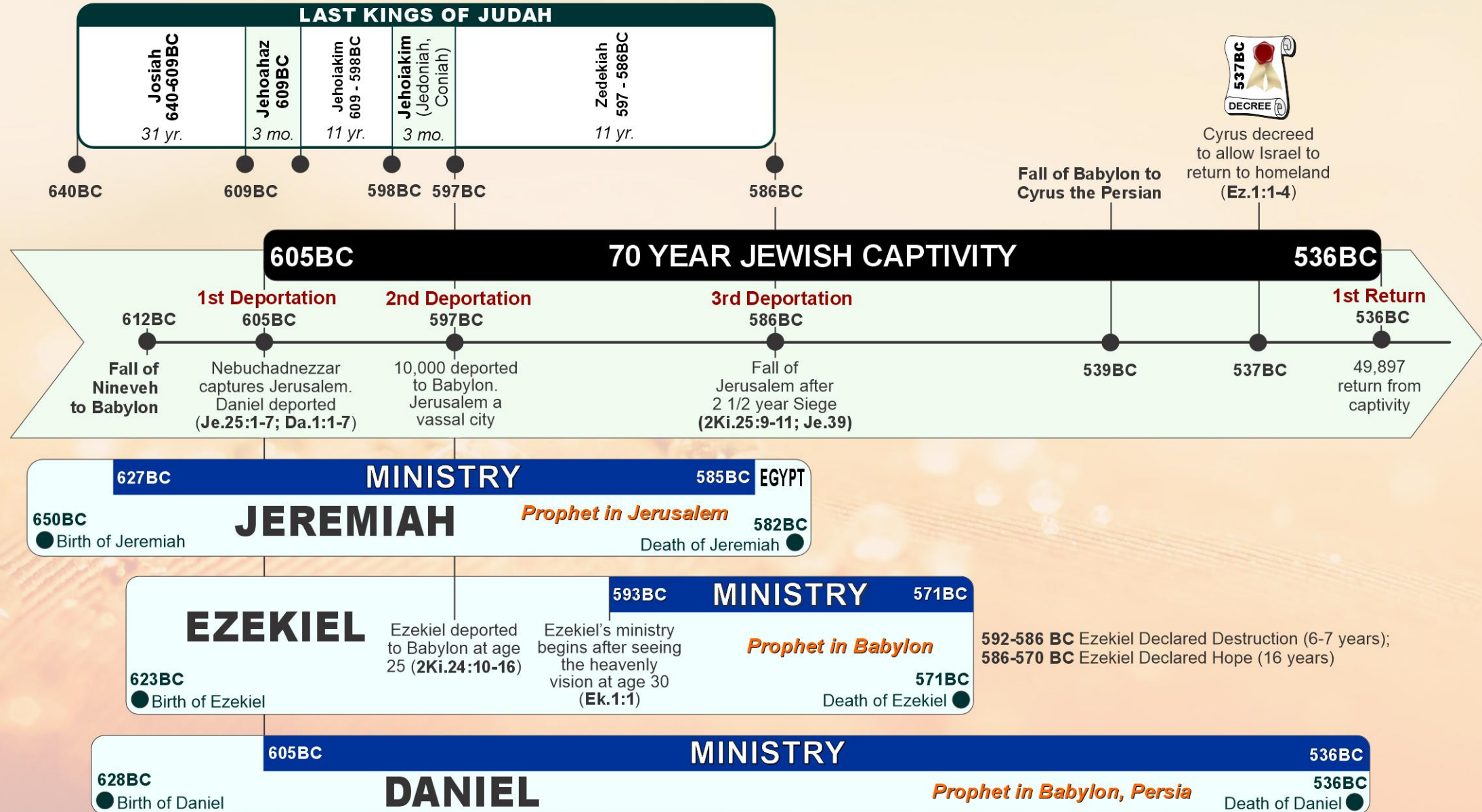
CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS

PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

PROPHETS OF JUDAH



EXILE HISTORY MAJOR PROPHETS



EZEKIEL: DATED MESSAGES

1:1-3	June/July	593	Call to prophetic of his ministry
8:1	Aug/Sept	592	The vision of temple abominations
20:1	July/Aug	591	Response to the elders' inquiry
24:1	Dec/Jan	589/588	Jerusalem's judgment

FROM PROPHECIES OF JUDGMENTS AGAINST JUDAH TO THE NATIONS

26:1	March/April	587/586	Judgment on Tyre
29:1	Dec/Jan	588/587	Judgment on Egypt
29:17	April	571	Judgment on Egypt (the latest date in Ezekiel)
30:20	March/April	587	News of Pharaoh's defeat
31:1	June 21	587	News of Pharaoh's final defeat
32:1	March 3	585	Lament over Pharaoh
32:17	April	585	Funeral dirge for Pharaoh & description of Sheol
33:21	Dec/Jan	586/585	News of Jerusalem's fall

PROPHECIES OF COMFORT & COMMUNION FOR JUDAH & ISRAEL

40:1	April 28	573	Temple vision
-------------	----------	-----	---------------

10 SIGNS IN EZEKIEL

1 Clay Tablet	<i>Jerusalem: Siege & Fall</i>	4:1-3
2 Posture	<i>Duration of the Exile</i>	4:4-8
3 Bread	<i>Deprivations of Captivity</i>	4:9-17
4 Shaving	<i>Destruction: People of Jerusalem</i>	5:1-17
5 Packing Belongings	<i>Exile to another land</i>	12:1-16
6 Trembling	<i>Harshness of Judgment</i>	12:17-20
7 Sharp Sword	<i>Judgment Imminent</i>	21:1-32
8 Furnace	<i>Judgment & Purification</i>	22:1-31
9 Death: Wife	<i>Blessings Forfeited</i>	24:15-27
10 Two Sticks	<i>Reunion: Israel & Judah</i>	37:15-28

EZEKIEL SYMBOLIC ACTIONS

- 1 3:22-26 **Shut up in his house and bound with cords. He is not to speak unless the Lord orders it.**
- 2 4:1-3 **Inscribe the likeness of the city on a clay tablet that models a siege using an iron skillet.**
- 3 4:4-8 **Lays on left side 390 days and on the right side 40 days.**
- 4 4:9-11 **Eats the meager vegetarian diet of a besieged city.**
- 5 4:12-17 **Bakes bread using human excrement (cow dung substituted) for fuel before their eyes.**
- 6 5:1-3 **Shaves beard and head and divides the hair into three equal parts. The cuts, burns, and scatters.**
- 7 12:1-16 **Digs through the wall of house and carries clothes as an exile and does not look at the ground.**
- 8 12:17-20 **Trembles when eating and drinking water.**
- 9 21:6-7 **Groans before people with a broken heart.**
- 10 21:18-24 **Marks out two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon.**
- 11 24:15-24 **His wife dies but not allowed to mourn. This coincides with the destruction of the Temple.**
- 12 37:15-28 **Takes two sticks and writes on them – one for Judah and one for Joseph.**



EVENTS SURROUNDING EZEKIEL

IN BABYLON

640BC

Josiah begins his reign in Judah (640BC, **2Ki.22-23**)
The lost Book of the Law was found resulting in sweeping reforms when Ezekiel was a young boy.

①

605BC

The first Jewish captives are taken to Babylon including Daniel (**Da.1:1-2**)

②

597BC

The second Jewish captives are taken to Babylon including Ezekiel, Jehoiachin, with a group of 10,000 (**2Ki.24:14**)

593BC

Ezekiel's prophetic ministry begins at age 30 (Ek.1:1)

588BC

Final siege of Jerusalem begins & lasts for 18 months (**2Ki.25:1-2**)

③

586BC

Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and Temple as the 3rd invasion (**2Ki.25:2ff; 2Ch.36:17-21**)

605BC

70 YEAR JEWISH CAPTIVITY

→ **536BC** ...

Ezekiel Birth: **623BC**

Ministry Begins: **593BC** End: **571BC**

IN JERUSALEM



609BC

Jehoahaz becomes king for 3 months (**2Ki.23:30-34**)



608BC

Jehoiakim becomes king of Judah (**2Ki.23:34—24:19**)



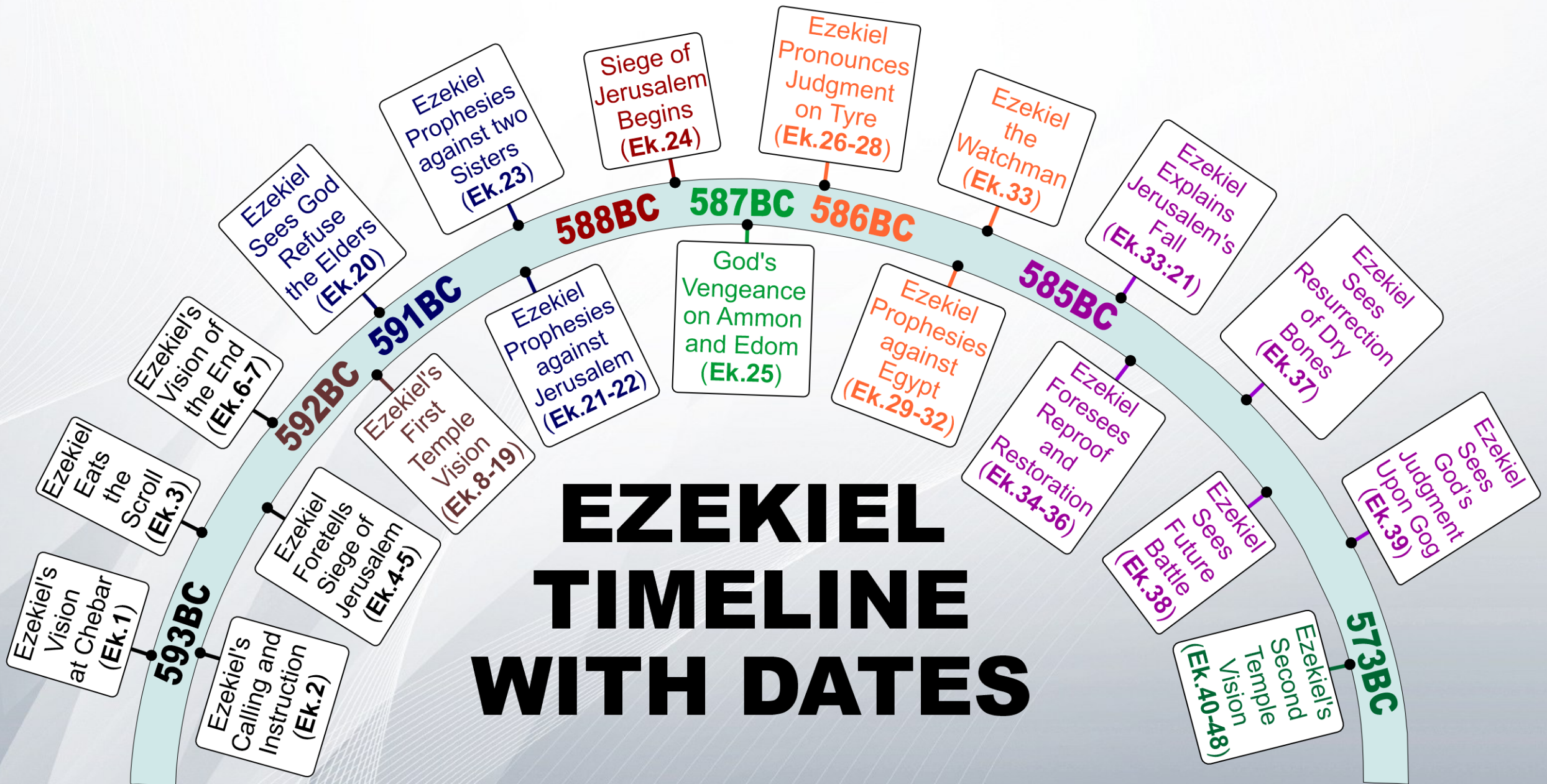
598BC

Jehoiachin becomes king for 3 months (**2Ki.24:17—25:7**)

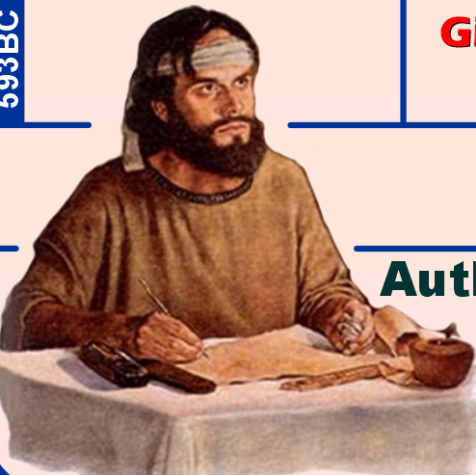


597BC

Zedekiah as last king begins reign in Judah (**2Ki.24:6-25:30; 2Ch.36:11ff**)



BOOK OF EZEKIEL – OUTLINE

INWARD → Personal		OUTWARD ↻ Peoples		ONWARD → Prophetic											
1 — 3		4 — 24		25 — 32		33 — 48									
Ezekiel's Call to Ministry - Ezekiel Birth (623BC) and Ministry Years (593-571BC) 597BC is the 2nd Deportation; Ezekiel taken at age 25 593BC Ezekiel begins Ministry at age 30		Sinfulness of Israel and Fall of Jerusalem - A Disobedient Nation (4-7) - A Departed Glory (8-11) - A Disciplined Nation (12-24)		Judgment on Nations that Opposed Israel - Ammon (25:1-7) - Moab (25:8-11) - Edom (25:12-14) - Philistia (25:15-17) - Tyre (26:1—28:19) - Babylonia (26) - Sidon (28:20-24) - Egypt (29-32)		Restoration of Israel in the Future - Return of Israel to the land (33-39) - Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40-48) - Promised Land; Millennial Temple, and the Glory of God									
593BC		Given BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem		587BC		Given DURING the siege of Jerusalem		586BC		Given AFTER the siege of Jerusalem		571BC			
								The City Destroyed 7 Years Prophesying JUDGMENT				The City Restored 15 Years Prophesying HOPE			
Author: Ezekiel (“God strengthens”) Place: Babylonia Time: About 22 years (593-571BC)															
Events: 605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken) Ezekiel 17 years old															
597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken) Ezekiel 25 years old															
593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel Ezekiel 30 years old															
586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed) Ezekiel 37 years old															

EZEKIEL KEY PHRASES

KEY PHRASE	EZEKIEL ¹	BIBLE ²
“know that I am the LORD”	63	77
“glory of the God of Israel”	5	5
“the word of the LORD came to me”	47	58

¹ Number of times the phrase is used in Ezekiel

² Number of times the phrase is used in the Bible



EZEKIEL IN BABYLON

EZEKIEL 1:1-3



IS ANTICHRIST REAL?

- **Only 49% of protestant churches teach that the Antichrist is real.**
- **Of that number, only a fifth (9%) believe we are going to face the Antichrist.**
- **Less than 10% of Protestants teach to be prepared.**
- **Percentages of Catholics and Orthodox churches are much lower.**



Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

EZEKIEL 1:1



Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. (Ek.1:1)

- **The thirtieth year evidently refers to the prophet's thirtieth year, when he was 30 years old.**
- **We know that Jewish priests begin their ministry at age 30 (Nu.4:3), which supports the time reference of “30th year” as a reference to Ezekiel's 30th birthday.**
- **This is the equivalent of July 31 (“fourth month... fifth day of the month”).**
- **Luke records that the greater Son of Man likewise “was about thirty years of age”...“when He began His ministry” (Lk.3:23).**



Chebar

BABYLONIA

Babylon

Tigris

Ulai

Susa

Nippur

Euphrates

Chebar

Erech

Ur

ELAM

Persian
Gulf



- We know from archeological discoveries that “the River Chebar” was a man-made irrigation canal from the Euphrates River, making a loop from near the city of Babylon, through the city of Nippur (Ps.137:1) and on to Erech.

- In all, it is about 60 miles long.

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. (Ek.1:1)

- **Jeremiah had been prophesying for approximately 35 years and Daniel for approximately 9 years when Ezekiel began his ministry.**
- **These visions came to Ezekiel while he was among the Jewish exiles who settled by the Chebar River in Babylonia.**
- **There is a paradox between those who claimed to have seen God (“I saw visions of God”) and the specific statements that no one can see God and live (Ex.33:20-23; Jn.1:18; 6:46; 1Tm.6:16; 1Jn.4:12).**
- **Apparently it is possible to see visions of deity, but not to gaze intently on His form.**



**On the fifth day of the
month, which was in
the fifth year of King
Jehoiachin's captivity,**

EZEKIEL 1:2

On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, (Ek.1:2)

- Note that the date of this vision is stated in two ways (v1 & v2), which emphasizes Ezekiel's careful attention to chronological detail.**
- Remember that Ezekiel's prophecy is generally given chronologically, making it easier to follow than for example Jeremiah in which the chapters are not in strict chronological order.**
- We have not quite come to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem which took place during the reign of Zedekiah.**



On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, (Ek.1:2)

- **The “fifth year” was 593 B.C. The king, Ezekiel, and ten thousand others (2Ki.24:14) had been deported to Babylon in 597 B.C., Ezekiel at the age of 25.**
- **Ezekiel had been in Babylon five years when he began writing.**
- **Both Ezekiel and Jehoiachin went into captivity at the same time, in the second deportation of Judean prisoners in 597 B.C.**



**the word of the LORD came expressly
to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi,
in the land of the Chaldeans by the
River Chebar; and the hand of the
LORD was upon him there.**

EZEKIEL 1:3



the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there. (Ek.1:3)

- Ezekiel belonged to the tribe of Levi, apparently the priestly branch, and probably to the sons of Kohath.**
- “Chebar” was the main canal that came off the Euphrates River, which watered that area. Evidently, the Jewish captives were put there to till the land.**
- Chebar was removed by quite a few miles from Babylon, and that may be the reason that Daniel and Ezekiel did not have the opportunity to meet together.**
- Daniel may have visited the area, but I doubt that Ezekiel would have been permitted to visit Daniel.**



the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there. (Ek.1:3)

- **As God prepared Isaiah (Is.6:5-13) and Jeremiah (Je.1:4-19), so the Lord prepares Ezekiel to receive revelation and strengthens him to speak as His prophet.**
- **The “Chaldeans” were the rulers of the Babylonian Empire at the time of Israel's captivity.**
- **It is both the “word of the LORD” and the “hand of the LORD” was upon Ezekiel.**



GLORY OF THE LORD

EZEKIEL 1:4—3:27

**Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind
was coming out of the north, a great
cloud with raging fire engulfing itself;
and brightness was all around it and
radiating out of its midst like the color
of amber, out of the midst of the fire.**

EZEKIEL 1:4



Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. (Ek.1:4)

- **The “whirlwind coming out of the north” symbolized God’s judgment on Jerusalem by Babylon.**
- **“The north” is used in Scripture to point to the throne of God (Is.14:13, speaking of the fall of Satan).**



For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north (Is.14:13)

- **The “fire” and “brightness” speak of God as a consuming fire (He.12:29) and that God is light (Jn.1:5).**



LIVING CREATURES

EZEKIEL 1:5-14

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

INTRODUCTION

