



A DISOBEDIENT NATION

EZEKIEL 4-7

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL



Ezekiel 4

A DISOBEDIENT NATION — EKEKIEL 4-7

4 SIGNS of Coming Judgment (4-5)

- 1. Sign of the Brick (4:1-3)**
- 2. Sign of Ezekiel's Lying on his sides (4:4-8)**
- 3. Sign of the Unclean Food (4:9-17)**
- 4. Sign of the Shaved Head and Divided Hair (5:1-17)**

2 MESSAGES of Coming Judgment (6-7)

- 1. Message of Idolatry as the Cause of Judgment (6:1-14)**
- 2. Message on the Nature of Judgment (7:1-27)**



A DISOBEDIENT NATION — EK 4-7

- **Ezekiel is in Babylon and the captives in Babylon are seeing this message of Jerusalem's coming destruction. This message likely causes them to lose hope (false optimism) at that time.**
- **Here is the first series of prophecies, given over a year's time, of Jerusalem's conquest by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.**
- **Ezekiel acted out the coming siege and fall of Jerusalem before it actually happened.**
- **God gave Ezekiel specific instructions about what to do and say and how to do and say it. Each detail had a specific meaning.**

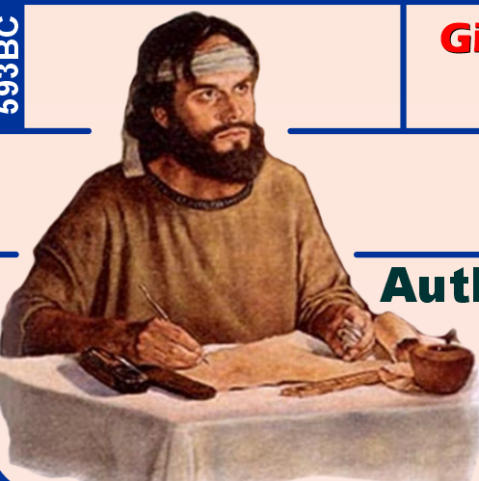


A DISOBEDIENT NATION — EK 4-7

- **This occurred exactly four years before the siege of Jerusalem by Babylon, which resulted in the total destruction of the city (i.e., 586 B.C.).**
- **Ezekiel 4-5 is one sustained dramatic act foreshadowing the siege of Jerusalem.**
- **Ezekiel 4-5 contain a series of silent, dramatic acts related to God's enforced silence of (Ek.3:26).**



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																	

FIRST DRAMATIZATION — SIEGE

EZEKIEL 4:1-8

**"You also, son of man, take a
clay tablet and lay it before you,
and portray on it a city,
Jerusalem.**

EZEKIEL 4:1



"You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. (Ek.4:1)

- **God commands the prophet to do several dramatic acts of judgment which depict the coming fall of Jerusalem.**
- **It seems these dramatic acts were probably performed in front of his house, in public view.**
- **Ezekiel's object lesson employed a soft tile to create a miniature city layout of Jerusalem with walls and siege objects to illustrate Babylon's final coming siege of Jerusalem (588-586 B.C.).**



"You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. (Ek.4:1)

- **The clay tablet in that day meant a brick. This was their writing material. Many of these have been found. They were about 14" by 12" in size.**
- **The clay tablet was a sun-baked brick larger than modern bricks. It was probably white clay.**
- **This was likely baked clay with an outline of the city scratched into it.**



"You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. (Ek.4:1)

- **The Lord instructed Ezekiel to construct a model of Jerusalem under siege.**
- **It is not clear whether the whole model fit on the brick or whether the brick just represented the city of Jerusalem.**
- **The outline of Jerusalem would have been distinctive and easily recognizable by Ezekiel's audience, and he may even have labeled the brick as Jerusalem.**



Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around.

EZEKIEL 4:2



Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)

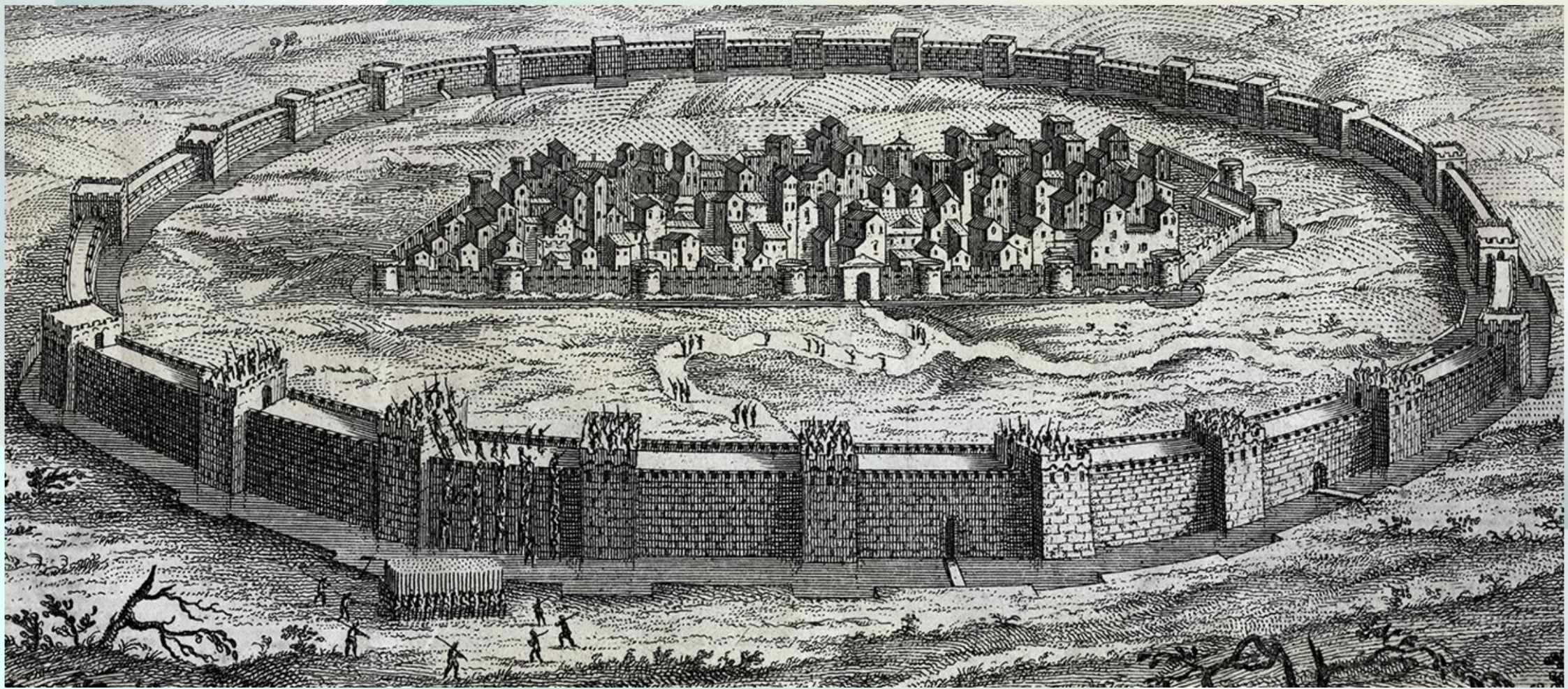
- **Ezekiel built a model of the siege of Jerusalem with enemy siege-works, an earth ramp, camps of soldiers, and battering rams, much like a small boy uses toy soldiers and models of tanks and buildings to play war today.**



- **The “siege wall” was a series of siege towers that were built to put the archers of the invaders on level with the ramparts of the city (2Ki. 25:1; Je.52:4; Ek.17:17; 21:27; 26:8).**



Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)



SIEGE WALL

Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)

- **This was an earthen ramp where the ramming instruments (Ek.21:27) could be brought against the walls of the city.**
- **The purpose of a siege was to starve out the enemies and wear them down by halting their flow of food, supplies, and weapons.**
- **Because Jerusalem was a well-fortified city, it would take Babylon months to capture it.**

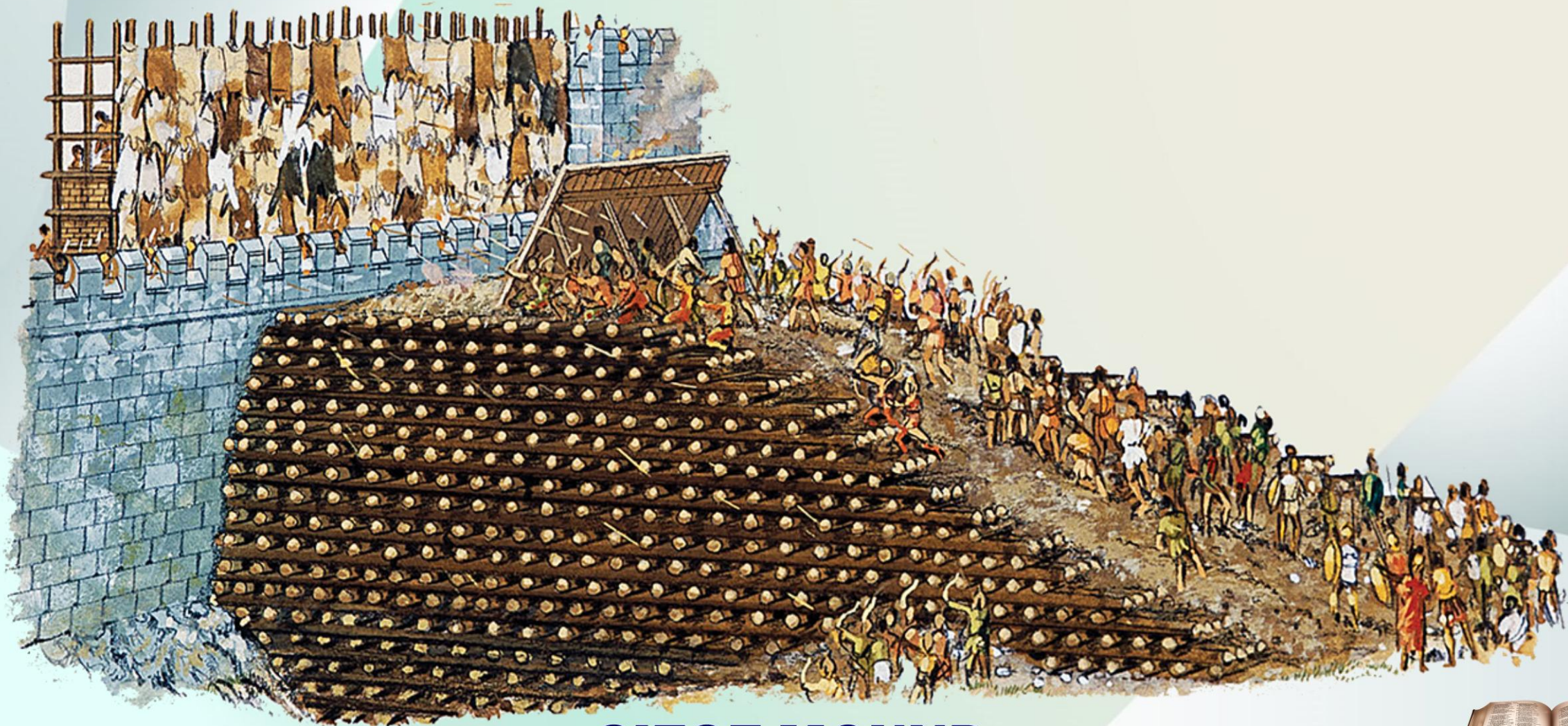


Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)

- **Ezekiel was also to build a ramp up to the brick city. The ramp provided a relatively smooth incline up which siege towers and battering rams could be pushed.**
- **The ramp allowed the attackers to get above the bedrock and large foundation stones of the city so the smaller and more vulnerable upper stones could be reached by the battering rams.**
- **To prevent reinforcements and supplies from coming in and to keep survivors from slipping out, an attacking army would set up camps “all around” the besieged city.**



Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)

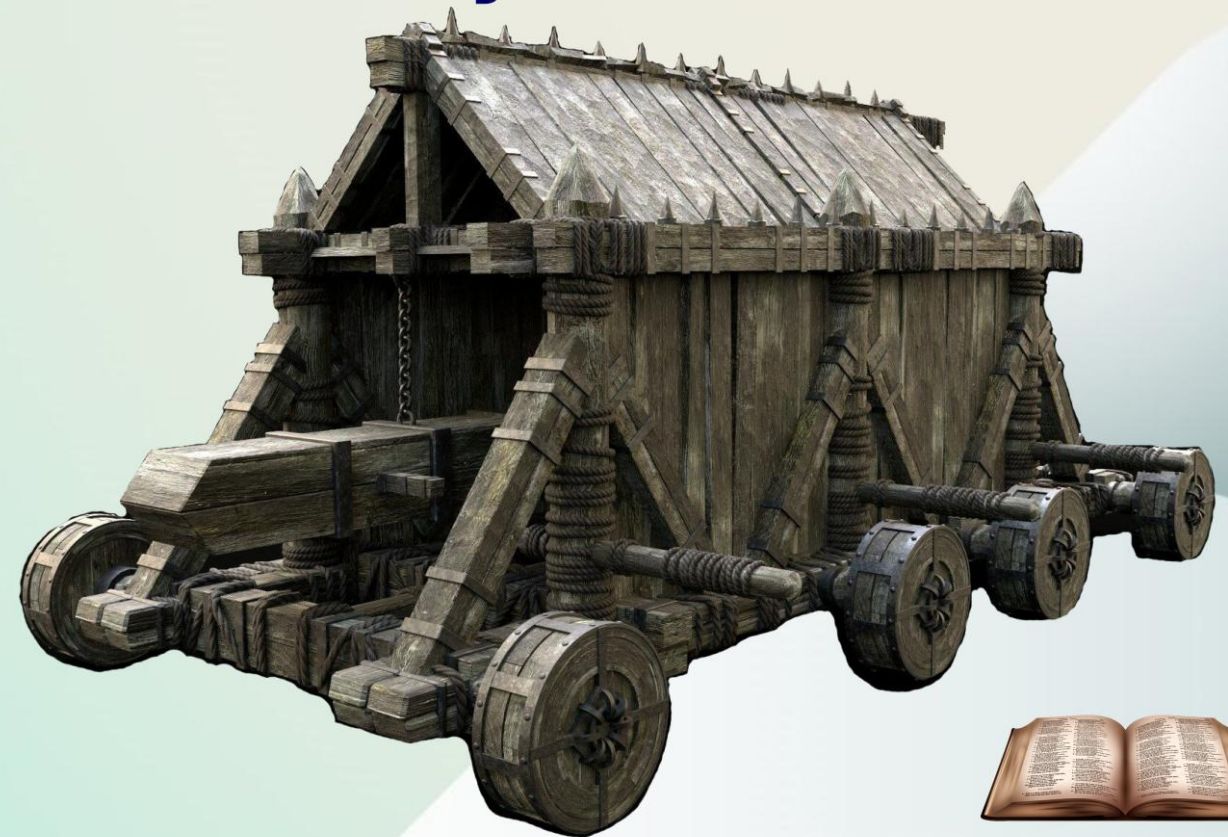


SIEGE MOUND



Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. (Ek.4:2)

- **Once everything was positioned the battering rams were brought forward to begin their assault. Their constant hammering gradually weakened the city's walls.**



Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

EZEKIEL 4:3



Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel. (Ek.4:3)

- Ezekiel was to place an iron plate between himself and his model of the city and to lay siege to Jerusalem.**
- This was to be a sign to the people of Israel of what God would do to the real Jerusalem (Du.28:52-57).**
- The meaning of the iron plate or pan is also debatable, though it appears to have been a common cooking griddle.**



Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel. (Ek.4:3)



IRON PLATE



Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel. (Ek.4:3)

- **Some see this to have signified the Babylonian army that made escape from the city impossible.**
- **Some see the iron plate as a sin barrier between the Jews and God. This context seems to favor the idea of a sin barrier.**
- **Evidently Ezekiel built this model scene without speaking to his audience or explaining what he was doing, and he probably did it just outside his house (Ek.3:24-25).**



Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel. (Ek.4:3)

- In context it seems to relate to God setting His face against His own people and not hearing their cries for help (prophet is silent, Ek.3:25-27).**
- As the siege progressed, Jerusalem would cry out for deliverance, but God would not answer her prayers.**
- The purpose of God in this prophetic act was hardly limited to letting Ezekiel and his countrymen in on the future.**
- More important was their need to see that God was not about to let the sins of the city He had chosen go unpunished.**



"Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity.



EZEKIEL 4:4



"Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. (Ek.4:4)

- **God commands the prophet to lie on his left side to bear (lit. "to carry,") the sin of Israel.**
- **Ezekiel's actions do not cause God to spare Jerusalem, but judge it.**
- **Ezekiel's acts show the extent or longevity of the people's rebellion.**



COMMANDS GIVEN TO EZEKIEL (Ek.4-5)

- **Get a brick (4:1)**
 - **Set it before you**
 - **Inscribe outline of Jerusalem on it**
 - **Build siege wall, ramps around the brick**
 - **Place battering rams (4:3)**
- **Get an iron plate [as a divider] (4:3)**
- **Lie on your side (4:4)**
- **Take food item (4:9)**
- **Take sharp sword and cut off hair & beard (5:1)**



**For I have laid on you the years of
their iniquity, according to the
number of the days, three hundred
and ninety days; so you shall bear
the iniquity of the house of Israel.**

EZEKIEL 4:5



**For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.
(Ek.4:5)**

- **Each day symbolized a year (Ek.4:6).**
- **Then Ezekiel was to recline in public on his left side for 390 days.**
- **This was to represent the number of years that Israel would have to bear punishment for her sins.**
- **Here “the house of Israel” means the Northern Ten Tribes only.**
- **Ezekiel is told to lie on his side to show the sin of both Israel (4:4-5) and Judah (4:6).**



**And when you have completed them,
lie again on your right side; then you
shall bear the iniquity of the house of
Judah forty days. I have laid on you a
day for each year.**



EZEKIEL 4:6



**And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.
(Ek.4:6)**

- Lying on his side, likely facing north, illustrated God's applying judgment to Israel; and facing south pointed to judgment on Judah (v.7).**
- It is not necessary to assume that Ezekiel was on his side position all the time.**
- He was also doubtless upright part of each day, as his need for preparing food (Ek.4:9) indicates.**



**And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.
(Ek.4:6)**

- **Judah was also guilty, but the forty cannot represent less guilt (Ek.23:11).**
- **After the 390 days had expired, he was to lie on his right side for an additional 40 days.**
- **This was to represent the number of additional years the Southern Kingdom of Judah would have to suffer punishment for her sins.**



**And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.
(Ek.4:6)**

- **That these days represented years of divine punishment seems clear, but what years are in view is not clear.**
- **Why God divided these years into two such unusual segments remains a mystery.**
- **In some way the length of the siege corresponded to the past years of Israel and Judah's sin.**



**"Therefore you shall set your face
toward the siege of Jerusalem;
your arm shall be uncovered, and
you shall prophesy against it.**

EZEKIEL 4:7



"Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm shall be uncovered, and you shall prophesy against it. (Ek.4:7)

- **To have the arm uncovered is a symbol for being ready for action, as a soldier would do (Is.52:10).**



The LORD has made bare His holy arm In the eyes of all the nations;
And all the ends of the earth shall see The salvation of our God.
(Is.52:10)

- **He was to face Jerusalem with his arm bared signifying Yahweh's hostility toward His people.**
- **The prophesying that he was to do against Jerusalem (Ek.4:7) was by means of this skit.**



**And surely I will restrain you so that
you cannot turn from one side to
another till you have ended the days
of your siege.**



EZEKIEL 4:8



And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege. (Ek.4:8)

- **This was to symbolize the impossibility of the Jews being able to shake off their punishment.**
- **It appears that the prophet acted out his drama for only a few hours each day, and it was during this time that God enabled him to lie quietly.**
- **Ezekiel was not allowed to move, symbolizing the fact that the people of Jerusalem would be imprisoned within the walls of the city.**



And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege. (Ek.4:8)

- **God's judgment of sin is inevitable. He is longsuffering and may wait for years, but ultimately he will dispense judgment.**
- **Faithfulness involves sticking to tasks where the reward cannot necessarily be experienced right away.**
- **Loyal Christian servants may not see in this life the rewards of their steady labors, but we carry on because God's work is never done in vain, no matter how hard it may be (1Co.15:58).**



LITERAL OR LITERARY?

**And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege.
(Ezekiel 4:8)**

**And you, O son of man, surely they will put ropes on you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them.
(Ezekiel 3:25)**

- **It seems that the prophet was limited to his home (3:25).**
- **The elders had to go there to see him (Ek.8:1; 14:1; 20:1).**



SECOND DRAMATIZATION — FOOD

EZEKIEL 4:9-17

"Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. During the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it.

EZEKIEL 4:9



"Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. During the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. (Ek.4:9)

- This second dramatization took place while Ezekiel was acting out the first 390 days of the siege of Jerusalem with the brick and the plate (Ek.4:1-8).**
- The main drama pictured the siege as a judgment from God. This aspect of it stressed the severe conditions that would exist in the city during the siege.**
- What he ate and drank and how much he ate and drank had significance (4:16-17).**
- The siege (first drama) would cause famine (second drama) in Jerusalem.**



**And your food which you eat shall
be by weight, twenty shekels a
day; from time to time you shall
eat it.**

EZEKIEL 4:10



And your food which you eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day; from time to time you shall eat it. (Ek.4:10)

- **Ezekiel may have eaten at other times of the day when he was not acting out his drama, but during his dramatic presentation each day he only ate and drank as people under siege in Jerusalem would do.**
- **The “twenty shekels” would be about eight ounces, while "one-sixth of a hin" would be less than a quart. These were famine rations.**
- **“From time to time” is a Hebrew idiom which means at a set time each day (1Ch.9:25).**



**You shall also drink water by
measure, one-sixth of a hin;
from time to time you shall
drink.**

EZEKIEL 4:11



You shall also drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; from time to time you shall drink. (Ek.4:11)

- **With this small amount Ezekiel would lose weight and strength which mimicked the siege situation.**



The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. In the foreground, there are dense bushes with bright orange and yellow autumn leaves. A dark wooden fence runs along the bottom left. In the middle ground, a calm blue lake stretches across the scene, with several small, forested islands. In the background, there are rolling mountains under a sky with soft, white clouds and a hint of blue.

FOOD BAKED FROM HUMAN EXCREMENT

EZEKIEL 4:12-15

**And you shall eat it as barley
cakes; and bake it using fuel
of human waste in their sight."**

EZEKIEL 4:12



And you shall eat it as barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight.” (Ek.4:12)

- **Bread was baked on hot stones (1Ki.19:6) heated by human waste because no other fuel was available.**
- **This was repulsive and polluting (Du.23:12-14), so the Lord calls it “defiled bread” (Ek.4:13).**
- **It must be noted that the command regarding “human waste” relates only to the fuel used to prepare the food.**
- **Ezekiel was to bake his food over a fire made with human excrement, as the Jews under siege in Jerusalem would have to do.**



And you shall eat it as barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight." (Ek.4:12)

- **In parts of the Middle East today (India), some people still use dried animal dung as fuel due to the scarcity of wood.**
- **There would be no wood or oil to cook with. Animal dung would be the only source of fuel.**
- **If nothing was left in the city that could be burned, it would be impossible to continue to follow God's laws for sacrifices.**
- **The dried dung burned slowly and gave off an unpleasant odor.**



And you shall eat it as barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight." (Ek.4:12)

- **Ezekiel was to bake his bread in the sight of the people, using human excrement for fuel.**
- **Though the Law did not specifically prohibit the use of human dung for cooking, its guideline regarding the disposal of human excrement suggests that it was considered improper (Du.23:12-14).**



Then the LORD said, "So shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them."

EZEKIEL 4:13



Then the LORD said, "So shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them." (Ek.4:13)

- The uncleanness of their food did not represent the type of food they would have to eat but the fact that they would have to eat their food among defiled people (in captivity).**
- God will drive the people out of the Promised Land (Je.8:3; 16:15; 24:9; 27:10;27:15).**
- Ezekiel presents YHWH's message of the destruction and exile of Jerusalem until it happens and then his message changes to one of a divine restoration (Ezekiel 33-48).**



So I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth."

EZEKIEL 4:14



So I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth." (Ek.4:14)

- **Ezekiel, like Daniel, had convictions to be undefiled even in his food (Da.1:8).**
- **God permitted fuel of dried cow chips for cooking his food in gracious deference to His spokesman's sensitivity (Ek.44:31).**
- **God acceded to Ezekiel's request to substitute animal dung for human feces because the prophet wished to preserve his own purity and because the use of human waste, though more realistic, was not essential to the lesson Ezekiel was to teach the people (Ac.10:14-15).**



So I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth." (Ek.4:14)



¹⁴But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." ¹⁵And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."
(Ac.10:14-15)

- **Ezekiel had always kept God's dietary laws (Du.14:1-29). As a priest he was careful to keep himself undefiled (Lv.22:8; Ek.44:31).**
- **God responds to the prophet's squeamishness and allows cow dung to be substituted for fuel (4:15).**



**Then He said to me, "See, I am giving
you cow dung instead of human
waste, and you shall prepare your
bread over it."**

EZEKIEL 4:15



Then He said to me, "See, I am giving you cow dung instead of human waste, and you shall prepare your bread over it." (Ek.4:15)

- The prophet complained that he had never eaten unclean food (Ek.44:31; Lv.22:8; Du.12:15-19; 14:21; 23:9-14), so the Lord graciously allowed him to prepare his food over a fire made with cow's dung rather than human feces.**
- Less of a stigma was associated with the use of cow dung, so God let Ezekiel use it.**



**Moreover He said to me, "Son of man,
surely I will cut off the supply of bread
in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by
weight and with anxiety, and shall
drink water by measure and with
dread,**

EZEKIEL 4:16



Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, surely I will cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread, (Ek.4:16)

- All these conditions were to symbolize how people back in Jerusalem were going to have to eat to live during the siege.**
- They would have to eat sparingly because the famine caused by the siege would be severe.**
- The purpose of his eating and drinking these meager rations was to show the scarcity of food and water in Jerusalem during the siege.**



**that they may lack bread and water,
and be dismayed with one another,
and waste away because of their
iniquity.**

EZEKIEL 4:17



that they may lack bread and water, and be dismayed with one another, and waste away because of their iniquity. (Ek.4:17)

- **They were soon to have neither bread nor water in any amount, and they were to grieve over the famine and their iniquity (Lv.26:21-26).**
- **To “waste away” in their iniquity has the idea of, 'to fester' (Ps.38:5), or 'to rot' (Zc.14:12).**
- **Ezekiel, as a trained priest, drew much of his vocabulary from Leviticus.**





A DISOBEDIENT NATION

EZEKIEL 4-7