

Ezekiel

God's Glory & Greatness,
Israel's Renewal & Return

Ezekiel

“There is another practice too that we have received from them—namely, that all the Scriptures should be delivered to boys by teachers and wise men, while at the same time the four they call *deuteroiseis*— that is to say, the beginning of Genesis, in which the creation of the world is described; the first chapters of Ezekiel, which tell about the cherubim; the end of that same, which contains the building of the Temple; and this book of the Song of Songs— should be reserved for study until last”
(Origen, *Song of Songs Commentary and Homilies*, 22-23)

“The beginning and ending of Ezekiel are involved in so great obscurity that like the commencement of Genesis they are not studied by the Hebrews until they are thirty years old.”
(Jerome, Letter 53.8, *NPNF*² 6:101)

Introduction

- Prophet: יְחֶזְקֵאל, May God strengthen, *priest*
- Date: 592-572 B.C. (1:3, 40:1; 2nd exile 597)
- Setting: Last days of Judah (*from Babylon*)
- Theme: God's Glory & Greatness (1-32),
Israel's Renewal & Return (33-48)

Brief Outline

○ Judah's Judgment (1-24)

Call of Ezekiel (1-3)

Coming End (12-14)

Concrete Examples (4-5)

Concrete Examples (15-17)

Confronting Evil (6-7)

Coming End (18-24)

Cloud Exits (8-11)

○ Judgment on the Nations (25-32)

○ Judah's Restoration (33-48)

Resources: Chisholm, *Handbook on the Prophets*, 2002;
Block, *Ezekiel*, 2 vols. NICOT, Eerdmans, 1997.

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- Setting: Last days of Judah (*from Babylon*)
- Theme: **God's Glory (YHWH leaves temple) & Greatness, Israel's Renewal & Return**
- Message: ***Because of Zion's sin, God removes His glory.***

Call of Ezekiel (1-3)

- Glory: ‘The *likeness* of the glory of God’ (1) *28x*
Arrival accompanied by wind, clouds, fire. Unusual?
 - *Creatures* (4-14): human (*face, hands, feet*) & animal (*faces/wings, calf-feet, glow fire, lightning*)
[contextualized portrait for readers, cf. Hays 202]
 - *Chariot* (15-28): wheels tall & gleaming, w/ eyes, able to move w/o turning (*globe*), moved by spirit; platform-throne, likeness of God’s glory
 - *Collapse* (28): humble, ready response (cf. Isa. 6)

Call of Ezekiel (1-3)

- Go: ‘*Son of man*, I send you to Israel...’ (2-3)
 - *Speak* (2:1-3:3): Ezekiel to deliver God’s message, **regardless of response (rebel, 9x)**! God commands Ezekiel to eat a scroll (*sustenance & satisfaction*)
 - *Stubborn* (4-15): Israel will be hard, but I will ‘harden’ you. **Speak My word to them, regardless!**
 - *Spokesman* (16-27): Ezekiel must warn wicked or be held accountable! Divine silence & speech

Concrete Examples (4-5)

- Sign #1: 'A sign for the house of Israel' (4)
 - *Siege*: engrave brick (*Jerusalem*), siege works, wall, *accused*: lie on left- 390 yrs. (*past?*, *Solomon idols*), lie on right- 40 yrs. (*future? exile*); *agent*: face city, bared arm, prophesy; 8 oz. bread, 2/3 qt. water



Ahiel's House

A test of the contents in the waste pit found that their menu included wild plants & uncooked meat (tapeworm)

<http://www.cityofdavid.org.il/en/archeology/finds/house-ahiel-storage-jars-and-toilet>



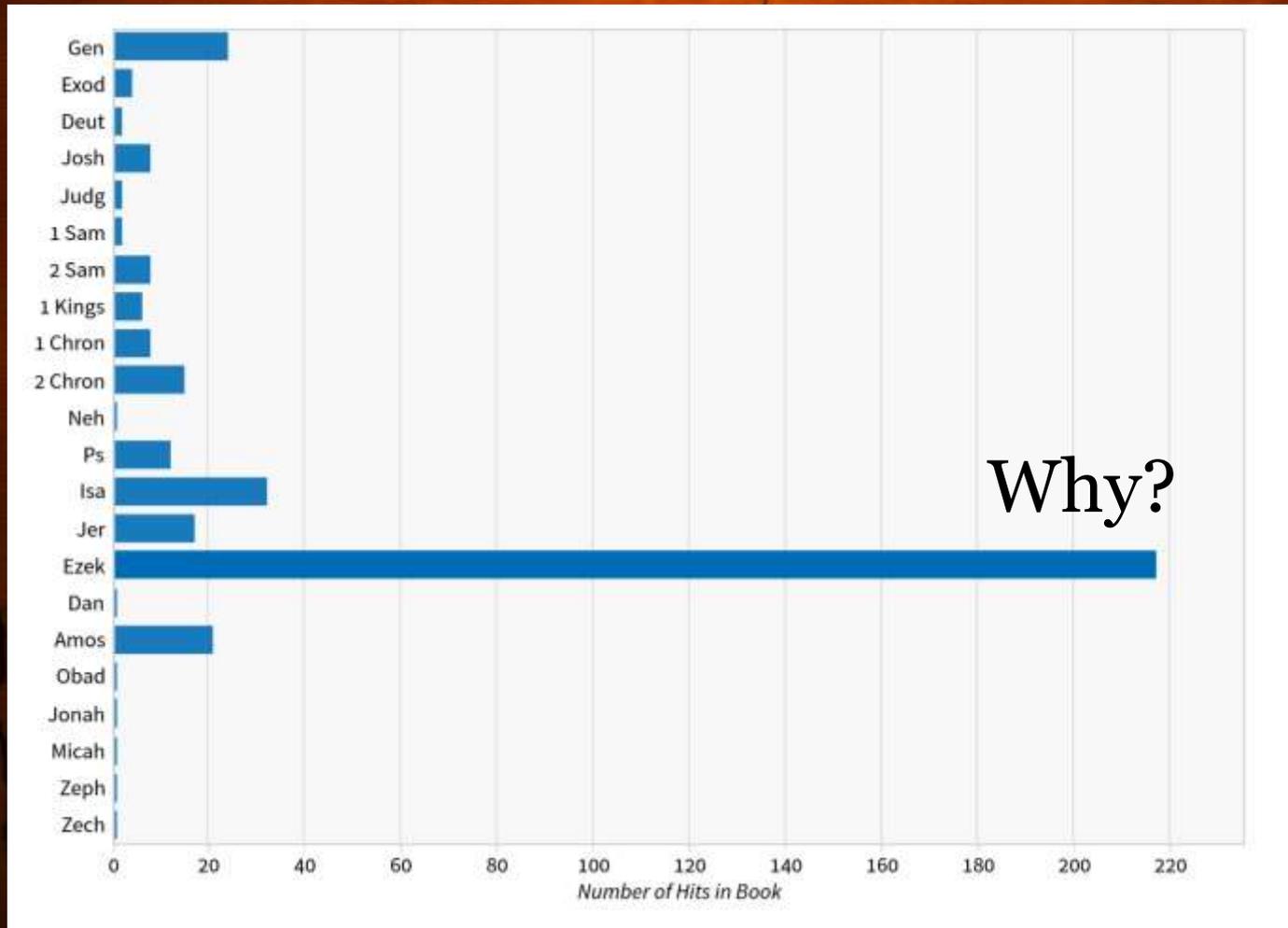
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- Sign #2: 'Pass it over your head & beard' (5)
 - **Shave**: divide hair: (1) burn, (2) sword, (3) scatter (*few saved*); 'I am against you,' *withdraw (cf. 8:6) (1) famine/pestilence, (2) sword, (3) scatter (Lev. 26)

Confronting Evil (6-7)

- Idolatry: ‘I will bring a sword upon you’ (6)
 - *Waste*: God promises to destroy worship centers & worshipers; a remnant will repent. Judgment & salvation to call Israel back to their covenant Lord

“Lord GOD” (Adonai YHWH)



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- Imminent: ‘An end! The end has **come**’ (7) (13x)
 - *Wrath*: God bringing judgment in just measure (4x) no mercy, know YHWH; people cut down/scattered, silver-gold can’t save (*idols*), violent get violence!

Cloud Exits (8-11)

- Idolatry: ‘You will see greater abominations’ (8)
 - *Worship*: (1) image of jealousy (*forbid, cf. Deut 4:16*) [*drive me*], (2) images of unclean things, (3) weeping for Tammuz, (4) sun worship; AND social injustice!
- Implement: ‘Land is full of blood, injustice’ (9)
 - *Wrath*: God’s glory moves, scribe to mark upright, executioners to kill mercilessly, Ezekiel: annihilate? God: judgment is just (*can’t see . . . eye won’t pity*)

Cloud Exits (8-11)

- Intervals: ‘The glory of YHWH went out’ (10-11)
 - *Wings & Wheels* (10:1f, 11:22-25): (1) man gets coals from cherub to spread over city, (2) cloud moves to threshold (*sad irony*), to east gate, to Mt. of Olives
 - *Wicked* (11:1-12): ‘we are secure’ (meat/cauldron), No! You will be driven out, cut down for evil
 - *Worry* (13-21): prince dies, Ezekiel: end? God will regather, recreate (*heart/spirit*), renew (*covenant*)

Summary

After being taken to Babylon, Ezekiel delivers God's message to the exiles, using prophetic oracles, parables & personal actions to speak about Zion's coming judgment. Because of Judah's continued rebellion against Him, God would remove His glory from their presence. But there is hope. In the future, God will renew & restore His people!