

Introduction to Ezekiel

It is of the greatest importance when studying the books of the Bible to have a clear understanding of the historical context. Prophecies need to be understood in the light of events occurring at the time. Too often prophecies that have already been fulfilled in history have been applied to the future. A good understanding of the historical background of the time will avoid such mistakes.

Ezekiel was a young priest who was taken captive to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar came the second time to Jerusalem when evil King Jehoiakim was killed and his son Jehoiachin was taken captive to Babylon.

After Jehoiachin was taken away, his uncle Zedekiah was made King and he paid tribute to Babylon. In his 4th year, Zedekiah visited Babylon (Jer.51:59) but after his return to Jerusalem he listened to the false prophets who claimed to speak the word of the Lord saying that within two years Babylon would be destroyed and all the captives in Babylon would return.

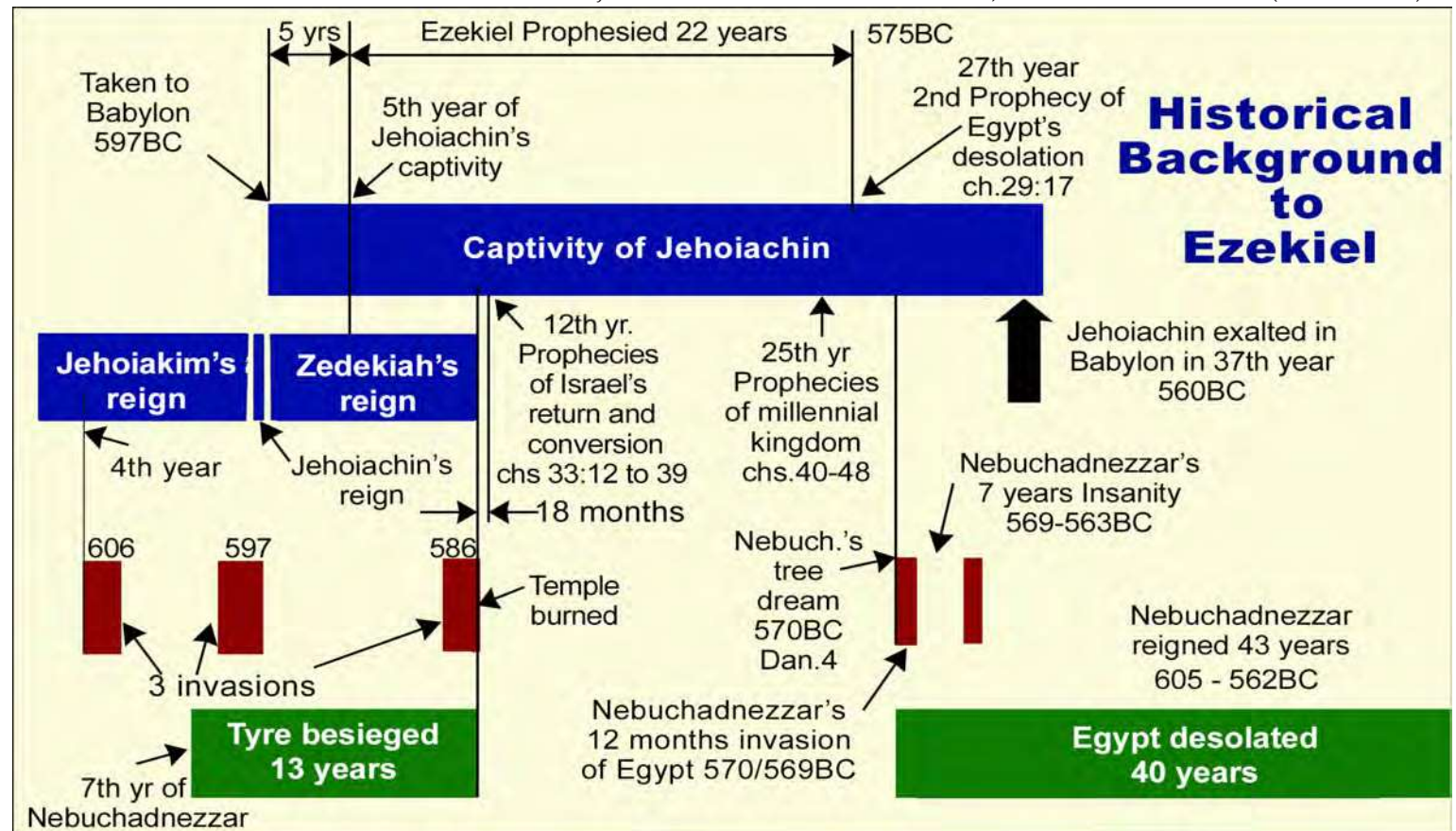
Jeremiah prophesied in the land while Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon telling the people not to resist the King of Babylon for God had determined that the Babylonian Empire would continue for 70 years (Jer.25:11-12; 29:10) and there would yet be a third invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar who would destroy the city and the Temple; many would be slain or taken captive; King Zedekiah would be blinded and taken to Babylon where he would die in prison.

Ezekiel was warned by God before he began to prophesy, that the Jews would not listen to him or heed his message (See Ezek.chs.2 and 3).

Each time the Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel it was dated from the captivity of Jehoiachin; he began in the 5th year of the second captivity (593BC) and concluded with a brief prophecy concerning Egypt in the 25th year (575BC).

Most prophecies concerning **Israel in the last days** were given in chapters 34 to 39, in the 12th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin which was just one year after Jerusalem was destroyed (Ezek.33:21). In the 25th year of the captivity, Ezekiel prophesied of the **future kingdom** of Christ giving much detail of the Temple that will be built and how worship will be conducted. David will be prince and the Lord will be present (Ezek.34:23).

When Christ reigns, all of the Tribes of Israel will be reinstated in their portion of the land and the glory of God will be seen. Jerusalem will be renamed *Jehovah-Shammah* which means, "The LORD is there" (Ezek.48:35).



The Prophecy of Ezekiel Summarized

Daniel prophesied concerning “*the times of the Gentiles*” but Ezekiel prophesied concerning Israel (Ezek.3:4-11). The entire Book may be summarized as the removal of the presence of the Glory of the Lord from Israel (Ezek.chs. 1 to 11) to the return of the presence of the Glory of the Lord (Ezek.44:1-7).

The Glory of God departed in 586BC from the Temple and left by the Mount of Olives on the east of Jerusalem. It will return from the east to dwell in the millennial Temple, built to the specifications given in Ezekiel chapters 40 to 42.

Chapters 31 to 39 provide much detail about Israel’s return to the land in **unbelief** and of her return to the Lord when she is invaded from the north by Russia (Magog), Turkey (The house of Togarmah), Iran (Persia), Libya and Sudan (Ethiopia) (Ezek.38 & 39).

The return in unbelief is seen in chapter 36 where God says:

“I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. THEN will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you”...Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed” (Ezek.36:25-26, 32).

The vision of the valley of dry bones (ch.37:1-14) indicates three stages in

Israel’s restoration. When Ezekiel prophesied to the bones which were the “*whole house of Israel*”, they **came together** as in 1897 at the First Zionist Congress. When he prophesied to the skeletons they took on sinews and flesh but had no spiritual life, just as the nation was formed in 1948 without having acknowledged Jesus Christ as Messiah and king. Finally, Ezekiel prophesied to the carcasses, and the Spirit of God came into them and they rose up a great **living** army. This will occur in the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*” when Israel is born again (Jer.30:7).

The timing of this amazing conversion when “*all Israel shall be saved*” (Rom.11:26) will be in the **first half of the Tribulation when Russia leads her Islamic allies into the land**. Israel will seek the Lord “*from that day and forward*” (Ezek.39:22) and the invaders will be destroyed by Divine intervention; by hail, pestilence, disunity and an earthquake as described in Revelation chapter 6:12. Only one sixth of the army will escape to Siberia (Joel 2:20) and the land of Magog (Russia) will be burned (Ezek.39:6).

Israel will be regathered as a redeemed people and will serve Messiah in the land as Christ reigns for 1,000 years from David’s throne at Jerusalem.

“Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek.39:29).

EZEKIEL SUMMARIZED

FULFILLED PROPHECY

Chapters 1 to 11

Ezekiel called to prophesy to Israel after seeing visions of the Glory of God & the Throne of God. The glory leaves the Temple and the Mt of Olives

Chapters 12 to 24

Idolatrous Jerusalem to be besieged, burned, & Zedekiah removed to Babylon. The throne of David to be overturned three times & cease till Messiah reigns.

Chapter 25

Because Ammon, Moab, Mt Seir (Edom), and the Philistines rejoiced over Jerusalem’s downfall they would be judged by Nebuchadnezzar

Chapters 26 to 28

Tyre’s coastal city and Sidon to be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Island city later by Alexander because she rejoiced over Jerusalem’s downfall. Tyre’s king possessed by Satan.

Chapters 29 to 32

Egypt to be judged by Nebuchadnezzar and desolate 40 years (570-530BC) because they failed to support Jerusalem. Tho’ Pharaoh claim to be God he will go to hell with kings of other heathen nations.

Chapters 30

Ezekiel to be a Watchman to warn Israel about **FUTURE** events

Chapters 31 to 36

Unbelieving Israel to return to the land in the **LAST DAYS** midst challenges from Arab neighbours.

Chapter 37

Three steps to Israel’s restoration in **LAST DAYS**. Zionism (1881), Nationhood (1948), Conversion in the Tribulation (future). No longer 2 kingdoms when converted.

Chapters 38 and 39

The day of Israel’s conversion when Islamic armies led by Russia, invade in first half of the Tribulation

Chapters 40 to 48

The Millennial Temple and priestly service specified. The Dead Sea healed and the land divided among the 12 Tribes when the Glory of God returns in the **LAST DAYS**.

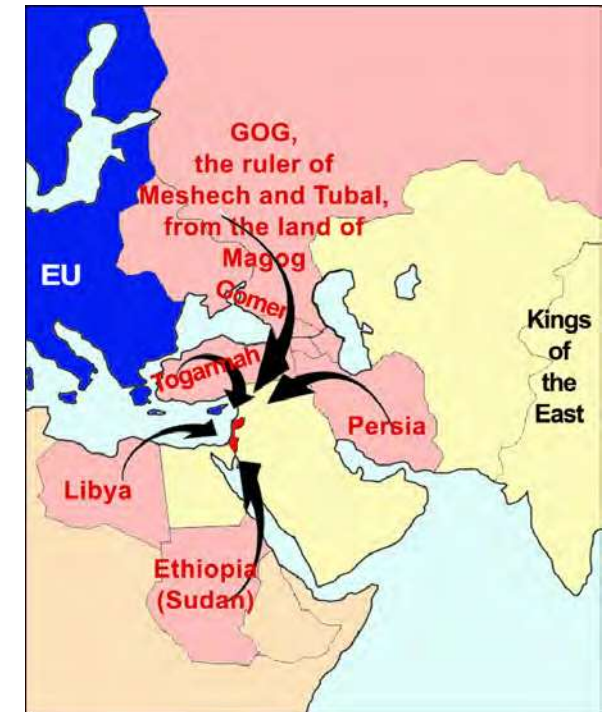
FUTURE PROPHECY

The War that Brings Israel to Repentance - Ezek.38 & 39

Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 describe the invasion of Israel in the **first half** of the 7-year Tribulation when Israel turns to the Lord. It must be in the first half because, during the second half, all Israel are keeping the "commandments of God, and have the *testimony of Jesus Christ*" (Rev.12:17). Also, this invasion must be **after the Rapture** because, if it were before the Rapture that "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26), then the Jews would become a part of the Church and all be Raptured. There would not be any Jews left to play their part in the 70th "week" which belongs to Israel.

This invasion must not be confused with ANOTHER invasion by Gog at the end of the Millennial kingdom (Rev.20:8). In the first invasion **one sixth escape** (Ezek.39:2) but at the end of the 1,000 years, **none escape**.

This invasion also must not be confused with Armageddon at **the end of the Tribulation** for only Turkey, Iran, Libya and Sudan join with Russia whereas Armageddon involves ALL NATIONS (Joel 3:2).



When will the Russian Islamic armies enter Israel? When Israel is **dwelling safely** in the "*latter days*" (Ezek.38:8). The covenant that many make with Antichrist will, at the beginning of the 7 years, guarantee Israel's security (Dan.9:27).

Where will the armies come from? Josephus states that the Magogites were "by the Greeks called Scythians" and we know they dwelt along the north coast of the Black Sea. Gog comes from his "*place out of the north parts*" (Ezek.38:15) and Togarmah is "*of the north quarters*" (Ezek.38:6).

The invasion is challenged by "*the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof*" (Britain and US) and "*Sheba and Dedan*" - Saudi Arabia (Ezek.38:13).