

# Long Story Short: Ezekiel



## The Big Picture:

- ◆ 1-3: Ezekiel's call to be a prophet **[Yahweh's glory in Babylon]** ←
- ◆ 4-7 Announcement of judgment on Jerusalem
- ◆ 8-11 Ezekiel's Temple Vision **[Yahweh's glory leaves the temple]** ←
- ◆ 12-24 Oracles, signs, and allegories of judgment on Israel
- ◆ 25-32 Judgment against the nations
- ◆ 25 Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia 26-28 Tyre and Sidon
- ◆ 29-32 Egypt
- ◆ 33 Jerusalem Destroyed
- ◆ 34-39 Oracles of future hope
- ◆ 34 Hope for a future, messianic king
- ◆ 35-36 New covenant, new nation
- ◆ 37 Valley of the dry bones
- ◆ 38-39 Gog oracles
- ◆ 40-48 Restoration of the Temple **[Yahweh's glory returns to the temple]** ←

## Historical Context:

- ◆ Ezekiel was a priest, taken captive in the first wave of the Babylonian attack and exile in the 590's BC (see 2Kings 24). He lived in Babylon, and was a contemporary of Jeremiah.

## Key Themes in Ezekiel:

1. Israel has completely abandoned Yahweh
  - They have filled the Jerusalem temple with idols: Ezek 8-10
    - = Key Image: Look for descriptions of Israel's idolatry with metaphors about adultery, marital unfaithfulness and prostitution. These are vivid descriptions of how sin and selfishness ruin our relationship with God: Ezek 16, 23.
  - They have been deceived by false prophets: Ezek 13
  - They have been rebellious from the Exodus: Ezek 20
  - Israel's Idolatry is connected with social injustice: Ezek 22
2. Therefore Yahweh has abandoned his temple.
  - Ezekiel's vision of the divine chariot (= "God-mobile"): Ezek 1 describes God's presence appearing to Ezekiel in Babylon (i.e. it assumes God's presence has left Jerusalem)
  - Yahweh's glory leaves the temple because of Israel's idolatry: Ezek 10-11
3. Yahweh's decision to bring judgment upon Judah is irreversible
  - Their idolatrous worship sites will be destroyed: Ezek 6
  - The righteous patriarchs could not save them: 14:12-21
  - They will go into exile: 12:1-15
4. Ezekiel emphasized that judgment is for this generation's apostasy
  - Ezek 18: Each individual is responsible before God [no generational sin]

5. Yahweh's judgment will also affect the surrounding nations [Ezek 25–32]
  - For taking advantage of Israel's downfall: Ezek 25
  - For pride and arrogance: Ezek 28:1–10 (King of Tyre), 29:1–5 (King of Egypt)
  - Gog and Magog oracles: Ezek 38–39
6. After the exile, Yahweh will restore Israel and enable them to keep the covenant
  - New Heart: Ezek 11:16–21
  - New Heart and New Covenant: Ezek 36:22–36
  - New Creation and a Messianic King: Ezek 37

7. At the center of Ezekiel's vision of a restored Israel is the New Temple: Ezek 40–48

– Interpretive Views of Ezekiel's Temple:

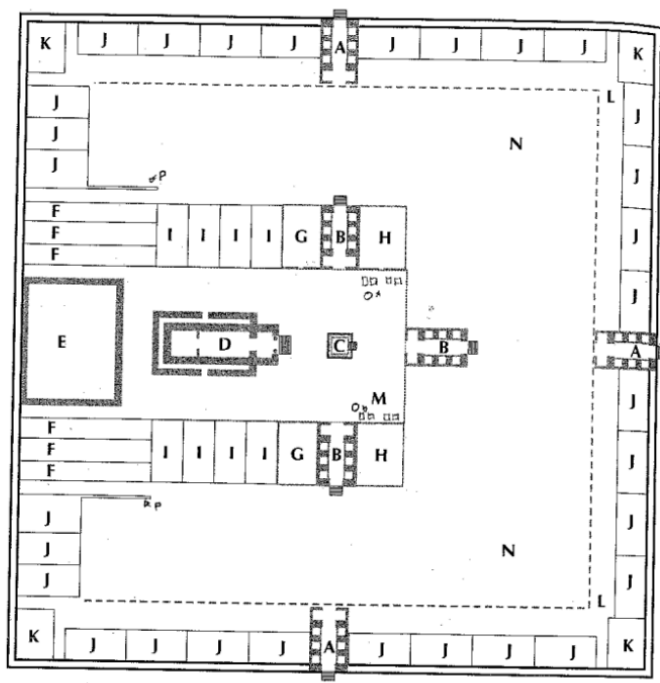
(1) Describes an actual temple to be built when the Messiah returns to restore Jerusalem [Orthodox Judaism, Christians who believe in a millennial kingdom]

- = Problem: There is no basis in the New Testament for the hope of a restored temple in Jerusalem.
- = Problem: In the depiction of the New Creation in Revelation 21:22, it is very clear that there is no centralized temple, because the entire creation is filled with God's presence.
- = Problem: The New Testament authors are clear that Jesus and His body, the community of Christ followers, are the new temple (1Cor 3:16–17, 1Pet 2:4–10)

(2) Describes an idealized temple that uses “symbolic geography and architecture” that was not intended for precise historical reference.

- = The location of the temple (“a very high mountain”, 40:2) is symbolic: “high mountain” = symbolic connection point between heaven and earth
- = The city-temple complex is over one mile wide and a perfect square, a magnified version of the Holy of Holies (48:17, 35).
- = There is a river coming from the temple mount (47:1–12). It is a symbolic stream linked to garden of Eden imagery.
- = The image of continuing sacrifices (ch. 45) is inconsistent with the New Testament theology of Christ's sacrificial death (Hebrews 9–10)

## Charts adapted from Daniel Block, *Ezekiel* (Eerdmans, 1998)

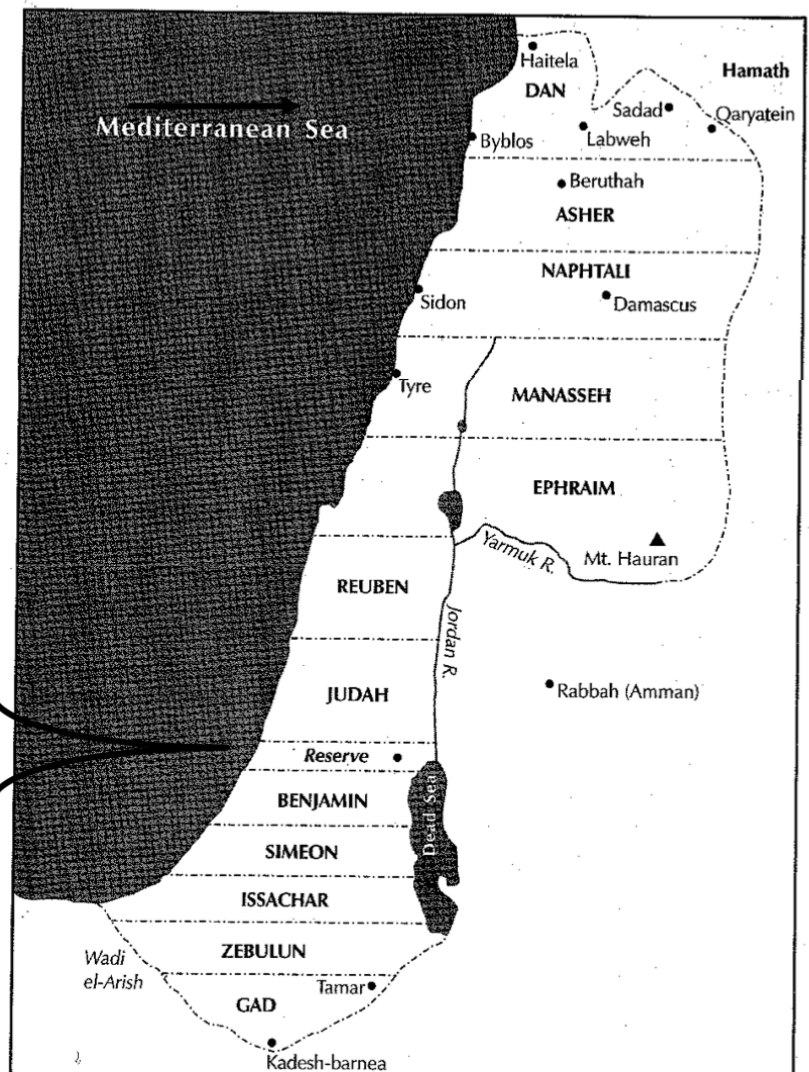
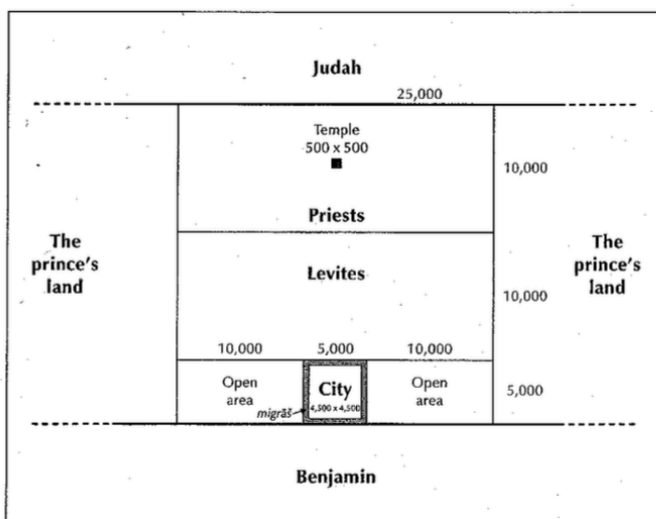


### The Temple

#### Key

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| A Outer gates (40:5-16, 20-27) | H Chamber of offerings (40:38)               |
| B Inner gates (40:28-37)       | I Outer chambers (41:9b-10)                  |
| C Altar (43:13-17)             | J Worshiper's chambers (40:17)               |
| D Temple (40:48-41:11, 15-26)  | K Kitchens (46:19-24)                        |
| E Binyan (41:12-14)            | L Lower pavement (40:18) $\text{הַבִּיטָּה}$ |
| F Priestly sacrists (42:1-14)  | M Inner court (40:44)                        |
| G Priestly chambers (40:44-46) | N Outer court (40:17-19)                     |

### The Divisions of the Land (ch.48)



Map 2. Ezekiel's Vision of the Land of Israel