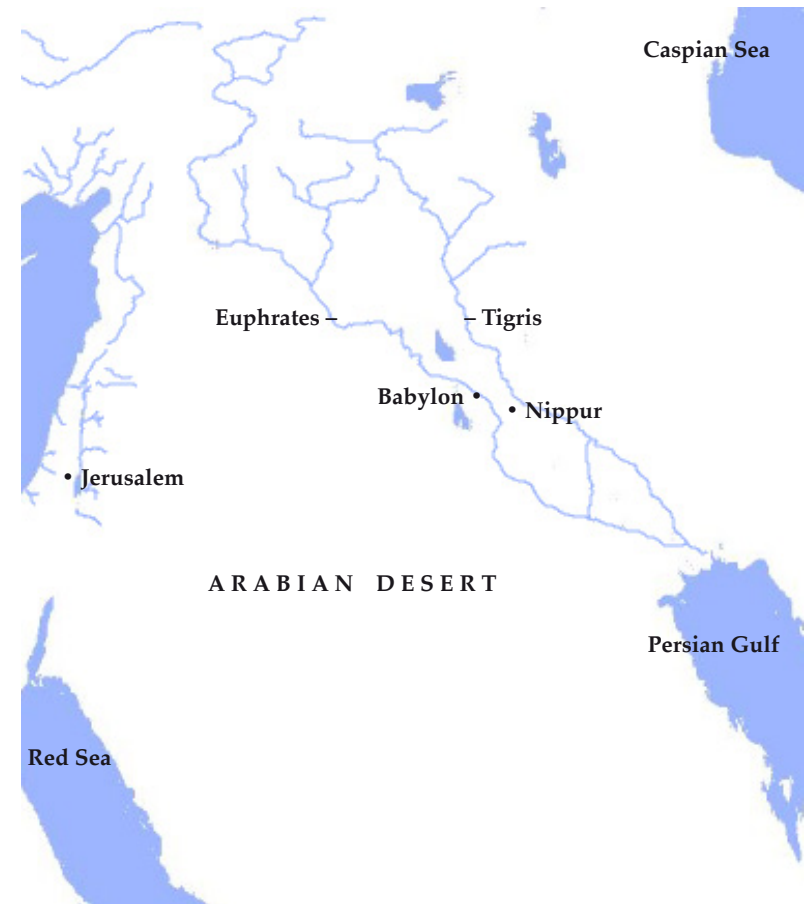


02. Ezekiel 1-7



Ezekiel 1:1-3 Ezekiel's Vision and call

In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin) (= 593BC), the word of YHWH came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal; and the hand of YHWH was on him ['me'] there.



Chebar canal' – a canal from the Euphrates which ran through the town of Nippur, to the south-east of Babylon.

Ezekiel 1:4-9

As I looked, a stormy wind came out of the north: a great cloud with brightness around it and fire flashing forth continually, and in the middle of the fire, something like gleaming amber.

In the middle of it was something like four creatures (cherubs, 10:20). This was their appearance: they were of human form. Each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: their wings touched one another; each of them moved straight ahead, without turning as they moved.

Ezekiel 1:10-12

As for the appearance of their faces: the four had the face of a human being (intelligence), the face of a lion (power) on the right side, the face of an ox (generativity) on the left side, and the face of an eagle (flight); such were their faces.

Their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. Each moved straight ahead; wherever the **spirit** would go, they went, without turning as they went.



Ezekiel 1:13-15

In the middle of the creatures there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving to and fro among the creatures; the fire was bright, and lightning issued from the fire. The creatures were darting to and fro, like lightning flashes.

As I looked at the creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the creatures, one for each of the four of them.

God is present among the exiles



Ezekiel 1:16-21

As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl; and the four had the same form, their construction being something like a wheel within a wheel. When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved. Their rims were tall and awesome, for the rims of all four were full of eyes all around. When the creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. Wherever the spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels. When they moved, the others moved; when they stopped, the others stopped; and when they rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.

Ezekiel 1:22-25

Over the heads of the creatures there was something like a dome, shining like crystal, spread out above their heads. Under the dome their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another; and each of the creatures had two wings covering its body. When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army.

And there came a **voice** from above the dome over their heads; when they stopped, they let down their wings.

Ezekiel 1:26-28

Above the dome over their heads there was, in appearance ('vision', Exodus 3:3; Numbers 12:6) like sapphire, something like a throne; and seated above the likeness of a throne was something that seemed like (Genesis 1:26) a human form. Upward from what appeared like the loins I saw something like gleaming amber, something that looked like fire enclosed all around; and downward from what looked like the loins I saw something that looked like fire, and there was a splendour all around.

Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendour all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of YHWH. When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

Ezekiel 2:1-5

He said to me: **Son of man** (92x), stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a **spirit** entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me.

He said to me: Son of man, **I am sending you** to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord YHWH.” Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

Ezekiel 2:6-10

And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words, and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. You shall speak **my words** to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house.

But you, son of man, hear what I say to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; **open your mouth and eat what I give you**. I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it. He spread it before me; it had writing on the **front** and on the **back**, and written on it were words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel 3:7-11

‘The house of Israel will not listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me; because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. See, I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their foreheads. Like the hardest stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not fear them or be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.

He said to me: Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you **receive in your heart** and hear with your ears; then go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, “Thus says the Lord YHWH”; whether they hear or refuse to hear.

Ezekiel 3:12-15

Then the spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of YHWH rose from its place, I heard behind me the sound of loud rumbling; it was the sound of the creatures' wings beating against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, that sounded like a loud rumbling. The spirit lifted me up and bore me away; I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of YHWH being strong upon me.

I came to the exiles at Tel-aviv (ancient tel thought to go back to the flood), who lived by the Chebar canal. And I sat there among them, stunned, for seven days.

At the close of this first section of the Ezekiel scroll we are left with a powerful reminder of YHWH's faithfulness to his people. They have abandoned YHWH, but YHWH has not abandoned them. He continues to reveal himself to them even in exile, and to call them through his prophet, no matter how stubborn and hard-hearted they have proved to be. YHWH will not give up on his people.

Ezekiel 3:16-19

At the end of seven days, the word of YHWH came to me:
Son of man, I have made you a sentinel for the house of Israel;
whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall enlighten (zhr)
from me.

If I say to the wicked, “You shall surely die,” and you fail to
enlighten them, or speak to warn the wicked from their wicked way,
in order to save their life, those wicked people shall die for their
iniquity; but their blood I will require at your hand.

But if you enlighten the wicked, and they do not turn from their
wickedness, or from their wicked way, they shall die for their
iniquity; but you will have saved your life.

Ezekiel 3:20-21

Again, if the righteous turn from their righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before them, they shall die; because you have not enlightened them, they shall die for their sin, and their righteous deeds that they have done shall not be remembered; but their blood I will require at your hand.

If, however, you enlighten the righteous not to sin, and they do not sin, they shall surely live, because they took warning; and you will have saved your life.

Ezekiel 3:22-27

Then the hand of YHWH was upon me there; and he said to me, Rise up, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you. So I rose up and went out into the valley; and the glory of YHWH was there, like the glory that I had seen by the Chebar canal; and I fell on my face. The spirit entered into me, and set me on my feet; and he spoke with me and said to me: Go, shut yourself inside your house. As for you, son of man, cords shall be placed on you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people; and I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be speechless and unable to reprove them; for they are a rebellious house. But whenever I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord YHWH”; whoever listens will listen, whoever will not will not; for they are a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 4-7 Siege and Exile

And you, son of man, take a brick and set it before you. On it engrave a city, Jerusalem; put it under siege – build a siege-wall against it, and cast up a ramp against it; set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. Then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

Then lie on your left side (facing north - direction of Israel), and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it; you shall bear their punishment for the number of the days that you lie there. For I assign to you a number of days, 390 days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment (Exodus 12:40-41); and so you shall bear the punishment of the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 4:6-8

When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side (facing south to Judah), and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; 40 days I assign you, one day for each year. You shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and with your arm bared you shall prophesy against it. See, I am putting ropes on you so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have completed the days of your siege.

Ezekiel 4:13

YHWH said, “Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread, unclean, among the nations to which I will banish them.”

Ezekiel 5:5-9

Thus says the Lord YHWH: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the centre of the nations, with countries all around her. But she has rebelled against my ordinances and my statutes, becoming more wicked than the nations and the countries all around her, rejecting my ordinances and not following my statutes.

Therefore thus says the Lord YHWH: Because you are more turbulent than the nations that are all around you, and have not followed my statutes or kept my ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are all around you; therefore thus says the Lord YHWH: I, I myself, am coming against you; I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations. And because of all your abominations, I will do to you what I have never yet done, and the like of which I will never do again.

Ezekiel 5:14-17

I will make you a desolation and an object of mocking among the nations around you, in the sight of all that pass by. You shall be a mockery and a taunt, a warning and a horror to the nations around you, when I execute judgments on you in anger and fury, and with furious punishments—I, YHWH, have spoken—when I loose against you my deadly arrows of famine, arrows for destruction, which I will let loose to destroy you, and when I bring more and more famine upon you, and break your staff of bread. I will send famine and wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children; pestilence and bloodshed shall pass through you; and I will bring the sword upon you. I, YHWH, have spoken.

Ezekiel 6:1-5

The word of YHWH came to me: Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, and say: You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord YHWH! Thus says the Lord YHWH to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I, I myself will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense braziers shall be broken; and I will throw down your slain in front of your idols. I will lay the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols; and I will scatter your bones around your altars.

Ezekiel 6:6-10

Wherever you live, your towns shall be waste and your high places ruined, so that your altars will be laid waste and ruined, your idols broken and destroyed, your incense braziers cut down, and what you have made wiped out. The slain shall lie fallen in your midst; **then you shall know that I am YHWH**. But I will spare some. Some of you shall escape the sword among the nations and be scattered through the countries. Those of you who escape shall **remember me** among the nations where they are carried captive, how I was grieved at their wanton heart that turned away from me, and their wanton eyes that turned after their idols. Then they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations. And they shall **know that I am YHWH**; I did not threaten in vain to bring this disaster upon them.

Ezekiel 7:14-20

They have blown the horn and made everything ready; but no one goes to battle, for my wrath is upon all their multitude. The sword is outside, pestilence and famine are inside; those in the field die by the sword; those in the city — famine and pestilence devour them. If any survivors escape, they shall be found on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning over their iniquity. All hands shall grow feeble, all knees turn to water. They shall put on sackcloth, horror shall cover them. Shame shall be on all faces, baldness on all their heads. They shall fling their silver into the streets, their gold shall be treated as unclean. Their silver and gold cannot save them on the day of the wrath of YHWH. They shall not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it. For it was the stumbling block of their iniquity. From their beautiful ornament, in which they took pride, they made their abominable images, their detestable things; therefore I will make of it an unclean thing to them.

Ezekiel 7:21-27

I will hand it over to strangers as booty, to the wicked of the earth as plunder; they shall profane it. I will avert my face from them, so that they may profane my treasured place; the violent shall enter it, they shall profane it. Make a chain! For the land is full of bloody crimes; the city is full of **violence**. I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the arrogance of the strong, and their holy places shall be profaned. When anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there shall be none. Disaster comes upon disaster, rumour follows rumour; they shall keep seeking a vision from the prophet; instruction shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the elders. The king shall mourn, the prince shall be wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people of the land shall tremble. According to their ways I will deal with them; according to their own judgments I will judge them. And **they shall know that I am YHWH**.