



# EZEKIEL

**JUNE 2018**

Read on your own or with others,  
which ever you prefer.

This leaflet is just a brief overview of the 'big picture' of this book. If you have been reading the Bible for some time you will be aware there is much more to it than you'll find here.

If you are new to reading the Bible don't worry too much if there are details you do not quite get at the moment - focus on the 'big picture'.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Ezekiel was a prophet between 593 and 571 BC. This was a dark period in Judah's history as the Babylonians first conquered the nation and then destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC. The messages that God gave Ezekiel explain the darkness of the situation, but also point forward to a better time.

Ezekiel was from a priestly family (1:3) and his prophecies are often accompanied by dramatic actions that illustrate the point. Ezekiel also recounts several visions that he had from God.

## **EZEKIEL – OUTLINE**

### **1. EZEKIEL IS CALLED: EZEKIEL 1-3**

At the age of 30 (1:1), Ezekiel receives a call to be God's prophet. As with Isaiah before him, Ezekiel's call began with an overwhelming vision of God. For Isaiah, the central aspect of God he saw was the holiness of God (Isaiah 6), for Ezekiel it was God's sovereign glory.

Ezekiel's call was to take God's message to the people of Israel (3:4). He was to act as a watchman bringing God's warning and the promise that all who turn from wickedness will live (3:21).

### **2. EZEKIEL EXPLAINS: EZEKIEL 4-24**

These chapters contain visions and prophecies that explain why God is going to judge Jerusalem and what he will do. They can be split into two parts.

The first section covers chapters 4 – 11. These begin with a demonstration of the siege of Jerusalem and speak of the depths to which sin has gone. The saddest part is the vision of God's glory departing from the temple (chapter 10).

The second section covers chapters 12 – 24. They focus on the exile from Jerusalem, the sin of the people and how God will hand them over to the Babylonians.

Notice that these sections are not all doom and gloom. They are peppered with hope of a better future.

### **3. EZEKIEL PROPHECIES: EZEKIEL 25 – 32**

In these chapters Ezekiel's prophecies take on a different focus as he brings messages from God to the nations surrounding the land of Israel.

They remind us of the sovereign authority of God. He is not only the God of Israel; he is also the God of the entire world. He is not only right to judge Israel, but also all the nations.

These chapters also warn us that no one is beyond the judgment of God. God sees, knows and hates sin wherever it is to be found.

### **4. EZEKIEL BRINGS HOPE: EZEKIEL 33-48**

The last chapters of Ezekiel look forward to a different time. They begin with a repeat of Ezekiel's call to be a watchman urging people to turn and live (33:11). God assures his people that:

- he will be their shepherd (chapter 34)
- he will bring new life (chapter 37:1-14)
- he will bring about one nation under one king (chapter 37:15-28)
- he will build a new temple (chapters 40-46)
- he will once more place his people in a land filled with his blessing and presence (chapters 47-48).

When would these things happen? We might say they took place when the Jews returned to Jerusalem from exile. At this time the temple was rebuilt and God was clearly guiding and helping his people. However, these events didn't seem to live up to the glory of God's promises in Ezekiel 33-48.

The promises were fulfilled when Jesus came into the world. He is the good shepherd and the one who brings eternal life. He is the king of two peoples (Jew & Gentile) combined in one nation. He is the temple of God and is building the new temple (Ephesians 2:21-22). When he returns he will bring us into a land filled with the blessing and presence of God (Revelation 21-22).

Ezekiel leaves us longing for Jesus.

## **ASKING THE QUESTIONS THE BIBLE WANTS YOU TO ASK**

What does this book teach you about Jesus? (Luke 24:45-47)

What does this book teach you about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you encouraged? (2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you corrected? (Romans 15:4)

What difference do the truths of this book make in your life (Matthew 7:24-27)