

EZEKIEL

The importance of Ezekiel can hardly be overstressed.

Henry McKeating, *Ezekiel*

1

What is the historical context?

Setting

30th year of Ezekiel's life

... when he should have
started as a priest

5th year of Jehoiachin's exile =
593 BC

Six years before the fall of
Jerusalem

5th day of 4th month = 31 July

Dates in Ezekiel

1:2 July 593

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40:1 April 573

29:17 April 571

A people in exile



surrounded by
pagan religion

cut off from the city

cut off from the temple

cut off from the land

experiencing God's judgment

defeated + displaced



disillusioned + discouraged



Exile was not simply displacement from the land, but it was the experience of the end of creation, the exhaustion of salvation history, the demise of king, temple, city, land and all those supports which gave structure and meaning to life.

Walter Breuggemann,
'Weariness, Exile and Chaos'

2

How does the prophet
present his message?

structure

I. Judgment on Jerusalem

4:1 – 24:27

II. Oracles against nations

25:1 – 32:32

III. Restoration

33:1 – 48:35

I. Judgment on Jerusalem

- The vision of God's glory (1:1–28)
- Ezekiel's commission (2:1 – 3:27)
- The coming fate of Jerusalem (4:1 – 7:27)
- Jerusalem's sin; God's glory departs (8:1 – 11:25)
- Reasons for the exile (12:1 – 24:27)

II. Oracles against nations

- Oracles against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia (25:1–17)
- Oracles against Tyre and Sidon (26:1 – 28:23)
- Israel's restoration (28:24–26)
- Oracles against Egypt (29:1 – 32:32)

III. Restoration

- Ezekiel call renewed (33:1–20)
- Jerusalem falls; oracles of salvation; vindication of Israel (33:21 – 37:28)
- God's future victory over nations (38:1 – 39:29)
- God's glory returns; a renewed city, temple and land (40:1 – 48:35)

genres

The vision of God's glory

1:1–28

Majesty

Beauty

Holiness

Splendour

Glory

Power

Activity

Movement

Awesomeness





An encounter with
God shapes everything

Ezekiel's commission

2:1 – 3:27

What repetitions (words/ideas/etc.) does Ezekiel use in 1:28 – 3:15?



Ezekiel's call

2:1-3:27

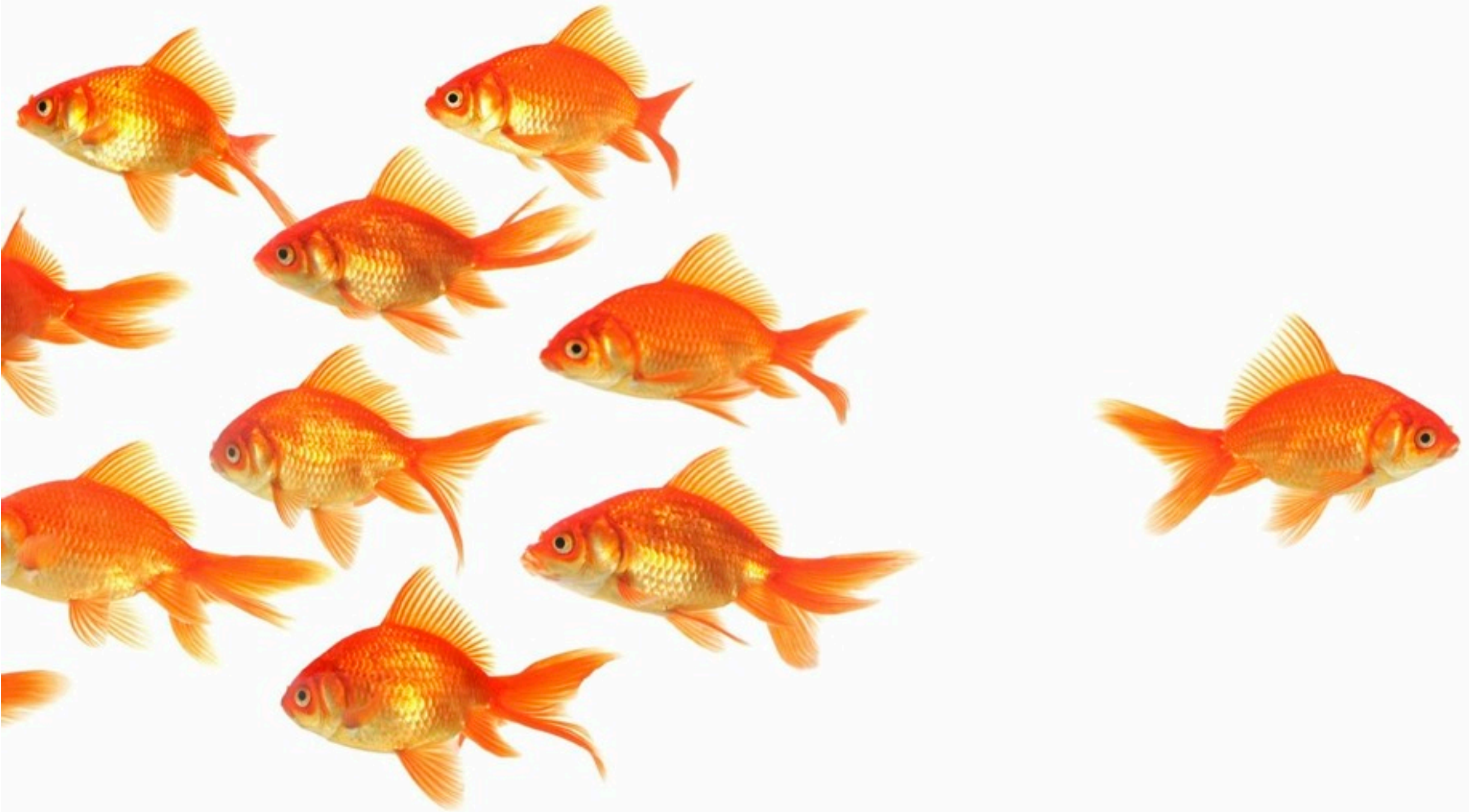
Expect a difficult audience



Don't be afraid of hostility



Go against the flow



Speak my words



God has work for you to do



‘Hear the word I speak’ (3:17)



‘Give them warning from
me’ (3:17)



3

What main problems does
the prophet diagnose?

Ezekiel 4–5

Ezekiel 4:1–5:4

What does all this symbolism represent?

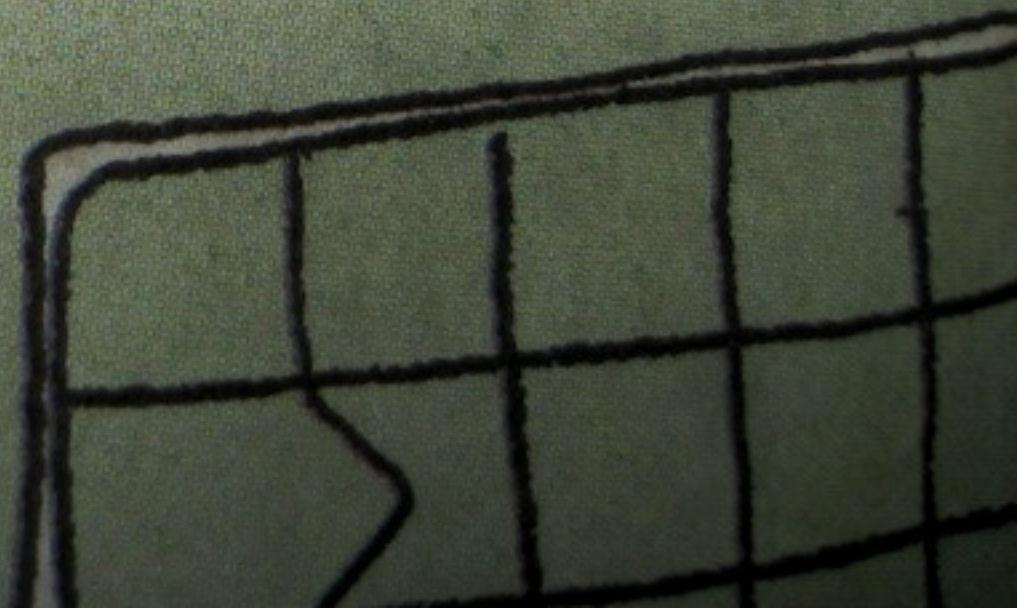
How would people have reacted?



Ezekiel bread mix

Easy to use multi grain bread mix with baking tray, inspired by a quote from the prophet Ezekiel.

*"Take thou also unto thee
wheat, barley, beans, millet
and fitches, and put them into
one vessel and make thee bread
therof" Ezekiel 4:9*



What theological perspectives does Ezekiel give?



Ezekiel 6–7

Parallelism

Synonymous Parallelism

I have swept your offenses like a cloud,
your sins like the morning mist.

Isaiah 44:22

Then I shall turn your festivals into mourning
And all your songs into lamentation.

Amos 8:10

He will judge between many peoples
and will settle disputes for strong nations far
and wide.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

Synthetic Parallelism

The swift will not escape,

The strong will not muster their escape,

And the warrior will not save his life.

Amos 2:14

Fallen is virgin Israel,
never to rise again,
deserted in her own land,
with no one to help her up

Amos 5:2

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not hear
Or cry to you 'Violence!'
and you will not save?

Habakkuk 1:2

Inverted Parallelism

Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.

Isaiah 11:13

Antithetical Parallelism

They do not cry out to me from their hearts,
but wail upon their beds.

Hosea 7:14

All the nations may walk
in the name of their gods;
we will walk in the name of the LORD
our God for ever and ever.

Micah 4:5

Repetition

- Leitwort
- Motif
- Theme
- Sequence of actions
- Type-scene

Inclusion

Chiasm

A

B

B'

A'



‘I also raised up prophets from among your children

And Nazirites from among your youths.

Is this not true, people of Israel,’ declares the LORD.

‘But you made the Nazirites drink wine
And commanded the prophets not to prophesy.’

God's glory departs
(8—11)

What is the progression within this section?



God is offended by idolatry at
the heart of his people

chapter 8

God avenges his glory

chapter 9

Jerusalem residents are
complacent

chapter 11

God's glory moves out from
the centre of worship

chapter 10

... and towards the exiles

chapter 10–11

Reasons for the exile

12:1 – 24:27

Ezekiel 12

Ezekiel 13

judgment on false prophets

Ezekiel 14

Noah,, Daniell,, Job

Ezekiel 16

Read Ezekiel 16:1-14

How does God show his grace and generosity?

Read 16:15-22

How does Israel respond? Why?



Jerusalem's origins

16:1-5

Abandoned

Neglected

Despised

Facing death

God's grace

Rescues the baby from death

Gives life

Gives growth

Shows grace to the
undeserving

God's generosity

16:8–14

Betrothal (8)



Married (8)



Cared for (9)



Showered with gifts (10-13)



Made famous (14)



Made perfectly beautiful (15)



Jerusalem's response

ingratitude

trusting in her own beauty

unfaithfulness

prostitution

Figures of speech

Simile

Comparing one thing with
something else

I will make your forehead like the hardest stone, harder than flint.

Ezekiel 3:9

Your prophets, Israel, are like jackals among ruins.

Ezekiel 13:4

Judah's leaders are like those who move
boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on
them like a flood of water.

Hosea 5:10

Metaphor

Associating something with another object or concept to which it is not related

You have not gone up to the breaches in the wall to repair it for the house of Israel so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the LORD.

Ezekiel 13:5

Your ancestry and birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. On the day you were born, your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths....

Ezekiel 16:3–4

Metonymy

A related word is used to represent
the person/object/concept

And the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown.

Ezekiel 3:23

Do not be afraid of them or terrified by
them, though they are a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 3:9

Shall we rejoice in the sceptre of my royal son? The sword despises every such stick.

Ezekiel 21:10

I did it to keep my name from being
profaned in the eyes of the nations . . .

Ezekiel 20:9

The voice of the LORD will shatter Assyria;
with his rod [sceptre] he will strike them
down.

Isaiah 30:31

Synecdoche

A part stands for the whole

Son of man, set your face against the mountains of Israel; prophesy against them and say, 'You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign Lord....'

Ezekiel 6:2–3

My hand will be against the prophets who
see false visions and utter lying divinations.

Ezekiel 13:9

My righteousness draws near speedily,
my salvation is on the way,
and my arm will bring justice to the nations.
The islands will look to me
and wait in hope for my arm.

Isaiah 51:5

Personification

Son of man, set your face against the mountains of Israel; prophesy against them and say, 'You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign Lord....'

Ezekiel 6:2–3

Slash to the right, you sword, then to the
left,

wherever your blade is turned.

Ezekiel 21:16

You will go out in joy
And be led forth in peace;
The mountains and hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands

Isaiah 55:12

Irony

As for you, house of Israel, this is what the
Sovereign Lord says: go and serve your idols,
every one of you!

Ezekiel 20:39

‘Go to Bethel and sin;
go to Gilgal and sin yet more.
Bring your sacrifices every morning,
your tithes every three years.
Burn leavened bread as a thank offering
and brag about your freewill offerings—
boast about them, you Israelites,
for this is what you love to do,’
declares the Sovereign LORD.

Amos 4:4–5

Hyperbole

An extreme exaggeration

Because of all your detestable idols, I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again.

Ezekiel 5:9

Cursed be the day I was born!

May the day my mother bore me not be
blessed!

Cursed be the man who brought my
father the news,

who made him very glad, saying,

‘A child is born to you – a son!’

Jeremiah 20: 14–15

adultery

Genesis 2:23–24
Ephesians 5:31–32

Exclusive, intimate
covenant

Revelation 21:1–10

The ultimate marriage

Numbers 15:37–41

Forgetfulness leads to
prostitution

Hosea 1:1–3:5

Jeremiah 2–3

Ezekiel 16, 23

exclusive, intimate covenant

Genesis 2:23–24; Ephesians 5:31–32

ultimate marriage

Revelation 21:1–10

forgetfulness leads to prostitution

Numbers 15:37–41

God's judgment

Allowing his people to make
themselves a disgrace before
the nations

Bringing down on their own
heads what they have done

Jerusalem's lovers will be the
agents of God's judgment

Grace

Punishment

dealing with the people
as they deserve

God will remember the
covenant

God will make atonement

God is doing this for
his own sake

Ezekiel 17

- Allegory
- Eagle – Nebuchadnezzar
- The shoot – Jehoiachin, exiled 597
- The seedling – Zedekiah, attempting to get help from Egypt for a rebellion
- He will be uprooted, exiled and killed
- God will plant a new king on a high mountain

Ezekiel 18

prophetic dispute

- **Opinion** – ‘We are being punished for the sin of our parents’ generation’
- **Refutation** – This generation is paying for its own sin
- Repentance is possible – leads to life
- A new heart and new spirit

Ezekiel 20

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- Very negative version of Israel's history
- The punishment they have deserved has been delayed
- Judgment = second exodus; purging
- God's motivation is the honour of his name among the nations (9, 14, 22, 39, 41, 44)

Identify the figures of speech in Ezekiel 21



Ezekiel 24

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- Different use of cooking pot metaphor – now expression of judgment
- God's patience has finally come to an end
- Symbolic action (15–27)

Ezekiel 25–32

oracles against the nations