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# EZEKIEL 1-24

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Lesson 31, Old Testament, Adult Religion Class, Tuesday, 17 April 2012

## Study Guide

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### INTRODUCTION

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Ezekiel's name in Hebrew is *yēḥezqēl*, meaning 'God strengthens' or 'strengthened by God.' It's an appropriate name for a man hauled off to Babylon against his will, forced to settle and live in a strange land, and then called of God to prophesy to his fellow exiles.

Ezekiel's call was to minister among his fellow exiles, first preparing them for the inevitable fall of Jerusalem and Judah, the consoling them when it happened. Like Isaiah and Jeremiah but perhaps to a greater extent, the Lord called on him to make his own life an example as he symbolically re-enacted or acted out several of his prophecies.

Many find Ezekiel challenging to understand. The Jews nearly excluded it from their canon, saying that it would never be fully understood until Elijah came and explained it. Jerome, and early Christian who

translated the Vulgate (Latin) version of the scripture struggled with the book. Early Protestant leaders like Calvin and Luther virtually ignored it. Even modern Latter-day Saint scholars evoke Joseph Smith's words that we are not responsible for understanding images for which God has given no interpretation. But Ezekiel's writings are influenced by where he lived. Like Daniel, he includes Aramaic words and phrases in his text, and many of the images are best understood in the context or the Akkadian culture of the day.

John's writing in Revelation was clearly influenced by Ezekiel, using many of the same apocalyptic and eschatological images. Ezekiel clearly struggles to express what he sees in vision, using language that is symbolic and not literal and saying things have 'the appearance of' or 'the likeness of' instead of just saying what they were.

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### OUTLINE

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Except for chapter 29 (which should probably be between chapters 25 and 26), the book of Ezekiel is presented in chronological order. Ezekiel's book has a number of dates in it, often including even the month and day, making it easy to date many of the events of his life (this includes: 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1; 29:17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1; 32:17; 33:21; and 40:1).

The book breaks very naturally into three major sections:

1. Preparing for Jerusalem's Destruction (1-24)
  - a. Ezekiel's call (1-3)
  - b. Judgment against Jerusalem (4-24)
    - i. Signs of God's judgment (4-5)

- ii. Messages about judgment (6-7)
  - iii. Visions of evil in Jerusalem (8-11)
  - iv. Symbols of judgment (12-24)
2. Prophecies Against The Nations (25-32)
  - a. Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia (25)
  - b. Tyre and Sidon (26-28)
  - c. Egypt (29-32)
3. Repentance and Restoration (33-48)
  - a. Repentance (33)
  - b. The gathering of Israel (34-37)
    - i. The true shepherd (34)
    - ii. Nations punished (35:1 - 36:7)
  - iii. The reason for restoration (36:8-38)
  - iv. Images of restoration: bones and sticks (37)

- c. Israel's enemies removed (38-39)
- d. True worship restored (40-46)
  - i. The new temple (40:1 – 43:17)

- ii. Worship of the Lord (43:18 – 46:24)
- e. Restoration of the Land (47-48)

## PREPARING FOR JERUSALEM'S DESTRUCTION (1-24)

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In the early chapters, Ezekiel was called by the Lord to minister to the people in the exile. These chapters cover the period of time from his call (593 BC) to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

### EZEKIEL'S CALL (1-3)

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**1:1 *in the thirtieth year.*** This probably refers to Ezekiel's age when he received his call. Because he was a priest, his thirtieth year was significant because that was when his full service as a priest could begin. Like Jesus (Luke 3:23), it was also the year Ezekiel began his ministry among the people.

**1:2 *the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity.*** Jehoiachin was the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. The son was made king during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 597 BC after his father died but when Nebuchadnezzar took the city, he took Jehoiachin back to Babylon and replaced him with his older uncle, Zedekiah. Jehoiachin was considered the true king by those in exile and Zedekiah just the regent—indeed, Ezekiel never referred to Zedekiah as a king. This date is thus 5 Tamuz 593 BC and means that Ezekiel was 25 years old when he was taken away to Babylon in 597 BC and born about 622 BC, while Josiah was king and just starting his reforms to try and cleanse Judah of idolatry. He was a contemporary with Jeremiah, Daniel, and Lehi.

**1:3 *Ezekiel the priest.*** Ezekiel was a descendant of Aaron, a priest in the Aaronic priesthood, and would have ministered in the temple in Jerusalem had he not been carried off to Babylon.

**1:3 *by the river Chebar.*** Ezekiel and others with him were settled in Tel-Abib, about sixty miles southeast of Babylon on a canal called Chebar dug out from the great Euphrates River.

**1:4 *whirlwind.*** Actually, this is a dust storm—not a twirling wind but a hard, blowing wind—something common in that area of the world. But this one is

uncommon in that it includes fire and light, representative of the Lord's presence (as in Exodus).

**1:10 *man . . . lion . . . ox . . . eagle.*** The four faces are those of the highest order of creatures in each group—man, lion (wild animals), ox (domesticated animals), and eagle (birds). These are the same symbols used by John in Revelation 4:7. The symbolism is that God is over all of creation, and is not necessarily symbolic of four actual creatures. Such aggregate and symbolic creatures were common in Babylonian and Assyrian art and mythology.

**1:16 *the wheels and their work.*** The wheels are part of the symbolism of the four creatures. Like wings and four faces looking in every direction, they seem to depict the ability to move in any direction, go anywhere, and see anything. The creatures and the wheels are all underneath God's throne, tying those powers directly to him.

**1:26 *the likeness as the appearance of a man.*** Ezekiel was seeing the Lord, and described him as having "the appearance of a man."

**2:1 *Son of man.*** This phrase occurs nearly one hundred times in Ezekiel and is *ben-ʾadam* in Hebrew (son of adam or mankind), usually as the way the Lord addressed Ezekiel. The Savior also referred to himself as Son of man, but for a different reason (Moses 6:57). It is used here in Ezekiel to mean he is part of the human race, a descendent of Adam.

**2:3 *a rebellious nation.*** The Lord described the kind of people Ezekiel will serve—not a very receptive bunch!

**2:8 *Be no thou rebellious.*** After describing the sins of the people in great detail, the Lord calls on Ezekiel to be different than them, to not be rebellious but to speak the Lord's words to these people, regardless of the consequences.

2:9 **a roll of a book**. Like John in Revelation 5 and 10 and Lehi in 1 Nephi 1:11-14, Ezekiel saw a book given him by the Lord. In John's and Ezekiel's cases, they symbolically ate the books, representing their accepting their missions (and thereby internalizing God's words by ingesting the divine writings), and the sweetness and bitterness of them (see Ezekiel 3:1-3; Revelation 10:8-11).

3:15 **Tel-abib**. The location of the captives; also one of the locations of the ten tribes over a hundred years previously (see 2 Kings 17:6; "Habor" = abib). Today this name is written Tel Aviv (though obviously the city in Israel is not Ezekiel's town in Babylon).

3:15 **astonished among them seven days**. After his experience by the river, Ezekiel didn't say anything about it for a week, so overwhelmed was he by what he had seen and heard.

3:17 **watchman**. A theme that starts here but is played out in more detail in chapter 33. The watchman's job is to warn, then his soul is delivered, regardless of the reaction of those warned. In this case, the metaphor is a gentle reproof to Ezekiel because he had been commissioned but remained silent for a week. The Lord was saying that he was the watchman on the tower and that if he didn't speak up, the blood of the wicked would be required at Ezekiel's hand.

3:25 **put bands upon thee**. As the first of his physical acts or signs of the Lord's messages to the people, Ezekiel was told to bind himself in his house so that he could not move or talk. This was perhaps also symbolic of his reluctance to speak at first, but in the end the Lord promised him that he would speak God's words.

### JUDGMENT AGAINST JERUSALEM (4-24)

Ezekiel was told to do twelve different personal acts that were metaphors for Judah's coming destruction and suffering. Three of these are in chapters 4 and 5, three in chapter 12, and three more in chapter 24 (the full list is below). The explanatory verse is 24:24 where the people were told by the Lord that Ezekiel himself is a sign to them, and when it all happens, they will know Jehovah is God. It didn't

happen for almost a decade from when he started doing these things, so for a long time Ezekiel just looked like a foolish man doing odd things. Ezekiel's prophetic actions were:

1. **3:23-27** He was shut up in his house and bound for period of time, then loosened to symbolize Judah's rebellious nature and lack of desire to hear him.
2. **4:1-3** He was told to create a drawing of Jerusalem and then build a little model of the city being attacked.
3. **4:4-8** He laid on his side for a certain number of days, according to the years of Israel's and Judah's punishments.
4. **4:9-17** He used a mixture of grains to make poor-tasting breads and then ate and drank very little for more than a year to represent how desperate for food the city would be during the siege.
5. **5:1-4** He cut off his hair and his beard (a dramatic thing because it goes against the Law), then burned a third, cut a third with a knife, and put a few in the hem of his robe and burned the rest. This depicted the various kinds of destruction Judah would face (explained in more detail in 5:12-17, 6:12, and 7:15-16).
6. **12:1-16** He dug a hole in the wall of his house (made of mudbrick, most likely) and carried all his stuff out of his house, symbolic of the deportation of the people from Jerusalem.
7. **12:17-20** He ate and drank with quaking and trembling, signifying the astonishment the people will have as they are destroyed and deported.
8. **21:8-17** He took a polished sword and carried it around three times, symbolic of their destruction.
9. **22:17-22** He put metals in a furnace and left them there, as Judah will suffer the wrath of the Lord.
10. **24:1-14** He boiled a pot of stew, then kept it on the fire until everything burned, even the

pot, symbolic of the thoroughness of Israel's destruction.

11. **24:15-24** He was not allowed to mourn publicly at the death of his wife, just as Judah did not mourn for her own iniquities.
12. **24:25-27** He didn't speak to them during the siege of Jerusalem (which started at the same time as chapter 24 and lasted 18 months), until his prophecies were fulfilled and the people knew it (see 33:22 for when he can talk again).

There is a thirteenth symbol—the only one in the restoration section of the book—which is in 37:15-28 and is about the two sticks of Judah and Ephraim.

Ezekiel also used at least eight parables in his book to illustrate various truths to the house of Judah, most of which are in the judgment chapters, but one is a restoration symbol in chapter 37:

1. The wood and vine (15:1-8) – Judah had become useless to the Lord and was ready to be burned.
2. The foundling (16) – Israel betrayed God's love.
3. The eagles and the cedar (17) – The foolishness of Zedekiah.
4. The fiery furnace (22:17-22) – How God will purify his people.
5. The two harlots (23) – Israel's spiritual adultery.
6. The shipwreck (27) – Judgment upon Tyre.
7. The irresponsible shepherds (34:1-19) – The worthless leaders of Jerusalem.
8. The dry bones (37:1-14) – The restoration of Israel.

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#### SIGNS OF GOD'S JUDGMENT (4-5)

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As mentioned above, all of chapter 4 is made up of three symbolic acts Ezekiel performed: (4:1-3) he was told to create a drawing of Jerusalem and then build a little model of the city being attacked; (4:4-8) he laid on his side for a certain number of days, according to the years of Israel's and Judah's punishments; and (4:9-17) he made some

interesting and even disgusting breads and cakes to represent how desperate for food the city will be. Chapter five continues that with a fourth one, (5:1-4) where he cut off his hair and his beard, burned a third, cut a third with a knife, and put a few in the hem of his robe and burned the rest. This depicted the various kinds of destruction Judah would face.

4:4 **upon thy left side**. Meaning, facing north, symbolic of the northern kingdom of Israel. In verse 6, he flipped to his right side (facing south) for Judah.

4:5 **three hundred and ninety days**. The symbolic time of the existence of the northern kingdom.

4:10 **twenty shekels a day**. A shekel is a weight—in this case, about 8 ounces, a very small amount of food. The water ("the sixth part of an hin") is about a quart. This was subsistence eating.

4:12 **with dung that cometh out of man**. Ezekiel was commanded to bake his bread using human waste as fuel. It was common to use dried animal waste as fuel during difficult times but to use human waste defiled the food (Deuteronomy 23:12-14). Note that when Ezekiel objected to this request, the Lord allowed him instead to use "cow's dung" (4:15) so he wouldn't be defiled.

5:11 **because thou hast defiled my sanctuary**. God's main justification for Israel's destruction was the defilement of the temple. This theme continues in the next two chapters.

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#### MESSAGES ABOUT JUDGMENT (6-7)

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These chapters interpret Ezekiel's actions in chapters 4 and 5. The Lord lists the wickedness that is bringing destruction upon Judah, then outlines the nature of the punishment that is coming.

6:3 **destroy your high places**. Idolatry was one of Israel's greatest sins as it shattered the covenants made with their fathers and which the Lord desired to continue with them.

6:8 **Yet will I leave a remnant**. Like Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel was promised that not all of Judah would be destroyed, but a remnant would survive. This was represented by the hair he put in his hem

but which was later burned (representing the trials the remnant would still face, even while being preserved).

6:12 **pestilence . . . sword . . . famine.** The three types of trials people would face (going back to Ezekiel's hair symbolism).

7:15 **sword . . . pestilence and the famine.** The three trials are repeated here.

7:16 **they that escape.** This is another reference to the remnant that shall escape, this time capturing the mourning they will make that will sound like many doves in a valley.

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#### VISIONS OF EVIL IN JERUSALEM (8-11)

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God put forth his hand (8:3) and took Ezekiel to Jerusalem and to the temple to see a vision of what was happening there. He saw the glory of God leaving the temple in stages, first to the threshold (9:3), then the court (10:4, 18), then to the gate of the city (10:19; 11:1), then to the Mount of Olives east of the city (11:22-23). He then taught the people all that he had seen (11:25). Later, in chapters 43-44, the Lord's glory returned to the city and the temple. But in the middle of that is a hint of the rest of Ezekiel's book and mission (11:13-20)—after Jerusalem is destroyed, restoration will be the prophet's message.

8:1 **sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day.** The fifth of Elul (August/September), 592 BC. The years are measured from the captivity of king Jehoiachin, starting in 597 BC.

8:1 **the elders of Judah sat before me.** Like Joseph Smith during some of his revelations, Ezekiel had this particular vision in his house with several witnesses.

8:3 **the spirit lifted me up.** It's not clear if Ezekiel was taken physically by the Spirit to Jerusalem (such as Nephi or Moses being caught up to a high mountain—see 1 Nephi 11:1 and Moses 1:1) or if it was just a vision, though the repeated use of that term in the account and the things he is shown would seem to indicate the latter.

8:10 **upon the wall round about.** Ezekiel saw the inside of the temple, something he'd never seen, through a hole in the wall, and discovered it was polluted with graffiti portraying foreign gods.

8:11 **censer in his hand.** The incense they were burning represented prayer but it was not being offering to the Lord but to the images in the temple.

8:14 **women weeping for Tammuz.** Tammuz was a god of the Babylonians, representative of vegetation and growth. Worship of this god, who was the consort of the famous goddess Ishtar, was done to bring back a return of life in the spring.

8:16 **they worshipped the sun.** Not satisfied just to worship the sun, as did the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians, these men did in the temple with their backs to the temple as a sign of their rejection of Jehovah.

9:3 **to the threshold of the house.** The Lord symbolically moved away from the polluted temple to the door.

9:4 **set a mark upon the foreheads.** A man (angel) with Ezekiel who had ink was commanded to mark those who were still righteous that they might be preserved in the destruction. In Revelation, the Saints were also marked to designate their status before God (7:3; 14:1), and the followers of Satan were likewise marked as his servants (14:9, 11). Anciently, slaves were marked in their foreheads to indicate ownership.

10:14 **four faces.** In an experience similar to the opening vision in chapter 1, Ezekiel again saw creatures with four faces—man, lion, eagle, and cherub this time—and wheels. He even states that this is what he saw in his first vision (10:15).

10:19 **at the door of the east gate.** The Lord symbolically moved out of the temple courtyard and to the gate facing the Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives.

10:13 **Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died.** Symbolic of the coming destruction, someone Ezekiel knew apparently died while he was having the vision, causing him to mourn.

10:16 **a little sanctuary.** With the temple destroyed, the assembled remnant would look to the Lord himself as their 'little temple.' Later Jews interpreted this verse as the justification for creating synagogues when they were away from the temple and when it was later again destroyed.

11:19 **a new spirit within you.** Like Jeremiah's pronouncements (e.g., 24:7), the Lord promised a new spirit and heart to the people, one that is unified and inclined toward God. They would thus be his people and he their God (11:20).

11:25 **I spake unto them.** Returning to his house the watching elders, Ezekiel told them what he had seen in his vision.

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#### SYMBOLS OF JUDGMENT (12-24)

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12:4 **bring forth thy stuff by day.** Ezekiel was commanded to dig a hole in the wall of his house then carry out his "stuff."

12:11 **I am your sign.** He was told to tell the people who were wondering what he was doing that he was acting as a sign for the Lord's message.

12:12 **the prince.** This refers to Zedekiah, whom Ezekiel never calls the king.

12:13 **yet shall he not see it.** As Ezekiel walked around with his head covered carrying his belongings, so Zedekiah would be taken to Babylon yet not see it. This proverb must have been puzzling to many—in fact, the seeming contradiction between Jeremiah and Ezekiel made Zedekiah believe neither one, according to Josephus (Student Manual 2:216)—until it was fulfilled and Zedekiah has his eyes taken out at Riblah then was taken blind to Babylon, so he never saw it (2 Kings 25:1-7).

12:22 **The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth.** Because Jerusalem had been preserved again and again, the people had developed a proverb that the days of the city would be prolonged and the visions of those who called for its destruction, such as Ezekiel and Jeremiah, were failures. But the Lord gave Ezekiel a new proverb to give them: "The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision [will soon be fulfilled]" (12:23).

13:2 **prophecy against the prophets.** The Lord commanded Ezekiel to speak out against the false prophets who declared peace and that life would go on without a problem. The words of these prophets would be proved wrong like a powerful storm can destroy a poorly built wall.

14:1 **Then came certain of the elders.** Some of the leaders of the exile community came to Ezekiel to counsel with him and be taught. Perhaps the prophet thought that his prophetic gift was starting to be recognized, but that was not why they were there.

14:2 **idols in his heart.** Though they had no temple, they had still put the worship of false gods ahead of the worship of Jehovah; the Lord used the metaphor of them having set up idols in their hearts. Alternatively, this could be a reference to the practice of wearing small idols on necklaces under the clothing, something common in the ancient Near East (Zondervan 4:434).

14:9 There are few JST changes in Ezekiel, but this first has the first one: "I the Lord have **not** deceived that prophet; ~~and~~ **therefore**, I will stretch out my hand . . ." In other words, if a prophet speaks falsely, it is his own work and he will be held accountable accordingly.

14:14 **Noah, Daniel, and Job.** Three men who were clearly righteous were not enough to deliver those around them from judgment. Daniel, of course, was a contemporary of Ezekiel who had a prominent role in the royal house.

15:4 **it is cast into the fire.** Chapter 15 should be compared to Isaiah 5 and Jacob 7, which both talk about how Israel is a vine. Here Ezekiel portrayed them as a useless vine that will be burned.

16:2 **cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.** The longest chapter in Ezekiel, chapter 16 portrays Jerusalem as a female, starting as a newborn child and growing up to adulthood, saved from death and nurtured by the Lord, marrying him, then betraying him in the worst possible way. Jerusalem not only adulterates herself but does it with many partners and for reason other than the sheer pleasure of it. Ezekiel's writing here was likely influenced by the annual and obscene Ishtar festival in Babylon, where

the goddess was paraded around and the people were encouraged to act out her fertility.

16:6 ***I passed by thee.*** The Lord figuratively found the infant Jerusalem in a field, left to die. He took pity on her and said, “Live.” Ancient custom was that if you found a newborn child (and this one is completely newborn, with the cord not yet cut away from its body and the blood of birth still present) and cared for it, it became yours by adoption.

16:11 ***I decked thee also.*** The Lord took the now grown woman and gave her everything—the finest clothing, jewelry, a crown, the best food—and all acknowledged her beauty.

16:15 ***playedst the harlot.*** In spite of all this love and care, she turned away to others, seeking relationships with many others, never being satisfied with any of them.

16:31 ***thou scornest hire.*** She played the harlot not for money or gifts—she gave the gifts she did receive to other lovers—but the sake of the experience itself. Jerusalem betrayed the Lord for other gods even though those gods could not give her anything in return.

16:60 ***I will remember my covenant.*** In spite of Judah’s great and repeated wickedness, the Lord shows his mercy and love and forgives her, making the covenant everlasting.

17:3 ***A great eagle.*** This refers to Babylon who swoops down and takes Judah (and others) captive (see the interpretation in 17:12-17).

17:4 ***the top of his young twigs.*** This refers to Jehoiachin, whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon, a “city of merchants.”

17:7 ***another great eagle.*** Egypt is the other eagle, to whom Judah looked for salvation from Babylon.

18:2-4 ***fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.*** A proverb meaning the fathers did sinful things and now the children are paying the price for it. The Lord debunks this proverb and says they cannot blame their destruction on their fathers. Today it is common for people to blame their problems on their parents and the way they are raised. The Lord doesn’t deny that

such things can have an influence but emphasizes that we all have the power to choose for ourselves how we will react to the challenges of life.

18:21 ***if the wicked will turn.*** Verses 21-23 provide a clear statement of personal accountability and righteousness and the power of repentance. The word “repent” is rarely used in the Old Testament but the Hebrew term with that meaning is to turn from evil and do that which is right.

18:31 ***make you a new heart and a new spirit.*** Returning to the theme of 11:19, the Lord calls on Israel to cast away all sin and make a new heart and spirit.

19:4 ***with chains unto the land of Egypt.*** This refers to Jehoahaz who was made king after Josiah was killed in 609 BC but then taken to Egypt three months later, to be replaced by his brother, Jehoiakim.

19:9 ***brought him to the king of Babylon.*** This speaks of Jehoiachin, the grandson of Josiah who was king in Jerusalem only three months after his father, Jehoiakim died. He was taken to Babylon in 597 BC and lived there the rest of his life.

20:1 ***the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day.*** This is 10 Ab 591 BC, during the hottest time of the summer.

20:6 ***bring them forth of the land of Egypt.*** Ezekiel gave the elders visiting him a short history lesson, reminding them of God’s goodness to Israel over the years since the Exodus.

20:40 ***in mine holy mountain.*** Temple worship is promised to be restored when Israel determines to serve the Lord.

21:9 ***a sword is sharpened.*** The Lord commanded Ezekiel to take a sharp sword and carrying it around three times and strike his hands together, symbolic of the judgment coming to Jerusalem.

22:18 ***in the midst of the furnace.*** Ezekiel symbolically took various metals and threw them in a furnace, melting them. This was symbolic of the coming punishment.

23:4 **Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah.** Israel and Judah are represented as two sisters who both became prostitutes. “Aholah” means ‘her own tent,’ because Israel broke off and had their own temples to false gods; “Aholibah” means ‘my tent is in her,’ referring to the temple at Jerusalem. The entire chapter is one of rather explicit adultery by these two sisters, even to the point of them giving their children up for sacrifice to the false gods they are giving themselves to.

23:25 **take away thy nose and thine ears.** It was an accepted punishment in the ancient world to cut off the nose or the ears for adultery.

24:1 **the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day.** This was 10 Tebeth 588 BC (15 Jan), the very day the siege of Jerusalem began. It would have taken some time for word of the siege to reach the exiles, so recording it on the very day it happened was a substantiation of Ezekiel’s call as prophet.

24:5 **make it boil well.** In this tenth living sign, Ezekiel was instructed to boil a lamb in a pot and keep it on the fire until the water, animal, and even

the pot were burned up. This was a sign of Jerusalem’s destruction.

24:16 **I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.** Ezekiel’s wife died suddenly and clearly unexpectedly. The Lord warned Ezekiel it was going to happen and told him he was not to publicly mourn her death. He used that as a symbol that Judah was not mourning their own sins. This had to be the most challenging living sign of the prophet’s ministry.

24:24 **Ezekiel is unto you a sign.** After his wife’s death, the Lord declared to the people that Ezekiel’s whole life had been a sign to the exiles of the Lord’s judgment on Jerusalem, and that his purpose was to lead them back to the Lord.

24:27 **shall thy mouth be opened.** Ezekiel was commanded not to speak after his wife’s death until the siege against Jerusalem was accomplished, which was almost two years.

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