EDIFIED EDITION

Ezekiel

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

48	1,273	Old	26
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

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Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

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Chapter 1

Ezekiel 1 records the vision Ezekiel the priest saw by the Kebar Canal in Babylonia in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile. A storm wind came from the north, a great cloud flashing with fire, and in it were four living creatures, each with four faces (of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle) and four wings, moving straight ahead like flashes of lightning. Beside each was a wheel within a wheel, its rims full of eyes, moving wherever the spirit went. Above them was a platform like dazzling crystal, and above that a throne like sapphire, on which sat a figure like a man, glowing like fire and surrounded by radiance like a rainbow. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD, and Ezekiel fell on his face.

1 In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar Canal, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.[1]

2 On the fifth of the month (it was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile),[2]

3 the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Kebar Canal. There the hand of the LORD was upon him.

4 As I looked, I saw a storm wind coming out of the north: a great cloud with fire flashing back and forth and brightness all around it, and in the middle of the fire something gleaming like amber.

5 Out of the middle of it came the likeness of four living creatures. This was their appearance: they had a human form,

6 but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings.

7 Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; they sparkled like burnished bronze.

8 Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. All four of them had faces and wings,

9 and their wings touched one another. They did not turn as they moved; each went straight ahead.

10 As for the form of their faces, each of the four had the face of a man; on the right side each had the face of a lion, on the left side the face of an ox, and each also had the face of an eagle.[3]

11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two wings touching those of the creature beside it, and two covering its body.

12 Each went straight ahead. Wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning as they went.

13 The appearance of the living creatures was like burning coals of fire, like torches. Fire moved back and forth among the creatures; the fire was bright, and lightning flashed out of it.

14 The living creatures darted to and fro like flashes of lightning.

15 As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the ground beside each creature, one for each of the four.

16 The appearance and construction of the wheels was like the gleam of topaz, and all four looked alike. Their construction was like a wheel within a wheel.

17 As they moved, they went in any of the four directions without turning as they went.

18 Their rims were high and awesome, and the rims of all four were full of eyes all around.

19 When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; when the creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose too.

20 Wherever the spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

21 When the creatures moved, the wheels moved; when they stood still, the wheels stood still; and when they rose from the ground, the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

22 Over the heads of the living creatures was the likeness of a platform, gleaming like awe-inspiring crystal, stretched out above their heads.

23 Under the platform their wings were stretched out straight, one towards another; each creature had two wings covering its body on one side and two covering it on the other.

24 When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the noise of an army. When they stood still, they lowered their wings.

25 Then a voice came from above the platform over their heads as they stood with their wings

lowered.

26 Above the platform over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire, and on the likeness of the throne, high above, was a likeness with a human appearance.[4]

27 From what looked like His waist upwards I saw something like gleaming amber, like fire enclosed all around; and from what looked like His waist downwards I saw something like fire, with brightness all around Him.

28 The radiance all around Him looked like a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day. Such was the sight of the likeness of the LORD's glory. At the sight of it I fell face down, and I heard a voice speaking.

1 'The thirtieth year' is probably Ezekiel's age, the age at which priests began to serve (Numbers 4:3). The Kebar was an irrigation canal near Nippur in Babylonia.

2 July 593 BC. Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:12–15); Ezekiel dates his visions from that exile.

3 Compare the four living creatures of Revelation 4:6–8.

4 Or 'lapis lazuli', a deep blue stone. Compare Revelation 4:2–3.

Chapter 2

Ezekiel 2 tells how the voice addresses Ezekiel as "son of man" and commands him to stand up. The Spirit enters him and sets him on his feet, and the LORD sends him to the people of Israel, a rebellious nation, stubborn and hard-hearted. Whether they listen or refuse, they will know that a prophet has been among them. He is not to be afraid of them, though they are like briers and thorns and scorpions, and he must not be rebellious like them. A hand stretches out to him holding a scroll written on both sides with laments, mourning and woe.

1 He told me, "Son of man, get up on your feet so that I can speak with you."[1]

2 As He spoke to me, the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and I heard Him speaking to me.

3 He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to rebellious nations that have rebelled against Me. They and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.

4 The children are brazen and hard-hearted. I am sending you to them, and you are to say to them, 'This is what the Lord GOD says.'

5 And whether they listen or refuse to listen, for they are a rebellious house, they will know that a prophet has been among them.

6 And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or of their words, though briers and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, for they are a rebellious house.

7 You must speak My words to them, whether they listen or refuse to listen, for they are rebellious.

8 But you, son of man, listen to what I am saying to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I give you."

9 Then I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and in it was a written scroll.

10 He spread it out before me, and it had writing on the front and on the back; written on it were laments, mourning and woe.[2]

1 'Son of man' (ben adam) means 'human being', 'mortal'; God addresses Ezekiel this way more than ninety times, stressing the gulf between the prophet and the glory he has seen. Jesus took the phrase as His own title, drawing on Daniel 7:13.

2 Scrolls were normally written on one side only; this one is so full that the writing covers both. Compare Revelation 5:1; 10:9–10.

Chapter 3

Ezekiel 3 continues the call. Ezekiel eats the scroll, and it is as sweet as honey in his mouth. He is sent not to a foreign people of strange speech but to Israel, who will not listen because they are hard-headed; so the LORD makes his forehead harder than flint. The Spirit lifts him up, and he hears behind him the roar of the creatures' wings: "Blessed be the glory of the LORD from His place!" He sits stunned for seven days among the exiles at Tel-abib. Then the LORD appoints him a watchman for Israel: if he fails to warn the wicked, their blood will be on his hands. In the plain he sees the glory again, and he is told to shut himself in his house, bound and unable to speak except when the LORD opens his mouth.

1 He told me, "Son of man, eat what lies before you. Eat up this scroll, and then go and speak to Israel's house."

2 So I opened my mouth, and He gave me the scroll to eat.

3 He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your belly with this scroll I am giving you." So I ate it, and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey.[1]

4 He went on, "Son of man, go now to Israel's house and give them My message.

5 For you are not being sent to a people of obscure speech and difficult language, but to the house of Israel,

6 not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language whose words you cannot understand. Surely if I sent you to them, they would listen to you.

7 But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me. The whole house of Israel is hard-headed and stubborn-hearted.

8 Look, I have made your face as hard as their faces and your forehead as hard as their foreheads.

9 Like diamond, harder than flint, I have made your forehead. Do not be afraid of them or dismayed by their looks, for they are a rebellious house."[2]

10 He said to me, "Son of man, take to heart all the words I speak to you, and listen carefully.

11 Go to the exiles, to your own people, and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what the Lord GOD says,' whether they listen or refuse to listen."

12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great rumbling sound: "Blessed be the glory of the LORD from His place!"[3]

13 It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, a great rumbling sound.

14 So the Spirit raised me up and carried me off. I went bitter and burning in spirit, and the LORD's hand pressed hard on me.

15 I came to the exiles at Tel-abib who lived by the Kebar Canal, and I sat where they were living. For seven days I sat there among them, stunned.

16 At the end of the seven days the word of the LORD came to me:

17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from My mouth, you must warn them from Me.

18 When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak to warn him from his wicked way to save his life, that wicked man will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you responsible for his blood.

19 But if you warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he will die for his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

20 Again, if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does wrong, and I put a stumbling block before him, he will die. Because you did not warn him, he will die for his sin, and the righteous deeds he has done will not be remembered, but I will hold you responsible for his blood.

21 But if you do warn the righteous man to keep from sin, and he does keep from it, he will certainly live, because he heeded the warning, and you will have saved yourself."

22 The hand of the LORD was upon me there, and He said to me, "Get up and go out to the plain, and there I will speak with you."

23 So I got up and went out to the plain, and there stood the glory of the LORD, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar Canal, and I fell on my face.

24 Then the Spirit came into me and stood me on
my feet, and He spoke to me: “Go home and shut
yourself in.

25 As for you, son of man, they will put ropes on
you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go
out among the people.

26 I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your
mouth; you will fall silent and be unable to
reprove them, for they are a rebellious house.

27 But when I speak with you, I will open your
mouth, and you will say to them, ‘This is what the
Lord GOD says.’ Whoever will listen, let him
listen; whoever will refuse, let him refuse, for they
are a rebellious house.”

1 Compare Psalm 19:10; Jeremiah 15:16; Revelation 10:9–10.

2 ‘Ezekiel’ means ‘God strengthens’ or ‘God makes hard’; the Hebrew words for ‘hard’ here echo his name.

3 A slight change in the Hebrew gives ‘as the glory of the LORD rose from its place’.

Chapter 4

Ezekiel 4 describes the first of Ezekiel’s acted signs of the siege of Jerusalem. He is to draw the city on a clay brick and lay siege to it with ramps, camps and battering rams, setting an iron plate between himself and the city. He is to lie on his left side for 390 days for the iniquity of Israel and on his right side for 40 days for Judah, a day for each year. He is to eat bread made from mixed grains, rationed by weight, with rationed water, as the people of Jerusalem will in the siege. When he protests at baking it over human dung, the LORD allows him cow dung instead, for the LORD will break the supply of bread in Jerusalem.

1 Now, son of man, take a clay brick, put it in front
of you and draw a city on it, Jerusalem.[1]

2 Then lay siege to it: build siege works against it,
raise a ramp against it, set up camps against it
and place battering rams against it all around.

3 Then take an iron plate and set it as an iron wall
between you and the city. Turn your face towards
it, and it will be under siege, and you will besiege
it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

4 Then lie on your left side and lay the iniquity of
the house of Israel upon it. For the number of days
you lie on it, you will bear their iniquity.

5 I have assigned you a number of days matching
the years of their iniquity: 390 days. So you will
bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.[2]

6 When you have completed these, lie down a
second time, on your right side, and bear the
iniquity of the house of Judah for forty days, a day
for each year; I have assigned it to you.

7 Turn your face towards the siege of Jerusalem
with your arm bared, and prophesy against it.

8 I will put ropes on you so that you cannot turn
from one side to the other until you have
completed the days of your siege.

9 Take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet
and spelt; put them in one container and make
bread from them for yourself. You are to eat it
during the 390 days you lie on your side.

10 The food you eat is to be weighed out, twenty
shekels a day; you are to eat it at set times.[3]

11 Drink water by measure too, a sixth of a hin;
drink it at set times.[4]

12 Eat it as you would a barley cake, baking it in
their sight over human dung.

13 Then the LORD said, “In the same way the
people of Israel will eat their bread unclean
among the nations where I will drive them.”

14 But I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! I have never defiled
myself. From my youth until now I have never
eaten anything that died of itself or was torn by
animals; no unclean meat has ever entered my
mouth.”

15 “Very well,” He said to me. “I will let you use
cow dung instead of human dung; you may bake
your bread over that.”

16 Then He said to me, “Son of man, I am going to
cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem. They will
eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and drink
water by measure and in dismay,

17 so that they will lack bread and water. They will
be appalled at one another and waste away
because of their iniquity.”

1 Babylonian bricks were large, flat tablets of clay, on which plans and maps were sometimes drawn.

2 The Greek translation has 190. The meaning of the numbers is uncertain; 390 and 40 together make 430, the years Israel spent in Egypt (Exodus 12:40).

3 About 230 grams (8 ounces).

4 About 0.6 litres (a pint).

Chapter 5

Ezekiel 5 continues the signs. Ezekiel shaves his head and beard with a sword and divides the hair into three: a third he burns in the city when the siege is over, a third he strikes with the sword around the city, and a third he scatters to the wind, keeping only a few hairs tucked in his robe. This is Jerusalem, which the LORD set in the centre of the nations, but which rebelled against His laws more wickedly than the nations around her. Because she defiled His sanctuary, He will do to her what He has never done before: a third will die of plague and famine, a third will fall by the sword, and a third will be scattered. Then they will know that the LORD has spoken in His jealousy.

1 As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword and use it as a barber's razor; pass it over your head and your beard. Then take scales for weighing and divide the hair.

2 When the days of the siege are completed, burn a third of it with fire in the middle of the city. Take a third and strike it with the sword all around the city. Scatter a third to the wind, and I will unsheathe a sword after them.

3 But take a few strands from these and tuck them into the hem of your robe.

4 Take some of these again, throw them into the fire and burn them. From there a fire will spread to the whole house of Israel.

5 This is what the Lord GOD says: This is Jerusalem. I set her at the centre of the nations, with countries all around her.

6 But she has rebelled against My judgements more wickedly than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries around her. For they have rejected My judgements and have not walked in My statutes.

7 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Because you have been more turbulent than the nations around you, and have not walked in My statutes or kept My judgements, and have not even acted according to the standards of the nations around you,[1]

8 therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I Myself am against you, and I will carry out judgements in your midst in the sight of the nations.

9 Because of all your abominations I will do among you what I have never done before and will never do again.

10 So in your midst fathers will eat their sons and sons will eat their fathers. I will carry out judgements on you and scatter all your survivors to every wind.

11 Therefore, as surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and all your abominations, I Myself will withdraw; My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity.

12 A third of your people will die of plague or perish by famine within you; a third will fall by the sword around you; and a third I will scatter to every wind and unsheathe a sword after them.

13 Then My anger will be spent, and I will satisfy My wrath on them and be appeased. And they will know that I, the LORD, have spoken in My jealousy, when I have spent My wrath on them.

14 I will turn you into rubble and a byword among the surrounding nations, before the eyes of every passer-by.

15 You will be a reproach and a taunt, a warning and a horror to the nations around you, when I carry out judgements on you in anger and wrath and with furious rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken.

16 When I send against them the deadly arrows of famine, arrows of destruction that I send to destroy you, I will bring more and more famine on you and cut off your supply of bread.

17 I will send famine and wild beasts against you, and they will leave you childless. Plague and bloodshed will sweep through you, and I will bring the sword on you. I, the LORD, have spoken.

1 Some Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac read ‘but have acted according to the standards of the nations’; compare 11:12.

Chapter 6

Ezekiel 6 is an oracle against the mountains of Israel, where the people worshipped at high places. The LORD will bring a sword against them, destroy the high places, smash the altars and incense altars, and scatter the bones of the slain around their idols. Yet a remnant will escape among the nations, and there they will remember Him, how He was grieved by their unfaithful hearts and their eyes that lusted after idols, and they will loathe themselves for their evil. Ezekiel is to clap his hands and stamp his feet over Israel’s abominations, for sword, famine and plague will fall on them from the desert to Diblah, and they will know that He is the LORD.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, turn to face Israel’s mountains and prophesy to them.

3 Say: Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! This is what the Lord GOD says to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I am about to bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places.

4 Your altars will be made desolate and your incense altars smashed, and I will make your slain fall in front of your idols.[1]

5 I will lay the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars.

6 Wherever you live, the towns will be laid waste and the high places made desolate, so that your altars will be laid waste and ruined, your idols smashed and destroyed, your incense altars cut down and your works wiped out.

7 Bodies will lie fallen in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

8 Yet I will leave a remnant, for some of you will escape the sword among the nations when you are scattered through the countries.

9 Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they have been taken captive, how I was broken by their unfaithful hearts that turned away from Me and by their eyes that lusted after their idols. They will loathe themselves for the evil they have done, for all their abominations.

10 And they will know that I am the LORD; I did not threaten in vain to bring this disaster on them.

11 This is what the Lord GOD says: Strike your hands together and stamp your foot, and cry, “Alas!” over every vile abomination of Israel’s house, for sword and famine and plague will bring them down.

12 Whoever is far off will die of plague, whoever is near will fall by the sword, and whoever is left and spared will die of famine. So I will spend My wrath on them.

13 And you will know that I am the LORD, when their slain lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every spreading tree and every leafy oak, the places where they offered soothing aromas to all their idols.

14 I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land a desolate waste from the wilderness to Diblah, wherever they live. Then they will know that I am the LORD.[2]

1 ‘Idols’ (gillulim) is a scornful word used almost forty times in Ezekiel; it may mean ‘dung pellets’ or ‘blocks’.

2 Probably Riblah in the far north, as in a few manuscripts; ‘from the wilderness to Riblah’ means the whole land from south to north.

Chapter 7

Ezekiel 7 announces that the end has come on the four corners of the land of Israel. The LORD will judge the people by their ways and show no pity, and they will know that it is He who strikes. Disaster after disaster is coming; the day is near, a day of panic and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. Buyer and seller need not rejoice or mourn, for wrath is on the whole crowd. The trumpet sounds, but no one goes to battle; the sword is outside and plague and famine inside. People will throw their silver into the streets, for it cannot save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; they made idols from their beautiful jewellery. The worst of the nations will take their houses, and they will seek peace and find none.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, the Lord GOD has this to say to Israel's land: The end! The end is here, across all four corners of the country.

3 Now the end is upon you, and I will send My anger against you. I will judge you according to your ways and repay you for all your abominations.

4 My eye will not spare you, and I will have no pity. I will repay you for your ways, and your abominations will be in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

5 This is what the Lord GOD says: Disaster! A unique disaster! Look, it is coming!

6 An end has come; the end has come! It has roused itself against you. Look, it is coming![1]

7 Doom has come upon you, you who live in the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of panic and not of joyful shouting on the mountains.

8 Now very soon I will pour out My wrath on you and spend My anger against you. I will judge you according to your ways and repay you for all your abominations.

9 My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. I will repay you for your ways, and your abominations will be in your midst. Then you will know that it is I, the LORD, who strike.

10 Look, the day! Look, it is coming! Doom has gone out; the rod has blossomed; arrogance has budded.

11 Violence has grown into a rod of wickedness. None of them will be left, none of their crowd, none of their wealth, nothing of value among them.[2]

12 The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice nor the seller mourn, for wrath is on their whole crowd.

13 The seller will not recover what he sold, even if both of them are still alive. For the vision concerning their whole crowd will not be revoked; because of their iniquity, not one of them will preserve his life.

14 They have blown the trumpet and made everything ready, but no one goes into battle, for My wrath is on their whole crowd.

15 The sword is outside; plague and famine are within. Whoever is in the field will die by the sword, and whoever is in the city, famine and plague will devour.

16 Even if their survivors escape, they will be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning, each for his iniquity.

17 Every hand will hang limp, and every knee will run with water.[3]

18 They will put on sackcloth and be covered with shuddering. Shame will be on every face and baldness on every head.

19 They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be like something unclean. Their silver and gold will not be able to rescue them on the day of the LORD's wrath. It will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs, for it was the stumbling block of their iniquity.

20 They took pride in their beautiful jewellery and used it to make their detestable images and abominable idols. So I will make it something unclean for them.

21 I will hand it over to foreigners as plunder and to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they will defile it.

22 I will turn My face away from them, and they will defile My treasured place; robbers will enter it and defile it.

23 Make ready the chains, because the country is crowded with blood crimes and the city overflows with violence.

24 I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the mighty, and their holy places will be defiled.

25 Anguish is coming! They will seek peace, but there will be none.

26 Disaster will follow disaster, and rumour will follow rumour. They will seek a vision from the prophet, but the law will be lost from the priest and counsel from the elders.

27 The king will mourn, the prince will be clothed with despair, and the hands of the people of the land will tremble. I will deal with them according to their conduct and judge them by their own standards. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

1 In Hebrew ‘end’ (qets) and ‘roused itself’ (heqits) sound alike; compare Amos 8:2.

2 The Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

3 That is, they will wet themselves with terror.

Chapter 8

Ezekiel 8 begins a vision dated to the sixth year, while the elders of Judah sat before Ezekiel in his house. A figure of fire lifts him by his hair and brings him in visions of God to Jerusalem. At the temple’s north gate stands the idol that provokes jealousy. Through a hole in the wall he sees seventy elders burning incense before images of creeping things and beasts, saying, “The LORD does not see us.” At the north gate women sit weeping for Tammuz, and in the inner court twenty-five men turn their backs on the temple and bow to the sun in the east. Because they have filled the land with violence, the LORD will act in wrath and not listen to their loud cries.

1 In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, I was sitting in my house with the elders of Judah sitting before me, and the hand of the Lord GOD fell on me there.[1]

2 I looked, and there was a figure with the appearance of a man. From what looked like His waist downwards was fire, and from His waist upwards was something like a brightness, gleaming like amber.[2]

3 He stretched out what looked like a hand and took me by a lock of my hair, and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the north gate of the inner court, where the idol that provokes jealousy stood.

4 And there was the glory of the God of Israel, like the vision I had seen in the plain.

5 Then He said to me, “Son of man, lift up your eyes towards the north.” So I lifted my eyes towards the north, and there, north of the altar gate, in the entrance, was this idol of jealousy.

6 He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations the house of Israel is committing here, to drive Me far from My sanctuary? But you will see still greater abominations.”

7 Then He brought me to the entrance of the court, and I looked, and there was a hole in the wall.

8 He said to me, “Son of man, dig through the wall.” So I dug through the wall, and there was a doorway.

9 He told me, “Go inside and look at the vile abominations being done here.”

10 So I went in and looked, and there, carved on the wall all around, were all kinds of creeping things and detestable beasts and all the idols of the house of Israel.

11 In front of them stood seventy of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them. Each had a censer in his hand, and a fragrant cloud of incense was rising.[3]

12 He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what Israel’s elders are doing in the darkness, each one in the shrine of his own carved images? They tell themselves, ‘The LORD does not see us. The LORD has abandoned the land.’”

13 He said to me, “You will see still greater abominations that they are committing.”

14 Then He brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the LORD, and there women were sitting, weeping for Tammuz.[4]

15 He said to me, “Son of man, did you see that? Turn round, and you will see abominations greater still.”

16 Then He brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD, and there at the entrance to the temple, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs to the temple of the LORD and their faces towards the east, bowing down eastwards to the sun.

17 He said to me, “Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations they are committing here, that they must also fill the land with violence and provoke Me again and again? Look, they are putting the branch to their nose![5]

18 So I too will act in wrath. My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. Though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not listen to them.”

1 September 592 BC.

2 So the Greek translation; the Hebrew reads ‘like fire’.

3 Probably a son of the Shaphan who served Josiah (2 Kings 22:3–14); his brothers Ahikam and Gemariah supported Jeremiah (Jeremiah 26:24; 36:10–12).

4 Tammuz was a Mesopotamian god of vegetation, whose death was mourned each summer.

5 The meaning of this ritual is unknown.

Chapter 9

Ezekiel 9 continues the temple vision. Six executioners come from the north gate, each with a weapon, and among them a man clothed in linen with a writing kit. The glory of the God of Israel rises from the cherub to the threshold of the temple. The man in linen is sent through Jerusalem to put a mark on the foreheads of those who groan over its abominations, and the others follow, striking down everyone without the mark, beginning at the sanctuary. Ezekiel falls on his face and cries out, asking whether the LORD will destroy the whole remnant of Israel. The LORD answers that the guilt of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, for they say the LORD has forsaken the land. The man in linen reports, “I have done as You commanded me.”

1 Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, “Bring near those appointed to punish the city, each with his weapon of destruction in his hand!”

2 And six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with a shattering weapon in his hand. Among them was a man clothed in linen with a writing kit at his side. They came in and stood beside the bronze altar.

3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the temple. He called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side,

4 and the LORD said to him, “Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations committed in it.”[1]

5 To the others He said in my hearing, “Follow him through the city and strike. Let your eye not spare, and have no pity.

6 Kill old men, young men and young women, little children and women, until all are destroyed, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at My sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple.

7 Then He said to them, “Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain. Go!” So they went out and struck down people throughout the city.

8 While they were striking them down and I was left alone, I fell on my face and cried out, “Ah, Lord GOD! Will You destroy the whole remnant of Israel as You pour out Your wrath on Jerusalem?”

9 He answered me, “The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of bloodshed and the city is full of injustice, for they say, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land; the LORD does not see.’

10 So as for Me, My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity; I will bring their conduct down on their own heads.”

11 Then the man clothed in linen with the writing kit at his side brought back word: “I have done as You commanded me.”

1 The mark is the letter taw, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which in the old script was written as a cross (X or +). Compare Revelation 7:3; 9:4.

Chapter 10

Ezekiel 10 describes how the man in linen is told to go among the whirling wheels under the cherubim, fill his hands with burning coals and scatter them over the city. The glory of the LORD rises from the cherub to the threshold, and the temple is filled with the cloud and the court with the brightness of His glory, while the sound of the cherubim's wings is heard like the voice of God Almighty. Ezekiel describes the cherubim and their wheels and realises that they are the living creatures he saw by the Kebar Canal. Then the glory of the LORD departs from the threshold of the temple and stands over the cherubim, and they rise and stop at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD's house.

1 Then I looked, and on the platform above the heads of the cherubim there appeared something like a sapphire, in shape like a throne.

2 The LORD said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the whirling wheels beneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter them over the city." And he went in as I watched.[1]

3 The cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court.

4 The glory of the LORD lifted from the cherub and came to the temple threshold. The cloud filled the house, and the court shone with the radiance of the LORD's glory.

5 The sound of the cherubim's wings could be heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks.

6 When the LORD commanded the man clothed in linen, "Take fire from among the whirling wheels, from among the cherubim," he went in and stood beside a wheel.

7 Then one of the cherubim stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among them. He took some and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out.

8 Under the cherubim's wings could be seen what looked like human hands.

9 I looked, and there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub, and the wheels gleamed like topaz.

10 As for their appearance, all four looked alike, as if a wheel were within a wheel.

11 When they moved, they went in any of the four directions without turning as they went. The wheels went wherever the head faced, without turning as they went.

12 Their whole bodies, their backs, their hands and their wings, and the wheels too, were full of eyes all around, the wheels of all four of them.

13 As for the wheels, I heard them called "the whirling wheels."

14 Each of the cherubim had four faces: the first face was that of a cherub, the second that of a man, the third that of a lion, and the fourth that of an eagle.[2]

15 Then the cherubim rose up. These were the living creatures I had seen by the Kebar Canal.

16 When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels did not leave their side.

17 When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still; when they rose, the wheels rose with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

18 Then the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim.

19 As I watched, the cherubim lifted their wings and rose from the ground, with the wheels beside them as they went. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

20 These were the living creatures I had seen beneath the God of Israel by the Kebar Canal, and I knew that they were cherubim.

21 Each had four faces and four wings, and under their wings was what looked like human hands.

22 Their faces looked the same as the faces I had seen by the Kebar Canal. Each went straight ahead.

1 'Whirling wheels' (galgal) is a different word from the 'wheels' (ophannim) of 1:15; see 10:13.

2 In 1:10 the face of an ox stands where 'the face of a cherub' stands here.

Chapter 11

Ezekiel 11 ends the temple vision. At the east gate Ezekiel sees twenty-five leaders, including Jaazaniah and Pelatiah, who give wicked counsel, saying, "This city is the pot, and we are the meat." He prophesies that the slain are the meat, but the leaders will be taken out and judged at the border of Israel; as he speaks, Pelatiah dies. The people left in Jerusalem claim the land and dismiss the exiles, but the LORD declares that He has been a sanctuary for the exiles for a little while, and He will gather them, give them one heart and a new spirit, and remove their heart of stone. Then the glory of the LORD leaves the city and stops on the mountain to the east, and the Spirit brings Ezekiel back to the exiles in Chaldea.

1 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the LORD's house, the one facing east. There at the entrance of the gate were twenty-five men, and among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.

2 He told me, "Son of man, these are the men who are plotting evil and giving harmful advice here in the city.

3 They say, 'The time is not near to build houses. This city is the pot, and we are the meat.'[1]

4 So prophesy against them, son of man; prophesy!"

5 Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and He said to me, "Say: This is what the LORD says: That is what you are saying, house of Israel, and I know the thoughts that rise in your mind.

6 You have piled up the dead in this city and strewn its streets with corpses.

7 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: The slain you have laid in the midst of it are the meat, and this city is the pot, but you will be taken out of it.

8 You have feared the sword, and the sword is what I will bring against you, declares the Lord GOD.

9 I will bring you out of the city, hand you over to foreigners and carry out judgements against you.

10 By the sword you will fall; at Israel's frontier I will pass sentence on you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

11 This city will not be a pot for you, nor will you be the meat in it; I will judge you at the border of Israel.[2]

12 Then you will know that I am the LORD, whose statutes you have not followed and whose judgements you have not kept, but you have acted according to the standards of the nations around you."

13 While I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will You make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?"

14 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

15 "Son of man, your brothers, your own relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel, all of them, are the ones of whom the people of Jerusalem have said, 'Keep far away from the LORD; this land was given to us as a possession.'

16 Therefore say: This is what the Lord GOD says: Though I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a little while in the countries where they have gone.

17 So tell them: This is what the Lord GOD says: I will bring you together out of the peoples and collect you from the lands you were scattered to, and I will give the land of Israel back to you.

18 They will return there and remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations.

19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit within them. I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,[3]

20 Then they will live by My statutes and carefully observe My judgements. They will be a people belonging to Me, and I will be God to them.

21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their own heads, declares the Lord GOD."

22 Then the cherubim lifted their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

23 The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stopped on the mountain east of the city.[4]

24 The Spirit lifted me and carried me in the vision, by God's Spirit, back to the exiles in Chaldea. Then the vision I had been seeing was taken from me,

25 and I told the exiles everything the LORD had shown me.

1 They think they are the choice meat, safe inside the pot, while the exiles have been thrown away. The Hebrew of the first sentence is uncertain.

2 Compare 2 Kings 25:18–21: the leaders were executed at Riblah, in the far north.

3 Compare 36:26 and Jeremiah 32:39.

4 The Mount of Olives. In 43:1–5 Ezekiel sees the glory return from the east.

Chapter 12

Ezekiel 12 records another acted sign for a rebellious house that has eyes but does not see. In daylight Ezekiel packs a bag as if for exile, and in the evening he digs through the wall and goes out with his face covered. This signifies that the prince in Jerusalem and the people will go into exile; the prince will be caught in the LORD's net and taken to Babylon, yet will not see it, and he will die there. Ezekiel is to eat his bread with trembling as a sign of the anxiety of Jerusalem's people. The LORD also rejects the proverb, "The days go by and every vision comes to nothing," and the claim that Ezekiel's visions are for the distant future: none of His words will be delayed any longer.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, you are living among a rebellious house. They have eyes to see but do not see, and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house.

3 So, son of man, pack your belongings for exile, and go into exile by day while they watch. Go as an exile from your place to another place while they watch. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house.

4 Bring out your belongings by day, as belongings for exile, while they watch. Then in the evening go out yourself while they watch, as people do when they go into exile.

5 While they watch, dig through the wall and carry your belongings out through it.

6 While they watch, lift them onto your shoulder and carry them out in the dark. Cover your face so that you cannot see the land, for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel.

7 So I did as I was commanded. By day I brought out my belongings as belongings for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my hands. I took them out in the dark, carrying them on my shoulder while they watched.

8 In the morning the word of the LORD came to me:

9 Son of man, has not the house of Israel, that rebellious house, asked you, "What are you doing?"

10 Say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and the whole house of Israel who are there.[1]

11 Tell them: I am a sign to you. What I have done will be done to them; into exile and captivity they will go.

12 The prince who is among them will lift his belongings onto his shoulder in the dark and go out. They will dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He will cover his face so that he cannot see the land with his eyes.

13 I will spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it, and there he will die.[2]

14 I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops, and I will unsheathe a sword after them.

15 When I scatter them through the nations and disperse them across the lands, then they will know that I am the LORD.

16 But I will spare a few of them from the sword, famine and plague, so that among the nations where they go they may recount all their abominations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

17 The word of the LORD came to me:

18 Son of man, eat your bread with trembling and drink your water with shuddering and anxiety.

19 Say to the people of the land: This is what the Lord GOD says about the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water in dismay, for their

land will be stripped of everything in it because of the violence of all who live there.

20 The inhabited towns will be laid waste, and the land will become a desolation. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

21 The word of the LORD came to me:

22 Son of man, what is this proverb you have about the land of Israel: “The days go by and every vision comes to nothing”?

23 Therefore tell them: This is what the Lord GOD says: I will put an end to this proverb, and they will no longer quote it in Israel. Instead say to them: The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled.

24 For there will no longer be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.

25 For I, the LORD, will speak whatever word I speak, and it will be done without further delay. In your days, rebellious house, I will speak the word and fulfil it, declares the Lord GOD.

26 The word of the LORD came to me:

27 Son of man, the house of Israel is saying, “The vision he sees is for many days from now; he prophesies about times far off.”

28 Therefore say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: None of My words will be delayed any longer; whatever word I speak will be done, declares the Lord GOD.

1 ‘Oracle’ (massa) can also mean ‘burden’, a play on the bag Ezekiel carries. The prince is King Zedekiah.

2 Zedekiah was blinded before being taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:7).

Chapter 13

Ezekiel 13 condemns the prophets of Israel who prophesy out of their own imagination. They are like jackals among ruins; they have not gone up into the breaches or built a wall for Israel to stand in the day of the LORD. They see false visions and say, “Declares the LORD,” when He has not sent them, and they mislead His people by saying “All is well” when nothing is well, whitewashing a flimsy wall. The LORD will bring a storm, torrential rain and hailstones to bring down the wall and expose its foundations. He also condemns the women who prophesy from their own hearts, sewing magic bands and veils to ensnare lives for handfuls of barley; He will tear them off and rescue His people.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are prophesying. Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: Hear the word of the LORD!

3 This is what the Lord GOD says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing!

4 Your prophets, Israel, have been like jackals among ruins.

5 You have not gone up into the breaches or repaired the wall around the house of Israel, so that it might stand firm in battle on the day of the LORD.

6 They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, “Declares the LORD,” when the LORD has not sent them, yet they expect Him to fulfil their word.

7 Have you not seen a false vision and spoken a lying divination when you say, “Declares the LORD,” though I have not spoken?

8 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Because you have spoken falsehood and seen lies, I am against you, declares the Lord GOD.

9 I will raise My hand against the prophets whose visions are empty and whose omens are lies. They will have no seat in My people’s council, no name in the rolls of Israel’s house, and no entry into Israel’s land. Then you will know that I am the Lord GOD.

10 Because, yes, because they have led My people astray, saying, “All is well,” when nothing is well, and when someone builds a flimsy wall, they cover it with whitewash,[1]

11 tell those who cover it with whitewash that it will fall. There will be a downpour of rain; you hailstones will fall, and a violent wind will break out.

12 When the wall falls, will people not ask you, “Where is the whitewash you smeared on it?”

13 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: In My wrath I will let loose a violent wind; in My anger there will be a downpour of rain, and hailstones in fury to destroy it.

14 I will tear down the wall you covered with whitewash and level it to the ground, so that its foundation is laid bare. When it falls, you will perish beneath it. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

15 So I will spend My wrath on the wall and on those who covered it with whitewash, and I will say to you, “The wall is gone, and so are those who whitewashed it,

16 the prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her when there was no peace, declares the Lord GOD.”

17 And you, son of man, turn your face towards the women among your people whose prophecies spring from their own minds. Prophesy against them

18 and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: Woe to the women who sew magic bands on every wrist and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt down lives! Will you hunt down the lives of My people and keep your own lives safe?[2]

19 You have profaned Me among My people for handfuls of barley and scraps of bread, putting to death people who should not die and keeping alive people who should not live, by your lies to My people, who listen to lies.

20 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am against your magic bands with which you hunt lives like birds. I will tear them from your arms and set free the lives you hunt like birds.

21 I will tear off your veils and rescue My people from your hands, and they will no longer be prey in your hands. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

22 Because you have disheartened the righteous with lies, when I had not grieved them, and have encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil way and save their lives,

23 you will no longer see false visions or practise divination. I will rescue My people from your hands. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

1 Compare Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11.

2 The exact nature of the bands and veils is unknown; they were charms used in sorcery.

Chapter 14

Ezekiel 14 tells how some elders of Israel come to enquire of Ezekiel, but they have set up idols in their hearts. The LORD will answer such people Himself, to take hold of Israel’s heart: they must repent and turn from their idols. Anyone who keeps idols in his heart and comes to a prophet will be cut off, and a prophet who is enticed into speaking will share their punishment, so that Israel will no longer stray. If a land sins against Him, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they would save only themselves by their righteousness, not sons or daughters. How much worse when He sends His four dreadful judgements on Jerusalem! Yet some survivors will come out to the exiles, and when the exiles see their conduct they will be consoled, knowing that He did not act without cause.

1 Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me.

2 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I let them consult Me at all?

4 Therefore speak to them and tell them: This is what the Lord GOD says: When anyone of the house of Israel sets up his idols in his heart, puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him Myself, in keeping with the multitude of his idols,

5 so that I may take hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who have all become estranged from Me through their idols.

6 Therefore say to the house of Israel: This is what the Lord GOD says: Repent! Turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations.

7 For when anyone of the house of Israel or any foreigner living in Israel separates himself from Me, sets up his idols in his heart, puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face and then comes to a prophet to enquire of Me, I the LORD will answer him Myself.

8 I will turn My face against such a man and make an example and a proverb of him; I will cut him off

from My people. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

9 If a prophet is led astray and gives a message, it is I, the LORD, who let that prophet be led astray; I will raise My hand against him and wipe him out from among My people Israel.[1]

10 They will bear their punishment; the punishment of the prophet will be the same as the punishment of the one who enquires of him,

11 so that the house of Israel will no longer stray from Me or defile themselves with all their transgressions. They will be My people, and I will be their God, declares the Lord GOD.

12 The word of the LORD came to me:

13 Son of man, if a land sins against Me by acting unfaithfully, and I stretch out My hand against it, cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it and cut off from it both people and animals,

14 even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would save only their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord GOD.[2]

15 If I sent wild beasts through the land and they left it childless, and it became a desolation so that no one passed through it because of the beasts,

16 even if these three men were in it, as surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they could not save their own sons or daughters. They alone would be saved, and the land would be desolate.

17 Or if I brought a sword against that land and said, “Let the sword pass through the land,” and I cut off from it both people and animals,

18 even if these three men were in it, as surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they could not save sons or daughters; they alone would be saved.

19 Or if I sent a plague into that land and poured out My wrath on it in bloodshed, to cut off from it both people and animals,

20 even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only their own lives by their righteousness.

21 For this is what the Lord GOD says: How much more when I send against Jerusalem My four dreadful judgements, sword, famine, wild beasts and plague, to cut off from it both people and animals!

22 Yet there will be survivors left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out. They will come out to you, and when you see their conduct and their deeds, you will be consoled about the disaster I have brought on Jerusalem, all that I have brought on it.

23 They will console you when you see their conduct and their deeds, and you will know that I did not do without cause all that I have done in it, declares the Lord GOD.

1 Compare 1 Kings 22:19–23. The LORD gives the false prophet over to the deception he has chosen.

2 The Hebrew spells the name ‘Danel’; this may be Daniel, Ezekiel’s younger contemporary, or an ancient righteous man of that name known from Canaanite texts. Compare 28:3.

Chapter 15

> *Ezekiel 15 is a short parable of the vine. What use is the wood of a vine compared with the trees of the forest? No one can make anything from it, not even a peg to hang things on, and once fire has charred both ends and the middle, it is useless. So the LORD has given up the people of Jerusalem like vine wood to the fire. They have escaped one fire, but another will consume them, and the land will be desolate because they have acted unfaithfully.*

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, how is the wood of the vine better than any other wood, the vine branch among the trees of the forest?[1]

3 Is wood taken from it to make anything useful? Do people make a peg from it to hang any vessel on?

4 No, it is thrown into the fire as fuel. When the fire has burned both ends and the middle is charred, is it good for anything?

5 Even when it was whole it could not be made into anything; how much less can it be made into anything when the fire has burned it and it is charred!

6 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: As I have given the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest to the fire as fuel, so I will give up the people of Jerusalem.

7 I will set My face against them. Though they have come out of the fire, the fire will still consume

them. And you will know that I am the LORD when I set My face against them.

8 I will make the land desolate because they have acted unfaithfully, declares the Lord GOD.

1 Israel is often pictured as a vine (Psalm 80:8–16; Isaiah 5:1–7; Jeremiah 2:21). Here only its wood is considered, which is good for nothing.

Chapter 16

Ezekiel 16 is a long allegory of Jerusalem as an unfaithful wife. She was born of Amorite and Hittite parents and abandoned at birth in an open field, but the LORD passed by and said, "Live!" When she grew up He made a covenant with her and she became His; He washed her, clothed her in fine linen and adorned her with jewels until she was fit to be a queen. But she trusted in her beauty and played the prostitute with every passer-by, making idols from His gifts and even sacrificing her children. Worse than a prostitute, she paid her lovers. So the LORD will gather her lovers to strip and judge her. Her sisters Samaria and Sodom were less wicked than she; Sodom's sin was pride, plenty and neglect of the poor. Yet the LORD will remember His covenant, establish an everlasting covenant with her and make atonement for all she has done.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, confront Jerusalem with her abominations.

3 Say: This is what the Lord GOD says to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.[1]

4 On the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse you, rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths.

5 No eye looked on you with pity to do any of these things for you out of compassion. Instead you were thrown out into the open field, for you were despised on the day you were born.

6 Then I passed by you and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay in your blood I said to you, "Live!" Yes, as you lay in your blood I said to you, "Live!"

7 I made you grow like a plant of the field. You grew up and became tall and reached the age of ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown, but you were naked and bare.

8 Then I passed by you again and saw you, and you were old enough for love. So I spread the corner of My garment over you and covered your nakedness. I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord GOD, and you became Mine.[2]

9 I bathed you with water, washed off your blood and anointed you with oil.

10 I clothed you with embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk.

11 I adorned you with jewellery: I put bracelets on your wrists and a chain round your neck,

12 I put a ring in your nose and rings in your ears, and set a splendid crown on your head.

13 So you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothes were of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil. You became exceedingly beautiful and rose to be a queen.

14 Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendour I had given you, declares the Lord GOD.

15 But you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to play the prostitute. You lavished your favours on everyone who passed by; your beauty became his.

16 You took some of your clothes and made for yourself gaudy high places, and there you played the prostitute. Such things should never have happened, nor should they ever be.

17 You also took the fine jewellery of gold and silver I had given you and made for yourself male images, and you prostituted yourself with them.

18 You took your embroidered clothes to cover them, and you set My oil and My incense before them.

19 The bread I gave you, the fine flour, oil and honey I fed you with, you set before them as a soothing aroma. That is what happened, declares the Lord GOD.

20 Then you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them as food to the idols. Was your prostitution not enough?

21 You slaughtered My children and gave them up, making them pass through the fire to the idols.

22 In all your abominations and your prostitution you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, kicking about in your blood.

23 After all your wickedness (woe, woe to you, declares the Lord GOD),

24 you built yourself a mound and made yourself a lofty shrine in every square.

25 At the head of every street you built your lofty shrine and degraded your beauty, offering yourself to every passer-by and multiplying your prostitution.

26 You prostituted yourself with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbours, and multiplied your prostitution to provoke Me to anger.[3]

27 So I stretched out My hand against you and reduced your allotted portion. I handed you over to the will of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd conduct.

28 You prostituted yourself with the Assyrians too, because you were never satisfied; even after that you were not satisfied.

29 Then you multiplied your prostitution with Chaldea, the land of merchants, yet even with this you were not satisfied.

30 How weak-willed you are, declares the Lord GOD, when you do all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute!

31 When you built your mound at the head of every street and made your lofty shrine in every square, you were not like a prostitute, because you scorned payment.

32 You adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!

33 All prostitutes receive gifts, but you gave gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side for your prostitution.

34 So you were the opposite of other women in your prostitution: no one solicited you, and you paid a fee instead of receiving one. You are the very opposite!

35 Therefore, you prostitute, hear the word of the LORD!

36 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness exposed in your prostitution with your lovers and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children whom you gave to them,

37 therefore I am going to gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from every side and expose your nakedness before them, and they will see all your nakedness.

38 I will sentence you to the punishment of women who commit adultery and shed blood, and I will bring on you the bloodshed of wrath and jealousy.

39 I will hand you over to them, and they will tear down your mound and demolish your lofty shrines. They will strip you of your clothes, take your fine jewellery and leave you naked and bare.

40 They will bring up a mob against you, stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords.

41 They will burn down your houses and carry out judgements on you in the sight of many women. I will put a stop to your prostitution, and you will no longer pay your lovers.

42 Then I will satisfy My wrath on you, and My jealousy will turn away from you; I will be calm and no longer angry.

43 Because you did not remember the days of your youth but enraged Me with all these things, I will bring your conduct down on your own head, declares the Lord GOD. Did you not add lewdness to all your other abominations?

44 Everyone who uses proverbs will quote this one about you: “Like mother, like daughter.”

45 You are truly your mother’s daughter: she despised her husband and her children. And you are truly a sister to your sisters, who despised their husbands and children. A Hittite was your mother, an Amorite your father.

46 Your older sister is Samaria, who lived to the north of you with her daughters, and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you with her daughters, is Sodom.[4]

47 It was not enough for you to follow their ways and imitate their abominations; in a very short time you had gone further than they did in every corrupt way.

48 As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done.

49 This was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters were proud, overfed and complacent; they did not help the poor and needy.

50 They were haughty and committed abominations
before Me, so I removed them when I saw it.
51 Samaria did not commit half your sins. You have
multiplied your abominations beyond theirs and
made your sisters look righteous by all the
abominations you have committed.
52 So bear your disgrace, for you have given your
sisters grounds for justification. Because your sins
were more detestable than theirs, they are more
righteous than you. Be ashamed, then, and bear
your disgrace, for you have made your sisters
appear righteous.
53 But I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of
Sodom and her daughters and the fortunes of
Samaria and her daughters, and your fortunes
along with them,
54 so that you may bear your disgrace and be
ashamed of all you have done, when you become a
comfort to them.
55 Your sisters, Sodom with her daughters and
Samaria with her daughters, will return to their
former state, and you and your daughters will
return to your former state.
56 Was not your sister Sodom a byword in your
mouth in the day of your pride,
57 before your wickedness was exposed? Now you
are scorned by the daughters of Aram and all
around her, and by the daughters of the
Philistines, who despise you on every side.[5]
58 You must bear the penalty of your lewdness and
your abominations, declares the LORD.
59 For this is what the Lord GOD says: I will deal
with you as you have done, you who despised the
oath by breaking the covenant.
60 Even so, I will remember the covenant I made
with you when you were young, and I will set up
with you a covenant that lasts for ever.
61 Then you will remember your ways and be
ashamed when you receive your sisters, both your
older and your younger. I will give them to you as
daughters, but not on account of your covenant.
62 I will establish My covenant with you, and you
will know that I am the LORD,
63 so that you will remember and be ashamed, and
never again open your mouth because of your
disgrace, when I make atonement for you for all
you have done, declares the Lord GOD.

1 Jerusalem was a Canaanite city before David captured it (2 Samuel 5:6–9).
2 Spreading the corner of a garment over a woman was a pledge of marriage; compare Ruth 3:9.
3 The ‘prostitution’ is Judah’s political alliances and the foreign worship that came with them.
4 Hebrew ‘on your left’ and ‘on your right’, facing east. The ‘daughters’ are the surrounding towns.
5 Many Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac read ‘Edom’ for ‘Aram’.

Chapter 17

Ezekiel 17 is a riddle and parable. A great eagle takes the top of a cedar from Lebanon to a land of merchants and plants a seed of the land beside abundant water, where it grows into a low, spreading vine. But the vine sends its roots towards another great eagle, hoping for water; it will be uprooted and wither when the east wind strikes it. The LORD explains: the king of Babylon took Jerusalem’s king to Babylon and made a covenant with one of the royal line, but he rebelled and sent to Egypt for horses and troops. Because he despised the oath and broke the covenant, he will die in Babylon, and Pharaoh will not help him. Yet the LORD Himself will take a tender shoot from the top of the cedar and plant it on a high mountain of Israel, where it will become a noble cedar sheltering every kind of bird.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:
2 Son of man, set a riddle before Israel’s house and
tell them a parable.
3 Say: This is what the Lord GOD says: A great
eagle with great wings, long feathers and full
plumage of many colours came to Lebanon and
took the top of a cedar.[1]
4 He broke off its topmost shoot and carried it to a
land of merchants, and planted it in a city of
traders.
5 Then he took some of the seed of the land and
planted it in fertile soil. He set it like a willow
beside abundant water.
6 It sprouted and became a spreading vine, low in
height, with its branches turned towards him and
its roots beneath him. So it became a vine,
produced branches and put out shoots.

7 But there was another great eagle with great wings and abundant plumage. And this vine bent its roots towards him and sent out its branches to him from the bed where it was planted, so that he might water it.[2]

8 Yet it had been planted in good soil beside abundant water, so that it could produce branches, bear fruit and become a splendid vine.

9 Say: This is what the Lord GOD says: Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its roots and strip its fruit so that it withers? All its fresh growth will wither. It will take no strong arm or many people to pull it up by the roots.

10 Even if it is transplanted, will it thrive? Will it not wither completely when the east wind strikes it, wither on the bed where it grew?

11 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

12 Say now to the rebellious house: Do you not know what these things mean? Say: The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and its officials and brought them back with him to Babylon.

13 He took a member of the royal family and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath. He also carried off the leading men of the land,

14 so that the kingdom would be brought low and not rise again, but would survive by keeping his covenant.

15 But the king rebelled against him by sending his envoys to Egypt to get horses and a large army. Will he succeed? Will the one who does such things escape? Can he break a covenant and still escape?

16 As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, he will die in Babylon, in the land of the king who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke.

17 Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in battle, when ramps are built and siege works set up to destroy many lives.

18 He despised the oath by breaking the covenant. He had given his hand in pledge, yet he did all these things; he will not escape.

19 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: As surely as I live, I will bring down on his head My oath that he despised and My covenant that he broke.[3]

20 I will spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgement with him there for the unfaithfulness he committed against Me.

21 All the choice men among his troops will fall by the sword, and the survivors will be scattered to every wind. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken.

22 This is what the Lord GOD says: I Myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out. I will break off a tender shoot from its topmost branches and plant it Myself on a high and lofty mountain.

23 On the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it, and it will put out branches and bear fruit and become a noble cedar. Birds of every kind will nest under it; they will find shelter in the shade of its branches.[4]

24 Then all the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD. I bring low the tall tree and make the low tree tall; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

1 The first eagle is Nebuchadnezzar (17:12); the cedar top is King Jehoiachin, taken to Babylon in 597 BC.

2 The second eagle is Pharaoh (17:15); the vine is King Zedekiah.

3 Zedekiah had sworn his loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar in the LORD’s name (2 Chronicles 36:13), so the oath was the LORD’s.

4 Compare Jesus’ parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:32).

Chapter 18

Ezekiel 18 rejects the proverb, "The fathers ate sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Every life belongs to the LORD, and the one who sins is the one who will die. A righteous man who does what is just and right, who does not worship idols, defile his neighbour's wife, oppress anyone or take interest, but feeds the hungry and clothes the naked, will surely live. If he has a violent son who does none of these things, that son will die for his own sins; but if that son has a son who sees his father's sins and does not do them, the grandson will live. The wicked who turn from their sins will live, for the LORD takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn and live. The righteous who turn to evil will die. So Israel must repent and get a new heart and a new spirit: "Why will you die, house of Israel?"

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 What do you mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel: "The fathers ate sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"?[1]

3 As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel.

4 Look, every life belongs to Me, the life of the father as well as the life of the son; both are Mine. The person who sins is the one who will die.

5 Suppose a man is righteous and does what is just and right.

6 He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not defile his neighbour's wife or approach a woman during her period.[2]

7 He does not oppress anyone, but returns what a debtor gave him in pledge. He commits no robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing.

8 He does not lend at interest or take a profit. He keeps his hand from wrongdoing and judges fairly between one person and another.

9 He walks in My statutes and faithfully keeps My judgements. Such a man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Lord GOD.

10 But suppose he has a violent son who sheds blood and does any of these things,

11 though the father did none of them. He eats at the mountain shrines and defiles his neighbour's wife.

12 He oppresses the poor and needy, commits robbery and does not return a pledge. He looks to idols and commits abominations.

13 He lends at interest and takes a profit. Will such a man live? He will not live! Because he has done all these abominations, he will surely be put to death; his blood will be on his own head.

14 But suppose this man has a son who sees all the sins his father has committed, and though he sees them, he does not do likewise.

15 He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not defile his neighbour's wife.

16 He does not oppress anyone or take a pledge or commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing.

17 He keeps his hand from harming the poor and takes no interest or profit. He keeps My judgements and walks in My statutes. He will not die for his father's iniquity; he will surely live.

18 As for his father, because he practised extortion, robbed his brother and did what was not good among his people, he will die for his own iniquity.

19 Yet you ask, "Why does the son not bear the punishment for his father's iniquity?" When the son has done what is just and right, and has kept all My statutes and done them, he will surely live.

20 The person who sins is the one who will die. A son will not bear the punishment for his father's iniquity, nor a father for his son's. The righteousness of the righteous will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged to him.

21 But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed, keeps all My statutes and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.

22 None of the transgressions he has committed will be remembered against him; because of the righteousness he has done, he will live.

23 Do I take any delight in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD? Do I not rather want him to turn from his ways and live?

24 But if a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and does wrong, committing all the same abominations as the wicked, will he live? None of the righteous deeds he has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness he has

committed and the sin he has committed, he will die.

25 Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is not fair.” Listen, house of Israel: is My way not fair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

26 When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and does wrong, he will die for it; because of the wrong he has done, he will die.

27 And when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life.

28 Because he has considered and turned away from all the transgressions he has committed, he will surely live; he will not die.

29 Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is not fair.” Are My ways not fair, house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

30 Therefore I will judge each of you according to your ways, house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your downfall.

31 Throw off all the transgressions you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, house of Israel?

32 For I take no delight in the death of anyone who dies, declares the Lord GOD. So turn, and live!

1 Compare Jeremiah 31:29–30.

2 ‘Eat at the mountain shrines’: share in sacrificial meals at the high places. See Leviticus 18:19–20.

Chapter 19

Ezekiel 19 is a lament for the princes of Israel. Their mother was a lioness among lions who raised her cubs. One cub became a young lion who learned to tear prey and devour people, but the nations caught him in their pit and led him with hooks to Egypt. She took another cub, who prowled among the lions and laid waste their towns, but the nations caught him in their net and brought him in a cage to the king of Babylon. Their mother was also like a vine planted by water, fruitful and full of branches, with a strong branch fit for a ruler’s sceptre; but she was uprooted in fury, withered by the east wind and now is planted in the desert, with no strong branch left.

1 As for you, take up a lament for the princes of Israel

2 and say: What a lioness your mother was among the lions! She lay among the young lions and reared her cubs.[1]

3 One of her cubs she raised to be a young lion. He learned to hunt his prey and became a man-eater.

4 The nations heard about him, and he was caught in their pit. They led him with hooks to the land of Egypt.

5 When she saw that her waiting was in vain and her hope had come to nothing, she chose another of her cubs and made a young lion of him.

6 He prowled among the lions and became a young lion. He learned to tear prey; he devoured people.

7 He broke down their strongholds and laid waste their towns. The land and everything in it was terrified at the sound of his roaring.[2]

8 Then the nations set against him from the provinces on every side. They spread their net over him, and he was caught in their pit.

9 With hooks they put him in a cage and brought him to the king of Babylon. They put him in custody so that his roar would no longer be heard on the mountains of Israel.

10 Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, planted by the water. It was fruitful and full of branches because of the abundant water.[3]

11 It had strong branches fit for the sceptres of rulers. It towered high above the thick foliage, conspicuous for its height and its many branches.

12 But in fury it was torn up and flung to the ground; the east wind shrivelled its fruit. Its sturdy branches snapped and dried up, and fire burned them away.

13 And now it is planted in the desert, in parched and waterless ground.

14 Fire has gone out from one of its branches and consumed its fruit. No strong branch is left in it, no sceptre for ruling. This is a lament, and it has become a lament.

1 The mother is Judah, or the royal house. The first cub (19:3–4) is King Jehoahaz, taken to Egypt in 609 BC (2 Kings 23:31–34); the second (19:5–9) is probably Jehoiachin or Zedekiah.

2 The Hebrew of the first line is uncertain; it may read ‘he knew their widows’.

3 ‘In your vineyard’ is a probable reading; the Hebrew has ‘in your blood’.

Chapter 20

Ezekiel 20 is dated to the seventh year, when elders came to enquire of the LORD. He refuses to be consulted by them and instead recounts Israel’s history of rebellion. In Egypt they would not give up their idols; in the wilderness they rejected His laws and profaned His Sabbaths, which He gave as a sign between Him and them; and in the land they offered sacrifices on every high hill. Each time He held back His wrath for the sake of His name. Now they want to be like the nations and worship wood and stone, but the LORD will rule over them with a mighty hand, bring them into the wilderness of the peoples, purge the rebels and accept His people on His holy mountain. A short oracle follows against the forest of the south, which a fire will consume.

1 In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, some of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and they sat down in front of me.[1]

2 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

3 Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and tell them: This is what the Lord GOD says: Have you come to enquire of Me? As surely as I live, I will not let you enquire of Me, declares the Lord GOD.

4 Will you judge them? Will you judge them, son of man? Then make known to them the abominations of their fathers.

5 Say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: On the day I chose Israel, I lifted My hand in an oath to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I lifted My hand to them and said, “I am the LORD your God.”

6 On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands.

7 And I said to them, “Each of you must throw away the detestable things your eyes delight in, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”

8 But they rebelled against Me and would not listen to Me. They did not throw away the detestable things their eyes delighted in, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I thought I would pour out My wrath on them and spend My anger against them in the land of Egypt.

9 But I acted for the sake of My name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I had made Myself known to them by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

10 So I brought them out of the land of Egypt and led them into the wilderness.

11 I gave them My statutes and made known to them My judgements, by which the person who does them will live.[2]

12 I also gave them My Sabbaths as a sign between Me and them, so that they would know that I am the LORD who makes them holy.

13 But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My statutes and they rejected My judgements, by which the person who does them will live, and they utterly profaned My Sabbaths. So I thought I would pour out My wrath on them in the wilderness to destroy them.

14 But I acted for the sake of My name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

15 Moreover, in the wilderness I raised My hand in an oath against them, that I would not lead them into the land I had given, the land flowing with milk and honey, the loveliest land of all,

16 because they rejected My judgements, did not walk in My statutes and profaned My Sabbaths, for their hearts went after their idols.

17 Yet My eye spared them from destruction, and I did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

18 I said to their children in the wilderness, “Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers or keep their judgements or defile yourselves with their idols.

19 I, the LORD, am your God. Follow My statutes, and be careful to carry out My judgements.

20 Keep My Sabbaths holy, so that they may be a
sign between Me and you, and you will know that
I am the LORD your God."

21 But the children rebelled against Me. They did
not walk in My statutes or carefully keep My
judgements, by which the person who does them
will live, and they profaned My Sabbaths. So I
thought I would pour out My wrath on them and
spend My anger against them in the wilderness.

22 But I withdrew My hand and acted for the sake
of My name, so that it would not be profaned in
the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had
brought them out.

23 So in the wilderness I raised My hand in an oath
against them as well, that I would disperse them
across the nations and scatter them among the
lands,

24 because they had not carried out My judgements
but had rejected My statutes and profaned My
Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers'
idols.

25 So I gave them statutes that were not good and
judgements by which they could not live.[3]

26 I let them become defiled through their gifts, as
they made every firstborn pass through the fire, so
that I might fill them with horror, and so that they
would know that I am the LORD.

27 Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of
Israel and say to them: This is what the Lord GOD
says: In this also your fathers blasphemed Me by
acting unfaithfully towards Me.

28 When I had brought them into the land I had
sworn to give them, wherever they saw a high hill
or a leafy tree, there they offered their sacrifices
and presented their offensive offerings, there they
made their soothing aromas and poured out their
drink offerings.

29 So I said to them, "What is this high place you
go to?" And it is called Bamah to this day.[4]

30 Therefore say to the house of Israel: This is what
the Lord GOD says: Will you defile yourselves as
your fathers did and prostitute yourselves after
their detestable things?

31 When you offer your gifts and make your sons
pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with
all your idols to this day. So should I let you
enquire of Me, house of Israel? As surely as I live,
declares the Lord GOD, I will not let you enquire
of Me.

32 What you have in mind will never happen, when
you say, "Let us be like the nations, like the clans
of the other countries, serving wood and stone."

33 As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, with
a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with
wrath poured out, I will rule over you as King.

34 I will bring you out from the peoples and gather
you from the countries where you have been
scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched
arm and with wrath poured out.[5]

35 I will lead you into the desert of the nations, and
there I will judge you face to face.

36 As I entered into judgement with your fathers in
the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter
into judgement with you, declares the Lord GOD.

37 I will count you as you pass under My
shepherd's rod, and bring you into the bonds of
the covenant.[6]

38 I will purge from among you those who rebel
and transgress against Me. I will bring them out
of the land where they live as foreigners, but they
will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will
know that I am the LORD.

39 As for you, house of Israel, this is what the Lord
GOD says: Go and serve your idols, every one of
you! But afterwards you will surely listen to Me,
and you will no longer profane My holy name with
your gifts and your idols.

40 For on My holy mountain, the high mountain of
Israel, declares the Lord GOD, there the whole
house of Israel, all of them in the land, will serve
Me. There I will accept them, and there I will
require your contributions and the best of your
gifts, with all your holy offerings.

41 I will accept you as a soothing aroma when I
bring you out from the peoples and gather you
from the countries where you have been
scattered, and I will show Myself holy among you
in the sight of the nations.

42 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I
bring you into the land of Israel, the land I swore
to give your fathers.

43 There you will remember your ways and all the
deeds by which you defiled yourselves, and you
will loathe yourselves for all the evil you have
done.

44 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I
deal with you for the sake of My name and not
according to your evil ways and corrupt deeds,
house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.

45 The word of the LORD came to me:[7]

46 Son of man, set your face towards the south; preach against the south and prophesy against the forest of the Negev.

47 Say to the forest of the Negev: Hear the word of the LORD! This is what the Lord GOD says: I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it will consume every green tree and every dry tree in you. The blazing flame will not be quenched, and every face from south to north will be scorched by it.

48 Everyone alive will see that it was I, the LORD, who set it alight; it will never be put out.

49 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! They are saying of me, 'Is he not just telling parables?'"

1 August 591 BC.

2 See Leviticus 18:5, quoted in Romans 10:5 and Galatians 3:12.

3 That is, the LORD gave them over to the laws of the idols they had chosen; compare Romans 1:24–28.

4 'Bamah' means 'high place'; the question plays on the sound of the word (ba, 'go', and mah, 'what').

5 The Greek translation of 'I will gather you' ('I will welcome you') is echoed in 2 Corinthians 6:17.

6 A shepherd counted his sheep as they passed under his staff (Leviticus 27:32).

7 In Hebrew 20:45–49 are numbered 21:1–5, and 21:1–32 are numbered 21:6–37.

Chapter 21

Ezekiel 21 is the song of the LORD's sword. He will draw His sword against Jerusalem and the land of Israel and cut off both righteous and wicked, from south to north. Ezekiel is to groan with breaking heart before the people, for news is coming that will melt every heart. The sword is sharpened and polished for slaughter and put into the hand of the killer. Then Ezekiel marks out two roads for the king of Babylon, one to Rabbah of the Ammonites and one to Jerusalem; at the fork the king consults arrows, idols and a liver, and the lot falls on Jerusalem. The wicked prince of Israel will lose his crown: "A ruin, a ruin, a ruin!" until the one comes to whom judgement belongs. The Ammonites too will be judged in their own land.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, turn your face to Jerusalem and speak out against its holy places. Prophesy against Israel's land

3 and say to the land of Israel: This is what the LORD says: I am against you. I will draw My sword from its sheath and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked.[1]

4 Because I will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked, My sword will go out from its sheath against all flesh from south to north.

5 Then all flesh will know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword from its sheath; it will not return again.

6 As for you, son of man, groan! Groan before their eyes with breaking heart and bitter grief.

7 When they ask you, "Why are you groaning?" say, "Because of the news that is coming. Every heart will melt and every hand go limp; every spirit will faint and every knee run with water. It is coming, and it will happen, declares the Lord GOD."

8 The word of the LORD came to me:

9 Son of man, prophesy and say: This is what the Lord says: Say: A sword, a sword, sharpened and polished!

10 Sharpened for slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Shall we rejoice? The rod of My son despises every tree.[2]

11 The sword is given to be polished, to be grasped in the hand; it is sharpened and polished to be put in the hand of the killer.

12 Cry out and wail, son of man, for it is against My people, against all the princes of Israel. They are thrown to the sword along with My people. So strike your thigh in grief.

13 For testing will come, and what if the rod that despises does not continue? declares the Lord GOD.[3]

14 So you, son of man, prophesy and clap your hands together. Let the sword strike twice, even three times; it is a sword for the slain, the sword for great slaughter that surrounds them.

15 So that hearts may melt and many stumble, I have set the flashing sword at all their gates. Ah! It is made to flash like lightning; it is drawn for slaughter.

16 Slash to the right; turn to the left, wherever your edge is directed!

17 I too will clap My hands together, and I will satisfy My wrath. I, the LORD, have spoken.

18 The word of the LORD came to me:

19 Now, son of man, mark out two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to take, both starting from the same land. Put up a signpost where the road branches off to the city.

20 Mark out one road for the sword to come against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and another against Judah and fortified Jerusalem.

21 For the king of Babylon stands at the fork in the road, where the two roads part, to practise divination. He shakes the arrows, consults the household idols and examines the liver.[4]

22 Into his right hand comes the omen for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to give the order for slaughter, to raise the battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to build a ramp and to erect siege works.

23 To those in Jerusalem it will seem a false omen, for they have sworn solemn oaths. But he will remind them of their guilt, and they will be captured.

24 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Because you have reminded Me of your guilt by your open rebellion, so that your sins are seen in all your deeds, because you have come to remembrance, you will be taken in hand.

25 As for you, profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, the time of final punishment,[5]

26 this is what the Lord GOD says: Take off the turban and remove the crown! Things will not stay as they are: exalt the lowly and bring down the exalted.

27 A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I will make it! This too will not be, until he comes to whom judgement belongs, and I will give it to him.[6]

28 And you, son of man, prophesy and say: This is what the Lord GOD says concerning the Ammonites and their insults. Say: A sword, a sword, drawn for slaughter, polished to consume, to flash like lightning,

29 while they see false visions for you and lying divinations, to lay it on the necks of the profane and wicked, whose day has come, the time of final punishment.

30 Put the sword back in its sheath! I will judge you where you were created, in the country you came from.

31 I will pour out My indignation on you and breathe on you with the fire of My wrath. I will hand you over to brutal men, skilled in destruction.

32 You will be fuel for the fire; your blood will be shed in the land. You will be remembered no more, for I, the LORD, have spoken.

1 The Greek translation reads ‘the unrighteous and the wicked’.

2 The meaning of the last two sentences is uncertain; they may echo Genesis 49:9–10.

3 The Hebrew of this verse is very uncertain.

4 Three ways of seeking omens: drawing marked arrows from a quiver, consulting teraphim (household gods), and reading the liver of a sacrificed animal.

5 King Zedekiah.

6 Probably an echo of Genesis 49:10, ‘until he comes to whom it belongs’.

Chapter 22

Ezekiel 22 indicts Jerusalem as the city of bloodshed. Her leaders use their power to shed blood; within her people despise father and mother, oppress the foreigner, orphan and widow, profane the LORD’s Sabbaths, practise sexual abominations, take bribes and interest, and forget Him. So He will scatter her among the nations. The house of Israel has become dross, and He will gather them into Jerusalem like metals into a furnace and melt them in His wrath. Her prophets conspire like roaring lions, her priests do violence to His law, her officials are like wolves and the people of the land practise extortion. The LORD looked for someone to build up the wall and stand in the breach before Him for the land, but found no one.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Now, son of man, will you judge? Will you judge the city of bloodshed? Then confront her with all her abominations.

3 Say: This is what the Lord GOD says: A city that sheds blood in her midst, bringing her time of doom upon herself, and that makes idols to defile herself!

4 You have become guilty through the blood you
have shed and defiled by the idols you have made.
You have brought your days to a close and
reached the end of your years. So I have made you
a reproach to the nations and a mockery to all the
countries.

5 Those near and far from you will mock you, you
with a defiled name, full of turmoil.

6 See how each of the princes of Israel among you
has used his power to shed blood.

7 Within you they treat father and mother with
contempt; within you they oppress the foreigner
and wrong the orphan and the widow.

8 You have despised My holy things and profaned
My Sabbaths.

9 Among you are slanderers bent on shedding
blood; among you are those who eat at the
mountain shrines and commit lewd acts.

10 Among you they uncover their fathers'
nakedness; among you they violate women who
are unclean in their period.[1]

11 One commits an abomination with his
neighbour's wife, another lewdly defiles his
daughter-in-law, and another violates his sister,
his father's daughter.

12 Among you they take bribes to shed blood. You
take interest and profit and extort gain from your
neighbours by oppression, and you have forgotten
Me, declares the Lord GOD.

13 Look, I strike My hands together at the
dishonest gain you have made and at the blood
shed among you.

14 Will your courage endure, or your hands stay
strong, in the days when I deal with you? I, the
LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

15 I will scatter you among the nations and
disperse you through the countries, and I will
purge your uncleanness from you.

16 You will be profaned in the sight of the nations,
and you will know that I am the LORD.[2]

17 The word of the LORD came to me:

18 Son of man, Israel's house has turned into dross
for Me. Every one of them is copper and tin, iron
and lead, left in the furnace; they are nothing but
the slag of silver.

19 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says:
Because you have all become dross, I am going to
gather you into Jerusalem.

20 As silver and copper, iron, lead and tin are
heaped in a furnace and the fire is fanned to melt
them, so in My anger and fury I will heap you
together, put you in and melt you down.

21 I will collect you and fan the fire of My fury over
you, and you will melt in the city.

22 As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be
melted within it, and you will know that I, the
LORD, have poured out My wrath on you.

23 The word of the LORD came to me:

24 Son of man, say to her: You are a land that has
not been cleansed, that has had no rain on the day
of wrath.

25 Her prophets within her are a conspiracy, like a
roaring lion tearing its prey. They devour people,
seize treasure and precious things, and make
many widows within her.[3]

26 Her priests do violence to My law and profane
My holy things. They make no distinction between
the holy and the common, and they do not teach
the difference between the unclean and the clean.
They shut their eyes to My Sabbaths, so that I am
profaned among them.

27 Her officials within her are like wolves tearing
their prey, shedding blood and destroying lives to
make dishonest gain.

28 Her prophets cover for them with whitewash,
seeing false visions and divining lies for them,
saying, "This is what the Lord GOD says," when
the LORD has not spoken.

29 The people of the land practise extortion and
commit robbery. They oppress the poor and needy
and wrong the foreigner without justice.

30 I searched among them for one man to repair
the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the
land, so that I would not have to destroy it. But
there was not one.

31 So I have poured out My indignation on them
and consumed them with the fire of My wrath. I
have brought their conduct down on their own
heads, declares the Lord GOD.

1 See Leviticus 18:7–8, 19.

2 Some manuscripts and ancient versions read 'I will be profaned through you'.

3 The Greek translation reads 'Her princes'.

Chapter 23

Ezekiel 23 is the allegory of two sisters, Oholah and Oholibah, who played the prostitute in Egypt in their youth. They became the LORD's and bore Him children; Oholah is Samaria and Oholibah is Jerusalem. Oholah lusted after the Assyrians, splendid horsemen in purple, and defiled herself with their idols, so the LORD handed her over to them, and they killed her. Oholibah saw this but was even more corrupt, lusting after the Assyrians and then after the Babylonians, whose portraits she saw carved on walls, and she remembered her youth in Egypt. So the LORD will bring the Babylonians and Assyrians against her from every side; she must drink her sister's cup of horror and desolation. Because both sisters committed adultery, shed blood, sacrificed their children and defiled His sanctuary on the same day, righteous men will judge them, and lewdness will be ended in the land.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, there were two women, daughters of the same mother.

3 They played the prostitute in Egypt, playing the prostitute in their youth. There their breasts were fondled and their virgin bosoms caressed.

4 The older was named Oholah, and her sister Oholibah. They became Mine and bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria and Oholibah is Jerusalem.[1]

5 Oholah played the prostitute while she was Mine. She lusted after her lovers, the Assyrians, warriors

6 clothed in blue, governors and commanders, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.

7 She offered herself to them all, the pick of Assyria's men, and made herself unclean with the idols of every man she desired.

8 She did not give up the prostitution she began in Egypt, for in her youth men had lain with her, caressed her virgin bosom and poured out their lust on her.

9 Therefore I handed her over to her lovers, the Assyrians, whom she lusted after.

10 They exposed her nakedness, took away her sons and daughters and killed her with the sword. She became a byword among women, and judgement was carried out on her.[2]

11 Her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt than her sister in her lust and in her prostitution.

12 She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and commanders, warriors clothed in splendour, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.

13 I saw that she had defiled herself; both of them had gone the same way.

14 But she carried her prostitution further. She saw men carved on the wall, images of Chaldeans portrayed in red,

15 with belts round their waists and flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, the image of Babylonians whose native land was Chaldea.

16 The moment she set eyes on them she was filled with desire, and she sent envoys to them in Chaldea.

17 Then the Babylonians came to her, to the bed of love, and defiled her with their lust. After she had been defiled by them, she turned away from them in disgust.

18 She exposed her prostitution and uncovered her nakedness, and I turned away from her in disgust, as I had turned away from her sister.

19 Still she went on multiplying her acts of prostitution, calling to mind her early years when she sold herself in Egypt.

20 She lusted after their paramours there, whose lust was like that of donkeys and stallions.

21 So you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians caressed your bosom and fondled your young breasts.

22 Therefore, Oholibah, this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to stir up against you your lovers, from whom you turned away in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side:

23 Babylon's men and every Chaldean, the men of Pekod, Shoa and Koa, and every Assyrian with them: handsome young men, every one a governor or commander, officers and men of note, all mounted on horses.[3]

24 They will attack you with weapons, chariots and carts and a great host of peoples, ringing you on every side with shield and buckler and helmet. I will hand your case to them, and they will sentence you by their own laws.

25 I will direct My jealousy against you, and they will deal with you in fury. They will cut off your nose and your ears, and those of you who are left will fall by the sword. They will take away your sons and daughters, and those who are left will be consumed by fire.

26 They will strip you of your clothes and take away your fine jewellery.

27 So I will put an end to your lewdness and the prostitution you began in the land of Egypt. You will not look to them again or remember Egypt any more.

28 For this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to hand you over to those you hate, to those from whom you turned away in disgust.

29 They will deal with you in hatred, take away everything you worked for and leave you naked and bare. The shame of your prostitution will be exposed, your lewdness and your promiscuity.

30 This will be done to you because you played the prostitute with the nations and defiled yourself with their idols.

31 You have walked in your sister's way, so I will put her cup into your hand.

32 This is what the Lord GOD says: You will drink your sister's cup, deep and wide; it will bring scorn and derision, for it holds so much.

33 Drunkenness and sorrow will fill you, the cup of ruin and horror, the cup your sister Samaria drank.

34 You will drink it and drain it, gnaw its fragments and tear your breasts. For I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.

35 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Because you have forgotten Me and thrown Me behind your back, you must bear the consequences of your lewdness and your prostitution.

36 The LORD said to me: Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then confront them with their abominations.

37 For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and they have even offered up to them as food the children they bore to Me.

38 They have also done this to Me: on the same day they defiled My sanctuary and profaned My Sabbaths.

39 On the very day they slaughtered their children for their idols, they came into My sanctuary and profaned it. That is what they did in My house.

40 They even sent for men to come from far away, to whom a messenger was sent, and they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes and decked yourself with jewellery.

41 You sat on a splendid couch with a table spread before it, on which you had placed My incense and My oil.

42 The sound of a carefree crowd was around her; drunkards were brought from the desert along with the common rabble, and they put bracelets on the women's wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads.[4]

43 Then I said of the one worn out by adulteries, "Now let them use her as a prostitute, for that is what she is."

44 Men went in to them as one goes to a harlot; that is how they used Oholah and Oholibah, those depraved women.

45 But righteous men will judge them with the punishment for adulteresses and for women who shed blood, for they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands.

46 For this is what the Lord GOD says: Bring up an assembly against them, and hand them over to terror and plunder.

47 The assembly will stone them and cut them down with their swords; they will kill their sons and daughters and burn down their houses.

48 So I will put an end to lewdness in the land, and all women will take warning and not imitate your lewdness.

49 They will repay you for your lewdness, and you will bear the penalty for your sins with idols. Then you will know that I am the Lord GOD.

1 'Oholah' means 'her tent'; 'Oholibah' means 'My tent is in her'. The tent may be a shrine: Samaria had her own sanctuaries, while the LORD's dwelling was in Jerusalem.

2 Samaria fell to Assyria in 722 BC (2 Kings 17:5–6).

3 Pekod, Shoa and Koa were peoples east of the Tigris.

4 The Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

Chapter 24

Ezekiel 24 is dated to the day Nebuchadnezzar began the siege of Jerusalem. Ezekiel is to write down the date and tell the rebellious house a parable of a cooking pot filled with choice pieces of meat and boiled hard; it is the bloody city, a pot whose corrosion will not come off, and it will be heated empty on the coals until its filth is burned away. Then the LORD tells Ezekiel that He is about to take the delight of his eyes with a sudden blow, yet he must not mourn openly. That evening his wife dies, and he does as he was told. When the people ask what this means, he explains that the LORD will profane His sanctuary, the delight of their eyes, and they too will waste away without mourning. When a fugitive brings the news, Ezekiel's mouth will be opened.

1 On the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year, the LORD's word came to me:[1]

2 Son of man, write down the date of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day.

3 Tell this rebellious house a parable and say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: Put the pot on the fire; put it on and pour water into it.

4 Put into it the pieces of meat, all the good pieces, the thigh and the shoulder; fill it with choice bones.

5 Take the best of the flock; pile the wood beneath it. Bring it to a rolling boil and cook the bones in it.

6 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Woe to the city of bloodshed, the pot whose corrosion is in it and whose corrosion has not gone out of it! Empty it piece by piece without casting lots for any.[2]

7 For the blood she shed is still in her midst. She poured it on the bare rock; she did not pour it on the ground to cover it with dust.[3]

8 To stir up wrath and take vengeance, I have put her blood on the bare rock so that it would not be covered.

9 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Woe to the city of bloodshed! I too will make the pile of fuel great.

10 Heap on the wood, kindle the fire, cook the meat well, mix in the spices, and let the bones be charred.

11 Then set the empty pot on the coals so that it becomes hot and its copper glows, its uncleanness melts within it and its corrosion is consumed.

12 It has worn Me out with toil, yet its thick corrosion has not gone out of it. Into the fire with its corrosion!

13 Your uncleanness is lewdness. Because I tried to cleanse you but you would not be cleansed from your uncleanness, you will not be cleansed again until I have satisfied My wrath on you.

14 I, the LORD, have spoken. It is coming, and I will do it. I will not hold back; I will not spare or relent. They will judge you according to your ways and your deeds, declares the Lord GOD.

15 The word of the LORD came to me:

16 "Son of man, I am about to take from you the delight of your eyes with a sudden blow. Yet you must not mourn or weep or shed any tears.

17 Groan quietly; do not mourn for the dead. Bind on your turban and put your sandals on your feet. Do not cover your lip or eat the bread of mourners."[4]

18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded.

19 Then the people asked me, "Will you not tell us what these things you are doing mean for us?"

20 So I said to them, "The word of the LORD came to me:

21 'Say to the house of Israel: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am about to profane My sanctuary, the pride of your strength, the delight of your eyes and the desire of your soul. The sons and daughters you left behind will fall by the sword.

22 And you will do as I have done. You will not cover your lip or eat the bread of mourners.

23 Your turbans will stay on your heads and your sandals on your feet. You will not mourn or weep, but you will waste away because of your iniquities and groan to one another.

24 So Ezekiel will be a sign to you; you will do just as he has done. When it happens, you will know that I am the Lord GOD.'"

25 "And you, son of man, on the day I take from them their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and the desire of their heart, and their sons and daughters as well,

26 on that day a fugitive will come to you to report the news.

27 On that day your mouth will be opened to the fugitive, and you will speak and no longer be silent. So you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the LORD."[5]

1 January 588 BC, the day the siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kings 25:1).

2 No one will be chosen to be spared; all will be taken out.

3 Blood was to be covered with earth (Leviticus 17:13); left uncovered, it cries out for justice (Genesis 4:10; Job 16:18).

4 Customary signs of mourning were to go bareheaded and barefoot, to cover the lower face and to eat food brought by neighbours.

5 Fulfilled in 33:21–22.

Chapter 25

Ezekiel 25 begins the oracles against the nations (chapters 25–32) with four short oracles. Ammon cried "Aha!" over the profaning of the LORD's sanctuary and the exile of Judah, clapping and stamping with malice, so the LORD will give it to the people of the east and cut it off from the nations. Moab said that Judah was like all the other nations, so its frontier towns will be laid open and it too will be handed to the people of the east. Edom took vengeance on Judah, so the LORD will lay His vengeance on Edom by the hand of His people Israel. The Philistines acted in vengeance with age-old hostility, so He will cut off the Kerethites and destroy the remnant on the coast. Then they will know that He is the LORD.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, set your face towards the Ammonites and prophesy against them.

3 Say to the Ammonites: Hear the word of the Lord GOD! This is what the Lord GOD says: Because you said "Aha!" over My sanctuary when it was profaned, over the land of Israel when it was laid waste, and over the house of Judah when they went into exile,

4 I am going to give you as a possession to the people of the east. They will set up their camps among you and pitch their tents in your midst; they will eat your fruit and drink your milk.[1]

5 I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

6 For this is what the Lord GOD says: Because you clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the malice of your heart against the land of Israel,

7 I will stretch out My hand against you and hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and wipe you out from the countries; I will destroy you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

8 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because Moab and Seir said, "Look, the house of Judah is like all the other nations,"

9 I will lay open the flank of Moab, beginning with its towns, its frontier towns, the glory of the land, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon and Kiriathaim.

10 I will give it, along with the Ammonites, to the people of the east as a possession, so that the Ammonites will not be remembered among the nations.

11 I will carry out judgements on Moab. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

12 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because Edom took vengeance on the house of Judah and incurred grievous guilt by avenging itself on them,[2]

13 therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I will stretch out My hand against Edom and cut off from it both people and animals. I will make it a ruin; from Teman to Dedan they will fall by the sword.

14 By the hand of My people Israel I will take vengeance on Edom; they will treat Edom as My anger and fury demand, and Edom will feel My vengeance, declares the Lord GOD.

15 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because the Philistines acted in vengeance and took revenge with malice of heart, seeking to destroy with age-old hostility,

16 therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to stretch out My hand against the Philistines. I will cut off the Kerethites and destroy what remains of the seacoast.[3]

17 I will carry out great vengeance on them with furious rebukes. Then they will know that I am the

LORD, when I lay My vengeance on them.

1 The nomadic tribes of the Arabian desert.

2 Compare Psalm 137:7; Obadiah 10–14.

3 The Kerethites were Cretans, a group closely linked with the Philistines (1 Samuel 30:14; Zephaniah 2:5). ‘Cut off’ (hikratti) and ‘Kerethites’ sound alike.

Chapter 26

Ezekiel 26 is an oracle against Tyre, given in the eleventh year. Tyre gloated over Jerusalem, “Aha! The gateway of the peoples is broken,” hoping to prosper from her ruin. So the LORD will bring many nations against Tyre like the waves of the sea, and they will scrape her down to bare rock, a place for spreading fishing nets. Nebuchadnezzar, king of kings, will come with horses and chariots, besiege her, break down her walls and throw her stones and timber into the sea. The princes of the coastlands will step down from their thrones and lament for the renowned city that ruled the seas. The LORD will bring her down to the Pit, and she will never be found again.

1 In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[1]

2 Son of man, because Tyre has said of Jerusalem, “Aha! The gateway of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. Now that she lies in ruins, I will be filled,”

3 therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.

4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers. I will scrape away her soil and make her a bare rock.

5 She will become a place in the middle of the sea for spreading nets, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD. She will become plunder for the nations,

6 and her daughter towns on the mainland will be slain by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

7 For this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army.[2]

8 He will slay with the sword your daughter towns on the mainland. He will set up siege works against you, build a ramp against you and raise a wall of shields against you.

9 He will direct the blows of his battering rams against your walls and break down your towers with his axes.

10 His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you. Your walls will shake at the noise of horsemen, wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as men enter a city that has been breached.

11 With the hooves of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will slay your people with the sword, and your mighty pillars will fall to the ground.

12 They will plunder your wealth and loot your merchandise. They will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses, and throw your stones, your timber and your rubble into the sea.

13 I will put an end to the noise of your songs, and the sound of your lyres will be heard no more.

14 I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for spreading nets. You will never be rebuilt, for I, the LORD, have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.

15 This is what the Lord GOD says to Tyre: Will not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan and slaughter takes place in your midst?

16 Then all the princes of the sea will step down from their thrones, lay aside their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. Clothed with trembling, they will sit on the ground, trembling every moment and appalled at you.

17 They will take up a lament over you and say to you: How you have perished, you who were inhabited from the seas, the renowned city, who was mighty on the sea, you and your inhabitants, who put your terror on all who lived there!

18 Now the coastlands tremble on the day of your fall; the islands in the sea are dismayed at your passing.

19 For this is what the Lord GOD says: When I make you a desolate city like cities no longer

inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you,

20 then I will bring you down with those who go down to the Pit, to the people of long ago. I will make you live in the world below, among ancient ruins, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you will not be inhabited or have a place in the land of the living.[3]

21 I will bring you to a terrible end, and you will be no more. People will look for you, but you will never be found again, declares the Lord GOD.

1 587 or 586 BC; the month is not given. Tyre was a great Phoenician trading city, built partly on a rocky island off the coast of Lebanon.

2 Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years (about 586–573 BC); see 29:17–20. The island city finally fell to Alexander the Great in 332 BC.

3 The Pit is the grave, the realm of the dead. 'Or have a place' follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads 'and I will give glory'.

Chapter 27

Ezekiel 27 is a lament over Tyre, pictured as a splendid merchant ship. Tyre said, "I am perfect in beauty." Her planks were of fir from Senir, her mast of cedar from Lebanon, her oars of oak from Bashan, her sails of embroidered linen from Egypt; men of Sidon and Arvad rowed her, and soldiers from Persia, Lud and Put manned her walls. A long list of nations traded with her, from Tarshish to Arabia, bringing silver, slaves, horses, ivory, grain, wine, spices and fine cloth. But the east wind wrecked her in the heart of the seas, and all her wealth and crew sank with her. Sailors and coastlands wail, throw dust on their heads and lament, "Who was ever like Tyre, now silenced in the middle of the sea?"

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Now, son of man, take up a lament over Tyre.

3 Say to Tyre, who sits at the gateway to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands: This is what the Lord GOD says: Tyre, you have said, "I am perfect in beauty."

4 Your realm lay in the midst of the seas; those who built you made your beauty complete.

5 They made all your planks of fir from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.[1]

6 Of oaks from Bashan they made your oars; your deck they made of cypress from the coasts of Cyprus, inlaid with ivory.[2]

7 Your sail was of fine embroidered linen from Egypt, serving as your banner; your awning was blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah.

8 The people of Sidon and Arvad were your oarsmen; your own skilled men, Tyre, were your sailors.

9 The elders of Gebal and her craftsmen were on board, caulking your seams. All the ships of the sea and their sailors came alongside to trade for your goods.[3]

10 Men of Persia, Lud and Put served in your army as your warriors. They hung shield and helmet on you; they gave you splendour.

11 Men of Arvad and Helech were on your walls all around, and men of Gammad were in your towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they made your beauty perfect.

12 Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of every kind; they exchanged silver, iron, tin and lead for your wares.

13 Javan, Tubal and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human beings and bronze vessels for your merchandise.[4]

14 Beth-togarmah exchanged horses, war horses and mules for your wares.

15 The people of Dedan traded with you; many coastlands were your markets. They paid you with ivory tusks and ebony.[5]

16 Aram did business with you because of your many products. They exchanged turquoise, purple, embroidered cloth, fine linen, coral and rubies for your wares.[6]

17 Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged wheat from Minnith, millet, honey, oil and balm for your merchandise.

18 Damascus did business with you because of your many products and your great wealth of every kind, with wine from Helbon and white wool.

19 Vedan and Javan from Uzal paid for your wares with wrought iron, cassia and sweet cane in exchange for your merchandise.

20 Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for
riding.
21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your
customers; they did business with you in lambs,
rams and goats.
22 The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded
with you; they exchanged the finest of all spices,
all kinds of precious stones, and gold for your
wares.
23 Haran, Canneh and Eden, the merchants of
Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad traded with you.
24 They traded with you in fine garments, in cloaks
of blue and embroidered work, and in
multicoloured carpets bound with tightly wound
cords, in your marketplace.
25 The ships of Tarshish carried your merchandise.
So you were filled and heavily laden in the heart
of the seas.
26 Your rowers brought you out into the great
waters, but the east wind shattered you in the
heart of the seas.
27 Your wealth, your wares and your merchandise,
your sailors and your seamen, those who caulk
your seams and those who trade your goods, all
your warriors on board and all the company in
your midst, will sink into the heart of the seas on
the day of your downfall.
28 At the sound of your seamen's cry the
shorelands will shake.
29 All who handle the oar, the sailors and all the
seamen of the sea, will come down from their
ships and stand on the shore.
30 They will raise their voices over you and cry
bitterly. They will throw dust on their heads and
roll in ashes.
31 They will shave their heads for you and put on
sackcloth, and weep over you with bitterness of
soul and bitter mourning.
32 In their wailing they will take up a lament for
you and chant over you: Who was ever like Tyre,
now silenced in the middle of the sea?
33 When your wares went out across the seas, you
satisfied many peoples. With your great wealth
and merchandise you enriched the kings of the
earth.
34 But now the seas have broken you in their
watery depths; your cargo and all your crew have
sunk along with you.
35 All who live in the coastlands are appalled at
you; their kings shudder with horror, their faces
twisted with fear.
36 The merchants among the peoples hiss at you;
you have come to a terrible end and will be no
more for ever.

1 Senir is Mount Hermon (Deuteronomy 3:9).

2 The Hebrew is uncertain; it may read 'boxwood' or 'pine'. Cyprus is Hebrew 'Kittim'.

3 Gebal is Byblos, north of Beirut.

4 Javan is Ionia (Greece); Tubal and Meshech were in Asia Minor.

5 The Greek translation reads 'Rhodes'.

6 Some manuscripts read 'Edom'. Several of these precious stones cannot be identified with certainty.

Chapter 28

Ezekiel 28 is addressed to the ruler of Tyre, whose heart is proud and who says, "I am a god; I sit on the throne of the gods in the heart of the seas." He is wiser than Daniel and has amassed gold and silver by his skill in trade, but he is only a man, and foreigners will bring him down to the Pit. A lament follows over the king of Tyre, who was the seal of perfection, in Eden, the garden of God, adorned with every precious stone, an anointed guardian cherub on God's holy mountain, blameless until wickedness was found in him. His trade filled him with violence and his beauty made him proud, so God cast him from the mountain and turned him to ashes. Sidon too will be judged, and Israel will no longer be troubled by scornful neighbours, but will live securely in the land given to Jacob.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:
2 Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre: This is what
the Lord GOD says: Because your heart is proud
and you have said, "I am a god; I sit on the throne
of the gods in the heart of the seas," yet you are a
man and not a god, though you consider yourself
as wise as a god,
3 you are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is
hidden from you.[1]

4 By your wisdom and understanding you have
gained wealth for yourself and amassed gold and
silver in your treasuries.
5 By your great skill in trading you have increased
your wealth, and your heart has grown proud
because of your wealth.
6 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says:
Because you consider yourself as wise as a god,
7 I am going to bring foreigners against you, the
most ruthless of the nations. They will draw their
swords against your beautiful wisdom and defile
your splendour.
8 They will hurl you down into the Pit, and you will
die a violent death out in the open sea.
9 Will you still say, “I am a god,” in the presence of
those who kill you? You are only a man and not a
god in the hands of those who slay you.
10 You will die the death of the uncircumcised at
the hands of foreigners, for I have spoken,
declares the Lord GOD.
11 The word of the LORD came to me:
12 Son of man, take up a lament over the king of
Tyre and say to him: This is what the Lord GOD
says: You were the seal of perfection, full of
wisdom and perfect in beauty.[2]
13 You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every
precious stone was your covering: carnelian, topaz
and diamond, beryl, onyx and jasper, sapphire,
turquoise and emerald; your settings and
mountings were made of gold. On the day you
were created they were prepared.[3]
14 You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I
appointed you. You were on the holy mountain of
God; you walked among the stones of fire.
15 From the day you were created your conduct
was flawless, until evil was discovered in you.
16 Through your widespread trade you were filled
with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in
disgrace from the mountain of God, and I
destroyed you, guardian cherub, from among the
stones of fire.
17 Your heart became proud because of your
beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of
your splendour. So I threw you to the ground; I
made you a spectacle before kings.
18 By your many sins and your dishonest trade you
profaned your sanctuaries. So I brought fire out
from within you, and it consumed you. I turned
you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who
saw you.
19 All among the peoples who knew you are
appalled at you. You have come to a terrible end
and will be no more for ever.
20 The word of the LORD came to me:
21 Son of man, set your face towards Sidon and
prophesy against her.
22 Say: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am
against you, Sidon, and I will display My glory
within you. They will know that I am the LORD
when I carry out judgements on her and show
Myself holy in her.
23 I will send plague into her and bloodshed into
her streets. The slain will fall within her, with the
sword against her on every side. Then they will
know that I am the LORD.
24 No longer will the house of Israel have malicious
neighbours who are painful briers and sharp
thorns. Then they will know that I am the Lord
GOD.
25 This is what the Lord GOD says: When I gather
the house of Israel from the peoples among whom
they have been scattered, I will show Myself holy
among them in the sight of the nations. Then they
will live in their own land, which I gave to My
servant Jacob.
26 They will live there in safety, build houses and
plant vineyards. They will live in safety when I
carry out judgements on all their neighbours who
treated them with scorn. Then they will know that
I am the LORD their God.

1 See the note at 14:14.

2 The language of 28:12–19 echoes Genesis 2–3. Many have also read it as describing the fall of Satan, whose pride lay behind the king’s; compare Isaiah 14:12–15.

3 Nine of the twelve stones on the high priest’s breastpiece (Exodus 28:17–20); the Greek translation lists all twelve. Several cannot be identified with certainty.

Chapter 29

Ezekiel 29 opens the oracles against Egypt, dated to the tenth year. Pharaoh is a great monster lying among his streams, who says, "The Nile is mine; I made it." The LORD will put hooks in his jaws, haul him out with the fish sticking to his scales and leave him in the desert for birds and beasts. Egypt has been a staff of reed to Israel, splintering when they leaned on it. The land will be desolate for forty years, after which the LORD will restore Egypt as a lowly kingdom that Israel will never again trust. A later oracle, from the twenty-seventh year, explains that because Nebuchadnezzar's army laboured long against Tyre without reward, the LORD will give him Egypt as wages, and He will make a horn sprout for Israel.

1 On the twelfth day of the tenth month of the tenth year, the LORD's word came to me:[1]

2 Son of man, turn your face towards Pharaoh, Egypt's king, and prophesy against him and against the whole of Egypt.

3 Speak and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster lying among your streams, who says, "My Nile is my own; I made it for myself."[2]

4 But I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams stick to your scales. I will pull you up out of your streams, with all the fish of your streams sticking to your scales.

5 I will throw you into the wilderness, you and all the fish of your streams. You will fall on the open field and not be gathered or buried. I will give you as food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky.

6 Everyone living in Egypt will know then that I am the LORD. For to Israel's house they have been nothing but a reed for a walking stick:

7 when they grasped you with the hand, you splintered and tore open all their shoulders; when they leaned on you, you broke and made all their legs give way.[3]

8 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to bring a sword against you and cut off from you both people and animals.

9 The land of Egypt will become a desolate ruin. Then they will know that I am the LORD. Because you said, "The Nile is mine; I made it,"

10 therefore I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter ruin and a desolation from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Cush.[4]

11 No human foot will pass through it, nor will any animal's foot pass through it; it will be uninhabited for forty years.

12 I will make the land of Egypt a desolation among desolate lands, and her cities will lie desolate for forty years among ruined cities. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them through the countries.

13 For this is what the Lord GOD says: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered.

14 I will restore the fortunes of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin, and there they will be a lowly kingdom.

15 It will be the lowliest of kingdoms and will never again exalt itself over the nations. I will make them so small that they will never again rule over the nations.

16 Egypt will never again be the confidence of the house of Israel, but will remind them of their iniquity in turning to Egypt for help. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.

17 In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[5]

18 Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labour hard against Tyre. Every head was rubbed bald and every shoulder rubbed raw, yet he and his army received no wages from Tyre for the labour he spent against it.

19 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He will carry off its wealth, take its spoil and seize its plunder; that will be the wages for his army.

20 I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for the labour he performed, because they worked for Me, declares the Lord GOD.

21 When that day comes I will make Israel's house grow strong again, and I will give you a voice to speak among them. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

1 January 587 BC.

2 The ‘monster’ (tannim) is a crocodile or dragon; the ‘streams’ are the Nile and its channels.

3 Compare 2 Kings 18:21; Isaiah 36:6.

4 From the far north to the far south of Egypt; Syene is Aswan.

5 April 571 BC, the latest date in the book.

Chapter 30

Ezekiel 30 is a lament for the day of the LORD on Egypt. A sword will come against Egypt, and anguish on Cush; Egypt’s allies will fall, and her proud strength will come down from Migdol to Syene. The LORD will put an end to Egypt’s hordes by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, dry up the Nile, destroy the idols of Memphis and bring judgement on Pathros, Zoan, Thebes, Pelusium, Heliopolis and Tahpanhes. A further oracle in the eleventh year declares that the LORD has broken Pharaoh’s arm, and it has not been bound up; He will break both his arms, strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put His sword in his hand. Then the Egyptians will be scattered among the nations, and they will know that He is the LORD.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, prophesy and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: Wail, “Alas for the day!”

3 For the day is near; the day of the LORD is near. It will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations.

4 A sword will come against Egypt, and anguish will grip Cush, when the slain fall in Egypt, her wealth is carried away and her foundations are torn down.

5 Cush and Put and Lud, all the foreign peoples, Libya and the people of the covenant land will fall by the sword with them.[1]

6 This is what the LORD says: Those who support Egypt will fall, and her proud strength will come down. From Migdol to Syene they will fall within her by the sword, declares the Lord GOD.

7 They will be desolate among desolate lands, and her cities will lie among ruined cities.

8 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I set fire to Egypt and all her helpers are crushed.

9 On that day messengers will go out from Me in ships to terrify complacent Cush. Anguish will grip them on the day of Egypt’s doom, for it is surely coming.

10 This is what the Lord GOD says: I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

11 He and his forces, the most brutal of nations, will be brought in to lay the land waste. They will unsheathe their swords against Egypt and cover the country with corpses.

12 I will dry up the streams of the Nile and sell the land into the hands of evil men. By the hands of foreigners I will lay waste the land and everything in it. I, the LORD, have spoken.

13 This is what the Lord GOD says: I will destroy the idols and put an end to the images in Memphis. There will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt, and I will put fear in the land of Egypt.

14 I will make Pathros desolate, set fire to Zoan and carry out judgements on Thebes.[2]

15 I will pour out My wrath on Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the hordes of Thebes.

16 I will set fire to Egypt; Pelusium will writhe in anguish, Thebes will be broken through, and Memphis will face foes by day.

17 The young men of Heliopolis and Bubastis will fall by the sword, and the women will go into captivity.[3]

18 At Tahpanhes the day will grow dark when I break the yoke of Egypt there and her proud strength comes to an end. A cloud will cover her, and her daughter towns will go into captivity.

19 So I will carry out judgements on Egypt, and they will know that I am the LORD.

20 In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[4]

21 Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. It has not been bound up to heal it or wrapped in a splint to make it strong enough to hold a sword.

22 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt. I will break his

arms, both the strong one and the one already broken, and make the sword fall from his hand.

23 I will disperse Egypt's people among the nations and scatter them across the lands.

24 I will make the arms of Babylon's king strong and place My own sword in his hand. But Pharaoh's arms I will shatter, and he will groan before him with the groans of a man fatally wounded.

25 I will make Babylon's king strong, while Pharaoh's arms drop helpless. When I put My sword in the hand of Babylon's king and he raises it over Egypt, then they will know that I am the LORD.

26 When I have dispersed the Egyptians among the nations and scattered them across the lands, they will know that I am the LORD.

1 'Libya' follows the Greek; Hebrew 'Cub' is unknown. 'The covenant land' may mean Judeans who had settled in Egypt.

2 Zoan (Tanis) was in the Nile Delta; Thebes (Hebrew 'No') was the great city of Upper Egypt.

3 Hebrew 'Aven' ('wickedness'), a scornful play on On, that is, Heliopolis; Bubastis is Hebrew 'Pi-beseth'.

4 April 587 BC.

Chapter 31

Ezekiel 31, dated to the eleventh year, asks Pharaoh whom he is like in his greatness. Assyria was once a cedar in Lebanon, towering above all the trees, watered by the deep, with every bird nesting in its branches and every nation living in its shade; not even the trees in Eden, the garden of God, could match it. But because it grew proud of its height, the LORD handed it over to the ruler of the nations, and ruthless foreigners cut it down and left its branches broken on the mountains. The LORD made the deep mourn for it when it went down to Sheol, and the trees of Eden were comforted below. So too will Pharaoh and all his hordes be brought down to lie among the uncircumcised.

1 In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[1]

2 Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his hordes: Who can be compared with you in your greatness?

3 Consider Assyria, a cedar in Lebanon, with beautiful branches and a shady forest canopy, towering high, its top among the clouds.[2]

4 The waters made it grow; the deep made it tall. Its streams flowed all around its planting place and sent out channels to all the trees of the field.

5 So it towered higher than all the trees of the field. Its boughs multiplied and its branches grew long because of the abundant water as it spread them out.

6 All the birds of the sky nested in its boughs; all the beasts of the field gave birth under its branches; all the great nations lived in its shade.

7 It was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches, for its roots went down to abundant water.

8 The cedars in the garden of God could not rival it; the cypresses could not match its boughs, nor the plane trees its branches. No tree in the garden of God could compare with it in beauty.

9 I made it beautiful with its many branches, and all the trees of Eden in the garden of God envied it.

10 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Because it towered high and set its top among the clouds, and its heart grew proud of its height,

11 I handed it over to the ruler of the nations, who will surely deal with it according to its wickedness. I have cast it out.

12 Foreigners, the most ruthless of the nations, cut it down and left it. Its branches fell on the mountains and in all the valleys; its boughs lay broken in all the ravines of the land. All the peoples of the earth went out from its shade and abandoned it.

13 All the birds of the sky settled on its fallen trunk, and all the beasts of the field were among its branches.

14 This is so that no trees by the waters may ever again tower proudly on high or set their tops among the clouds, and no well-watered trees may reach up to them in height. For they are all destined for death, for the world below, among mortals, with those who go down to the Pit.

15 This is what the Lord GOD says: On the day it went down to Sheol I caused mourning. I covered

the deep over it and held back its streams, and its abundant waters were stopped. I clothed Lebanon in gloom for it, and all the trees of the field fainted because of it.[3]

16 I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall when I brought it down to Sheol with those who go down to the Pit. And all the trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, all that drank water, were comforted in the world below.

17 They too had gone down with it to Sheol, to those slain by the sword, along with those who had been its strength, who had lived in its shade among the nations.

18 Which of the trees of Eden can be compared with you in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below; you will lie among the uncircumcised, with those slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the Lord GOD.

1 June 587 BC.

2 'Among the clouds', or 'among the thick boughs'.

3 Sheol is the realm of the dead.

Chapter 32

Ezekiel 32 contains two final laments over Egypt, from the twelfth year. Pharaoh thought himself a lion among the nations, but he is like a monster in the seas, churning the waters. The LORD will catch him in His net, throw him on the open field and feed the birds and beasts on his flesh; He will darken the heavens over him. The sword of the king of Babylon will come against Egypt, and its waters will run smooth as oil, undisturbed by foot or hoof. In the second lament Ezekiel wails over Egypt's hordes as they go down to the Pit. There they join the uncircumcised slain: Assyria, Elam, Meshech and Tubal, Edom, the princes of the north and the Sidonians, all who once spread terror in the land of the living. Pharaoh will see them and be consoled.

1 In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[1]

2 Son of man, take up a lament over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: You thought of yourself as a young lion among the nations, but you are like a monster in the seas. You thrash about in your rivers, churn up the water with your feet and muddy their streams.

3 This is what the Lord GOD says: I will spread My net over you with a company of many peoples, and they will haul you up in My dragnet.

4 I will throw you on the land and hurl you on the open field. I will let all the birds of the sky settle on you and let the beasts of the whole earth gorge themselves on you.

5 I will strew your flesh across the mountains and heap your remains in the valleys.[2]

6 I will drench the land with your flowing blood all the way to the mountains, and the ravines will be filled with you.

7 When I snuff you out, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars. I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light.[3]

8 All the shining lights in the heavens I will darken over you, and I will bring darkness on your land, declares the Lord GOD.

9 Many peoples will be troubled at heart when I make your ruin known among the nations, in countries you never knew.

10 I will make many peoples appalled at you, and their kings will shudder with horror because of you when I brandish My sword before them. On the day of your downfall each of them will tremble every moment for his life.

11 For this is what the Lord GOD says: The sword of the king of Babylon will come against you.

12 I will make your hordes fall by the swords of mighty men, all of them the most ruthless of nations. They will shatter the pride of Egypt, and all her hordes will be destroyed.

13 I will destroy all her cattle from beside abundant waters. No human foot will muddy them again, nor will the hooves of cattle muddy them.

14 Then I will let her waters settle and make her rivers run like oil, declares the Lord GOD.

15 When I make the land of Egypt desolate and strip the land of everything in it, when I strike down all who live there, then they will know that I am the LORD.

16 This is a lament, and they will chant it. The daughters of the nations will chant it; over Egypt

and all her hordes they will chant it, declares the Lord GOD.

17 In the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:[4]

18 Son of man, wail over the hordes of Egypt and send them down, her and the daughters of mighty nations, to the world below, with those who go down to the Pit.

19 Are you more lovely than anyone else? Down you go; lie down among the uncircumcised!

20 They will fall among those slain by the sword. The sword is drawn; drag her away with all her hordes.

21 From the midst of Sheol the mighty leaders will speak of him and his allies: “They have come down; they lie with the uncircumcised, slain by the sword.”

22 Assyria lies there, all her host about her, ringed by their graves: every one of them struck down, cut down by the sword.

23 Their graves lie in the far recesses of the Pit, her host surrounding her tomb; all of them were struck down by the sword, they who once filled the land of the living with terror.

24 Elam is there with all her hordes around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised to the world below, who once spread terror in the land of the living. They bear their disgrace with those who go down to the Pit.

25 Among the slain they have made a bed for her with all her hordes, her graves all around her. All of them are uncircumcised, slain by the sword, for their terror once spread in the land of the living. They bear their disgrace with those who go down to the Pit; they are laid among the slain.

26 Meshech and Tubal are there with all their hordes, their graves all around them, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, for they spread their terror in the land of the living.

27 But they do not lie with the fallen warriors of old, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads and whose shields lay on their bones, though the terror of these warriors was in the land of the living.[5]

28 And you, Pharaoh, will be shattered and lie among the uncircumcised, alongside those the sword has slain.

29 Edom is there, her kings and all her princes, who for all their might are laid with those slain by the sword. They lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the Pit.

30 There too are all the rulers of the north and every Sidonian. They went down in shame with the slain, for all the dread their power once caused, and now they lie uncircumcised with the victims of the sword, sharing the disgrace of those who go down to the Pit.

31 Pharaoh will see them and be consoled for all his hordes, Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, declares the Lord GOD.

32 For I spread terror in the land of the living, but Pharaoh and all his hordes will be laid among the uncircumcised, with those slain by the sword, declares the Lord GOD.

1 March 585 BC.

2 ‘Carcass’ is uncertain; the Hebrew word may mean ‘height’ or ‘worms’.

3 Compare Isaiah 13:10; Joel 2:10; Matthew 24:29.

4 The month is not given; the Greek translation reads ‘the first month’.

5 ‘Of old’ follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads ‘of the uncircumcised’. ‘Shields’ is a probable reading; the Hebrew has ‘iniquities’.

Chapter 33

Ezekiel 33 renews Ezekiel’s appointment as watchman. A watchman who sees the sword coming and blows the trumpet is not to blame if people ignore it, but if he keeps silent, their blood is on his hands. The people say their sins are crushing them, and the LORD answers that He takes no delight in the death of the wicked, but wants them to turn and live: “Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why will you die, house of Israel?” The righteous cannot rely on past righteousness, nor will the wicked be condemned if they repent. In the twelfth year a fugitive arrives with the news, “The city has fallen!”, and Ezekiel’s mouth is opened. Those left in the ruins claim the land as Abraham did, but they will perish. The exiles come to hear Ezekiel as if he sang love songs, yet do not act on his words; when it comes, they will know a prophet has been among them.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: Suppose I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman.

3 and when he sees the sword advancing on the land, he sounds the horn to alert the people.

4 If anyone then hears the horn but ignores the warning, and the sword comes and cuts him off, he has only himself to blame for his death.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning, so his blood is on himself. Had he taken warning, he would have saved his life.

6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man is taken away in his iniquity, but I will hold the watchman responsible for his blood.

7 As for you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from My mouth, you must warn them from Me.[1]

8 When I say to the wicked, “Wicked man, you will surely die,” and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you responsible for his blood.

9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way and he does not turn from it, he will die for his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

10 Now, son of man, say to the house of Israel: This is what you have been saying: “Our transgressions and our sins weigh on us, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?”

11 Say to them: As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, I take no delight in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why will you die, house of Israel?

12 And you, son of man, say to your people: The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him on the day he transgresses, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not make him fall on the day he turns from his wickedness. Nor will the righteous man be able to live by his righteousness on the day he sins.

13 Though I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, if he trusts in his righteousness and does wrong, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; he will die for the wrong he has done.

14 And though I say to the wicked man, “You will surely die,” if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right,

15 if the wicked man returns a pledge, pays back what he has stolen and walks in the statutes that give life without doing wrong, he will surely live; he will not die.

16 None of the sins he has committed will be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he will surely live.

17 Yet your people say, “The way of the Lord is not fair,” when it is their own way that is not fair.

18 When a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does wrong, he will die for it.

19 And when a wicked man turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live because of it.

20 Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is not fair.” I will judge each of you according to his ways, house of Israel.

21 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, a fugitive from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has fallen!”[2]

22 The evening before the fugitive arrived, the hand of the LORD had come upon me, and He opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning. So my mouth was opened, and I was no longer silent.[3]

23 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

24 Son of man, those living in these ruins in the land of Israel are saying, “Abraham was only one man, yet he took possession of the land. But we are many; surely the land has been given to us as our possession.”

25 Therefore say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: You eat meat with the blood in it, look to your idols and shed blood. Should you then possess the land?

26 You rely on your swords, you commit abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbour’s wife. Should you then possess the land?

27 Say this to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: As surely as I live, those in the ruins will fall by the sword, those in the open field I will give to

the wild beasts to be devoured, and those in strongholds and caves will die of plague.

28 I will make the land a desolate waste, and her proud strength will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate that no one will pass through them.

29 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I make the land a desolate waste because of all the abominations they have committed.

30 As for you, son of man, your people are talking about you by the walls and in the doorways of the houses. They say to one another, each to his brother, “Come and hear what message has come from the LORD.”

31 They come to you as people do and sit before you as My people. They hear your words but do not put them into practice. With their mouths they show much love, but their hearts go after dishonest gain.

32 To them you are no more than a singer of love songs, with a beautiful voice who plays an instrument well. They hear your words but do not put them into practice.

33 When it comes, and it surely will come, then they will know that a prophet has been among them.

1 33:7–9 repeat 3:17–19.

2 January 585 BC, about five months after Jerusalem fell. Some manuscripts read ‘the eleventh year’.

3 See 3:26–27 and 24:25–27.

Chapter 34

Ezekiel 34 is a prophecy against the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves instead of the flock. They ate the fat and wore the wool but did not strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up the injured, bring back the strays or seek the lost, so the sheep were scattered and became food for wild beasts. The LORD will rescue His flock from them and be their Shepherd Himself: He will search for His sheep, gather them from the nations and feed them on the mountains of Israel; He will seek the lost and bind up the injured. He will judge between sheep and sheep, between the fat and the lean, and He will set over them one shepherd, His servant David. He will make a covenant of peace with them, send showers of blessing and break their yoke, and they will know that He is with them.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to them, to the shepherds: This is what the Lord GOD says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flock?[1]

3 You eat the fat, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the fattened sheep, but you do not feed the flock.

4 You have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. Instead you have ruled them with force and harshness.

5 So they were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for every wild beast.

6 My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, with no one to search or look for them.

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

8 As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, because My flock has become plunder and food for every wild beast for lack of a shepherd, and because My shepherds did not search for My flock but fed themselves and not My flock,

9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD.

10 This is what the Lord GOD says: I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My flock from their hand. I will remove them from tending the flock, so that the shepherds will no longer feed themselves. I will rescue My flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

11 For this is what the Lord GOD says: I Myself will search for My sheep and look after them.

12 As a shepherd looks after his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so I will look after My sheep. I will rescue them from all the places

where they were scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

13 I will lead them out from among the peoples and collect them from foreign lands, and bring them home to their own soil. I will graze them on Israel's mountains, beside its streams and in every settled part of the country.

14 I will feed them in good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will lie down in a good grazing ground and feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

15 I Myself will be the Shepherd of My sheep, and I will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD.

16 I will seek the lost, bring back the strays, bind up the injured and strengthen the sick, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd them with justice.[2]

17 As for you, My flock, this is what the Lord GOD says: I will judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats.

18 Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water, that you must muddy the rest with your feet?

19 Must My flock eat what you have trampled with your feet and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

20 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says to them: I Myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

21 Because you push with flank and shoulder and butt all the weak with your horns until you have driven them away,

22 I will save My flock, and they will no longer be plunder. I will judge between one sheep and another.

23 I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd.[3]

24 I, the LORD, will be God to them, and My servant David will be a prince in their midst. I, the LORD, have spoken.

25 I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts, so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the forests.

26 I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. I will send down showers in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

27 The orchards will bear fruit and the soil will give its harvest, and they will live safely on their own land. When I snap the bars of their yoke and free them from those who made slaves of them, they will know that I am the LORD.

28 They will no longer be plunder for the nations, and the beasts of the land will not devour them. They will live securely, and no one will make them afraid.

29 I will provide for them a planting place renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be consumed by famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations.

30 So they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, Israel's house, are My own people, declares the Lord GOD.

31 You are My flock, the sheep of My pasture; you are people, and I am your God, declares the Lord GOD.

1 The shepherds are Israel's kings and leaders. Compare Jeremiah 23:1–6 and John 10:1–18.

2 The Greek and Syriac read 'watch over' for 'destroy'. Compare Luke 19:10.

3 The promised King from David's line; compare 37:24–25; Jeremiah 23:5; 30:9; and Jesus, the good Shepherd (John 10:11).

Chapter 35

Ezekiel 35 is an oracle against Mount Seir, that is, Edom. Because Edom harboured age-old hostility and handed Israel over to the sword at the time of their calamity, the LORD will make Mount Seir a desolate waste, fill its hills and valleys with the slain and make it a desolation for ever. Edom said that the two nations and two lands, Israel and Judah, would be theirs, though the LORD was there; they boasted against Him and gloated over Israel's ruin. As the whole earth rejoices, He will make Edom desolate, and they will know that He is the LORD.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, turn your face towards Mount Seir and prophesy against it.[1]

3 Say to it: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am
against you, Mount Seir; I will stretch out My
hand against you and make you a desolate waste.
4 I will turn your towns into ruins, and you will
become a desolation. Then you will know that I am
the LORD.
5 Because you harboured an age-old hostility and
handed the people of Israel over to the power of
the sword at the time of their calamity, the time of
their final punishment,
6 therefore, as surely as I live, declares the Lord
GOD, I will hand you over to bloodshed, and
bloodshed will pursue you. Since you did not hate
bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.
7 I will make Mount Seir a desolate waste and cut
off from it all who come and go.
8 I will fill its mountains with the slain; those slain
by the sword will fall on your hills and in your
valleys and in all your ravines.
9 I will make you desolate for ever, and your towns
will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am
the LORD.
10 Because you said, “These two nations and these
two countries will be ours, and we will take
possession of them,” though the LORD was there,
11 therefore, as surely as I live, declares the Lord
GOD, I will deal with you according to the anger
and jealousy you showed in your hatred towards
them, and I will make Myself known among them
when I judge you.
12 Then you will know that I, the LORD, have heard
all the contemptuous things you said against the
mountains of Israel: “They are desolate; they have
been given to us to devour.”
13 You boasted against Me with your mouth and
multiplied your words against Me; I heard it.
14 This is what the Lord GOD says: While the whole
earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation.
15 As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the
house of Israel because it became desolate, so I
will deal with you. You will be desolate, Mount
Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know
that I am the LORD.

1 Mount Seir is the mountain country of Edom, south-east of the Dead Sea.

Chapter 36

Ezekiel 36 addresses the mountains of Israel, which the nations have mocked and plundered. The LORD has spoken in His jealousy: the nations will bear their own disgrace, but the mountains of Israel will again yield fruit for His people, who will soon come home; towns will be rebuilt and people and animals multiply. Israel had defiled the land, so He scattered them, but among the nations they profaned His holy name. Not for their sake but for His name’s sake He will gather them, sprinkle clean water on them, give them a new heart and a new spirit, remove their heart of stone and put His own Spirit within them, so that they follow His laws. The desolate land will become like the garden of Eden, and the nations will know that the LORD has rebuilt the ruins.

1 As for you, son of man, prophesy to the
mountains of Israel and say: Mountains of Israel,
hear the word of the LORD!
2 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because the
enemy said of you, “Aha! The ancient heights have
become our possession,”
3 therefore prophesy and say: This is what the
Lord GOD says: Because they have made you
desolate and hounded you from every side, so that
you became the possession of the rest of the
nations and the talk and gossip of people,
4 therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of
the Lord GOD. This is what the Lord GOD says to
the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the
valleys, to the desolate ruins and the deserted
towns that have become plunder and mockery for
the rest of the nations around you:
5 This is what the Lord GOD says: In the fire of My
jealousy I have spoken against the rest of the
nations and against all Edom, who with
wholehearted glee and utter contempt took My
land as their own possession so that they could
plunder its pastureland.
6 Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel
and say to the mountains and the hills, to the
ravines and the valleys: This is what the Lord GOD
says: I have spoken in My jealousy and My wrath,
because you have endured the scorn of the
nations.

7 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: I swear with uplifted hand that the nations around you will themselves endure scorn.

8 But you, mountains of Israel, will put out your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel, for they will soon come home.

9 Look, I am on your side; I will turn My face to you, and you will be ploughed and planted.

10 I will multiply the people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of it. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.

11 I will multiply people and animals on you, and they will increase and be fruitful. I will settle you as in former times and make you more prosperous than at your beginning. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

12 I will let people, My people Israel, walk on you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again bereave them of their children.

13 This is what the Lord GOD says: Because people say to you, “You devour people and bereave your nation of its children,”[1]

14 therefore you will no longer devour people or bereave your nation of its children, declares the Lord GOD.

15 I will no longer let you hear the taunts of the nations, and you will no longer bear the scorn of the peoples or make your nation stumble, declares the Lord GOD.

16 The word of the LORD came to me:

17 Son of man, while Israel’s people were living in their own land, they made it unclean by the way they lived and acted; in My eyes their ways were as unclean as a woman’s monthly impurity.

18 So I poured out My wrath on them because of the blood they had shed on the land and because they had defiled it with their idols.

19 I dispersed them among the nations and scattered them through foreign lands, judging them as their conduct and actions deserved.

20 But wherever they went among the nations, they profaned My holy name, for people said of them, “These are the people of the LORD, yet they had to leave His land.”

21 But I was concerned for My holy name, which Israel’s house had dishonoured wherever they went among the nations.

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel: This is what the Lord GOD says: It is not for your sake that I am about to act, house of Israel, but for the sake of My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.

23 I will show the holiness of My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when I show Myself holy through you before their eyes.

24 I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.

25 I will sprinkle you with clean water, and you will be clean; I will wash you clean of all your impurity and all your idols.[2]

26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your body and give you a heart of flesh.

27 I will put My Spirit within you and enable you to walk in My statutes and keep My judgements and live by them.

28 You will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be a people belonging to Me, and I will be God to you.

29 I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and make it plentiful, and I will not bring famine on you.

30 I will multiply the fruit of the trees and the produce of the fields, so that you will never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

31 Then you will call to mind your wicked ways and your deeds that were evil, and you will be disgusted with yourselves for your sins and your abominations.

32 Let it be known to you that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Lord GOD. Be ashamed and humiliated because of your ways, house of Israel!

33 This is what the Lord GOD says: On the day I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will resettle the towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt.

34 The desolate land will be tilled, instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by.

35 People will say, “This land that lay waste is now like the garden of Eden; the towns that were ruined, abandoned and demolished now stand fortified and full of people.”

36 Then the nations around you that are left will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt what was torn down and replanted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

37 This is what the Lord GOD says: I will yet again let the house of Israel ask Me to do this for them: to multiply their people like a flock.

38 Like the flocks for sacrifice, like the flocks of Jerusalem at her appointed feasts, so the ruined towns will be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

1 Compare Numbers 13:32, 'a land that devours its inhabitants'.

2 Compare John 3:5 and Hebrews 10:22.

Chapter 37

Ezekiel 37 records the vision of the valley of dry bones. The LORD sets Ezekiel in a valley full of very dry bones and asks whether they can live At His command Ezekiel prophesies to the bones; they come together with a rattling, and sinews, flesh and skin cover them, but there is no breath in them. Then he prophesies to the breath, which comes from the four winds, and they live and stand up, a vast army. The bones are the whole house of Israel, who say their hope is lost; the LORD will open their graves, put His Spirit in them and bring them home. Then Ezekiel joins two sticks, one for Judah and one for Joseph, into one in his hand: the LORD will make them one nation under one king, His servant David, and make an everlasting covenant of peace with them, with His sanctuary among them for ever.

1 The LORD's hand came on me, and by His Spirit He carried me out and put me down in the middle of a valley, and the valley was full of bones.[1]

2 He led me round among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, and they were very dry.

3 He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I answered, "Lord GOD, only You know."

4 Then He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!

5 This is what the Lord GOD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.

6 I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'"

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded. As I was prophesying there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.

8 As I watched, sinews appeared on them, flesh grew and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

9 Then He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: Come from the four winds, breath, and breathe into these slain, so that they may live.'"

10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet, a vast army.

11 Then He told me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole of Israel's house. Listen to what they say: 'Our bones are dry, our hope has gone, and we are finished.'

12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

13 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, My people.

14 I will put My Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it, declares the LORD."

15 The word of the LORD came to me:

16 Son of man, take a piece of wood and write on it, "Belonging to Judah and to the Israelites allied with him." Then take a second piece and write on it, "Belonging to Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and to all the house of Israel allied with him."[2]

17 Join them together into one stick, so that they become one in your hand.

18 When your people ask you, "Will you not tell us what you mean by this?"

19 tell them: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph, which is in

Ephraim's hand, and the tribes of Israel associated with him, and join it to the stick of Judah, making them a single stick, and they will become one in My hand.

20 The sticks you have written on must be in your hand before their eyes.

21 Then say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am going to take the Israelites from among the nations where they have gone, gather them from all around and bring them into their own land.

22 I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over all of them. They will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.

23 They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things or any of their transgressions. I will save them from all the places where they sinned and cleanse them. They will be My people, and I will be their God.

24 My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will walk in My judgements and carefully keep My statutes.

25 They will live in the land I gave to My servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They will live there for ever, they, their children and their children's children, and My servant David will be their prince for ever.

26 I will make a covenant of peace with them, a covenant that lasts for ever. I will plant them firmly and make them many, and I will place My sanctuary in their midst for all time.

27 I will make My home among them; I will be God to them, and they will be a people belonging to Me.[3]

28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who makes Israel holy, when My sanctuary is among them for ever.

1 'Spirit', 'breath' and 'wind' all translate the one Hebrew word ruach, which runs through 37:1–14.

2 Judah stands for the southern kingdom and Joseph, through his son Ephraim, for the northern kingdom.

3 Paul combines this verse with Leviticus 26:12 in 2 Corinthians 6:16. Compare Revelation 21:3.

Chapter 38

Ezekiel 38 is a prophecy against Gog of the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. In the latter years the LORD will turn him round and bring him out with a vast army from the far north, together with Persia, Cush, Put, Gomer and Beth-togarmah, to invade a land restored from the sword, whose people live securely in unwalled villages. Gog will plan to plunder them, while Sheba, Dedan and Tarshish ask whether he has come for spoil. But the LORD brings him so that the nations may know Him when He shows Himself holy through Gog. On that day there will be a great earthquake in Israel; the LORD will call for a sword against Gog and judge him with plague, bloodshed, torrential rain, hailstones, fire and sulphur, and the nations will know that He is the LORD.

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 Son of man, turn your face towards Gog, in the land of Magog, chief ruler of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him[1]

3 and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

4 I will turn you round, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army, horses and horsemen, all splendidly equipped, a great company with large and small shields, all of them wielding swords.

5 With them are Persia, Cush and Put, every man with shield and helmet;

6 Gomer with all its troops, and Beth-togarmah from the far north with all its troops: many peoples are with you.

7 Get ready and be prepared, you and all the companies gathered around you, and be their guard.[2]

8 After many days you will be summoned. In the latter years you will come against a land restored from the sword, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been a waste. Its people were brought out from the nations, and now all of them live in safety.

9 You will advance, coming like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops and the many peoples with you.

10 This is what the Lord GOD says: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil plan.

11 You will say, “I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful people who live in safety, all of them living without walls, bars or gates,

12 to seize spoil and carry off plunder, to turn my hand against the resettled ruins and against the people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods and live at the centre of the earth.”[3]

13 Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all its young lions will say to you, “Have you come to seize spoil? Have you gathered your company to carry off plunder, to take away silver and gold, to seize livestock and goods, to take great spoil?”

14 Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog: This is what the Lord GOD says: On that day, when My people Israel are living in safety, will you not take notice?

15 You will march out from your home in the farthest north, with a host of nations at your side, a vast horde, a mighty army, every one of them on horseback.

16 You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud covering the land. In the latter days I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I show Myself holy through you, Gog, before their eyes.

17 This is what the Lord GOD says: Are you not the one I foretold long ago through My servants, Israel’s prophets, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against My people?

18 On that day, the day Gog comes against the land of Israel, declares the Lord GOD, My fury will be roused in My anger.

19 In My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I declare that on that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.

20 The fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that creeps on the ground and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at My presence. The mountains will be thrown down, the cliffs will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground.

21 I will call for a sword against Gog on all My mountains, declares the Lord GOD; every man’s sword will be against his brother.

22 I will execute judgement on him with plague and bloodshed. I will pour down torrential rain, hailstones, fire and sulphur on him and his troops and the many peoples with him.

23 So I will show My greatness and My holiness, and I will make Myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

1 Or ‘the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal’. Gog is a mysterious ruler from the far north; Meshech and Tubal were in Asia Minor (27:13). Compare Revelation 20:8.

2 Or ‘be at their command’.

3 Hebrew ‘the navel of the earth’.

Chapter 39

Ezekiel 39 continues the prophecy against Gog. The LORD will turn him round, drive him from the far north to the mountains of Israel, strike the bow from his hand and make him and his troops fall on the open field as food for birds and beasts. He will send fire on Magog and make His holy name known in Israel. For seven years the people of Israel will burn Gog’s weapons as fuel, and for seven months they will bury his dead in the Valley of Hamon-gog to cleanse the land. The birds and beasts are summoned to a great sacrificial feast of the flesh of warriors. Then the nations will know that Israel went into exile for its sin, and the LORD will restore the fortunes of Jacob, gather them home and never again hide His face from them, for He will pour out His Spirit on the house of Israel.

1 As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

2 I will turn you round and drive you on, bring you up from the far north and lead you against the mountains of Israel.

3 Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand.

4 On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the peoples with you. I will give you as food to birds of prey of every kind and to the beasts of the field.

5 You will fall on the open field, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.

6 I will send fire on Magog and on those who live securely in the coastlands. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

7 I will make My holy name known among My people Israel, and I will no longer let My holy name be profaned. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

8 Look, it is coming and it will be done, declares the Lord GOD. This is the day I have spoken of.

9 Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out and use the weapons for fuel and burn them: the large and small shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs and spears. For seven years they will make fires with them.

10 There will be no need to collect sticks in the countryside or chop down trees in the woods, for the weapons will be their firewood. They will rob those who robbed them and strip those who stripped them, declares the Lord GOD.

11 On that day I will give Gog a burial place in Israel, the Valley of the Travellers east of the Sea. It will block the way of travellers, because Gog and all his horde will be buried there. So it will be called the Valley of Hamon-gog.[1]

12 For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land.

13 All the people of the land will bury them, and it will bring them honour on the day I display My glory, declares the Lord GOD.

14 They will set apart men to travel continually through the land, burying those who remain on the surface of the ground, so as to cleanse it. At the end of the seven months they will make their search.

15 As they pass through the land, whenever one of them sees a human bone, he will set up a marker beside it until the gravediggers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog.

16 A city named Hamonah will also be there. So they will cleanse the land.[2]

17 As for you, son of man, this is what the Lord GOD says: Call out to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field: Assemble and come! Gather from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood.

18 You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams and lambs, goats and bulls, all of them fattened animals of Bashan.

19 At the sacrifice I am preparing for you, you will eat fat until you are glutted and drink blood until you are drunk.

20 At My table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, of mighty men and soldiers of every kind, declares the Lord GOD.[3]

21 I will display My glory among the nations, and all the nations will see the judgement I execute and the hand I lay on them.

22 From that day forward the house of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God.

23 And the nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity, because they were unfaithful to Me. So I hid My face from them and handed them over to their enemies, and they all fell by the sword.

24 I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and I hid My face from them.

25 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have compassion on the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for My holy name.

26 They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed towards Me when they live securely in their land with no one to make them afraid.[4]

27 When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, I will show Myself holy through them in the sight of many nations.

28 Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then gathered them back to their own land, leaving none of them behind.

29 I will no longer hide My face from them, for I will pour out My Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.

1 ‘Hamon-gog’ means ‘the horde of Gog’. ‘The Sea’ is the Dead Sea.

2 ‘Hamonah’ also means ‘horde’.

3 Compare Revelation 19:17–18.

4 ‘Forget’ follows a slight change in the Hebrew; the text reads ‘bear’.

Chapter 40

Ezekiel 40 begins the final vision (chapters 40–48), dated to the twenty-fifth year of the exile, fourteen years after the city fell. In visions of God Ezekiel is brought to a very high mountain in the land of Israel, where a man who looks like bronze, holding a linen cord and a measuring rod, tells him to look carefully and report everything to Israel. The man measures the wall around the temple area and the east gate, with its steps, guardrooms, porch and palm-tree decorations, then the outer court with its thirty rooms and pavement, and the north and south gates, all of the same size. In the inner court he measures three more gates, each approached by eight steps, the tables for slaughtering offerings, the rooms for the singers and for the priests, and the inner court itself, a hundred cubits square, with the altar in front of the temple. Finally he measures the temple porch.

1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day the hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me there.[1]

2 In visions of God He brought me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, on which to the south there was a structure like a city.

3 He brought me there, and I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze. He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring rod in his hand.

4 The man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes and listen with your ears, and pay attention to everything I show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the house of Israel everything you see.”

5 I saw a wall surrounding the temple area on every side. The measuring rod in the man’s hand was six long cubits, each a cubit and a handbreadth. He measured the wall; it was one rod thick and one rod high.[2]

6 Then he went to the gate facing east, climbed its steps and measured the threshold of the gate; it was one rod deep.

7 Each guardroom was one rod long and one rod wide, and the space between the guardrooms was five cubits. The threshold of the gate next to the porch of the gate facing the temple was one rod deep.

8 He measured the porch of the gate facing the temple; it was one rod deep.

9 He measured the porch of the gate; it was eight cubits deep, and its pillars were two cubits thick. The porch of the gate faced the temple.

10 There were three guardrooms on each side of the east gate; all three had the same measurements, and the pillars on each side had the same measurements.

11 He measured the width of the entrance of the gate; it was ten cubits, and the length of the gateway was thirteen cubits.

12 In front of the guardrooms was a barrier one cubit high on each side, and the guardrooms were six cubits square.

13 He measured the gateway from the roof of one guardroom to the roof of the opposite one; it was twenty-five cubits wide from one doorway to the opposite doorway.

14 He measured the pillars as sixty cubits; the court extended round the gateway up to the pillar.[3]

15 From the front of the entrance gate to the far end of the porch of the inner gate was fifty cubits.

16 The guardrooms and their pillars had narrow windows all around the inside of the gateway, and the porch likewise had windows all around the inside. The pillars were decorated with palm trees.

17 Then he brought me into the outer court. There were rooms and a pavement laid all around the court; thirty rooms faced the pavement.

18 The pavement ran along the sides of the gates and was as long as the gates were deep; this was the lower pavement.

19 He measured the distance from the inside of the lower gate to the outside of the inner court; it was a hundred cubits on the east side as well as on the north.

20 Then he measured the length and width of the gate facing north, which led into the outer court.

21 Its three guardrooms on each side, its pillars and its porch had the same measurements as the first gate. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

22 Its windows, its porch and its palm-tree decorations had the same measurements as those of the gate facing east. Seven steps led up to it, with its porch in front of them.

23 There was a gate to the inner court facing the north gate, as on the east. He measured from gate to gate; it was a hundred cubits.

24 Then he led me to the south, and there was a gate facing south. He measured its pillars and its porch; they had the same measurements as the others.

25 The gateway and its porch had windows all around, like the other windows. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

26 Seven steps led up to it, with its porch in front of them, and it had palm-tree decorations on its pillars, one on each side.

27 The inner court also had a gate facing south. He measured from this gate to the outer gate on the south side; it was a hundred cubits.

28 Then he brought me into the inner court through the south gate, and he measured the south gate; it had the same measurements as the others.

29 Its guardrooms, its pillars and its porch had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

30 There were porches all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits deep.[4]

31 Its porch faced the outer court; palm trees decorated its pillars, and eight steps led up to it.

32 Then he brought me into the inner court on the east side, and he measured the gate; it had the same measurements as the others.

33 Its guardrooms, its pillars and its porch had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

34 Its porch faced the outer court; palm trees decorated its pillars on each side, and eight steps led up to it.

35 Then he brought me to the north gate and measured it; it had the same measurements as the others,

36 as did its guardrooms, its pillars and its porch, and it had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

37 Its pillars faced the outer court; palm trees decorated its pillars on each side, and eight steps led up to it.

38 A room with a doorway opened by the pillars of the gates; there the burnt offerings were washed.

39 In the porch of the gate were two tables on each side, on which the burnt offerings, sin offerings and guilt offerings were slaughtered.

40 Outside, as one goes up to the entrance of the north gate, were two tables on one side, and on the other side of the porch of the gate were two more tables.

41 So there were four tables on one side of the gate and four on the other, eight tables in all, on which the sacrifices were slaughtered.

42 There were also four tables of dressed stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide and a cubit high. On them were laid the utensils used for slaughtering the burnt offerings and the other sacrifices.

43 Double-pronged hooks, a handbreadth long, were fastened all around the inside, and the flesh of the offerings was to be laid on the tables.[5]

44 Outside the inner gate, within the inner court, were two rooms, one at the side of the north gate facing south, and another at the side of the south gate facing north.[6]

45 He said to me, “This room facing south is for the priests who keep charge of the temple,

46 and the room facing north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who alone among the descendants of Levi may come near the LORD to minister before Him.”

47 Then he measured the court; it was square, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide. And the altar stood in front of the temple.

48 He brought me to the porch of the temple and measured the pillars of the porch; they were five cubits on each side. The width of the entrance was

fourteen cubits, and its side walls were three cubits on each side.[7]

[49]The porch was twenty cubits wide and twelve cubits deep, and it was reached by a flight of steps. There were pillars beside the side posts, one on each side.[8]

1 April 573 BC.

2 The long cubit was about 52 centimetres (20½ inches), so the rod was about 3.1 metres (10½ feet).

3 The Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

4 This verse is missing in some manuscripts and in the Greek translation.

5 Or ‘ledges’; the Hebrew word is uncertain.

6 So the Greek translation; the Hebrew reads ‘rooms for the singers’ and ‘the east gate’.

7 ‘The width of the entrance was fourteen cubits’ follows the Greek; it is missing in the Hebrew.

8 ‘Twelve’ and ‘by a flight of steps’ follow the Greek; the Hebrew has ‘eleven’ and ‘by the steps’. Compare the pillars Jachin and Boaz (1 Kings 7:21).

Chapter 41

Ezekiel 41 measures the temple building. The man measures the nave, forty cubits by twenty, and the inner room, twenty cubits square, which he names the Most Holy Place. Around the temple’s walls are three storeys of side rooms, thirty in each storey, growing wider as they rise, set on a raised platform. To the west stands a large building facing the temple courtyard. The temple, its yard and the building each measure a hundred cubits. Inside, the walls are panelled with wood and carved with cherubim and palm trees, each cherub with two faces, of a man and of a lion. Before the Holy Place is a wooden altar, which the man calls the table that is before the LORD, and the nave and the Holy Place each have double folding doors.

[1]Then he brought me to the nave and measured the pillars; they were six cubits wide on each side, the width of the tent.[1]

[2]The entrance was ten cubits wide, and its side walls were five cubits on each side. He measured the nave; it was forty cubits long and twenty cubits wide.[2]

[3]Then he went inside and measured the pillars of the entrance; they were two cubits wide. The entrance was six cubits wide, and the side walls of the entrance were seven cubits wide.

[4]He measured the length of the inner room; it was twenty cubits, and its width twenty cubits, in front of the nave. He said to me, “This is the Most Holy Place.”

[5]Then he measured the wall of the temple; it was six cubits thick. Each side room around the temple was four cubits wide.

[6]The side rooms were in three storeys, one above another, thirty in each storey. There were ledges all round the temple wall to serve as supports for the side rooms, so that the supports were not inserted into the wall of the temple itself.

[7]The side rooms around the temple became wider at each successive storey, because the structure surrounding the temple went upwards by stages. So the temple widened as it rose, and one went up from the lowest storey through the middle one to the top storey.

[8]I saw that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side rooms were a full rod, six long cubits, high.

[9]The outer wall of the side rooms was five cubits thick. There was an open area between the side rooms of the temple

[10]and the priests’ rooms, twenty cubits wide all around the temple.

[11]The side rooms had entrances onto the open area, one entrance on the north and another on the south. The open area was five cubits wide all around.

[12]The building facing the temple yard on the west side was seventy cubits wide. The wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and it was ninety cubits long.

[13]Then he measured the temple; it was a hundred cubits long. The temple yard and the building with its walls were also a hundred cubits long.

[14]The width of the front of the temple and the yard on the east was a hundred cubits.

[15]Then he measured the length of the building facing the yard at the rear of the temple, with its galleries on each side; it was a hundred cubits.

The nave, the inner room and the porches facing the court,

16 the thresholds, the narrow windows and the galleries around the three of them, opposite the threshold, were panelled with wood all around, from the floor up to the windows; the windows were covered.[3]

17 Above the entrance, and on into the inner room and outside, and on all the walls all around, inside and out, there were measured panels.

18 They were carved with cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between each pair of cherubim. Each cherub had two faces:

19 the face of a man towards the palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion towards the palm tree on the other. They were carved all around the whole temple.

20 From the floor to above the entrance, cherubim and palm trees were carved on the wall of the nave.

21 The doorposts of the nave were square. In front of the Holy Place was something that looked like

22 an altar of wood, three cubits high and two cubits long; its corners, its base and its sides were of wood. The man said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD."[4]

23 The nave and the Holy Place each had a double door.

24 Each door had two leaves, two folding leaves for each door.

25 Cherubim and palm trees were carved on the doors of the nave like those carved on the walls, and there was a wooden canopy on the front of the porch outside.

26 There were narrow windows and palm trees on the side walls of the porch on each side, and on the side rooms of the temple and on the canopies.

1 'The tent' may recall the tabernacle; the Greek omits the phrase.

2 The same size as the main hall of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:2, 17).

3 The Hebrew of 41:15–17 is uncertain in places.

4 Probably the table for the bread of the Presence (Exodus 25:23–30). 'Its base' follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads 'its length'.

Chapter 42

Ezekiel 42 describes two blocks of rooms for the priests, north and south of the temple yard, facing the outer court. They are built in three storeys stepped back from one another, each block a hundred cubits long, with a walkway in front and an entrance from the east. The man explains that these are the holy rooms where the priests who approach the LORD eat the most holy offerings and leave the garments in which they minister before going out to the people. Having finished measuring the inner temple area, he leads Ezekiel out by the east gate and measures the whole area on all four sides, five hundred rods square, with a wall around it to separate the holy from the common.

1 Then the man led me out into the outer court towards the north and brought me to the rooms opposite the temple yard and opposite the building on the north side.

2 The building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide.

3 Facing the twenty cubits of the inner court, and facing the pavement of the outer court, gallery faced gallery in three storeys.

4 In front of the rooms was a walkway on the inside, ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long, and their doors were on the north.[1]

5 The upper rooms were narrower, because the galleries took more space from them than from the lower and middle storeys of the building.

6 For they were in three storeys and had no pillars like the pillars of the courts, so the upper rooms were set back from the ground more than the lower and middle ones.

7 There was an outer wall parallel to the rooms, towards the outer court, in front of the rooms; it was fifty cubits long.

8 For the rooms along the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those facing the temple were a hundred cubits long.

9 Below these rooms was an entrance on the east side as one enters them from the outer court.

10 On the south side, along the length of the wall of the court, facing the temple yard and the building, there were also rooms,[2]

11 with a walkway in front of them. They looked like the rooms on the north; they had the same length and width, with the same exits, arrangements and doors.

12 The doors of the rooms on the south side were like these. There was a door at the head of the walkway, the walkway in front of the corresponding wall towards the east, by which one enters them.

13 Then he said to me, “The north rooms and the south rooms facing the temple yard are the holy rooms where the priests who approach the LORD will eat the most holy offerings. There they will put the most holy offerings, the grain offerings, the sin offerings and the guilt offerings, for the place is holy.

14 When the priests enter, they must not go out from the holy place into the outer court until they have left there the garments in which they minister, for these are holy. They must put on other garments before they go near the area for the people.”[3]

15 When he had finished measuring the inner temple area, he led me out by the gate facing east and measured the area all around.

16 He measured the east side with the measuring rod; it was five hundred rods by the measuring rod.[4]

17 He measured the north side; it was five hundred rods by the measuring rod.

18 He measured the south side; it was five hundred rods by the measuring rod.

19 Then he turned to the west side and measured it; it was five hundred rods by the measuring rod.

20 So he measured it on all four sides. It had a wall all around, five hundred long and five hundred wide, to separate the holy from the common.

1 ‘A hundred cubits long’ follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads ‘a way of one cubit’.

2 ‘South’ follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads ‘east’.

3 Compare 44:19; Leviticus 6:10–11.

4 About 1.5 kilometres (a mile) on each side. The Greek translation reads ‘five hundred cubits’, which would agree with 45:2.

Chapter 43

Ezekiel 43 describes the return of the glory. The glory of the God of Israel comes from the east with a sound like many waters, and the land shines with it; it enters the temple by the east gate and fills the house. The LORD speaks from the temple: this is the place of His throne, where He will dwell among Israel for ever, and they must no longer defile His name with their idolatry and the corpses of their kings. Ezekiel is to describe the temple to Israel so that they will be ashamed of their iniquities and keep all its laws; the whole area on the mountaintop is most holy. Then the altar is measured, with its base, ledges, hearth and horns and its steps facing east, and the LORD gives the regulations for consecrating it over seven days, after which He will accept the people’s offerings.

1 Then the man brought me to the gate, the gate facing east,

2 and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of many waters, and the earth shone with His glory.[1]

3 The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when He came to destroy the city, and like the vision I had seen by the Kebar Canal, and I fell on my face.[2]

4 The glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east.

5 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

6 While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from the temple.

7 He said to me, “Son of man, here is the place of My throne, the place where My feet rest, where I will live among Israel’s people for ever. Never again will Israel’s house, they or their kings, defile My holy name with their prostitution and with the dead bodies of their kings at their shrines.[3]

8 When they placed their threshold next to My threshold and their doorposts beside My doorposts, with only a wall between Me and them, they defiled My holy name by the abominations they committed. So I consumed them in My anger.

9 Now let them put away from Me their prostitution and the corpses of their kings, and I will dwell among them for ever.

10 As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, so that they will be ashamed of their iniquities, and let them measure its plan.

11 If they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and entrances, its whole design and all its statutes and laws. Write it down before their eyes, so that they may keep its whole design and all its statutes and carry them out.

12 This is the law of the temple: the whole area all around on the top of the mountain will be most holy. Yes, this is the law of the temple.”

13 These are the measurements of the altar in long cubits, each a cubit and a handbreadth: its base was a cubit high and a cubit wide, with a rim a span wide around its edge. This was the height of the altar:[4]

14 from the base on the ground to the lower ledge was two cubits, and the ledge was a cubit wide; from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge was four cubits, and that ledge was a cubit wide.

15 The altar hearth was four cubits high, and four horns projected upwards from the hearth.[5]

16 The altar hearth was square, twelve cubits long and twelve cubits wide.

17 The ledge was also square, fourteen cubits long and fourteen cubits wide, with a rim of half a cubit around it and a base of a cubit all around. Its steps faced east.

18 Then He said to me, “Son of man, this is what the Lord GOD says: These are the regulations for the altar on the day it is built, so that burnt offerings may be offered on it and blood sprinkled on it.

19 You are to give a young bull as a sin offering to the Levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who come near to minister before Me, declares the Lord GOD.

20 Take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge and on the rim all around. So you will purify the altar and make atonement for it.

21 Then take the bull for the sin offering and burn it in the appointed place of the temple area, outside the sanctuary.

22 On the second day offer a male goat without blemish as a sin offering, and the altar is to be purified as it was with the bull.

23 When you have finished purifying it, offer a young bull without blemish and a ram from the flock without blemish.

24 Present them before the LORD; the priests are to sprinkle salt on them and offer them as a burnt offering to the LORD.

25 For seven days you are to provide a male goat daily as a sin offering, and a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish, are also to be provided.

26 For seven days they are to make atonement for the altar and cleanse it; so they will consecrate it.

27 When these days are over, from the eighth day onwards the priests are to present your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar, and I will accept you, declares the Lord GOD.”

1 Compare Revelation 1:15; 18:1.

2 Hebrew ‘when I came to destroy’; Ezekiel’s prophecy was the LORD’s instrument of judgement (compare Jeremiah 1:10).

3 Or ‘at their deaths’. The royal tombs and palace adjoined Solomon’s temple.

4 A span was half a cubit, about 26 centimetres (10 inches).

5 The Hebrew words for the hearth (harel, ariel) may mean ‘mountain of God’ or ‘hearth of God’.

Chapter 44

Ezekiel 44 sets out who may serve in the temple. The outer east gate is to remain shut, because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; only the prince may sit in its porch to eat before the LORD. The glory fills the temple again, and the LORD rebukes Israel for bringing uncircumcised foreigners into His sanctuary. The Levites who went astray after idols will serve as gatekeepers and assistants but may not come near as priests. Only the priests descended from Zadok, who stayed faithful, may approach Him. Rules follow for their linen clothing, hair, wine, marriage, teaching, judging and mourning. They will have no property in Israel, for the LORD is their inheritance; they will eat the offerings and receive the firstfruits.

1 Then the man brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, the one facing east, and it was shut.

2 The LORD said to me, “This gate is to remain
shut. It must not be opened, and no one may enter
by it, because the LORD, the God of Israel, has
entered by it. Therefore it is to remain shut.

3 Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before
the LORD, because he is the prince. He is to enter
by way of the porch of the gate and go out the
same way.”

4 Then he brought me by way of the north gate to
the front of the temple. I looked, and the glory of
the LORD filled the house of the LORD, and I fell
on my face.

5 The LORD said to me, “Son of man, pay close
attention, look carefully and listen closely to
everything I tell you concerning all the statutes
and laws of the house of the LORD. Pay close
attention to who may enter the temple and who
must be excluded from the sanctuary.

6 Say to the rebellious house of Israel: This is what
the Lord GOD says: Enough of all your
abominations, house of Israel!

7 You brought foreigners, uncircumcised in heart
and flesh, into My sanctuary, profaning My house
while you offered My food, the fat and the blood.
You broke My covenant by all your abominations.[1]

8 Instead of keeping charge of My holy things
yourselves, you put others in charge of My
sanctuary.

9 This is what the Lord GOD says: No foreigner
uncircumcised in heart and flesh may enter My
sanctuary, not even a foreigner who lives among
the people of Israel.

10 The Levites who went far from Me when Israel
went astray, who strayed from Me after their idols,
must bear the consequences of their iniquity.

11 They may serve in My sanctuary, having charge
of the gates of the temple and ministering in the
temple. They may slaughter the burnt offerings
and sacrifices for the people and stand before the
people to serve them.

12 But because they served the people in front of
their idols and made Israel’s house stumble into
sin, I have raised My hand in an oath against
them, declares the Lord GOD: they will bear the
penalty of their guilt.

13 They must not come near Me to serve as My
priests or come near any of My holy things or the
most holy offerings. They must bear the shame of
the abominations they committed.

14 Yet I will put them in charge of the temple, for
all its work and all that is to be done in it.

15 But the Levitical priests, the descendants of
Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the
people of Israel went astray from Me, they are to
come near to minister to Me. They are to stand
before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,
declares the Lord GOD.[2]

16 They alone may enter My sanctuary and come
near My table to minister to Me and keep My
charge.

17 When they enter the gates of the inner court,
they must wear linen garments. They must not
wear any wool while ministering at the gates of
the inner court or inside the temple.

18 They are to wear linen turbans on their heads
and linen undergarments round their waists; they
must not wear anything that makes them sweat.

19 When they go out into the outer court, the outer
court where the people are, they must take off the
garments in which they have been ministering and
leave them in the holy rooms, and put on other
garments, so that they do not transmit holiness to
the people through their garments.

20 They must not shave their heads or let their hair
grow long; they are to keep the hair of their heads
trimmed.

21 No priest may drink wine when he enters the
inner court.[3]

22 They are not to marry a widow or a woman who
has been divorced, but only a virgin of Israelite
descent, or else the widow of a priest.

23 They are to teach My people the difference
between the holy and the common and show them
how to distinguish between the unclean and the
clean.

24 In a dispute they are to act as judges and decide
it according to My judgements. They are to keep
My laws and My statutes at all My appointed
festivals and keep My Sabbaths holy.

25 A priest must not defile himself by going near a
dead person, except for his father or mother, son
or daughter, brother or unmarried sister; for these
he may defile himself.

26 After he is cleansed, he must wait seven days.

27 On the day he returns to the holy place, to the
inner court, to serve there, he must present a sin
offering for himself, declares the Lord GOD.

28 This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance. You are to give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession.

29 They will eat the grain offerings, the sin offerings and the guilt offerings, and everything in Israel devoted to the LORD will be theirs.

30 The best of all the firstfruits of every kind and every contribution of every kind from all your contributions will belong to the priests. You are also to give the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

31 The priests must not eat anything, whether bird or animal, that has died of itself or been torn by wild beasts.”

1 ‘You’ follows the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew reads ‘they’.

2 Zadok served as priest under David and Solomon (1 Kings 1:32–39; 2:35).

3 Compare Leviticus 10:9; 21:1–15 for 44:21–25.

Chapter 45

Ezekiel 45 sets out a holy portion of the land, 25,000 cubits long, for the sanctuary and the priests, with a strip for the Levites, land for the city, and land on either side for the prince, so that Israel’s princes will no longer oppress the people. The princes must stop their violence and evictions, do justice and use honest scales and measures, and the ephah, bath, homer, shekel and mina are defined. The people are to give a fixed contribution to the prince, who will provide the offerings for the festivals, new moons and Sabbaths to make atonement for Israel. On the first day of the first month the sanctuary is to be purified with a bull, and the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles are to be kept with daily offerings for seven days.

1 When you allot the land as an inheritance, you are to set apart for the LORD a holy portion of the land, 25,000 cubits long and 20,000 cubits wide; the whole area will be holy.[1]

2 Of this, a square plot of 500 by 500 cubits will be for the sanctuary, with fifty cubits of open land around it.

3 From this measured area you are to measure off a section 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide; in it will be the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place.

4 It will be the holy portion of the land for the priests who minister in the sanctuary and come near to minister to the LORD. It will be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

5 An area 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide will belong to the Levites who serve in the temple, as their possession for towns to live in.[2]

6 As the city’s property you are to set aside an area 5,000 cubits wide and 25,000 cubits long, alongside the holy portion; it will belong to the whole house of Israel.

7 The prince will have the land on both sides of the holy portion and the city’s property, alongside them, extending westwards on the west side and eastwards on the east side, running lengthwise from the western to the eastern border, parallel to one of the tribal portions.

8 This land will be his possession in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress My people, but will give the rest of the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

9 This is what the Lord GOD says: Enough, you princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression and do what is just and right. Stop evicting My people, declares the Lord GOD.

10 You must use honest scales, an honest ephah and an honest bath.

11 The ephah and the bath are to be the same size, the bath holding a tenth of a homer and the ephah a tenth of a homer; the homer is to be the standard for both.[3]

12 The shekel is to be twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels make one mina.[4]

13 This is the contribution you are to offer: a sixth of an ephah from each homer of wheat and a sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley.

14 The prescribed portion of oil, measured by the bath, is a tenth of a bath from each cor, which is ten baths or one homer, for ten baths make a homer.

15 Also, one sheep is to be taken from every flock of two hundred from the well-watered pastures of Israel. These are for the grain offerings, burnt

offerings and peace offerings, to make atonement for the people, declares the Lord GOD.

16 All the people of the land must give this contribution to the prince in Israel.

17 It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings at the festivals, the new moons and the Sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel. He will provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings and peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

18 This is what the Lord GOD says: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you are to take a young bull without blemish and purify the sanctuary.

19 The priest is to take blood from the sin offering and smear it on the temple doorposts, on the four corners of the altar's ledge, and on the doorposts of the inner court's gate.

20 You must do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned unintentionally or through ignorance. So you will make atonement for the temple.

21 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you are to celebrate the Passover, a festival lasting seven days, during which bread made without yeast is to be eaten.[5]

22 On that day the prince is to provide a bull as a sin offering for himself and for all the people of the land.

23 During the seven days of the festival he is to provide each day a burnt offering to the LORD of seven bulls and seven rams without blemish, and a male goat as a sin offering each day.

24 He is to provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull and an ephah for each ram, with a hin of oil for each ephah.[6]

25 In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the festival, he is to make the same provision for seven days: the same sin offerings, burnt offerings, grain offerings and oil.[7]

1 About 13 kilometres (8 miles) by 10 kilometres (6½ miles). 'Cubits' is supplied throughout these chapters; '20,000' follows the Greek, and the Hebrew has '10,000'. Compare 48:8–22.

2 'Towns to live in' follows the Greek; the Hebrew reads 'twenty rooms'.

3 The homer was about 160 litres (35 gallons); the ephah (dry measure) and the bath (liquid measure) about 16 litres (3½ gallons) each.

4 That is, sixty shekels. A shekel weighed about 11.5 grams (0.4 ounce).

5 'Seven' follows a few manuscripts; most read 'weeks'.

6 A hin was about 4 litres (7 pints).

7 The Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:34).

Chapter 46

Ezekiel 46 gives further rules for worship. The east gate of the inner court is to be shut on the six working days and opened on the Sabbath and at the new moon, when the prince worships at its threshold and the people bow at its entrance. The offerings for Sabbaths, new moons and festivals are specified. At the festivals the people must go out by the gate opposite the one they came in by, and the prince goes in and out among them. A lamb is to be offered every morning. The prince may give part of his inheritance to his sons for ever, but a gift to a servant returns to him in the year of release, and he must not seize the people's property. Finally Ezekiel is shown the kitchens where the priests cook the holy offerings and where the temple servants cook the people's sacrifices.

1 This is what the Lord GOD says: The gate of the inner court facing east is to be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day and on the day of the new moon it is to be opened.

2 The prince is to enter from outside through the porch of the gateway and stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests are to offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he is to worship at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate is not to be shut until evening.

3 The people of the land are to worship before the LORD at the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and at the new moons.

4 The burnt offering that the prince brings to the LORD on the Sabbath day is to be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish.

5 The grain offering is to be an ephah with the
ram, and with the lambs as much as he pleases,
with a hin of oil for each ephah.

6 On the day of the new moon he is to offer a
young bull without blemish, six lambs and a ram,
all without blemish.

7 He is to provide as a grain offering an ephah with
the bull, an ephah with the ram, and with the
lambs as much as he is able, with a hin of oil for
each ephah.

8 When the prince enters, he is to go in through
the porch of the gateway and go out the same way.

9 When the people of the land come before the
LORD at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by
the north gate to worship is to go out by the south
gate, and whoever enters by the south gate is to
go out by the north gate. No one is to return by
the gate through which he entered; each must go
out by the opposite gate.

10 The prince is to be among them, going in when
they go in and going out when they go out.

11 At the festivals and appointed feasts the grain
offering is to be an ephah with a bull and an
ephah with a ram, and with the lambs as much as
one pleases, with a hin of oil for each ephah.

12 Whenever the prince brings the LORD a
voluntary offering, a burnt offering or peace
offerings, the east-facing gate is to be opened for
him, and he is to present them just as he does on
the Sabbath. Then he goes out, and once he has
left, the gate is closed.

13 Every day you are to provide a year-old lamb
without blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD;
morning by morning you are to provide it.

14 With it, morning by morning, you are to provide
a grain offering of a sixth of an ephah, with a third
of a hin of oil to moisten the fine flour. This grain
offering to the LORD is a perpetual statute.

15 So they are to provide the lamb, the grain
offering and the oil morning by morning as a
regular burnt offering.

16 This is what the Lord GOD says: If the prince
makes a gift from his inheritance to any of his
sons, it will belong to his sons; it is their property
by inheritance.

17 But if he makes a gift from his inheritance to
one of his servants, it will belong to the servant
until the year of release, and then it will revert to
the prince. His inheritance belongs only to his
sons; it is theirs.[1]

18 The prince must not take any of the people's
inheritance, evicting them from their property. He
is to give his sons their inheritance out of his own
property, so that none of My people will be
scattered from their property.

19 Then the man brought me through the entrance
at the side of the gate into the holy rooms for the
priests, which faced north. There I saw a place at
the far western end.

20 He said to me, "This is the place where the
priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin
offering and bake the grain offering, so that they
do not bring them into the outer court and
transmit holiness to the people."

21 Then he brought me out to the outer court and
led me round to its four corners, and in each
corner of the court there was another court.

22 In the four corners of the court were enclosed
courts, forty cubits long and thirty wide; the four
corner courts were all the same size.

23 Around each of the four courts was a row of
masonry, with hearths built for cooking under the
rows all around.

24 He said to me, "These are the kitchens where
those who minister in the temple will boil the
sacrifices of the people."

1 The year of release is probably the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:10–13).

Chapter 47

Ezekiel 47 shows Ezekiel water flowing from under the threshold of the temple towards the east. The man measures off a thousand cubits at a time, and the stream rises from ankle-deep to knee-deep to waist-deep, until it is a river too deep to cross. Along its banks grow many trees. The water flows down to the Arabah and into the Dead Sea, making its salt water fresh, so that living creatures swarm wherever the river goes and fishermen spread their nets from En-gedi to En-eglaim; only the marshes are left for salt. Fruit trees of every kind grow on both banks, bearing fresh fruit every month, with leaves for healing. Then the LORD sets the boundaries of the land to be divided among the twelve tribes, with Joseph receiving two portions, and foreigners who have settled among them are to receive an inheritance like the native-born.

1 Then the man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water flowing out from under the threshold of the temple towards the east, for the temple faced east. The water was flowing down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

2 He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me round on the outside to the outer gate facing east, and there the water was trickling out from the south side.

3 As the man went eastwards with a measuring line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water; it came up to my ankles.[1]

4 He measured another thousand cubits and led me through the water; it came up to my knees. He measured another thousand and led me through; the water came up to my waist.

5 He measured another thousand, and it was a river I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed on foot.

6 He said to me, “Son of man, do you see this?” Then he led me back to the bank of the river.

7 When I returned, I saw a great many trees on both banks of the river.

8 He said to me, “This water flows out towards the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah. When it enters the Sea, the sea of foul water, the water will be made fresh.[2]

9 Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms there will live. There will be a great number of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so wherever the river flows everything will live.

10 Fishermen will stand along its shore from En-gedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for spreading nets. Its fish will be of many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, a very great number.[3]

11 But its swamps and marshes will not be made fresh; they will be left for salt.

12 Fruit trees of every kind will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fresh fruit, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”[4]

13 This is what the Lord GOD says: These are the boundaries by which you are to divide the land as an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel, with two portions for Joseph.[5]

14 You are to divide it equally among them. I swore with uplifted hand to give it to your fathers, and this land will fall to you as an inheritance.

15 This is to be the boundary of the land: On the north side it will run from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon past Lebo-hamath to Zedad,

16 Berothah and Sibraim, which lie on the border between Damascus and Hamath, as far as Hazer-hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran.

17 So the boundary will run from the sea to Hazar-enan, along the border of Damascus, with the territory of Hamath to the north. This will be the north side.

18 On the east side the boundary will run between Hauran and Damascus, along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel, to the eastern sea and as far as Tamar. This will be the east side.[6]

19 On the south side it will run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, then along the Brook of Egypt to the Great Sea. This will be the south side.

20 On the west side the Great Sea will be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This will be the west side.

21 You are to divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel.

22 You are to allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the foreigners who live among you and have had children among you. You are to treat them as native-born Israelites; along with you they are to be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel.

23 In whatever tribe the foreigner lives, there you are to give him his inheritance, declares the Lord GOD.

1 A thousand cubits is about half a kilometre (a third of a mile).

2 The Dead Sea, whose water is too salty for fish to live in. The Arabah is the Jordan rift valley.

3 The Great Sea is the Mediterranean.

4 Compare Revelation 22:1–2; also John 7:38.

5 Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, each receive a portion (Genesis 48:5), while the Levites have no territory.

6 'As far as Tamar' follows the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew reads 'you will measure'.

Chapter 48

Ezekiel 48 completes the division of the land. Seven tribes receive parallel strips from east to west in the north: Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben and Judah. Next comes the holy portion, 25,000 cubits square, containing the sanctuary with the land of the Zadokite priests, the land of the Levites, and the city with its common land, worked by people from all the tribes, with the prince's land on either side. To the south lie the strips of Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun and Gad. The city has twelve gates, three on each side, named after the twelve tribes, and its circumference is 18,000 cubits. From that day the name of the city will be "The LORD Is There."

1 These are the names of the tribes. At the northern frontier, beside the road to Hethlon, past Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan on the border of Damascus, with Hamath to the north, extending from the east side to the west, Dan will have one portion.

2 Next to the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west side, Asher will have one portion.

3 Next to the territory of Asher, from east to west, Naphtali will have one portion.

4 Next to the territory of Naphtali, from east to west, Manasseh will have one portion.

5 Next to the territory of Manasseh, from east to west, Ephraim will have one portion.

6 Next to the territory of Ephraim, from east to west, Reuben will have one portion.

7 Next to the territory of Reuben, from east to west, Judah will have one portion.

8 Next to the territory of Judah, from east to west, will be the portion you are to set apart. It will be 25,000 cubits wide, and as long as one of the tribal portions from east to west, with the sanctuary in the middle of it.

9 The portion you are to set apart for the LORD will be 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide.

10 This will be the holy portion for the priests. It will measure 25,000 cubits on the north side, 10,000 cubits on the west, 10,000 cubits on the east and 25,000 cubits on the south, with the sanctuary of the LORD in the middle of it.

11 It will be for the consecrated priests, the descendants of Zadok, who kept My charge and did not go astray as the Levites did when the people of Israel went astray.

12 It will be a special portion for them from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, next to the territory of the Levites.

13 Alongside the territory of the priests, the Levites will have an area 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide. The whole length will be 25,000 cubits and the width 10,000.

14 They must not sell or exchange any of it or transfer this best part of the land, for it is holy to the LORD.

15 The remaining area, 5,000 cubits wide and 25,000 cubits long, will be for common use by the city, for houses and for open land. The city will be in the middle of it.

16 These will be its measurements: the north side 4,500 cubits, the south side 4,500 cubits, the east side 4,500 cubits and the west side 4,500 cubits.

17 The city's open land will be 250 cubits on the north, 250 on the south, 250 on the east and 250 on the west.

18 The rest of the length alongside the holy portion will be 10,000 cubits on the east and 10,000 on

the west; it will run alongside the holy portion, and its produce will supply food for the workers of the city.

19 The workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, will farm it.

20 The whole portion will be a square, 25,000 cubits on each side; you are to set apart the holy portion together with the property of the city.

21 What remains on both sides of the holy portion and the property of the city will belong to the prince. It will extend eastwards from the 25,000 cubits of the holy portion to the eastern border, and westwards from the 25,000 cubits to the western border, alongside the tribal portions. This will belong to the prince, and the holy portion with the temple sanctuary will be in the middle of it.

22 So the property of the Levites and the property of the city will lie in the middle of the area belonging to the prince. The area belonging to the prince will lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

23 For the remaining tribes: Benjamin will have one portion, stretching from the eastern side across to the western.

24 Next to the territory of Benjamin, from east to west, Simeon will have one portion.

25 Next to the territory of Simeon, from east to west, Issachar will have one portion.

26 Next to the territory of Issachar, from east to west, Zebulun will have one portion.

27 Next to the territory of Zebulun, from east to west, Gad will have one portion.

28 Next to the territory of Gad, the southern boundary will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, then along the Brook of Egypt to the Great Sea.

29 This is the land you are to allot as an inheritance to the tribes of Israel, and these will be their portions, declares the Lord GOD.

30 These are the exits of the city: beginning on the north side, which measures 4,500 cubits,

31 the gates of the city will be named after the tribes of Israel. The three gates on the north side will be the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah and the gate of Levi.[1]

32 On the east side, which measures 4,500 cubits, there will be three gates: the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin and the gate of Dan.

33 On the south side, which measures 4,500 cubits, there will be three gates: the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar and the gate of Zebulun.

34 On the west side, which measures 4,500 cubits, there will be three gates: the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher and the gate of Naphtali.

35 The distance all around will be 18,000 cubits. And from that day the name of the city will be “The LORD Is There.”[2]

1 Compare Revelation 21:12–13.

2 Hebrew ‘YHWH Shammah’. The book that began with the glory leaving Jerusalem ends with the LORD’s presence in the city for ever.