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**Volume 8 -**  
**Ezekiel**  
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*To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:*

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# EZEKIEL

## INTRODUCTION

We know scarcely anything of Ezekiel except what we learn from the book that bears his name.

(An apocryphal tradition says that he was murdered by one of his fellow-exiles; and in the middle ages his tomb was shown, distant a few days' journey from Bagdad.)

Of the date and authorship of this book there has scarcely been any serious question. The Book of Ezekiel has always formed part of the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament.

(About the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, a question was raised as to the authenticity of Ezekiel on the ground of a supposed discrepancy between passages of his writings and the teaching of the Pentateuch — compare e.g. <sup><3680></sup>Ezekiel 18:20 with <sup><0216></sup>Exodus 20:5; but this was a mere critical discussion, and the difficulty was solved by reconciling the passages objected to.)

Ezekiel is found in the most ancient versions.

Ezekiel (The name also occurs in <sup><1346></sup>1 Chronicles 24:16.), “God strengtheneth” or “hardeneth,” was the son of Buzi, a priest probably of the family of Zadok. He was one of those who went into exile with Jehoiachin (<sup><1244></sup>2 Kings 24:14), and would seem to have belonged to the higher class, a supposition agreeing with the consideration accorded to him by his fellow exiles (<sup><3601></sup>Ezekiel 8:1, etc.). The chief scene of his ministry was Tel-Abib in northern Mesopotamia, on the river Chebar, along the banks of which were the settlements of the exiles. He was probably born in or near Jerusalem, where he must certainly have lived many years before he was carried into exile. The date of his entering upon the prophetic office is given in <sup><3001></sup>Ezekiel 1:1; and if, as is not unlikely, he entered upon this office at the legal age of 30, he must have been about 14 years of age when Josiah died. In this case, he could not have exercised the priestly functions at Jerusalem. However, since his father was a priest (<sup><3003></sup>Ezekiel 1:3), no

doubt he was brought up in the courts of the temple, and so became familiar with its services and arrangements.

Ezekiel lived in a house of his own, was married, and lost his wife in the ninth year of his exile. Of the rest of his life we know nothing.

The period during which Ezekiel prophesied in Chaldea was signalized by the miserable reign of Zedekiah, ending in his imprisonment and death — by the destruction of the temple, the sack of Jerusalem, and the final deportation of its inhabitants — by Gedaliah's short regency over the poor remnant left behind in the country, his treacherous murder, and the flight of the conspirators, conveying Jeremiah with them into Egypt — and by Nebuchadnezzar's conquests in the neighboring countries, and especially his prolonged siege of Tyre.

The year in which Ezekiel delivered his prophecies against Egypt corresponds with the first year of the reign of Pharaoh-Hophra, the Apries of Herodotus. The accession (589 B.C.) of this king to the Egyptian throne affected very materially the future of the kingdom of Judah. Since the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the Jews had found the service of the Chaldeans a hard one, and were ready at any moment to rise and shake off the yoke. Egypt was the only power from which they could hope for effectual support; and Egypt had long been inactive. The power of Necho was broken at Carchemish (605 B.C., <sup>244B</sup>Jeremiah 46:2; <sup>124B</sup>2 Kings 24:7). Apries, during his reign of 19 years, was determined to recover the ground which his grandfather and father had lost in Palestine and in Syria. No doubt rumors of these designs had reached the Jews, both in Jerusalem and in captivity, and they were watching their opportunity to break with Babylon and ally themselves with Egypt. Against such an alliance Ezekiel came forward to protest. He told his countrymen that their hopes of safety did not lay in shaking off a yoke, which they could not do without the grossest perjury, but in repenting of their sins and turning to the God of their fathers.

The fallacy of the hopes entertained by the Jews of deliverance through Egypt was soon made manifest. In the course of the final siege of Jerusalem, Hophra attempted a diversion which proved unsuccessful. Nebuchadnezzar left the siege of Jerusalem to attack the Egyptians, who — forced to retreat over the borders — offered no further resistance to the captor of Jerusalem (<sup>267B</sup>Jeremiah 37:5-8). It was at this time that Ezekiel commenced the series of prophecies against Egypt (Ezekiel 29—32),

which were continued until the blow fell upon that country and ended in the ruin and deposition of Pharaoh-Hophra.

This book throws much light upon the condition and the feelings of the Jews both in the holy land and in exile, and upon the relation of the two parties to each other.

Idolatry remained in Jerusalem, even among the priests and in the temple (<sup>238B</sup>Ezekiel 8:5ff.), and clung to the exiles (<sup>234B</sup>Ezekiel 14:3ff.), though probably in a less decided degree. Mixed up with this unfaithfulness to the true God there was prevalent a superstitious confidence in His disposition to protect the city and people, once His own. Utterly disregarding the conditional character of His promises, and the more spiritual nature of His blessings, people satisfied themselves that the once glorious Jerusalem never would and never could be overthrown (<sup>231D</sup>Ezekiel 13:2ff). Hence, arose the foolish rebellions of Zedekiah, commencing in reckless perjury, and terminating in calamity and disgrace. Connected with this feeling was a strange reversal of the relative positions of the exiles and of the Jews at home. The latter, though only the most ordinary of the people (<sup>12314</sup>2 Kings 24:14), afflicted to despise their exiled countrymen (<sup>23114</sup>Ezekiel 11:14ff.); and Ezekiel had to assure his fellow-exiles that to THEM and not to the Jews in Palestine belonged the enduring title of God's people (<sup>23116</sup>Ezekiel 11:16,17,20).

But though the voice of the prophet may have sounded back to the country which he had left, yet Ezekiel's special mission was to those among whom he dwelt.

- (a) He had to convince them of God's utter abhorrence of idolatry, and of the sure and irrevocable doom of those who practiced it;
- (b) He had to show that the Chaldaeans were the instruments of God, and that therefore resistance to them was both hopeless and unlawful;
- (c) He had to destroy their presumptuous confidence in external privileges, to open their eyes to a truer sense of the nature of the divine promises; and, lastly,
- (d) He had to raise their drooping hearts by unfolding to them the true character of the divine government, and the end for which it was administered.

The Book of Ezekiel may be said in this respect to be the moral of the captivity. The captivity was not simply a divine judgment, but a preparation for a better state, an awakening of higher hopes. It was Ezekiel's part to direct and satisfy these hopes. He was to set before his countrymen the prospect of a restoration, reaching far beyond a return to their native soil; he was to point to an inauguration of divine worship far more solemn than what was to be secured by the reconstruction of the city or temple on its original site in its original form. Their very condition was intended, and was calculated, to stir their hearts to their inmost depths, and awaken thoughts which must find their answer in the messages characteristic of Gospel truth. In the Law there had been intimations of restoration upon repentance (<sup><6301></sup>Deuteronomy 30:1-10): but this is expanded by Ezekiel (Ezekiel 18), and the operations of the Holy Spirit are brought prominently forward (<sup><2570></sup>Ezekiel 37:9,10).

The mission of Ezekiel should be compared with that of his countryman, Jeremiah, who began his prophetic office earlier, but continued it through the best part of the time during which Ezekiel himself labored. Both had to deliver much the same messages, and there is a marked similarity in their utterances. But Jeremiah's mission was incomparably the more mournful one. Ezekiel's task was, indeed, a bitter one; but personally he soon acquired respect and attention, and if at first opposed, was at last listened to if not obeyed. He may have been instrumental, together with Daniel, in working that reformation in the Jewish people, which certainly was, to some extent, effected during the captivity.

One of the immediate effects of the captivity was the reunion of the severed tribes of Israel. The political reasons which had severed them were at an end; a common lot begat sympathy in the sufferers; and those of the ten tribes who even in their separation had been conscious of a natural unity, and could not but recognize in the representative of David the true center of union, would be naturally inclined to seek this rarity in amalgamation with the exiles of Judah. In the course of the years which had elapsed since their exile, the numbers of the ten tribes may well have wasted away, partly through absorption among the pagan who surrounded them; and thus the exiles from Judah may have far exceeded in number and importance those who yet remained of the exiles of Israel. Accordingly, we find in Ezekiel the terms which Judah and Israel applied indiscriminately to those among whom the prophet dwelt (see <sup><3641></sup>Ezekiel 14:1); and the sins of Israel, no less than those of Judah, are summed up in the reproof of his

countrymen. All descendants of Abraham were again being drawn together as one people, and this was to be effected by the separated members gathering again around the legitimate center of government and of worship, under the supremacy of Judah. The amalgamation of the exiles of Israel and of Judah is in fact distinctly predicted by Jeremiah (~~24:18~~ Jeremiah 3:18); a prediction which had its accomplishment in the restoration of the people to their native land by the decree of Cyrus (compare also ~~35:16~~ Ezekiel 37:16ff.). Attempts have been made from time to time to discover the LOST ten tribes, by persons expecting to find, or thinking that they have found, them existing still as a separate community. According to the foregoing view, the time of captivity was the time of reunion. Ezekiel's mission was "to the house of Israel," not only to those who came out with him from Jerusalem or Judah, but to those also of the stock whom he found residing in a foreign land, where they had been settled for more than 100 years (~~35:16~~ Ezekiel 37:16; 48:1).

The order and the character of the prophecies which this book contains are in strict accordance with the prophet's mission. His first utterances are those of bitter denunciation of judgment upon a rebellious people, and these threatenings are continued until the storm breaks in full fury upon the deserted city. Then the note is changed. There are yet indeed threatenings, but they are for unfaithful shepherds, and for the enemies of God's people. The remainder of the book is full of reassurances, of hopes and promises of renovation and blessing, in which the spiritual predominates over the temporal, and the kingdom of Christ takes the place of the kingdom upon Mount Zion.

(The prophecies are divided into groups by dates prefixed to various chapters, and we may assume that those prophecies which are without date were delivered at the same time as the last given date, or, at any rate, followed closely upon it.

1. "The fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity." Ezekiel 1—7: Ezekiel's call, and predictions of the coming siege of Jerusalem.
2. "The sixth year." Ezekiel 8—19. An inspection of the whole condition of the people, with predictions of coming punishment.
3. "The seventh year." Ezekiel 20—23. Fresh reproofs and fresh predictions of the coming ruin.

4. “The ninth year.” Ezekiel 24. The year in which the siege began. The declarations that the city should be overthrown.
5. “The same year.” Ezekiel 25. Prophecies against Moab, Ammon, and the Philistines.
6. “Eleventh year.” In this year Jerusalem was taken after a siege of eighteen months and the temple was destroyed. Ezekiel 26—28. Prophecies against Tyre.
7. “The tenth year.” ~~אֲשׁוּר~~ Ezekiel 29:1-16. Prophecy against Egypt.
8. “The twenty-seventh year.” ~~אֲשׁוּר~~ Ezekiel 29:17—30:19. Prophecy against Egypt.
9. “The eleventh year.” ~~אֲשׁוּר~~ Ezekiel 30:20—31:18. Prophecy against Egypt.
10. “The twelfth year.” Ezekiel 32. Prophecy against Egypt.
11. “The same year.” Ezekiel 33—34. Reproof of unfaithful rulers.
12. “The same year, or some year between the twelfth and twenty-fifth.” Ezekiel 35. Judgment of Mount Seir.
13. “The same year.” Ezekiel 36—39. Visions of comfort. The overthrow of Gog.
14. “The twenty-fifth year.” Ezekiel 40—48. The vision of the temple.)

The prophecies are therefore in general arranged in chronological order. So far as the people of God were concerned, there are two chief groups:

- (1) those delivered BEFORE the destruction of the city (Ezekiel 1-24),
- (2) those delivered AFTER the destruction of the city (Ezekiel 33-48).

There was an interval during which the prophet’s mouth was closed so far as regarded the children of his people, from the ninth to the twelfth year of the captivity. During this interval, he was guided to utter words of threatening to the pagan nations, and these utterances find their place (Ezekiel 25—32). They form a suitable transition from the declaration of God’s wrath to that of His mercy toward His people, because the punishment of their enemies is in itself a part of the deliverance of His people. But the arrangement of these prophecies against the pagan is rather

local than chronological, so that, as in the case of Egypt, several prophecies delivered at various times on the same subject are brought together.

The leading characteristics of Ezekiel's prophecies are, first, his use of visions; secondly, his constant reference to the earlier writings of the Old Testament. The second of these characteristics is especially seen by his application of the Pentateuch. It is not merely the voice of a priest, imbued with the Law which it was his profession to study. It is the voice of the Holy Spirit Himself, teaching us that the Law, which came from God, is always just, wise, and holy, and preparing the way for the enlarged interpretation of the ancient testimonies, which our blessed Lord Himself promulgated afterward.

In regard to visions, the most striking is that in which is revealed the majesty of God to him (See the Ezekiel 1 notes). Besides these are visions of ideal scenes (e.g. Ezekiel 8) and of symbolic actions (e.g. Ezekiel 4.).

(This form was not unknown to the earlier prophets. Isaiah has in Isaiah 6 a vision resembling that with which the Book of Ezekiel opens. Jeremiah has many symbolic actions similar to those of Ezekiel: but that which was heretofore kept in the background is now brought to the front, and while we find in Ezekiel direct addresses to the people, as in the older prophets, these are less frequent; while on the other hand, we find no prophecy communicated to him by dreams, as was the case with Daniel. The form of his prophecy may then be said to be a kind of transition from the earlier to the later mode.)

The temple and its services furnish much of the imagery and figurative language of the book. These ordinances were but the shell containing within the kernels of eternal truth; these were the shadows, not the substance; and when the Spirit of God would reveal by the mouth of Ezekiel spiritual realities, He permitted the prophet to clothe them in those symbols with which he and his country were familiar. Some have insisted that the language of the prophet takes its color from the scenes which surround him, that "the living creatures" (Ezekiel 1), for instance, were suggested by the strange forms of Assyrian sculpture familiar to us through recent explorations. But these living creatures (like the Seraphim of Isaiah, <sup>312</sup>Isaiah 6:2) have much more in common with the cherubim of the Jewish temple than with the winged figures of Assyria. And though, here and



there, we find traces of the place of his sojourn (as in ~~300~~ Ezekiel 4:1), it is but seldom. By the waters of Babylon the prophet remembered Zion, and his language, like his subject, was, for the most part, not of Chaldaea but of Jerusalem.

The various systems of interpretation of Ezekiel's prophecies have been summed up under the heads of:

- (1) historical
- (2) allegorical
- (3) typical
- (4) symbolical
- (5) Judaistical

(The historical supposes Ezekiel's prophecies and visions to have their purpose and fulfillment in the restoration after the 70 years. The allegorical gathers spiritual lessons from any part according to the fancy of the interpreter. The typical recognizes, both in the history, and in the temple and its services, types of the Christian church and its ordinances (as e.g., in the Epistle to the Hebrews). The symbolic is supplementary to the former method; the types were in themselves symbolic. The tabernacle or temple and its ordinances, its measurements and arrangements, no less than its sacrifices, had their meaning, and were intended by the Divine Lawgiver to express it. According to the Judaistical method, the prophecies look forward to the restoration of the Jews to their native soil, to the establishment of an earthly kingdom, having Jerusalem for its capital, with a new temple and restored services, Messiah for the king, His subjects being the whole company of believers incorporated with the twelve tribes of Israel. In this way, either the Christian is to be absorbed in the Jewish, or the Jewish in the Christian church.)

To many the prophecy is still in the course of fulfillment. The temple in its completeness is for the time when the kingdom of Christ shall be fully established, and He shall have put down all rule and all principalities and power, to deliver up the kingdom unto the Father, that God may be all in all (see the Ezekiel 37 notes).

The relation of the visions of Ezekiel to those of the Book of Revelation is very marked. So much is common to the two books that it is impossible to doubt that there is in the Revelation of John a designed reference to the older seer. It is not merely that the same images are employed, which might be supposed naturally to belong to a common apocalyptic language, but in some of the visions there is a resemblance which can only be accounted for by an identity of subject; and as the subject is by John often more precisely defined, the later vision throws great light upon the former. For example, the opening visions of Ezekiel and of John can scarcely be otherwise than substantially identical. Since there can be no doubt as to WHO is designated by John, we are led by an irresistible conclusion to recognize in the vision of Ezekiel the manifestation of the glory of God in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who was made man, “in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” But while the central object is the same there are marked differences in the two visions.

(So, also, in the figures of a building there is a most significant difference between Ezekiel and John. Ezekiel, writing before the old dispensation had passed away, is guided to represent the perfection of worship under the form of a renewed and more complete ritual; the Christian seer, writing under the new dispensation, represents to us the true character of the worship of God (~~6172~~ Revelation 21:22), foretold by our Lord Himself, “not in Jerusalem, nor in this mountain, but everywhere in spirit and in truth.”)

In Ezekiel, the various particulars are parts of one whole, which represents the manifestations of the glory of God upon “earth,” and in all the creatures of the “earth:” in John the scene is “heaven.” Again, a characteristic feature of Ezekiel’s prophecy is the declaration of God’s judgments, first against the rebellious city, and then against the enemies of the chosen people. In the Book of Revelation the same figures, both to denote wickedness and its punishment, which are by Ezekiel applied to idolatrous Judah, are by John turned upon idolatrous Babylon. The image of Babylon as “the great whore” finds its parallel in the whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah (Ezekiel 23), and the judgment is pronounced upon the former in the very terms which in Ezekiel are employed against the latter (compare ~~6176~~ Revelation 17:16 and ~~2236~~ Ezekiel 23:36, etc.).

(Further, the dirge of Babylon with its merchants and merchandise (<sup><681b></sup>Revelation 18:11, etc.), recalls forcibly the dirge of Tyre (Ezekiel 27); and the fowls of the air are summoned to fatten upon the carcasses of the armies of Babylon in the same manner as upon those of the army of Gog (compare <sup><3697></sup>Ezekiel 39:17 and <sup><697></sup>Revelation 19:17). The same mighty array of forces under Gog and their overthrow is found in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 38) and in the Revelation (Revelation 20).)

The repetition of such descriptions by the Christian seer must be owing to something more than the mere employment of figurative language already in use; in fact, just as our Lord's predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem are so mixed up with those of the end of the world, that we learn to regard the destruction of the city as the type and anticipation of the final judgment, so in the adoption of Ezekiel's language and figures by John, we see a proof of the extended meaning of the older prophecies. It is one conflict, waged from the first, and waging still; the conflict of evil with good, of the world with God, to be accomplished only in the final consummation, to which the Book of Revelation manifestly conducts us.

There is one feature in the writings of Ezekiel, which deserves particular notice. This is (to use a modern term) their ESCHATOLOGICAL character, i.e. their reference not merely to "an" end, but to "the" very end of all (see, e.g. Ezekiel 7; Ezekiel 36). There are many parts which have special reference to the circumstances of the prophet and his countrymen. The local and the temporary seem to predominate; but looking closely, more than this is to be found. The reiteration of the threats of the Law (Compare <sup><318D></sup>Ezekiel 5:2, with <sup><1353></sup>Leviticus 26:33; — <sup><3421></sup>Ezekiel 14:21, with <sup><1322></sup>Leviticus 26:22,25,26; — <sup><3638></sup>Ezekiel 16:38, with <sup><1222></sup>Deuteronomy 22:22.) by Ezekiel proves that the events which he predicts form part of that plan which was set forth at the commencement of the national life of the children of Israel. And, since this fundamental plan of government reached beyond the time of any one particular visitation, so Ezekiel's predictions of siege, of slaughter, of dispersion, did not have their final accomplishment in the consequences of the Chaldaean conquest. This is borne out by the history of the Jewish nation. There is no city of which such dreadful sieges are recorded as the city of Jerusalem. The horrors predicted by Moses and by Ezekiel have had their literal fulfillment on more than one occasion; yet the discourses of our Lord (Matthew 24; Luke 21) repeat the same predictions, and manifestly look forward to the end of

time, to the final judgment of the world. Since, therefore, each temporal judgment foreshadows the final retribution, so one prophecy may be directly addressed to many periods of time, in all of which the immutable law illustrates itself in the history of nations and individuals. This gives the principle upon which we are to interpret even those passages in Ezekiel which seem most particularly to refer to Israel and to Jerusalem. John the Baptist, Paul, and our Lord Himself, teach us to regard believers in Christ as the true Israel, the real children of Abraham; and this because connected with the truth, that the institution of the Church of Christ is only a continuance of the plan according to which God called Abraham out of the world, and separated his descendants to be a special people to Himself. Israel represents the visible church, brought into special relation with God Himself. The prophetic warnings have therefore their applications to the Christian church when neglectful of the obligations which such relation imposes. Many of the calamities of Christendom have been the direct consequence of departure from the principles of the law of Christ (compare <sup><300></sup>James 4:1). These predictions of Ezekiel are therefore not to be interpreted simply as illustrative of, but as directly predictive of, the future of the church, Jewish and Christian, until the end of time. This view is confirmed by the introduction of passages setting forth in the strongest terms individual responsibility (see especially Ezekiel 18). Their unique appropriateness to such a book as that of Ezekiel is best seen when we perceive that he is addressing, not simply the historical Israel of his own day, but the whole body who have been, like Israel of old, called forth to be God's people, and who will be called to strict account for the neglect of their consequent privileges (see <sup><3119></sup>Ezekiel 11:19ff.).

The parts of the book were probably arranged by the prophet himself, who, at the same time, prefixed the dates to the several prophecies. The precision of these dates affords a clear proof that the prophecies were in the first instance orally delivered, written down at the time of their delivery, and afterward, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, put together into one volume, to form a part of those Scriptures which God has bequeathed as a perpetual inheritance to His church.

Some have thought that the frequent insertion of passages from older writers is characteristic rather of an author than of a prophet; but even if Ezekiel, the priest, imbued not only with the spirit, but also with the letter, of the Law engrafted it upon his predictions, this can in no degree lessen the authority of his commission as a prophet. The greater part of this book

is written in prose, although the images employed are highly poetical. Some portions, however, may be regarded as poetry; as, for instance, the dirge of the kings (Ezekiel 19), the lay of the sword (~~3218~~ Ezekiel 21:8ff), the dirges of Tyre (Ezekiel 27; 28) and of Egypt (Ezekiel 31—32). The language bears marks of the later style, which was introduced at the time of the Babylonian captivity.

Points of contact in the writings of Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and John, are numerous, and the principal will be found noted in the marginal references.

# THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 1

The first three chapters of Ezekiel contain the account of Ezekiel's call.

A mighty whirlwind issues from the north, and a dark cloud appears in that quarter of the heavens. In the midst of the cloud is an area of dazzling brightness surrounded by encircling flames. Therein are seen four beings of strange and mysterious shape standing so as to form a square, below their feet are four wheels, and over their heads a throne on which is seated the likeness of a man dimly seen, while a voice issuing from the throne summons the prophet to his office.

**Ezekiel 1:1.** *The thirtieth year* being closely connected with as I, is rather in favor of considering this a personal date. It is not improbable that Ezekiel was called to his office at the age prescribed in the Law for Levites (~~OLD~~ Numbers 4:23,30), at which age both John the Baptist and our Lord began their ministry. His call is probably to be connected with the letter sent by Jeremiah to the captives (Jeremiah 29) written a few months previously. Some reckon this date from the accession of Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, 625 B.C., and suppose that Ezekiel here gives a Babylonian, as in ~~OLD~~ Ezekiel 1:2 a Jewish, date; but it is not certain that this accession formed an era in Babylon and Ezekiel does not elsewhere give a double date, or even a Babylonian date. Others date from the 18th year of Josiah, when Hilkiah discovered the Book of the Law (supposed to be a jubilee year): this would give 594 B.C. as the 30th year, but there is no other instance in Ezekiel of reckoning from this year.

*The captives* Not in confinement, but restricted to the place of their settlement.

*The fourth month* "Month" is not expressed in the original. This is the common method. Before the captivity the months were described not by proper names but by their order, "the first, the second," etc.; the first

month corresponding nearly with our “April.” After the captivity, the Jews brought back with them the proper names of the months, “Nisan” etc. (probably those used in Chaldaea).

*Chebar* The modern “Khabour” rises near Nisibis and flows into the Euphrates near “Kerkesiah,” 200 miles north of Babylon.

*Visions of God* The exposition of the fundamental principles of the existence and nature of a Supreme God, and of the created angels, was called by the rabbis “the Matter of the Chariot” (compare ~~1388~~ 1 Chronicles 28:18) in reference to the form of Ezekiel’s vision of the Almighty; and the subject was deemed so mysterious as to call for special caution in its study. The vision must be compared with other manifestations of the divine glory (Exodus 3; 24:10; ~~2008~~ Isaiah 6:1; ~~2009~~ Daniel 7:9; ~~6042~~ Revelation 4:2). Each of these visions has some of the outward signs or symbols here recorded. If we examine these symbols we shall find them to fall readily into two classes,

(1) those which we employ in common with the writers of all ages and countries. “Gold, sapphire, burnished brass,” the “terrible crystal” are familiar images of majestic glory, “thunders, lightnings” and “the rushing storm” of awful power. But

(2) we come to images to our minds strange and almost grotesque. That the “Four Living Creatures” had their groundwork in the cherubim there can be no doubt. And yet their shapes were very different. Because they were symbols not likenesses, they could yet be the same though their appearance was varied.

Of what are they symbolic? They may, according to the Talmudists, have symbolized orders of Angels and not persons; according to others they were figures of the Four Gospels actuated by one spirit spread over the four quarters of the globe, upon which, as on pillars, the Church is borne up, and over whom the Word of God sits enthroned. The general scope of the vision gives the best interpretation of the meaning.

Ezekiel saw “the likeness of the glory of God.” Here His glory is manifested in the works of creation; and as light and fire, lightning and cloud, are the usual marks which in inanimate creation betoken the presence of God (~~9806~~ Psalm 18:6-14) — so the four living ones symbolize animate creation. The forms are typical, “the lion” and “the ox” of the beasts of the field (wild and tame), “the eagle” of the birds of the air, while

“man” is the rational being supreme upon the earth. And the human type predominates over all, and gives character and unity to the four, who thus form one creation. Further, these four represent the constitutive parts of man’s nature: “the ox” (the animal of sacrifice), his faculty of suffering; “the lion” (the king of beasts), his faculty of ruling; “the eagle” (of keen eye and soaring wing), his faculty of imagination; “the man,” his spiritual faculty, which actuates all the rest. Christ is the Perfect Man, so these four in their perfect harmony typify Him who came to earth to do His Father’s will; and as man is lord in the kingdom of nature, so is Christ Lord in the kingdom of grace. The “wings” represent the power by which all creation rises and falls at God’s will; the “one spirit,” the unity and harmony of His works; the free motion in all directions, the universality of His Providence. The number “four” is the symbol of the world with its “four quarters;” the “veiled” bodies, the inability of all creatures to stand in the presence of God; the “noise of the wings,” the testimony borne by creation to God (<sup><390B></sup>Psalm 19:1-3); the “wheels” connect the vision with the earth, the wings with heaven, while above them is the throne of God in heaven. Since the eye of the seer is turned upward, the lines of the vision become less distinct. It is as if he were struggling against the impossibility of expressing in words the object of his vision: yet on the summit of the throne is He who can only be described as, in some sort, the form of a man. That Yahweh, the eternal God, is spoken of, we cannot doubt; and such passages as <sup><3015></sup>Colossians 1:15; <sup><300B></sup>Hebrews 1:3; <sup><3014></sup>John 1:14; 12:41, justify us in maintaining that the revelation of the divine glory here made to Ezekiel has its consummation or fulfillment in the person of Christ, the only-begotten of God (compare <sup><3017></sup>Revelation 1:17,18).

The vision in the opening chapter of Ezekiel is in the most general form — the manifestation of the glory of the living God. It is repeated more than once in the course of the book (compare <sup><300B></sup>Ezekiel 8:2,4; 9:3; 10; 11:22; 40:3). The person manifested is always the same, but the form of the vision is modified according to special circumstances of time and place.

<sup><300B></sup>**Ezekiel 1:2.** The Jewish date. This verse and <sup><300B></sup>Ezekiel 1:3, which seem rather to interrupt the course of the narrative, may have been added by the prophet when he revised and put together the whole book. The word “captivity” (as in <sup><300B></sup>Ezekiel 1:1) refers to the “transportation” of the king and others from their native to foreign soil. This policy of settling a conquered people in lands distant from their home, begun by the Assyrians, was continued by the Persians and by Alexander the Great. The Jews were



specially selected for such settlements, and this was no doubt a Providential preparation for the Gospel, the dispersed Jews carrying with them the knowledge of the true God and the sacred Scriptures, and thus paving the way for the messengers of the kingdom of Christ.

**Ezekiel 1:3.** *Came expressly* The phrase marks that it was in truth a heaven-sent vision.

*The hand of the LORD* A phrase in all prophecy implying a “constraining” power, because the spirit “constrains” the prophet independently of his own will.

**Ezekiel 1:4.** *Out of the north* From this quarter the Assyrian conquerors came upon the holy land. The vision, though seen in Chaldea, had reference to Jerusalem, and the seer is to contemplate judgment as it is coming upon the holy land. Others consider the words expressive of the special seat of the power of Yahweh. The high mountain range of Lebanon that closed in the holy land on the north naturally connected to the inhabitants of that country the northern region with the idea of height reaching to heaven, from which such a vision as this might be supposed to come.

*Infolding itself* Forming a circle of light — flames moving round and round and following each other in rapid succession, to be as it were the framework of the glorious scene.

*Amber* The original word occurs only in Ezekiel. The Septuagint and the Vulgate have “electrum,” a substance composed by a mixture of silver and gold, which corresponds very well to the Hebrew word. The brightness, therefore, is that of shining metal, not of a transparent gum. Render it: “out of the midst thereof,” like (**Ezekiel 1:7**) burnished gold out of the midst of fire.

**Ezekiel 1:5.** *Living creatures* The Hebrew word answers very nearly to the English “beings,” and denotes those who live, whether angels, men (in whom is the breath of life), or inferior creatures.

**Ezekiel 1:6.** In the Revelation of John each “beast” has its own distinctive character, here each unites in itself the four characters; there each has six wings, like the Seraphim (**Isaiah 6:2**), here only four.

**Ezekiel 1:7.** The “foot” seems here to mean the lower part of the leg, including the knee, and this was “straight,” i.e. upright like a man’s. The “sole” is the “foot” as distinguished from the “leg,” the leg terminated in a solid calf’s hoof. This was suitable for a being which was to present a front on each of its four sides. Ezekiel was living in a country on the walls of whose temples and palaces were those strange mixed figures, human heads with the bodies of lions and the feet of calves, and the like, which we see in the Babylonian and Assyrian monuments. These combinations were of course symbolic, and the symbolism must have been familiar to Ezekiel. But the prophet is not constructing his cherubim in imitation of these figures, the Spirit of God is revealing forms corresponding to the general rules of eastern symbolism.

**Ezekiel 1:8.** Or, “They had the hands of a man under their wings on all four sides, just as they had wings and faces on all four sides.”

**Ezekiel 1:9.** Two of the wings were in the act of flying, so stretched out that the extremity of each touched a wing of a neighboring living creature, similarly stretched out. This was only when they were in motion. See **Ezekiel 1:24.**

*They went every one straight forward* The four together formed a square, and never altered their relative position. From each side two faces looked straight out, one at each corner — and so all moved together toward any of the four quarters, toward which each one had one of its four faces directed; in whatsoever direction the whole moved the four might be said all to go “straight forward.”

**Ezekiel 1:10.** Each living creature had four faces, in front the face of a man, that of a lion on the right side, that of an ox on the left side, and that of an eagle behind, and the “chariot” would present to the beholder two faces of a man, of a lion, of an eagle, and of an ox, according to the quarter from which he looked upon it.

**Ezekiel 1:11.** *Thus ...* Rather, And their faces and their wings were separated above. All four formed a whole, yet the upper parts of each, the heads and the wings (though touching), rose distinct from one another. Two wings of each, as in the case of Isaiah’s Seraphim, were folded down over the body: and two were in their flight (**Ezekiel 1:9**) “stretched upward” parted) so as to meet, each a wing of the neighboring living

creature, just as the wings of the cherubim touched one another over the mercy-seat of the ark.

<sup><3012></sup>**Ezekiel 1:12.** The “chariot,” though composed of distinct parts, was to be considered as a whole. There was one spirit expressive of one conscious life pervading the whole, and guiding the motions of the whole in perfect harmony.

<sup><3013></sup>**Ezekiel 1:13.** *Lamps* “like the appearance of” flames. Omit the “and” before “like.” The “bright flames” resembled “coals of fire.”

*It went up* i.e. “fire went up.”

<sup><3015></sup>**Ezekiel 1:15.** Translate it: “one wheel upon the earth by” each of “the living creatures” on his four sides (i.e. on the four sides of each of the living creatures). There was a wheel to “each” of the living creatures: it was set “by,” i.e. immediately “beneath” the feet of the living creature, and was constructed for direct motion in any of the four lines in which the creatures themselves moved. Their “work” or make, i.e. their construction, was “a wheel in the middle of a wheel;” the wheel was composed of two circumferences set at right angles to each other, like the equator and meridian upon a globe. A wheel so placed and constructed did its part alike on each side of the living creature beneath which it stood. The “ten bases” of the temple (<sup><1072></sup>1 Kings 7:27-36) were constructed with lions, oxen, and cherubim, between the ledges and wheels at the four corners attached beneath so as to move like the wheels of a chariot.

<sup><3017></sup>**Ezekiel 1:17.** *Upon their four sides* i.e. straight in the direction toward which their faces looked. Since the four quarters express all directions, the construction of the living creatures was such that they could move in each direction alike.

<sup><3018></sup>**Ezekiel 1:18.** *Rings* The felloes (circumference) of the wheels: they were both high and terrible. The “eyes” may have been no more than dazzling spots adding to their brilliancy. But it seems more likely that they had a symbolic meaning expressing either the universal fulfillment of God’s will through His creation (<sup><1409></sup>2 Chronicles 16:9; compare <sup><3012></sup>Ezekiel 10:12), or the constant and unceasing praise which His works are ever rendering to Him (<sup><603></sup>Revelation 4:8). The power of nature is no blind force. it is employed in the service of God’s Providence, and the stamp of

reason is impressed all over it. It is this very thing that makes the power of nature terrible to him who is at enmity with God.

**Ezekiel 1:20.** Whithersoever the spirit of the four living creatures was to go, the wheels went — there was the spirit of the wheels to go. All four creatures together with their wheels are here called “the living creature,” because they formed a whole, one in motion, and in will, for one spirit was in them.

**Ezekiel 1:22.** “The color” (Hebrew, “eye”) “of the terrible crystal” refers to the dazzling brightness of the “firmament,” a clear bright expanse between the “throne” and the “living creatures,” separating heaven from earth.

**Ezekiel 1:23.** *Every one had two, which covered ...* Or, each one had two wings covering his body on either side.

**Ezekiel 1:24.** *The voice of the Almighty* Thunder.

*The voice of speech* Rendered in <sup>4116</sup>Jeremiah 11:16 “a great tumult.” Some take it to describe the rushing of a storm.

**Ezekiel 1:25.** *A voice from the firmament* Compare <sup>4102</sup>Ezekiel 3:12; in the midst of the tumult, are heard articulate sounds declaring the glory of God.

**Ezekiel 1:26.** *Sapphire* Clear heavenly blue.

*The appearance of a man* Deeply significant is the form of this manifestation. Here is no angel conveying God’s message to man, but the glory of the Lord Himself. We recognize in this vision the prophetic announcement of the Holy Incarnation. We are told little of the extent to which the human form was made evident to the prophet. For the vision was rather to the mind than to the bodily eye, and even inspired language was inadequate to convey to the hearer the glory which eye hath not seen or ear heard, and which only by special revelation it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

**Ezekiel 1:28.** The rainbow is not simply a token of glory and splendor. The “cloud” and the “day of rain” point to its original message of forgiveness and mercy, and this is especially suited to Ezekiel’s

commission, which was first to denounce judgment, and then promise restoration.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 2

The second and third chapters of Ezekiel contain the direct commission conveyed to Ezekiel in connection with the vision just recorded. The commission was repeated more than once, at what intervals of time we are not told. The communication is from without, the vision and the words are from God.

**Ezekiel 2:1.** *Son of man* This phrase (which occurs elsewhere in Scripture) is applied especially to Ezekiel and Daniel, the prophets of the captivity. Ezekiel is thus reminded of his humanity, at the time when he is especially permitted to have contact with God.

**Ezekiel 2:2.** *The spirit* i.e. “the Spirit of God.”

*Nation* literally, as in the margin — the word which usually distinguishes the pagan from God’s people. Here it expresses that Israel is cast off by God; and the plural is used to denote that the children of Israel are not even “one nation,” but scattered and disunited.

**Ezekiel 2:3,4.** Translate: “I send thee to the children of Israel, the rebellious nation that have rebelled against Me (they and their fathers have transgressed against Me, even to this very day), and the children impudent and stiff-hearted: I do send thee unto them.”

**Ezekiel 2:5.** *A rebellious house* A phrase employed continually by Ezekiel in bitter irony, in the place of house of Israel, as much as to say, “House no longer of Israel, but of rebellion.” Compare Isaiah 30:9.

**Ezekiel 2:9.** *Was sent* Rather, was put forth.

*A roll of a book* The book was one of the ancient kind written on skins rolled up together. Hence, our English volume (<sup>1940</sup>Psalm 40:7). The writing was usually on one side, but in this case it was written within and without, on both sides, the writing as it were running over, to express the abundance of the calamities in store for the devoted people. To eat the book signifies to be thoroughly possessed with its contents (compare <sup>1810</sup>Ezekiel 3:10; <sup>2456</sup>Jeremiah 15:16). There should be no break between <sup>1810</sup>Ezekiel 2:10 and Ezekiel 3.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 3

**Ezekiel 3:1.** Before, there was a direct commission, now there is a symbolic action. John has the same vision (<sup><4008></sup>Revelation 10:8ff), but there that is expressed, which is here left to be inferred, namely, that “as soon as he had eaten it his belly was bitter.” The sweetness in the mouth denoted that it was good to be a messenger of the Lord (compare the margin reference), but the bitterness which accompanied it, denoted that the commission brought with it much sorrow.

**Ezekiel 3:6.** *To many people* To various nations using diverse languages.

*Surely* The thought is that expressed by our Saviour Himself (margin reference). Some render it: “but I have sent thee unto these; they can hearken” etc.

**Ezekiel 3:8.** *I have made ... thy forehead strong* I have given thee a strength superior to theirs; a metaphor taken from horned animals.

**Ezekiel 3:9.** *Adamant* Or, diamond (<sup><2470></sup>Jeremiah 17:1), which was employed to cut flint. Ezekiel’s firmness being that of a diamond, he should cut a stroke home to the hardened hearts of a rebellious people. For “though” read “for.”

**Ezekiel 3:11.** *Thy people* God’s people.

**Ezekiel 3:12.** *I heard behind me* The commission having been given, and the prophet transported to the place of his ministry, the chariot of the vision passes away with the proper tokens (<sup><2402></sup>Ezekiel 1:24,25). A voice from above the firmament is now heard proclaiming the divine glory.

*From his place* The place where the glory of the Lord had revealed itself in the vision. The words are to be joined to “saying:” put a comma after LORD.

**Ezekiel 3:13.** *That touched* literally, touching. The living creatures in their flight raised their wings, so as to touch each other.

**Ezekiel 3:14.** *Lifted me up* We are not to suppose that the prophet was miraculously transported from one place to another in the land of his captivity. Compare <sup><400></sup>Matthew 4:1; <sup><403></sup>Acts 8:39. He had been in an ecstatic vision (<sup><300></sup>Ezekiel 1:1), and now guided by the Spirit he goes forth among his countrymen.

*The heat of my spirit* Full of the righteous indignation, which God inspired, against the sin which he was to denounce.

*But the hand* and “the hand.” The Lord strengthened him for his mission.

**Ezekiel 3:15.** *Tel-abib*, on the river Chebar was the chief seat of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia. The name “Tel-abib” (“mount of ears of corn”) was probably given on account of its fertility.

*I sat where they sat* Rather, “And I saw them sitting there and I sat there.”

*Astonished* Rather, silent, with fixed and determined silence (compare <sup><400></sup>Ezra 9:3,4). “To be silent” was characteristic of mourners (<sup><200></sup>Lamentations 3:28); “to sit” their proper attitude (<sup><200></sup>Isaiah 3:26; <sup><200></sup>Lamentations 1:1); “seven days” the set time of mourning (<sup><400></sup>Job 2:13).

**Ezekiel 3:16.** The Lord guards both Ezekiel and his countrymen from dwelling exclusively on the national character of his mission. In the midst of the general visitations, each individual was to stand as it were alone before Him to render account of his doings, and to be judged according to his works.

*Watchman* The priests and ministers of the Lord were often so called. Ezekiel is especially distinguished by this title (<sup><200></sup>Ezekiel 33:7). The duties of a watchman are twofold,

- (1) to wait and watch what God will order,
- (2) to watch over and superintend the people.

Isaiah describes and censures unfaithful watchmen (<sup><200></sup>Isaiah 56:10).

**Ezekiel 3:18-21.** This passage anticipates the great moral principle of divine government (Ezekiel 18) that each man is individually responsible for his own actions, and will be judged according to these and these alone.



**Ezekiel 3:20.** *I lay a stumblingblock before him* I bring him to trial by placing difficulties and temptations in his way (compare **Ezekiel** 7:19; 44:12 margin; **Ezekiel** 14:3,4). It is true that God tempts no man in order to his destruction, but in the course of His Providence He permits men to be tried in order that their faith may be approved, and in this trial some who seem to be righteous fall.

*Because thou ... his blood ...* So far as the prophet was concerned, the neglect of his duty is reckoned as the cause of the seemingly righteous man's fall.

*His righteousness ...* Or, righteousnesses, i.e. acts of righteousness. The "righteous" man here is one, who had hitherto done the "acts of righteousness" prescribed by the Law, but when trial came was shown to lack the "principle of righteousness."

**Ezekiel 3:21.** The repetition of the word "righteous" is to be noted. There seems to be an intimation that sin is alien to the character of a "righteous" man. Compare **1 John** 3:7-9.

**Ezekiel 3:23.** A fresh revelation of the glory of the Lord, to impress upon Ezekiel another characteristic of his mission. Now he is to learn that there is "a time to be silent" as well as "a time to speak," and that both are appointed by God. This represents forcibly the authoritative character and divine origin of the utterances of the Hebrew prophets.

**Ezekiel 3:24.** "Shut" in the privacy of his own chamber he is to receive a message from Yahweh. This "shutting up," however, and the "bands" (**Ezekiel** 3:25, used figuratively) were signs of the manner in which Ezekiel's countrymen would close their ears, hindering him as far as in them lay from delivering the message of the Lord.

With this verse commences a series of symbolic actions enjoined to the prophet in order to foretell the coming judgments of Jerusalem (**Ezekiel** 4; 5). Generally speaking symbolic actions were either literal and public, or figurative and private. In the latter case they impressed upon the prophet's mind the truth which he was to enforce upon others by the description of the action as by a figure. Difficulties have arisen, because interpreters have not chosen to recognize the figurative as well as the literal mode of prophesying. Hence, some, who would have all literal, have had to accept the most strange and unnecessary actions as real; while others, who would

have all figurative, have had arbitrarily to explain away the most plain historical statement. There may be a difference of opinion as to which class one or other figure may belong; but after all, the determination is not important, the whole value of the parabolic figure residing in the lesson which it is intended to convey.

~~<B>~~ **Ezekiel 3:26.** *And I will make* Rather, Then will I “make.” One action is the consequence of the other. Because the people would silence the prophet, God to punish them will close his mouth (compare ~~<B>~~ Isaiah 6:9; ~~<B>~~ Matthew 13:14).

~~<B>~~ **Ezekiel 3:27.** *He that heareth ...* The judicial blindness of which Ezekiel speaks had already fallen upon the great body of the nation (~~<B>~~ Ezekiel 14:4. Compare ~~<B>~~ Revelation 2:7; 22:11).

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 4

In Ezekiel 4—5, the coming siege of Jerusalem and the dispersion of its inhabitants is foretold under divers symbols. If the 5th year of Jehoiachins captivity be taken (as is most probable) for the year in which Ezekiel received this communication, it was a time at which such an event would, according to human calculation, have appeared improbable. It could scarcely have been expected that Zedekiah — the creature of the king of Babylon and ruling by his authority in the place of Jehoiachin — would have been so infatuated as to provoke the anger of the powerful Nebuchadnezzar. It is indeed to infatuation that the sacred historian ascribes the act (<sup><301></sup>2 Kings 24:20).

<sup><301></sup>**Ezekiel 4:1.** *A tile* Rather, a brick. Sun-dried or kiln-burned bricks were from very early times used for building walls throughout the plain of Mesopotamia. The bricks of Nineveh and Babylon are sometimes stamped with what appears to be the device of the king in whose reign they were made, and often covered with a kind of enamel on which various scenes are portrayed. Among the subjects depicted on such bricks discovered at Nimroud are castles and forts.

<sup><301></sup>**Ezekiel 4:2.** *Lay siege against it* The prophet is represented as doing that which he portrays. The leading features of a siege are depicted. See the <sup><306></sup>Jeremiah 6:6 note.

*The camp* Encampments. The word denotes various hosts in various positions around the city.

*Fort* It was customary in sieges to construct towers of vast height, sometimes of 20 stories, which were wheeled up to the walls to enable the besiegers to reach the battlements with their arrows; in the lower part of such a tower there was commonly a battering-ram. These towers are frequently represented in the Assyrian monuments.

*Battering rams* Better than the translation in the margin. Assyrian monuments prove that these engines of war are of great antiquity. These engines seem to have been beams suspended by chains generally in moveable towers, and to have been applied against the walls in the way familiar to us from Greek and Roman history. The name “ram” was

probably given to describe their mode of operation; no Assyrian monument yet discovered exhibits the ram's head of later times.

**Ezekiel 4:3.** *An iron pan* Another figure in the coming siege. On Assyrian sculptures from Nimroud and Kouyunjik there are sieges of cities with "forts, mounts, and rams;" and together with these we see a kind of shield set up on the ground, behind which archers are shooting. Such a shield would be represented by the "flat plate" (margin). Ezekiel was directed to take such a plate (part of his household furniture) and place it between him and the representation of the city.

*A sign to the house of Israel* This "sign" was not necessarily acted before the people, but may simply have been described to them as a vivid representation of the event which it foretold. "Israel" stands here for the kingdom of Judah (compare **Ezekiel 3:7,17; 5:4; 8:6**). After the captivity of the ten tribes the kingdom of Judah represented the whole nation. Hence, prophets writing after this event constantly address their countrymen as the house of Israel without distinction of tribes.

**Ezekiel 4:4.** The siege being thus represented, the condition and suffering of the inhabitants is exhibited by the condition of one, who, bound as a prisoner or oppressed by sickness, cannot turn from his right side to his left. The prophet was in such a state.

*Bear their iniquity* The prophet was, in a figure, to bear their iniquities for a fixed period, in order to show that, after the period thus foretold, the burden of their sins should be taken off, and the people be forgiven. Compare **Leviticus 16:21,22**.

**Ezekiel 4:5.** *According to the number of the days* Or, "to be to thee as a number of days (even as)" etc. Compare the margin reference. Some conceive that these "days" were the years during which Israel and Judah sinned, and date in the case of Israel from Jeroboam's rebellion to the time at which Ezekiel wrote (circa 390 years); and in the case of Judah from Josiah's reformation. But it seems more in accordance with the other "signs," to suppose that they represent not that which had been, but that which shall be. The whole number of years is 430 (**Ezekiel 4:5,6**), the number assigned of old for the affliction of the descendants of Abraham (**Genesis 15:13; Exodus 12:40**). The "forty years" apportioned to Judah (**Ezekiel 4:6**), bring to mind the 40 years passed in the wilderness; and these were years not only of punishment, but also of

discipline and preparatory to restoration, so Ezekiel would intimate the difference between the punishments of Israel and of Judah to be this, that the one would be of much longer duration with no definite hope of recovery, but the other would be imposed with the express purpose of the renewal of mercy.

**Ezekiel 4:7.** *Therefore thou shalt set thy face* Or, “And etc.” i.e., direct thy mind to that subject.

*Thine arm shall be uncovered* A sign of the execution of vengeance (<sup>2520</sup>Isaiah 52:10).

**Ezekiel 4:8.** *I will lay barrels upon thee* Contrast margin reference. The Lord will put constraint upon him, to cause him to exercise his office. In the retirement of his house, figuratively bound and under constraint, he shall not cease to proclaim the doom of the city.

*The days of thy siege* Those during which he should thus foretell the approaching calamity.

**Ezekiel 4:9.** Two things are prefigured in the remainder of this chapter,

- (1) the hardships of exile,
- (2) the straitness of a siege.

To the people of Israel, separated from the rest of the nations as holy, it was a leading feature in the calamities of their exile that they must be mixed up with other nations, and eat of their food, which to the Jews was a defilement (compare <sup>3043</sup>Ezekiel 4:13; <sup>3077</sup>Amos 7:17; <sup>2008</sup>Daniel 1:8.)

*Fitches* A species of wheat with shorn ears.

*In one vessel* To mix all these varied seeds was an indication that the people were no longer in their own land, where precautions against such mixing of seeds were prescribed.

*Three hundred and ninety days* The days of Israel’s punishment; because here is a figure of the exile which concerns all the tribes, not of the siege which concerns Judah alone.

**Ezekiel 4:10. *meat*** A general term for food, which in this case consists of grain. Instead of measuring, it was necessary in extreme scarcity to weigh it (<sup><3035></sup>Leviticus 26:26; <sup><3016></sup>Revelation 6:6).

***Twenty shekels a day*** The shekel contained about 220 grains, so that 20 shekels would be about 5/6 of a pound.

***From time to time*** Thou shalt receive and eat it at the appointed interval of a day.

**Ezekiel 4:11. *Water by measure*** This probably corresponds to the water of affliction (<sup><1227></sup>1 Kings 22:27; <sup><3333></sup>Isaiah 30:20). The measure of the hin is variously estimated by Jewish writers. The sixth part of a hin will be according to one estimate about 6/10ths, according to another 9/10ths of a pint. The lesser estimate is more suitable here.

**Ezekiel 4:12.** In eastern countries where fuel is scarce the want is supplied by dried cow-dung laid up for the winter. Barley cakes were (and are) baked under hot ashes without an oven. The dung here is to be burned to ashes, and the ashes so employed.

**Ezekiel 4:13.** The ceremonial ordinances in relation to food were intended to keep the nation free from idolatrous usages; everywhere among the pagan idol feasts formed a leading part in their religious services, and idol meats were partaken of in common life. Dispersion among the Gentiles must have exposed the Jews to much which they regarded as common and unclean. In Ezekiel's case there was a mitigation (<sup><3015></sup>Ezekiel 4:15) of the defilement, but still legal defilement remained, and the chosen people in exile were subjected to it as to a degradation.

**Ezekiel 4:14. *Abominable flesh*** Flesh that had become corrupt and foul by overkeeping. Compare <sup><3907></sup>Leviticus 19:7.

**Ezekiel 4:16. *The staff of bread*** Bread is so called because it is that on which the support of life mainly depends.

***With astonishment*** With dismay and anxiety at the calamities which are befalling them.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 5

**Ezekiel 5:1.** Translate it: take thee a sharp sword, for a barber's razor thou shalt take it thee. Even if the action were literal, the use of an actual sword would best enforce the symbolic meaning. The "head" represents the chief city, the "hair" the inhabitants — its ornament and glory — the "hair cut from the head" the exiles cast forth from their homes. It adds to the force of the representation that "to shave the head" was a token of mourning (~~OLD~~ Job 1:20), and was forbidden to the priests (~~OLD~~ Leviticus 21:5). Thus, in many ways, this action of Ezekiel "the priest" is significant of calamity and ruin. The sword indicates the avenging power; the shaving of the head the removal of grace and glory; the scales and weights the determination of divine justice. Compare ~~OLD~~ Zechariah 13:8,9.

**Ezekiel 5:2.** "The third part burnt in the midst of the city" represents those who perished within the city during the siege; "the third part smitten about it" (the city) "with" the sword, those who were killed about the city during the same period: "the third part scattered to the wind" those who after the siege were dispersed in foreign lands.

*In the midst of the city* The prophet is in exile, and is to do this in the midst of Jerusalem. His action being ideal is fitly assigned to the place which the prophecy concerns.

*When the days of the siege are fulfilled* i.e., "when the days of the figurative representation of the siege are fulfilled."

**Ezekiel 5:3,4.** Of the third part a few are yet to be taken and kept in the fold of the garment (representing those still to remain in their native land), and yet even of those few some are to be cast into the fire. Such was the fate of those left behind after the destruction of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 40; 41). The whole prophecy is one of denunciation.

**Ezekiel 5:4.** *Thereof* Or, from thence, out of the midst of the fire. Omit "For."

**Ezekiel 5:5.** *I have set it in the midst of the nations* It was not unusual for nations to regard the sanctuary, which they most revered, as the center of the earth. In the case of the holy land this was both natural

and appropriate. Egypt to the south, Syria to the north, Assyria to the east and the Isles of the Gentiles in the Great Sea to the west, were to the Jew proofs of the central position of his land in the midst of the nations (compare <sup><4189></sup>Jeremiah 3:19). The habitation assigned to the chosen people was suitable at the first for separating them from the nations; then for the seat of the vast dominion and commerce of Solomon; then, when they learned from their neighbors idol-worship, their central position was the source of their punishment. Midway between the mighty empires of Egypt and Assyria the holy land became a battlefield for the two powers, and suffered alternately from each as for the time the one or the other became predominant.

<sup><4186></sup>**Ezekiel 5:6.** *They* The inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup><4187></sup>**Ezekiel 5:7.** *Because ye multiplied* Some prefer: "Because ye have raged tumultuously."

*Neither have done according to the judgments* (or, ordinances) *of the nations* The reproach is that the Israelites have not even been as faithful to their one true God as the nations have been to their false gods (compare <sup><2733></sup>2 Kings 17:33).

<sup><4188></sup>**Ezekiel 5:8.** *Execute judgments* As upon the false gods of Egypt (<sup><1222></sup>Exodus 12:12; <sup><4834></sup>Numbers 33:4).

<sup><4189></sup>**Ezekiel 5:9.** Compare <sup><4121></sup>Matthew 24:21. The calamities of the Babylonian were surpassed by the Roman siege, and these again were but a foreshadowing of still more terrible destruction at the last day.

<sup><4192></sup>**Ezekiel 5:12.** The judgments (<sup><4192></sup>Ezekiel 5:12-17) of "famine, pestilence," and the "sword," were precisely those which attended the coming siege of Jerusalem (<sup><4192></sup>Jeremiah 15:2ff). The "drawing out the sword after them" indicates that the anger of God will follow them even to the land of their exile (compare <sup><3429></sup>Jeremiah 42:19-22; <sup><1825></sup>Leviticus 26:25), and that the horrors of the Babylonian siege are but the beginning of the sorrows of the nation.

<sup><4193></sup>**Ezekiel 5:13.** *Comforted* In the sense of "consoling oneself" and "feeling satisfaction in punishing;" hence, to "avenge oneself."



The fury is to “rest” upon them, abide, so as not to pass away. The “accomplishment” of the divine anger is not the “completion” in the sense of bringing it to a close, but in the sense of carrying it out to the full.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 6

**Ezekiel 6:1.** The former prophecies concerned the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants of Judaea. The present is addressed to the whole land and people of Israel, which is to be included in a like judgment. The ground of the judgment is “idolatry,” and the whole rests on Deuteronomy 12. The prophecy is against the “mountains” of Israel, because the mountains and valleys were the seats of idol-worship. It is also the proclamation of the final judgment of Israel. It is the picture of the future judgment of the world.

**Ezekiel 6:3.** *Rivers* Or, “ravines,” which were, like the mountains, favorite seats of idol-rites (<sup>4230</sup>2 Kings 23:10).

**Ezekiel 6:4.** *Images* See the margin and margin reference, and the <sup>4186</sup>Ezekiel 8:16 note.

*Idols* The Phoenicians were in the habit of setting up “heaps” or “pillars” of stone in honor of their gods, which renders the use of the word more appropriate.

**Ezekiel 6:7.** The force of the words is, “When the slain shall fall in the midst of you, then at last ye shall know that I am the Lord.” So in <sup>4180</sup>Ezekiel 6:10 where the knowledge implies a recognition of the merciful intent of Yahweh’s dispensations, and therefore, a hope of restoration.

**Ezekiel 6:9.** *I am broken ...* Translate: “because” I have broken “their whorish heart, which hath departed from me,” and their eyes etc. Since Ezekiel is addressing the Church of God through Israel, we are to note here that the general principle of the divine administration is laid down. Sin leads to judgment, judgment to repentance, repentance to forgiveness, forgiveness to reconciliation, reconciliation to a knowledge of communion with God.

**Ezekiel 6:11-14.** The gleam of hope is but transitory. Darkness again gathers round, for as yet the prophet is predicting judgment.

**Ezekiel 6:11.** *Smite ... stamp* Well-known modes of expressing grief.

<sup><3163></sup>**Ezekiel 6:13.** *Sweet savor* Compare <sup><3162></sup>Genesis 8:21. Words, applied to the smell of sacrifices accepted by God, applied here to idol-sacrifices in irony.

<sup><3164></sup>**Ezekiel 6:14.** *Toward Diblath* Or, “Diblathaim,” the “Diblathan” of the Moabite stone, one of the double cities of Moab (see <sup><3570></sup>Ezekiel 25:9) to the east of which lay the great desert of Arabia. Some read: “unto Riblah” (<sup><2670></sup>Jeremiah 52:9) and take the margin rendering.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 7

**Ezekiel 7:1.** A dirge. Supposing the date of the prophecy to be the same as that of the preceding, there were now but four, or perhaps three, years to the final overthrow of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.

**Ezekiel 7:3,4.** A kind of refrain, repeated in Ezekiel 7:8,9, as the close of another stanza.

**Ezekiel 7:5.** *An only evil* An evil singular and remarkable above all others.

**Ezekiel 7:6.** *The end is come: it watcheth for thee* The end (personified) so long slumbering now awakes and comes upon thee.

**Ezekiel 7:7,10.** *The morning* Rather, "The conclusion:" a whole series (literally circle) of events is being brought to a close. Others render it: Fate.

*The day of trouble ...* Or, The day is near; a tumult (Zechariah 14:13), and not the echo of (or, shouting on) the mountains. The contrast is between the wild tumult of war and the joyous shouts of such as keep holiday.

**Ezekiel 7:10.** *Rod* Used here for tribe (Exodus 31:2). The people of Judah have blossomed into proud luxuriance. In Ezekiel 7:11 it means the rod to punish wickedness. The meaning of the passage is obscure, owing to the brief and enigmatic form of the utterance. We may adopt the following explanation. The Jews had ever exulted in their national privileges — everything great and noble was to be from them and from theirs; but now Yahweh raises up the rod of the oppressor to confound and punish the rod of His people. The furious Chaldaean has become an instrument of God's wrath, endued with power emanating not from the Jews or from the multitude of the Jews, or from any of their children or people; nay, the destruction shall be so complete that none shall be left to make lamentation over them.

**Ezekiel 7:12.** *The day* Either of temporal or final judgment.

**Ezekiel 7:12,13.** It was grievous for an Israelite to part with his land. But now the seller need not mourn his loss, nor the buyer exult in his gain. All should live the pitiful lives of strangers in another country.

**Ezekiel 7:13.** *Although they were yet alive* Though they be yet among the living.

*Which shall not return ...* He (i.e. the seller) shall not return; and, every man living in his iniquity, they shall gather no strength. Exile being the punishment of iniquity, the exiles were said to “live in their iniquity.”

**Ezekiel 7:16.** As doves whose natural abode is the valleys moan lamentably when driven by fear into the mountains, so shall the remnant, who have escaped actual death, moan in the land of their exile.

**Ezekiel 7:18.** Various signs of mourning common in eastern countries. Baldness was forbidden to the Israelites (**Deuteronomy 14:1**). They seem, however, in later times to have adopted the custom of foreign nations in this matter, not without permission. Compare **Isaiah 22:12**.

**Ezekiel 7:19.** *Shall be removed* literally, “shall be an unclean thing” (**Leviticus 20:21**); their gold shall be unclean and abominable in their eyes.

*The stumblingblock of their iniquity* See **Ezekiel 3:20**. Their gold and silver used in making images was the occasion of their sin.

**Ezekiel 7:20.** Or, And “the beauty of his ornament, he” (the people) turned “it” to pride.

*Have I set it far from them* Rather, as in the margin — therefore have I made it their defilement and their disgrace.

**Ezekiel 7:22.** *My secret place* The inner sanctuary, hidden from the multitude, protected by the most high.

**Ezekiel 7:23.** *Make a chain* Forge the chain, the chain of imprisonment determined for them.

**Ezekiel 7:24.** *The worst of the pagan* The most cruel and terrible of nations — the Chaldeans.

*The pomp of the strong* Compare ~~(3369)~~ Leviticus 26:19 “The strong” are those who pride themselves in imaginary strength.

*Their holy places* What elsewhere is called “God’s Holy place” is here “their holy places,” because God disowns the profaned sanctuary. In the marginal rendering “they” must mean “the worst of the pagan.”

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 8

The prophecies contained in these chapters (Ezekiel 8—19) fall within eleven months (compare <sup><ARB></sup>Ezekiel 8:1 with <sup><ARB></sup>Ezekiel 20:1). Although they were not all delivered on the same day, they may be regarded as a whole. They contain in fact a review of the condition of the people of Judah, including those who were still in the holy land, and those who were with the prophet exiles in Chaldaea. This is first represented by a vision (Ezekiel 8—11) in which the seer is transported in spirit to the Temple of Jerusalem; and next — the prophet having again taken his stand as a man among men — by symbolic act, parables, figures, etc., addresses his fellow-exiles.

<sup><ARB></sup>**Ezekiel 8:1.** *The elders of Judah* The prophet's fellow-exiles are no longer unwilling to hear him (Ezekiel 2). They sat as mourners. The message here is not as in <sup><ARB></sup>Ezekiel 6:2, but distinctly to Judah, that portion of the people whose exile Ezekiel shared.

<sup><ARB></sup>**Ezekiel 8:2.** *The appearance of fire* In margin reference, seen as the appearance of a man enthroned upon the cherubim. Here He stands apart from the throne revealing Himself to His servant. Compare <sup><ARB></sup>Daniel 3:25 note.

*Amber* See the margin reference note.

<sup><ARB></sup>**Ezekiel 8:3.** *In the visions of God* Ezekiel was not transported “in the body,” but rapt “in spirit,” while he still sat amidst the elders of Judah.

*The inner gate* Or, the gate of the inner court. This gate, leading from the outer to the inner court (the court of the priests), is called (<sup><ARB></sup>Ezekiel 8:5) “the gate of the altar,” because it was from this side that the priests approached the brass altar. The prophet is on the “outside” of this gate, so that the “image of jealousy” was set up in the outer or people's court over against the northern entrance to the priest's court. This image was the image of a false god provoking Yahweh to “jealousy” (<sup><ARB></sup>Deuteronomy 32:16,21; <sup><ARB></sup>1 Kings 14:22). It may be doubted whether the scenes described in this chapter are intended to represent what actually occurred. They may be ideal pictures to indicate the idolatrous corruption of priests and people. And this is in accordance with the symbolic character of the

number “four;” the four idolatries representing the idolatries in all the four quarters of the world. The false gods of pagandom are brought into the temple in order that they may be detected and exposed by being brought face to face with the God of revelation. Still history proves that the ideal picture was supported by actual facts which had occurred and were occurring.

**Ezekiel 8:4.** The glory of the LORD having departed from His seat between the cherubims in the holy of holies (see **Ezekiel 9:3**) rests in the threshold of the temple, to execute vengeance before it quits the house altogether (**Ezekiel 10:18**). The “there” in the inner court, which was “full of the brightness of the LORD’S glory” (**Ezekiel 10:4**), and at the gate of which Ezekiel stands.

**Ezekiel 8:7.** *The door of the court* The seer is brought to another spot. In Ezekiel’s time there were various buildings on the space around the inner court which formed a court or courts, not improbably enclosed by a wall. The idolatries here were viewed as taking place in secret, and it is more in accordance with the temple arrangements to suppose that such chambers as would give room for those rites should belong to the outer than to the inner court. The seer is now outside the wall of the outer court, by the door which leads from it out of the temple-boundary. By breaking through the wall he enters into a chamber which stands in the outer court against the wall near the gate.

**Ezekiel 8:10.** There is clearly a reference to the idolatry of Egypt. Many subterranean chambers in rocks upon the shores of the Nile exhibit ornamentation and hieroglyphical characters, some of which are representative of the objects of idolatrous worship. Such chambers fitted them for the scene of the ideal picture by which Ezekiel represented Egyptian idolatry. The Egyptian worship of animals is well known.

**Ezekiel 8:11.** *Seventy men* Compare **Exodus 24:9,10**. The vision may have pointed to the contrast between the times. The number “seven” is symbolic of the covenant between Yahweh and His people, and so the “seventy” men exhibit forcibly the breach of the covenant. It is a figure of the covert idolatry of the whole people.

**Ezekiel 8:12.** *In the dark* Hidden in the secret places which the seer dug through the wall to discover.



*Chambers of his imagery* i.e., chambers painted with images.

<sup><4184></sup>**Ezekiel 8:14.** The seer is now brought back to the same gate as in <sup><4183></sup>Ezekiel 8:3.

It is not certain that this verse refers to any special act of Tammuz-worship. The month in which the vision was seen, the sixth month (September), was not the month of the Tammuz-rites. But that such rites had been performed in Jerusalem there can be little doubt. Women are mentioned as employed in the service of idols in <sup><4178></sup>Jeremiah 7:18. There is some reason for believing that the weeping of women for Tammuz passed into Syria and Palestine from Babylonia, Tammuz being identified with Duv-zi, whose loss was lamented by the goddess Istar. The festival was identical with the Greek "Adoniacs." The worship of Adonis had its headquarters at Byblos, where at certain periods of the year the stream, becoming stained by mountain floods, was popularly said to be red with the blood of Adonis. From Byblos it spread widely over the east and was thence carried to Greece. The contact of Zedekiah with pagan nations (<sup><4183></sup>Jeremiah 32:3) may very well have led to the introduction of an idolatry which at this time was especially popular among the eastern nations. This solemnity was of a twofold character, first, that of mourning, in which the death of Adonis was bewailed with extravagant sorrow; and then, after a few days, the mourning gave place to wild rejoicings for his restoration to life. This was a revival of nature-worship under another form — the death of Adonis symbolized the suspension of the productive powers of nature, which were in due time revived. Accordingly, the time of this festival was the summer solstice, when in the east nature seems to wither and die under the scorching heat of the sun, to burst forth again into life at the due season. At the same time there was a connection between this and the sun-worship, in that the decline of the sun and the decline of nature might be alike represented by the death of Adonis. The excitement attendant upon these extravagances of alternate wailing and exultation were in complete accord with the character of nature-worship, which for this reason was so popular in the east, especially with women, and led by inevitable consequence to unbridled license and excess. Such was in Ezekiel's day one of the most detestable forms of idolatry.

<sup><4186></sup>**Ezekiel 8:16.** *The inner court* The court of the priests.

*About five and twenty men* Rather, as it were five etc. This was the number of the heads of the 24 courses (shifts) with the high priest presiding over them. These then were the representatives of the priests, as the seventy were of the people. In the temple the seat of the Divine Majesty was at the west, perhaps appointed for this very purpose, to guard against the idolatrous adoration of the rising sun. Therefore the idolatrous priests must in worshipping the false sun-god turn their backs upon the True. The worship of the heavenly bodies was one of the earliest forms of idolatry (~~18125~~ Job 31:26,27) and was expressly forbidden in the Law (~~18178~~ Deuteronomy 17:3). In its earliest form, it was conducted without the intervention of images, the adoration being addressed to the heavenly bodies themselves: this form, continued among the Persians, seems to have been introduced afresh into Jerusalem at the time of Ezekiel. Compare, also, ~~12291~~ 2 Kings 23:11,12. The images (compare ~~18104~~ Ezekiel 6:4,6) were probably columns set up in honor of the sun, not images in human form. This simpler mode of sunworship was soon changed. The sun, or the god supposed to preside over it, was represented as a person, whose image was set up and adored.

~~18187~~ **Ezekiel 8:17.** “Violence” represents sin against man, “abominations” sins against God. These went hand in hand in Jerusalem.

*And have returned* After the reformation effected for a time by Josiah’s zeal, they have gone back to their old state.

*They put the branch to their nose* An allusion to a then familiar practice, of which we find no clear traces elsewhere. Ezekiel is describing the attitude usual in such devotions, the branch held before the mouth, but wishing to represent it in contemptuous and derogatory terms, he substitutes the word “nose” for “mouth.”

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 9

The punishment of the dwellers in Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 9:1.** *Them that have charge* The angels who have charge to execute God's sentence.

*Every man* "angels," not "men."

**Ezekiel 9:2.** *Six men* angels of wrath — figurative of destruction. They come from the north, the quarter from which invading armies entered the holy land. These "six" angels, with the "one among them," a superior over the six, make up the number "seven," a number symbolic of God's covenant with His people.

*The higher gate* The north gate of the court of the priests. The temple rose by platforms; as there was a north gate to the outer and also to the inner court, the latter was probably distinguished as the "higher gate." It was built by Jotham (<sup>425B</sup>2 Kings 15:35).

*Clothed with linen* The priestly garment (<sup>123B</sup>Exodus 28:6,8; <sup>816A</sup>Leviticus 16:4). This "One Man" (Compare <sup>270B</sup>Daniel 10:5; <sup>601B</sup>Revelation 1:13) was the "angel of the covenant," the great high priest, superior to those by whom He was surrounded, receiving direct communication from the Lord, taking the coals of vengeance from between the cherubim (<sup>200B</sup>Ezekiel 10:2), but coming with mercy to the contrite as well as with vengeance to the impenitent; these are attributes of Jesus Christ (<sup>415B</sup>John 5:30; <sup>413A</sup>Luke 2:34; <sup>419B</sup>Matthew 9:13; <sup>416B</sup>John 6:39).

*A writer's inkhorn* Usually a flat case about nine inches long, by an inch and a quarter broad, and half an inch thick, the hollow of which serves to contain the reed pens and penknife. At one end is the ink-vessel which is twice as heavy as the shaft. The latter is passed through the girdle and prevented from slipping through by the projecting ink-vessel. The whole is usually of polished metal, brass, copper or silver. The man with the inkhorn has to write in the Book of Life the names of those who shall be marked. The metaphor is from the custom of registering the names of the Israelites in public rolls. Compare <sup>122B</sup>Exodus 32:33; <sup>160B</sup>Psalms 69:28; <sup>200B</sup>Isaiah 4:3; <sup>104B</sup>Philippians 4:3; <sup>616B</sup>Revelation 3:5.

**Ezekiel 9:3.** *Cherub* The singular is put collectively for the “cherubim,” which were upon the mercy-seat of the ark in the holy of holies, the proper seat of the glory of the Lord in the midst of Israel. God is represented as “arising” from between the cherubim to scatter His enemies (<sup><4005></sup>Numbers 10:35).

**Ezekiel 9:4.** mercy precedes judgment. So in the case of Sodom (Genesis 19), and in the last day (<sup><4218></sup>Luke 21:18,28; <sup><6001></sup>Revelation 7:1). This accords with the eschatological character of the predictions in this chapter (see the introduction of Ezekiel).

*A mark* literally, “Tau,” the name of the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The old form of the letter was that of a cross. The Jews have interpreted this sign variously, some considering that “Tau,” being the last of the Hebrew letters, and so closing the alphabet, denoted completeness, and thus the mark indicated the completeness of the sorrow for sin in those upon whom it was placed. Others again observed that “Tau” was the first letter of Torah (“the Law”) and that the foreheads were marked as of men obedient to the Law. Christians, noting the resemblance of this letter in its most ancient form to a cross, have seen herein a reference to the cross with which Christians were signed. The custom for pagan gods and their votaries to bear certain marks furnishes instances, in which God was pleased to employ symbolism, generally in use, to express higher and more divine truth. The sign of the cross in baptism is an outward sign of the designation of God’s elect, who at the last day shall be exempted from the destruction of the ungodly (<sup><4122></sup>Matthew 24:22,31).

**Ezekiel 9:6.** *Begin at my sanctuary* The first to be punished were those who had brought idolatry nearest to the holy place. The “ancient men,” i.e., the 25 men who had stood with their backs to the altar (<sup><3186></sup>Ezekiel 8:16) were the first to be slain.

**Ezekiel 9:7.** *Defile the house* By filling the temple and its courts with the bodies of the slain. See <sup><0491></sup>Numbers 19:11.

**Ezekiel 9:8.** *Left* The prophet was left alone, all who had been around him were slain.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 10

**Ezekiel 10:1.** As in Ezekiel 1, the vision of the glory of the Lord, the particulars given identifying the two visions.

**Ezekiel 10:2.** *He spake* The person enthroned.

*The cherub* The particular cherub who was to hand the coals to destroy (<sup><3004></sup>Psalm 120:4; <sup><23016></sup>Isaiah 10:16; <sup><66518></sup>Revelation 15:8).

**Ezekiel 10:3.** *On the right side* On the south (<sup><2570></sup>Ezekiel 47:2). The idolatries had been seen on the north side. On the south stood the “cherubim” ready to receive and bear away the glory of the Lord.

**Ezekiel 10:4.** A repetition of <sup><2003></sup>Ezekiel 9:3. Now the glory of the Lord had gone up from the cherub to the threshold of the house.

<sup><2604></sup>Ezekiel 10:4-6 describe what had occurred before the “man went in” (<sup><2603></sup>Ezekiel 10:3).

**Ezekiel 10:5.** *The Almighty God* El Shaddai; compare the <sup><0107></sup>Genesis 17:1 note.

**Ezekiel 10:7.** *One cherub* The “cherub” who stood next the wheel by the side of which the man stood. The representative of the priestly office now gives up his post of reconciliation, and becomes simply a minister of wrath; another sign that God will turn from Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 10:8.** An explanation following upon the mention of the “hand.” It is characteristic of this chapter that the narrative is interrupted by explanatory comments. The “narrative” is contained in <sup><2601></sup>Ezekiel 10:1-3,6,7,13,15 (first clause),18,19; the other verses contain the “interposed explanations.”

**Ezekiel 10:11.** *The head* Either “the leading wheel which the others followed,” or more probably, the head of a cherub (one for all), the description passing from the wheels to the cherubim (<sup><2602></sup>Ezekiel 10:12).

**Ezekiel 10:13.** According to the marginal rendering the present verse refers back to <sup><2602></sup>Ezekiel 10:2,6, and tells us that the name “galgal, a rolling thing” (compare <sup><23173></sup>Isaiah 17:13), was given to the wheels in the

seer's hearing. But taking <sup><26014></sup>Ezekiel 10:14 as a description, and reading <sup><26015></sup>Ezekiel 10:15 immediately after <sup><26013></sup>Ezekiel 10:13, the meaning is clear. In the hearing Of the seer a voice calls upon the wheels, and, obedient to the call, the cherubim are lifted up and the wheels roll on. The word “galgal” would be better rendered “chariot” instead of “wheel;” “chariot” representing very well the collection of “wheels.”

<sup><26014></sup>**Ezekiel 10:14.** *The first face ...* The face of the first was the face of the cherub, and the face of the second was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion and the fourth the face of an eagle. Of the four faces of each cherub, the seer names only one — the face looking in the direction in which that cherub leads the motion of the chariot. The face of the cherub which presented itself to the seer was that of “an ox.” When he looking northward first saw the chariot the “ox-face” was on the left side (<sup><26010></sup>Ezekiel 1:10). This would make the ox-face look eastward, and it is not unlikely that the man might approach the chariot from the southeastern part of the inner court.

<sup><26016></sup>**Ezekiel 10:16,17** are a repetition of the general description of the nature and connection of the various parts of the vision, and this is the more appropriate as showing why they were regarded as “one living creature” (<sup><26015></sup>Ezekiel 10:15). The attributes here assigned to them show that they were pervaded by one will — “the spirit of the living creature” (others, as in the margin, “the spirit of life”) “was in them.”

<sup><26019></sup>**Ezekiel 10:19.** The cherubim (or chariot) had stood first on the threshold of the temple-door, and there received the glory of the Lord. They then lifted their wings, rose, and left the temple by “the east gate” of the outer court at “the entrance” of which they now for a time stood. It was by the east gate of the outer court that the glory of the Lord returned to the new temple (<sup><26014></sup>Ezekiel 43:4).

*And every one stood* Or, “and” they “stood.” The Cheruibim and wheels are viewed as “one living creature.”

<sup><26020></sup>**Ezekiel 10:20.** In this departure of the glory of the Lord from the temple, the seer recognizes for the first time the full meaning of the vision which he had seen on the banks of Chebar (Ezekiel 1). What he had seen there (did indeed imply that Yahweh had forsaken His house; but now this is made clear. The Glory has left the holy of holies, has appeared in the

court, has been enthroned on the Living Four, and with them has departed from the temple. It is now clear that these Four (in form similar to, yet differing from, the cherubim of the temple) are indeed the cherubim, in the midst of whom the Lord dwelleth.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 11

**Ezekiel 11:1.** *The gate* The gate of the templecourt. The gate was the place of judgment.

*Five and twenty men* Not the same men as in <sup>2486</sup>Ezekiel 8:16. There they were representatives of the “priests,” here of the “princes.” The number is, no doubt, symbolic, made up, probably, of 24 men and the king. The number 24 points to the tribes of undivided Israel.

*Jaazaniah ... Pelatiah* We know nothing more of these men. The former name was probably common at that time (<sup>2481</sup>Ezekiel 8:11). In these two names there is an allusion to the false hopes which they upheld. “Jaazaniah” (Yah(weh) listeneth) “son of Azur” (the Helper); “Pelatiah” (Yah(weh) rescues) “son of Benaiah” (Yah(weh) builds). In the latter case, death (<sup>2413</sup>Ezekiel 11:13) turned the allusion into bitter irony.

**Ezekiel 11:3.** *It is not near* In contradiction to <sup>2412</sup>Ezekiel 7:2.

*Let us build houses* “To build houses” implies a sense of security. Jeremiah bade the exiles “build houses” in a foreign land because they would not soon quit it (<sup>2425</sup>Jeremiah 29:5; 35:7). These false counselors promised to their countrymen a sure and permanent abode in the city which God had doomed to destruction. No need, they said, to go far for safety; you are perfectly safe at home. The Hebrew, however, is, difficult: literally it means, “It is not near to build houses,” which may be explained as spoken in mockery of such counsel as that of Jeremiah: matters have not gone so far as to necessitate “house-building” in a foreign land. The same idea is expressed by the image of the “caldron:” whatever devastation may rage around the city, we are safe within its walls, as flesh within a caldron is unburned by the surrounding fire (compare <sup>2416</sup>Ezekiel 24:6).

**Ezekiel 11:7.** All that shall remain in the city are the buried dead. Bloodshed and murder were at this time rife in Jerusalem, and these were among the chief crimes that were bringing down judgment upon the city. All the inhabitants that should yet survive were destined to be carried away into exile.



**Ezekiel 11:10.** *In the border of Israel* Hamath was the northern border of Israel (margin reference). At Riblah in Hamath the king of Babylon judged and condemned Zedekiah and the princes of Judah (<sup>2519</sup>Jeremiah 52:9,10).

**Ezekiel 11:13.** The death of Pelatiah was communicated in this vision, which represented ideally the idolatry in which Pelatiah had actually been foremost.

**Ezekiel 11:15.** *Thy kindred* The original word is derived from a root, suggesting the ideas of “redeeming” and “avenging” as connected with the bond of “kindred.” The word, therefore, conveys here a special reproach to the proud Jews, who have been so ready to cast off the claims of blood-relationship, and at the same time a hope of restoration to those who have been rudely thrown aside.

**Ezekiel 11:16.** *As a little sanctuary* Rather, I will be to them for a little while a sanctuary. The blessing was provisional, they were to look forward to a blessing more complete. For a little while they were to be satisfied with God’s special presence in a foreign land, but they were to look forward to a renewal of His presence in the restored temple of Jerusalem. “sanctuary” means here strictly the holy place, the tabernacle of the Most High: Yahweh will Himself be to the exiles in the place of the local sanctuary, in which the Jews of Jerusalem so much prided themselves (compare the margin reference). Here is the germ from which is developed Ezekiel 40—48, the picture of the kingdom of God in its new form.

**Ezekiel 11:19-21.** Compare Revelation 21. The identity of thought and language in Ezekiel, predicting the new kingdom of Israel, and in John, foretelling the kingdom of heaven, forces upon us the conclusion that the prophecy of Ezekiel has an ultimate reference to that climax which John plainly indicates.

**Ezekiel 11:19.** *One heart* So long as the Israelites were distracted by the service of many gods, such unity was impossible; but now, when they shall have taken away the “abominations” from the land, they shall be united in heart to serve the true God.

*Stony heart ... heart of flesh* The heart unnaturally hardened, and the heart reawakened to feelings proper to man.

~~3123~~ **Ezekiel 11:23.** *The mountain which is on the east side of the city*

The Mount of Olives. The rabbis commenting on this passage said the Shechinah retired to this Mount, and there for three years called in vain to the people with human voice that they should repent. On that mountain, Christ stood, when He wept over the fair city so soon to be utterly destroyed. From that mountain he descended, amid loud Hosannas, to enter the city and temple as a Judge.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 12

**Ezekiel 12:2.** Compare <sup><6026></sup>Deuteronomy 1:26; margin reference; <sup><6027></sup>Romans 10:21. The repetition of such words from age to age, shows that the prophet's words are intended to reach beyond the generation in which he lived.

**Ezekiel 12:3.** *Stuff* Raiment, vessels, and the like. The “removing” was to be of the kind that accompanied exile. The whole account of this transaction marks it as a real act. The prophet was to be “a sign” to his countrymen, and the “exiles” as well as those that remained in Judaea had need to be taught this lesson, for though themselves far away, they looked to Jerusalem as their home, and were scarcely less eager for its safety than the inhabitants themselves.

**Ezekiel 12:4.** The particulars which Ezekiel here foretold actually occurred (compare <sup><1234></sup>2 Kings 25:4; <sup><3304></sup>Jeremiah 39:4); but at this time Zedekiah seemed to be prosperous, and the Jews at Jerusalem expected, it is clear, a long continuance of his prosperity (see <sup><3171></sup>Ezekiel 17:1 note).

The prophetic character of the passage is undoubted (the prophet is declared to be “a sign,” <sup><3176></sup>Ezekiel 12:6) — the genuineness of the book and of the position of the passage in the book, are beyond dispute; in the historical event we have an exact fulfillment. The only legitimate inference is that the prophet received his knowledge from above.

**Ezekiel 12:6.** *Thou shalt cover thy face* A sign of mourning (see <sup><3147></sup>Ezekiel 24:17); also of Zedekiah's blindness (<sup><3172></sup>Ezekiel 12:12).

**Ezekiel 12:7.** In the evening the prophet was to return to the wall, break through it, and transport the goods from the inside to the outside of the city.

**Ezekiel 12:10.** *Burden* A word used to indicate a prediction of woe to be borne by some individual or people (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 13:1 note). Ezekiel, bearing his “stuff” on his shoulder was a sign of the weight of calamity coming upon king and people.

**Ezekiel 12:13.** Compare <sup><2519></sup>Jeremiah 52:9ff

**Ezekiel 12:16.** *Few* literally, as in the margin; so few, that they can easily be counted (<sup>2310B</sup>Isaiah 10:19). The few who should escape destruction should make known to all among whom they should dwell how great had been the wickedness of the people, how just their punishment.

**Ezekiel 12:18.** Here the sign is the exhibition of such terror as the danger of a siege creates.

**Ezekiel 12:19.** *The people of the land* Chaldaea.

*Of the inhabitants* In respect to “the inhabitants.”

*Desolate from, all that is therein* i.e., stripped of all its inhabitants and of all its wealth.

**Ezekiel 12:19,20.** At one and the same time, Jeremiah was prophesying in Jerusalem, and Ezekiel in Chaldaea; the prophecies of the former were sent to the exiles, and those of Ezekiel to the dwellers at Jerusalem, that the guiding hand of One God in different places might be made clear (Jerome).

**Ezekiel 12:21-28.** As in Ezekiel 7, the nearness of the judgment is foretold.

**Ezekiel 12:22.** *The land of Israel* is put generally for the land where the children of Israel dwelt, whether at home, or in exile. There was prevalent a disregard for the true prophets, which is ever followed by a recognition of the false. First, the true prophet is rejected because it is thought that his prophecies fail. Then men persuade themselves that if the prophecy be true it respects some distant time, and that the men of the present generation need not disturb themselves about it. Compare <sup>2401B</sup>Jeremiah 1:11; <sup>2403B</sup>Amos 6:3; <sup>2404B</sup>Matthew 24:43; <sup>2405B</sup>1 Thessalonians 5:2; <sup>2406B</sup>2 Peter 3:4. Against both these delusions Ezekiel is commissioned to protest, and so to lead the way to his condemnation of his countrymen for their blind reliance on false prophets.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 13

**Ezekiel 13:1.** The identity of phrases and ideas of this chapter with Jeremiah 23 leads to the conclusion that Ezekiel took up a well-known prophecy to enforce and apply it to his companions in exile. They probably had read Jeremiah's words as referring to others than themselves.

**Ezekiel 13:3.** *That follow ... nothing* Better in the margin. A true prophet (like Ezekiel) spoke "the word of the Lord," and declared what he had seen "in the visions of God." These pretenders are stigmatized in scorn "prophets out of their own hearts," "seers of what they have not seen."

**Ezekiel 13:4.** *In the deserts* Foxes find a home among ruins etc. (<sup>26158</sup>Lamentations 5:18). So the prophets find their profit in the ruin of their country.

**Ezekiel 13:5.** *For* Or, before. In a time of siege when there are gaps or breaches in the walls, it is the part of the leaders to go up to defend them, and to throw up works to stop the in-road of the enemy. Yahweh is now assailing His people as an enemy (compare <sup>2630</sup>Isaiah 63:10; <sup>4861</sup>Job 16:11-13), and where are those who claim to be prophets, leaders of the people?

**Ezekiel 13:6.** *And they have made others ...* Rather, "and they hope for the confirmation of their word." They come to believe their own lies.

**Ezekiel 13:9.** *Assembly* Here "the congregation of the people." These false prophets were to be struck off from "the writing" or, the rolls, in which the names of all Israelites were registered (compare <sup>4876</sup>Psalms 87:6; <sup>4232</sup>Exodus 32:32); and therefore when the restoration (<sup>26117</sup>Ezekiel 11:17) shall take place these men shall not have part in it.

**Ezekiel 13:10.** *Wall* A partition wall; in <sup>26312</sup>Ezekiel 13:12, the word used is the usual word for the outer wall of a house or city. The fall of the partition wall would perhaps involve the fall of the whole house.

*Untempered mortar* Or, whited plaster, employed to patch up a wall, so as to give it an appearance (without the reality) of strength and beauty.

Compare <sup><127></sup>Matthew 23:27. In the original there is a play upon a word rendered “folly” in <sup><213></sup>Jeremiah 23:13.

<sup><537></sup>**Ezekiel 13:17-23.** A rebuke to the false prophetesses, and a declaration that God will confound them, and deliver their victims from their snares. Women were sometimes inspired by the true God, as were Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, and Huldah; but an order of prophetesses was unknown among the people of God, and the existence of such a class in the last days of the kings of Judah was a fresh instance of declension into pagan usages.

<sup><638></sup>**Ezekiel 13:18-21.** Render thus: “Woe to the women that” put charms on every finger-joint, that set veils upon heads of every height to ensnare souls. “Will ye” ensnare “the souls of my people,” and keep your own souls alive, and will ye profane my name “among my people for handfuls of barley and pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to” keep alive “the souls that should not live, by lying to my people” who listen to “a lie? Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold” I will come upon your charms, where ye are ensnaring the souls like birds; “and I will tear them from your arms and will let the souls go” free, “even the souls” which ye are ensnaring like birds. “Your” veils “also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be” ensnared; “and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

Most ancient interpreters and many modern interpreters have understood the “pillows” (or charms) and “kerchiefs” (or veils), as appliances to which the sorcerers had resort in order to attract notice. The veil was a conspicuous ornament in the east — women whatever their “stature” (or, height) putting them on — and it was worn by magicians in order to seem more mysterious and awful.

<sup><539></sup>**Ezekiel 13:19.** *Pollute me* Profane Me by your false words, which ye pretend to be from Me.

*Handfuls of barley* Such were the gifts with which men used to approach a seer (compare <sup><997></sup>1 Samuel 9:7,8; <sup><1148></sup>1 Kings 14:3).

<sup><533></sup>**Ezekiel 13:20.** *To make them fly* If the marginal reading “into gardens” be adopted, it must mean, Ye entice men to the gardens or groves, where magical arts are practiced. That groves were used for this purpose and for idolatrous rites is notorious.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 14

This prophecy (<sup><3140></sup>Ezekiel 14:1-11) is a reproof of those who consult the false prophets. Some of the chief exiles come to Ezekiel as to one who has authority; but he, endowed with the genuine prophetic spirit, sees deep into their hearts, and finds the idols of self-will and unsubmitiveness set up therein. The prophet warns them that God will not be inquired of in such a spirit as this.

<sup><3140></sup>**Ezekiel 14:1.** *Elders of Israel* Some of the fellow-exiles of Ezekiel, among whom he ministered.

<sup><3140></sup>**Ezekiel 14:4.** Omit “that cometh.”

*According to the multitude of his idols* i.e., I will give him an answer as delusive as the idols which he serves. Compare Micaiah’s answer to Ahab (<sup><1225></sup>1 Kings 22:15).

<sup><3145></sup>**Ezekiel 14:5.** *That I may take ...* i.e., that I may take them, as in a snare, deceived by their own heart.

<sup><3140></sup>**Ezekiel 14:7.** *The stranger* They who sojourned among Israel, though they were not of Israel, were bound to abstain from idol-worship (<sup><1870></sup>Leviticus 17:10; 20:2).

*By myself* Or, as in <sup><3140></sup>Ezekiel 14:4, “according to” Myself. He who comes to inquire with a heart full of idolatry shall have his answer,

(1) “according to the multitude of his idols” — in delusion,

(2) “according to the holiness of God” — in punishment.

The inquiry was hypocritical and unreal — but God will answer not by the mouth, but by the hand, not by word but by deed, not by speech but by a scourge.

<sup><3148></sup>**Ezekiel 14:8.** *Will make him* Or, I will make him amazed (<sup><3320></sup>Ezekiel 32:10); or, astonished, so as to be a sign and a proverb.

<sup><3149></sup>**Ezekiel 14:9.** *I the LORD have deceived that prophet* A deep truth lies beneath these words, namely, that evil as well as good is under God’s



direction. He turns it as He will, employing it to test the sincerity of men, and thus making it ultimately contribute to the purification of His people, to the confirmation of the righteous, to the increase of their glory and felicity. The case of the false prophets who deceived Ahab (1 Kings 22) is a striking representation of this principle. The Lord sends forth an evil spirit to persuade Ahab to his ruin. Toward the close of the kingdom of Judah false prophets were especially rife. The thoughts of men's hearts were revealed, the good separated from the bad, and the remnant of the people purged from the sins by which of late years the whole nation had been defiled.

<3411> **Ezekiel 14:11.** “God,” it has been said, “punishes sins by means of sins,” but the end is the re-establishment of righteousness.

<3412> **Ezekiel 14:12-22.** Jeremiah 14; 15 is a remarkable parallel to this prophecy. Here, as elsewhere, Ezekiel is commissioned to deliver to the exiles the same message which Jeremiah conveys to the inhabitants of Judaea. The answer discovers the nature of the questions which had been expressed or implied.

- (1) Can God cast out a people who are holy unto Himself?
- (2) Is it just to punish them with utter desolation?

The prophet answers:

- (1) That when a people is so corrupt as to call down national judgment, individual piety shall save none but the individuals themselves.
- (2) The corrupt condition of the people shall be made so manifest, that none will question the justice of God in dealing thus severely with them.

<3412> **Ezekiel 14:12.** Or, “When a land” — the case is first put in a general form, and then is brought with increased force home to Jerusalem — “sinneth against me by trespassing grievously,” and I stretch out “mine hand upon it,” and break the staff of bread “thereof,” and send famine “upon it and” cut off “man and beast: though these three men” etc.

<3414> **Ezekiel 14:14.** *Noah, Daniel, and Job* Three striking instances of men who, for their integrity, were delivered from the ruin which fell upon others. Some have thought it strange that Daniel, a contemporary, and still young, should have been classed with the two ancient worthies. But the

account of him (Daniel 2) shows, that by this time Daniel was a very remarkable man (compare <sup><31B></sup>Ezekiel 28:3), and the introduction of the name of a contemporary gives force and life to the illustration. There is in the order in which the names occur a kind of climax. Noah did not rescue the guilty world, but did carry forth with him his wife, sons, and sons' wives. Daniel raised only a few, but he did raise three of his countrymen with him to honor. To Job was spared neither son nor daughter.

<sup><31D></sup>**Ezekiel 14:22,23.** *Ye shall be comforted ...* By a truer estimate of the dispensations of the Almighty. This visitation will be recognized as inevitable and just.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 15

**Ezekiel 15:2.** *The vine ...* The image is grounded on a well-known figure (<sup><808></sup>Psalm 80:8; Isaiah 5). The comparison is not between the vine and other trees, but between the wood of the vine and the wood of other trees.

**Ezekiel 15:4.** *Behold, it is cast into the fire* The wood is in itself useless for any purpose; but what if it have been cast into the fire, and half burned, what of it then?

**Ezekiel 15:7.** *They shall go out ...* Rather, they have gone forth from the fire, and the fire shall devour them. The condition of the people is here depicted. The people of Israel — as a whole and as separate kingdoms — had become worthless. The branch torn from the living stem had truly been cast into the fire, which had devoured both ends of it; what remained was a brand plucked from the burning. Those who had escaped the general calamity were reserved for a like fate. Compare <sup><816></sup>John 15:6.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 16

**Ezekiel 16:1.** Idolatry is frequently represented by the prophets under the figure of a wife's unfaithfulness to her husband. This image is here so portrayed, as to exhibit the aggravation of Israel's guilt by reason of her origin and early history. The original abode of the progenitors of the race was the land of Canaan, defiled with idolatry and moral corruption. Israel itself was like a child born in a polluted land, abandoned from its birth, left by its parents in the most utter neglect to the chance regard of any passer-by. Such was the state of the people in Egypt (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:3-5). On such a child the Lord looked with pity, tended, and adopted it. Under His care it grew up to be comely and beautiful, and the Lord joined it to Himself in that close union, which is figured by the bonds of wedlock. The covenants made under Moses and Joshua represent this alliance (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:6-8). In the reigns of David and Solomon, Israel shone with all the glory of temporal prosperity (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:9-14). The remainder of the history of the people when divided is, in the prophet's eye, a succession of defection and degradation marked by the erection of high places (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:16-20); by unholy alliances with foreign nations (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:26-33). Such sins were soon to meet their due punishment. As an unfaithful wife was brought before the people, convicted, and stoned, so should the Lord make His people a gazing-stock to all the nations round about, deprive them of all their possessions and of their city, and cast them forth as exiles to be spoiled and destroyed in a foreign land (<sup>2510B</sup>Ezekiel 16:35-43).

**Ezekiel 16:3.** *Birth* See the margin; the word represents "origin" under the figure of "cutting out stone from a quarry" (compare <sup>2510B</sup>Isaiah 51:1).

*An Amorite* the Amorite, a term denoting the whole people. The Amorites, being a principal branch of the Canaanites, are often taken to represent the whole stock (<sup>01516</sup>Genesis 15:16; <sup>1211B</sup>2 Kings 21:11).

*An Hittite* Compare <sup>01354</sup>Genesis 26:34. The main idea is that the Israelites by their doings proved themselves to be the very children of the idolatrous nations who once occupied the land of Canaan. Compare <sup>16307B</sup>Deuteronomy 20:17.

**Ezekiel 16:4.** *To supple thee* i.e., to cleanse thee.

<sup><2616></sup>**Ezekiel 16:5.** *To the lothing of thy person* Or, “so abhorred was thy person.”

<sup><2616></sup>**Ezekiel 16:6.** Or, Then I passed by thee ... and I said.

*Polluted* wallowing, “treading upon oneself.”

*In thy blood* may be connected either with “I said” or with “Live.” In the latter case, the state of blood and defilement is made the very cause of life, because it called forth the pity of Him who gave life. Since in the Mosaic Law “blood” was especially defiling, so was it also the special instrument of purification.

<sup><2617></sup>**Ezekiel 16:7.** I caused “thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou” didst increase “and” wax “great, and thou” didst come “to excellent” beauty; “thy breasts” were “fashioned and thine hair” was grown, yet wast “thou naked and bare.” The prophet has arrived at the time at which the child grew up to maturity. God preserved the life of the infant which must without His help have died (<sup><2616></sup>Ezekiel 16:6); and the child grew up to womanhood, but was still desolate and unprotected. This represents the sojourn in Egypt, during which the people increased, but were not bound, as a nation, to God by a covenant.

*Excellent ornaments* literally, as in the margin. Some render it: “ornament of cheeks,” i.e., beauty of face.

<sup><2618></sup>**Ezekiel 16:8.** *Now when ...* Or, Then I passed by thee ... and behold. The espousal of the damsel represents God’s entering into covenant with the people in the wilderness at Matthew Sinai (<sup><1237></sup>Exodus 34:27).

<sup><2619></sup>**Ezekiel 16:9.** The usual purifications for marriage.

<sup><2620></sup>**Ezekiel 16:10.** *Badgers’ skin* Probably the skin of the dolphin or dugong (<sup><1235></sup>Exodus 25:5 note).

*Silk* For a robe, a turban, or (as gauze) for a transparent veil; the derivation of the word in the original is much disputed.

<sup><2622></sup>**Ezekiel 16:12.** *A jewel on thy forehead* literally, “a nose-ring on thy nostril” (<sup><1222></sup>Genesis 24:22 note).

<sup><26163></sup>**Ezekiel 16:13.** *Fine flour, and honey, and oil* These were the choicest kinds of food.

*Into a kingdom* This part of the description refers to the reigns of David and Solomon, when the kingdom of Israel (still undivided) attained its highest pitch of grandeur.

<sup><26164></sup>**Ezekiel 16:14.** *Perfect ... my comeliness* The comeliness was not natural, but the gift of God.

<sup><26165></sup>**Ezekiel 16:15.** The prophet now describes the idolatries of the time of the Kings. The earlier offences in the time of the Judges are not noticed, that being an unsettled time. The conduct of the people after they had “prospered into a kingdom” is to be described.

*Because of thy renown* The marriages of Solomon with pagan wives, and his consequent idolatries, are a clear instance of such, misuse of glory.

<sup><26166></sup>**Ezekiel 16:16.** Compare <sup><12207></sup>2 Kings 23:7. Such decoration of idol-temples in the holy land showed how the ungrateful people were devoting the wealth and energies which Yahweh had given them to the service of those false gods, in whose worship He was especially dishonored.

*The like things shall not come ...* The abominations reached the very utmost — nothing would hereafter be so bad as these had been.

<sup><26167></sup>**Ezekiel 16:17.** Possibly an allusion to the custom of bearing about shrines. Compare <sup><31265></sup>Amos 5:26; <sup><41743></sup>Acts 7:43.

<sup><26168></sup>**Ezekiel 16:18.** *Mine oil and mine incense* The oil was the produce of the land, the incense received in exchange for such produce. Both were the gifts of Yahweh and belonged to Him; yet the oil (<sup><12216></sup>Exodus 25:6; 29:40) and the incense (<sup><12214></sup>Exodus 30:34), prepared for the service of God, were used in idol-worship. In nature worship the worshippers were especially lavish in vegetable products like incense.

<sup><26169></sup>**Ezekiel 16:19.** Allusion is here made to some rite like the Roman “Lectisternia,” in which public tables were set forth for feasts in honor of idols.

<sup><26170></sup>**Ezekiel 16:20,21.** *Borne unto me* ME is emphatic. The children of Yahweh have been devoted to Moloch. The rites of Moloch were twofold;

- (1) The actual sacrifice of men and children as expiatory sacrifices to, false gods.
- (2) The passing of them through the fire by way of purification and dedication.

Probably the first is alluded to in <sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>Ezekiel 16:20; the two rites together in <sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>Ezekiel 16:21.

<sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>**Ezekiel 16:23.** *After all ...* Besides these things, there was the introduction of other idolatrous rites from the nations with whom Israel had contact.

<sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>**Ezekiel 16:24.** *That thou ...* Render it: after that thou didst build “unto thee an eminent place,” and didst make “thee an high place in every street” — after that thou didst build “thy high place at the head of every way and” didst make ... “it came to pass, that thou” didst “also” commit “fornication” etc.

*An eminent place* literally, “an arched building.” Such places were used as brothels, and so the word is used metaphorically for a place of idol-worship.

<sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>**Ezekiel 16:26.** Egyptian idolatry, a worship of the powers of nature, was eminently sensual. The idolatry here spoken of is not so much that which Israel brought with them from Egypt, as the idolatry introduced in the time of Solomon and Rehoboam.

<sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>**Ezekiel 16:27.** *Have diminished thine ordinary food* As a husband lessens the things which minister to the luxury of an unfaithful wife, so did the Lord cut Israel short in consequence of her unfaithfulness.

*Daughters* The small cities. The Philistines have left a permanent record of their supremacy in the name of the holy land — Palestine. It was a special shame to be subjected to so small a power as that of Philistia (see <sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>Isaiah 14:29); but the very Philistines were ashamed of Judah’s unfaithfulness, and were themselves truer to their false gods than Judah was to Yahweh.

<sup>אֵלֵינוּ</sup>**Ezekiel 16:28.** Compare the marginal reference. Idolatry, spiritual adultery, invariably accompanied these unholy alliances, and brought with it disaster and ruin.

**Ezekiel 16:29.** *In the land ...* Probably used in the restricted sense of the low lands on the coast of the western sea; occupied by Phoenician colonies. The children of Israel were brought into contact at first with pagans residing within their own borders. Then they extended their contact to foreign nations, trading and forming alliances with Chaldaea, and in so doing were attracted by the idolatries of those with whom they carried on commerce. Some render it: “with the merchants’ land, even with Chaldaea.” Compare **Ezekiel 17:4**.

**Ezekiel 16:31.** Rather, didst build — didst make — wast not — scornest. In the marginal rendering, “thy daughters” must mean “thy smaller cities or villages.”

**Ezekiel 16:33.** The picture is heightened by the contrast between one who as a prostitute receives hire for her shame, and one who as a wife is so utterly abandoned as to bestow her husband’s goods to purchase her own dishonor. Compare **2 Kings 16:8**.

**Ezekiel 16:35-43.** Judah is now represented as undergoing the punishment adjudged to an adulteress and murderess. Only in her utter destruction shall the wrath of the Lord, the jealous God, cease.

**Ezekiel 16:36.** *Filthiness* Or, brass, i.e., money, is lavished. The Hebrews generally speak of money as gold (**Isaiah 46:6**), but brass coins were not unknown in the time of the Maccabees. Compare **Matthew 10:9**; **Mark 12:41**. Ezekiel may here have put brass for gold contemptuously. Compare **Isaiah 1:22-25, 48:10**.

**Ezekiel 16:38.** *I will give thee blood in fury* Rather, “I will make thee a bloody sacrifice to fury and jealousy.” By the Law of Moses, death was the penalty for murder (**Exodus 21:12**), and for adultery (**Leviticus 20:10**; e.g., by stoning, **Ezekiel 16:40**). The circumstances of the siege of Jerusalem corresponded with the punishment of the adulteress; the company gathered around her were the surrounding armies, the fury of the jealous husband was the fury of the attacking army, the stripping off her ornaments was the rapine of the siege, the stoning the battering-rams, the bloody death being the slaughter in the battle.

**Ezekiel 16:42.** *So ... rest* Or, “My fury shall not rest until thou art utterly ruined.”



~~2163~~ **Ezekiel 16:43.** *Thou shalt not ... abominations* Others render it: “I will not do wickedly because of all thine etc.” i.e., by allowing Jerusalem to remain unpunished

~~2164~~ **Ezekiel 16:44.** The Jews prided themselves on being under the special protection of Yahweh. In the downfall of their neighbors, they found only additional grounds for confidence in their own security. Ezekiel now in severe rebuke places them on an equality with Sodom and Samaria. Alike have been their sins, except that Judah has had the preeminence in guilt. Alike shall be their punishment.

~~2165~~ **Ezekiel 16:46.** The temple looked to the east. Samaria was on its left, and Sodom on its right hand.

~~2166~~ **Ezekiel 16:50.** *As I saw good* Or, “as soon as I saw it.” Omit “good.” God saw and punished. Compare ~~0182~~ Genesis 18:21.

~~2167~~ **Ezekiel 16:51.** *Justified thy sisters* Made them appear just in comparison with thee.

~~2168~~ **Ezekiel 16:53.** A denunciation of hopeless ruin. When Sodom shall be rebuilt and shall flourish, when Samaria shall be again a mighty people, then, but not until then, shall Jerusalem be restored.

~~2169~~ **Ezekiel 16:54.** *Thou art a comfort unto them* The degradation of Judah would be a kind of consolation to others. Compare Isaiah 14.

~~2170~~ **Ezekiel 16:56.** *Was not mentioned by thy mouth* Was held in utter contempt.

~~2171~~ **Ezekiel 16:57.** *Thy reproach* Rather, the “reproach.” In his march toward Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar attacked and overthrew Damascus and other Syrian towns. The Jews exulted, not foreseeing that this was but a precursor of that ruin which should discover their own wickedness.

~~2172~~ **Ezekiel 16:60.** The promise of restoration must almost have sounded as strangely as the threat of punishment, including as it did those whom Judah hated and despised (~~2166~~ Ezekiel 16:61). The covenant of restoration was not to be like the old covenant. Not “by thy covenant,” but “by My covenant.” The people’s covenant was the pledge of obedience. That had

been found ineffectual. But the covenant of God was by “promise”  
(~~Galatians~~ Galatians 3:17). See

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 17

**Ezekiel 17:1.** Ezekiel, after describing by a figure the circumstances and conditions of the Jews and Zedekiah, the vassal of the Assyrian monarch, warns them of the delusive character of their hopes of help from Egypt, protests against the perfidy which must accompany such alliance, and points out that the restoration of the people of God will be effected by a very different son of David. The close of this chapter is a striking prediction of the kingdom of the Messiah.

**Ezekiel 17:3.** *A great eagle ...* Probably the golden eagle, whose plumage has the variety of color here depicted. The eagle (the king of birds) is a natural representative of monarchs (compare, **Jeremiah 48:40**), and was an Assyrian emblem.

*With great wings, longwinged* literally, “great of wing, long of pinion,” because he has swept victoriously over widely distant lands — of divers colors, because his subjects are of various races and tongues. Jerusalem is here called “Lebanon” because Lebanon is the proper home of the cedar. The “highest branch” or “topshoot” is Jeconiah, the rightful king of Jerusalem, the “young twigs” are his children and the princes carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon.

**Ezekiel 17:4.** *A land of traffick* The land of Babylon.

**Ezekiel 17:5.** *He took also of the seed of the land* Zedekiah the king’s uncle, not a Babylonian satrap, was made king.

**Ezekiel 17:6.** *Spreading* On the ground, not trained to a pole, that it might have no other prop but Nebuchadnezzar. As a vine it was less majestic than a cedar (**Ezekiel 17:3**); but compare **Psalm 80:10**.

*Whose branches ...* Rather, in order that her branches should turn unto him, and that her roots should be under him.

**Ezekiel 17:7.** *Another great eagle* This is the king of Egypt, mighty indeed but not like the first.

*By the furrows of her plantation* From the beds, where it was planted to bring forth fruit for another, it shot forth its roots to him that he might

water it. Zedekiah was courting the favor of Egypt while he owed his very position to the bounty of Assyria.

<sup><3179></sup>**Ezekiel 17:9.** *Her spring* Rather, her growth.

*Even without ...* Translate; and not with great power or with much people is it to be raised up from its roots again.

<sup><3177></sup>**Ezekiel 17:17.** *To cast up mounts and build forts* was the business not of the relieving but of the besieging army. Translate it: when men cast up mounts and build forts to destroy many persons.

<sup><3172></sup>**Ezekiel 17:22.** A contrast between the dealings of Nebuchadnezzar and of Yahweh. Nebuchadnezzar “cut off,” Yahweh will “set up” the topshoot; Nebuchadnezzar “carried it into a land of traffic,” Yahweh will “plant it in the mountain of the height of Israel.” Nebuchadnezzar set his favorite as a “vine, lowly” though not poor, in the place where such trees as the humble “willow” grow and thrive. Yahweh’s favorite is like the “lofty cedar, eminent upon a high mountain.”

*The highest branch of the high cedar* The rightful representative of the royal house of David, the Messiah.

*Tender one* The Messiah. This prophecy rests upon <sup><3101></sup>Isaiah 11:1,10.

<sup><3173></sup>**Ezekiel 17:23.** *In the mountain of the height of Israel* The parallel passage (<sup><3104></sup>Ezekiel 20:40) points to the mountain on which the temple stood. But it is not here the actual Mount Moriah so much as the kingdom of which that mountain was the representative, the seat of the throne of the anointed Son of God (<sup><3105></sup>Psalms 2:6; compare 40:2).

*All fowl of every wing* (or, of every kind) are those who flock from all lands to this kingdom. Compare <sup><3132></sup>Matthew 13:32.

The prophet brings prominently forward the future exaltation of the king; and he furnishes us thereby with hope, encouragement, and consolation, at such times as we see the Church of Christ in like depression.

<sup><3174></sup>**Ezekiel 17:24.** *The trees of the field* The kingdoms of the world as contrasted with the kingdom of God. The truth here enunciated is a general one. God gives the promise, God fulfils it.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 18

**Ezekiel 18:1.** The last verse of Ezekiel 17 gives occasion for a declaration of the principle upon which God's providential dispensations proceed, namely, that every individual shall be equitably dealt with — a principle that precludes the children from either presuming on the father's merits or despairing on account of the father's guilt. This chapter is an enlargement of <sup><2612></sup>Jeremiah 31:29, and sets forth fully the doctrine of individual responsibility.

**Ezekiel 18:2.** *Concerning the land of Israel* Rather, "in the land of Israel," i.e., upon Israel's soil, the last place where such a paganish saying should be expected. The saying was general among the people both in Palestine and in exile; and expressed the excuse wherewith they ascribed their miserable condition to anyone's fault but their own — to a blind fate such as the pagan recognized, instead of the discriminating judgment of an All-holy God.

**Ezekiel 18:4.** *All souls are mine* Man is not simply to ascribe his existence to earthly parents, but to acknowledge as his Father Him who created man in His own image, and who gave and gives him the spirit of life. The relation of father to son is merged in the common relation of all (father and son alike) as sons to their heavenly Father.

**Ezekiel 18:6.** *Eaten, upon the mountains* At the feast of idols, in contradiction to the command of <sup><6127></sup>Deuteronomy 12:17.

*Idols of the house of Israel* Idolatry was so popular that certain idols were counted as belonging to the people of Israel, of whom Yahweh was the true God.

**Ezekiel 18:8.** *Usury* is the profit exacted for the loan of money, "increase" that which is taken for goods; both are forbidden (<sup><8236></sup>Leviticus 25:36; <sup><8239></sup>Deuteronomy 23:19). The placing out of capital at interest for commercial purposes is not taken into consideration. The case is that of money lent to a brother in distress.

**Ezekiel 18:9-13.** *Live ... die* In the writings of Ezekiel there is a development of the meaning of "life" and "death." In the holy land the

sanctions of divine government were in great degree temporal; so that the promise of “life” for “obedience,” the threatening of “death” for “disobedience,” in the Books of Moses, were regarded simply as temporal and national. In their exile this could not continue in its full extent, and the universality of the misfortune necessarily made men look deeper into the words of God. The word “soul” denotes a “person” viewed as an “individual,” possessing the “life” which God breathed into man when he became a “living soul” (~~GEN~~ Genesis 2:7); i.e., it distinguishes “personality” from “nationality,” and this introduces that fresh and higher idea of “life” and “death,” which is not so much “life” and “death” in a future state, as “life” and “death” as equivalent to communion with or separation from God — that idea of life and death which was explained by our Lord in the Gospel of John (John 8), and by Paul in Romans 8.

~~EZK~~ **Ezekiel 18:19.** *Why?* ... Rather, “Why doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?”

~~EZK~~ **Ezekiel 18:25.** *Equal* literally, “weighed out, balanced.” Man’s ways are arbitrary, God’s ways are governed by a self-imposed law, which makes all consistent and harmonious.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 19

Ezekiel regarded Zedekiah as an interloper (<sup><370></sup>Ezekiel 17:1 note), therefore he here (in Ezekiel 19) passes over Jehoiakim and Zedekiah as mere creatures of Egypt and of Babylon, and recognizes Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin as the only legitimate sovereigns since the time of Josiah. This dirge is for them, while it warns the usurper Zedekiah of an approaching fate similar to that of the two earlier kings.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:1.** *Princes of Israel* Israel is the whole nation over which the king of Judah was the rightful sovereign. Compare <sup><318></sup>Ezekiel 2:3; 3:1,7.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:2.** *Thy mother* The people represented by Judah. Compare <sup><149></sup>Genesis 49:9; <sup><231></sup>Numbers 23:24.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:3,4.** Compare the marginal reference. The short reign of Jehoahaz was marked by violence and idolatry, and was closed by Pharaoh-Necho's carrying him captive into Egypt.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:4,9.** *Chains* See the marginal rendering to <sup><390></sup>Ezekiel 19:9 and <sup><370></sup>Isaiah 27:29 note.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:5.** *Another* Jehoiachin who soon showed himself no less unworthy than Jehoahaz. The "waiting" of the people was during the absence of their rightful lord Jehoahaz, a captive in Egypt while Jehoiakim, whom they deemed an usurper, was on the throne. It was not until Jehoiachin succeeded, that they seemed to themselves to have a monarch of their own (<sup><246></sup>2 Kings 24:6).

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:7.** *Their desolate palaces* Rather, his palaces, built upon the ground, from where he had ejected the former owners.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:8.** *The nations* are here the Chaldaeans: see the marginal references.

<sup><390></sup>**Ezekiel 19:10.** *Thy mother* Judah or Jerusalem. Jehoiachin is still addressed.

*In thy blood* Blood is equivalent to “life” (<sup><0090></sup>Genesis 9:4). The clause is equivalent to “Thy mother is a vine, living in thy blood,” i.e., in the life of thee and of thy children. The excellency of a vine is in her fruitful branches; the glory of a mother in her noble children. Jeremiah was to write Jehoiachin childless (see the note at <sup><223></sup>Jeremiah 22:30); Ezekiel here takes a general view of the king and princes of the blood royal.

<sup><391></sup>**Ezekiel 19:11.** *Sceptres* <sup><490></sup>Genesis 49:10.

*The thick branches* Or, the clouds; so <sup><308></sup>Ezekiel 31:3,10,14.

<sup><392></sup>**Ezekiel 19:12.** This is a dirge; and therefore that which is foreseen by the prophet, the capture and burning of Jerusalem, is described as already accomplished.

<sup><394></sup>**Ezekiel 19:14.** *Fire is gone out* Compare the marginal reference. Zedekiah is regarded, like Abimelech, as all usurper and the ruin of his people.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 20

The prophecies of this section (Ezekiel 20—23) were delivered nearly a year after those of the former (<sup><2800></sup>Ezekiel 8:1). Ezekiel in reply to other inquiries from the chieftains of the people, sets forth their national history, the national judgment, and the hope of divine mercy. This leads up to the prediction of the kingdom of the Messiah.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:1.** *The elders of Israel* These were as in <sup><2840></sup>Ezekiel 14:1, some of Ezekiel's fellow-exiles, designated in general terms by the name of Israel, though more properly belonging to the kingdom of Judah.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:3.** *Enquire* As to the hope of deliverance from the Babylonians.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:4.** *Wilt thou judge them?* We should rather say, Wilt thou not judge them? i.e., wilt thou not pronounce sentence upon them? Compare <sup><2820></sup>Ezekiel 22:2.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:5-9.** The children of Israel in Egypt were warned to abstain from the idolatry of the pagan. This purpose they lost sight of, yet God spared them and brought them into another state of probation.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:5.** *Lifted up mine hand* i.e., sware, because the hand was lifted up in adjuration.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:8.** *Idols of Egypt* These incidental notices show the children of Israel in Egypt to have been addicted to idolatry. Compare <sup><2824></sup>Joshua 24:14.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:9.** *I wrought for my name's sake* Lest it should appear to the Egyptians that Yahweh was a God who would, but could not, save.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:10-26.** The probation in the wilderness. The promise was forfeited by those to whom it was first conditionally made, but was renewed to their children.

<sup><2810></sup>**Ezekiel 20:11.** The "statutes" were given on Mount Sinai, and repeated by Moses before his death (<sup><2820></sup>Exodus 20:1ff; <sup><2830></sup>Deuteronomy 4:8).

*In them* Or, through them: and in <sup><503></sup>Ezekiel 20:13.

<sup><502></sup>**Ezekiel 20:12.** See <sup><1213></sup>Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath was a sign of a special people, commemorative of the work of creation, and hallowed to the honor of Yahweh, the covenant-God. As man honored God by keeping the Sabbath holy, so by the Sabbath, God “sanctified” Israel and marked them as a holy people. Therefore to profane the Sabbath was to abjure their Divine Governor.

<sup><503></sup>**Ezekiel 20:13.** *My sabbaths they greatly polluted* Not by actual non-observance of the sabbatical rest in the wilderness, but in failing to make the day holy in deed as well as in name by earnest worship and true heart service.

<sup><508></sup>**Ezekiel 20:18.** The book of Deuteronomy contains the address to “the children” of those who perished in the wilderness. The whole history of Israel was a repetition of this course. The covenant was made with one generation, broken by them, and then renewed to the next.

<sup><505></sup>**Ezekiel 20:25.** The “judgments whereby they should not live” are those spoken of in <sup><508></sup>Ezekiel 20:18, and are contrasted with the judgments in <sup><503></sup>Ezekiel 20:13,21, laws other than divine, to which God gives up those whom He afflicts with judicial blindness, because they have willfully closed their eyes, (<sup><5812></sup>Psalms 81:12; <sup><5024></sup>Romans 1:24).

<sup><506></sup>**Ezekiel 20:26.** *To pass through* The word also means to “set apart,” as the firstborn to the Lord (<sup><1232></sup>Exodus 13:12). They were bidden to “set apart” their firstborn males to the Lord. They “caused them to pass through the fire” to Moloch. An instance of their perversion of God’s laws.

<sup><507></sup>**Ezekiel 20:27-31.** The probation in the land of Canaan from their entry to the day of Ezekiel.

<sup><507></sup>**Ezekiel 20:27.** *Yet in this* It was an aggravation of their guilt that they defiled with idolatry the land given them for their glory.

<sup><509></sup>**Ezekiel 20:29.** *Bamah* The Hebrew word for “high place.” Another instance of the perversion of God’s laws. When the Israelites first entered Canaan they were to set up the “tabernacle” on a “high place,” and upon this and upon no other they were to worship Yahweh (<sup><1092></sup>1 Samuel 9:12ff; <sup><1094></sup>1 Kings 3:4). But the Israelites followed the custom of the country, and

set up idol-worship on every high hill, and the word “high place” (“Bannah,” plural “Bamoth”) became a by-word (compare “Bamoth-Baal,” <sup>(**צו**)</sup>Joshua 13:17). “Bamoth” occurs on the Moabitic stone, which records the erection of high places in honor of Chemosh. The name “Bamah” was thus a brand of the divine displeasure, and a memorial of the people’s guilt.

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:30,31.** The present state of the people. Those who came to inquire were the representatives of the whole people though belonging to the exiles.

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:32-44.** God’s future dealings with His people:

(1) in judgment (<sup>(**צו**)</sup>Ezekiel 20:32-38);

(2) in mercy (<sup>(**צו**)</sup>Ezekiel 20:39-44).

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:32.** The inquirers had thought that if Jerusalem were taken, and the whole people became sojourners in a foreign land, they would cease to be a separate nation. In their love for idolatry some may have even desired this. But more probably they thought that this very consequence precluded the possibility of such a catastrophe. God answers that He will not allow them to become as the pagan, but this will only subject them to severer trial and stricter rule.

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:33.** The expressions “a mighty hand, stretched out arm” carry back the thoughts to Egyptian bondage (<sup>(**צו**)</sup>Deuteronomy 4:34; 5:15); but then it was for deliverance, now for judgment “with fury poured out.”

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:35.** *The wilderness of the people* A time of probation will follow, as before in the wilderness of Sin, so in the “wilderness of the nations” among whom they will sojourn (not the Babylonians) “after” that captivity. This period of their probation is not over. The dispersion of the Jews did not cease with the return under Zerubbabel; but in our Saviour’s time they were living as a distinct people in all the principal places in the civilized world; and so they live now. God is yet pleading with them “face to face,” calling them personally to embrace those offers which as a nation they disregarded.

<sup>(**צו**)</sup>**Ezekiel 20:37.** *To pass under the rod* i.e., to be gathered into the flock (<sup>(**צו**)</sup>Micah 7:14).

*The bond* The shepherd collects the flock, and separates the sheep from the goats, which are rejected. Compare <sup><5107></sup>Romans 11:7-11.

<sup><5119></sup>**Ezekiel 20:39.** Strong irony. Some prefer another rendering: “Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, yet hereafter ye shall surely hearken unto me, and shall no more pollute My Holy Name etc.” In this way, this verse is introductory to what follows.

<sup><5140></sup>**Ezekiel 20:40.** This points to the consummation indicated by the vision of the temple.

*In the mountain of the height* Or, Upon a very high mountain (<sup><5140></sup>Ezekiel 40:2). Compare <sup><5102></sup>Isaiah 2:2,3.

*The house of Israel, all of them* All the separation between Israel and Judah shall cease. This points to times yet future, when in Messiah’s kingdom Jews and Gentiles alike shall be gathered into one kingdom — the kingdom of Christ. Jerusalem is the Church of Christ (<sup><5105></sup>Galatians 4:26), into which the children of Israel shall at last be gathered, and so the prophecy shall be fulfilled (<sup><6212></sup>Revelation 21:2).

<sup><5115></sup>**Ezekiel 20:45-49.** This paragraph is in the Hebrew text, Septuagint and Vulgate the beginning of Ezekiel 21 to which it belongs, as it contains a prophecy delivered in a form which is there explained. It may, however, be regarded as a link between the foregoing and following prophecies, being a general introduction to seven words of judgment about to be pronounced in development of that which has just been delivered.

<sup><5146></sup>**Ezekiel 20:46.** In this verse occur three Hebrew synonyms for “south,” denoting:

- (1) the region on the right, Teman (1 Samuel 33:24);
- (2) the region of dryness, Negeb (<sup><6154></sup>Joshua 15:4);
- (3) the region of brightness, Darom (<sup><6523></sup>Deuteronomy 33:23).

The variety of terms helps the force of the application. Chebar is in the north of Babylonia; from the north the Chaldeans came upon Judaea (see the <sup><5104></sup>Ezekiel 1:4 note).

<sup><5147></sup>**Ezekiel 20:47.** *Forest of the south* The land of Israel. See <sup><5201></sup>Ezekiel 21:1,2.

◀514▶ **Ezekiel 20:49.** *Parables* Compare ▶517▶ Ezekiel 17:2. The meaning of the prophet was clear enough, if those whom he addressed had chosen to understand.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 21

The first word of judgment (<sup>2101</sup>Ezekiel 21:1-7). Ezekiel speaks first to the people of Israel, shows the universality of the coming destructions, and indicates by a sign (that of sighing) the sadness of the calamity.

<sup>2101</sup>**Ezekiel 21:1,2.** The words and order of words are identical with <sup>2045</sup>Ezekiel 20:45,46, except that for “south,” there are substituted:

- (1) “Jerusalem;”
- (2) “the holy place,” i.e., the temple and its various parts;
- (3) “the land of Israel.”

No subterfuge is left for the people to pretend misunderstanding.

<sup>2101</sup>**Ezekiel 21:4.** *The righteous and the wicked* take the place of “every green tree and every dry tree” (<sup>2047</sup>Ezekiel 20:47); “all faces” that of “all flesh:” to show the universality of the destructions. National judgment involves the innocent in the temporal ruin of the guilty. The equity of God is vindicated by the ruin being only temporal.

*From the south to the north* From one end of the holy land to the other; the seer is in the north, and looks at once on the whole extent of the ruin.

<sup>2106</sup>**Ezekiel 21:6.** The prophet was directed to let the people see him sighing and prostrate, as a sign of the sorrow and weakness about to come upon the people.

*The breaking of thy loins* The prostration of strength; the loins being the seat of strength.

<sup>2108</sup>**Ezekiel 21:8-17.** The second word of judgment: the glittering and destroying sword. The passage may be called the “Lay of the Sword;” it is written in the form of Hebrew poetry, with its characteristic parallelism.

<sup>2110</sup>**Ezekiel 21:10.** *It contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree* The rod is the scepter of dominion, assigned to Judah (<sup>0490</sup>Genesis 49:10). The destroying sword of Babylon despises the scepter of Judah; it despises every tree. Others render the verse, “Shall we make mirth” (saying), “the

rod of my son,” (the rod which corrects my people) “contemneth” (treats with scorn, utterly confounds) “every tree” (every other nation); or, the scepter of my people “contemneth” (proudly despises) every other nation. Proud as the people are, they shall be brought to sorrow.

<sup><2112></sup>**Ezekiel 21:12.** *Terrors* Better as in the margin.

*Smite upon thy thigh* A token of mourning (compare the marginal reference note).

<sup><2113></sup>**Ezekiel 21:13.** Or,

For it is put to the proof, and if it contemneth even the rod, What shall not be? saith the Lord God.

i.e., What horrors will not arise when the sword shall cut down without regard the ruling scepter of Judah!

<sup><2114></sup>**Ezekiel 21:14.** *Doubled the third time* i.e., “thrice doubled” to express its violence and force.

*The sword of the slain* The sword whereby men are to be slain.

*Of the great men ...* Or, The sword of the mighty slain, which presseth hard upon them.

<sup><2115></sup>**Ezekiel 21:15.** *The point of the sword* The threatening sword or terror; as in <sup><0034></sup>Genesis 3:24, “the flaming sword.”

*And their ruins be multiplied* literally, “to the multiplication of stumblingblocks,” that is, so that the causes of their fall may be more numerous. Compare <sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 46:16.

*Made bright ...* Or,

*Ah! It is prepared for a lightning-flash, Drawn for slaughter.*

<sup><2116></sup>**Ezekiel 21:16.** The prophet addresses the sword,

*Gather thyself up, O sword, to the right or to the left.*

Another rendering is: “Turn thee backwards! get thee to the right! Set thee forwards(!) get thee to the left! O whither is thy face appointed?”

**Ezekiel 21:17.** The Lord smites together His hands in anger (marginal reference), man in consternation.

**Ezekiel 21:18-32.** The third word of judgment. The king of Babylon's march upon Judaea and upon the Ammonites. Destruction is to go forth not on Judah only, but also on such neighboring tribes as the Ammonites (compare <sup>272</sup>Jeremiah 27:2,3).

**Ezekiel 21:19.** *Appoint thee* Set before thee.

*Choose thou a place, choose it* Rather, "mark a spot, mark it," as upon a map, at the head of the two roads, one leading to Jerusalem, the other to Ammon. These were the two roads by one or other of which an invading army must march from Babylon to Egypt.

**Ezekiel 21:21.** The Chaldaean king is depicted standing at the entrance of the holy land from the north, meditating his campaign, using rites of divination that really belonged to the Akkadians, a primitive race which originally occupied the plains of Mesopotamia. The Accadians and the Etruscans belong through the Finnish family to the Turanian stock; this passage therefore shows a characteristic mode of divination in use among two widely separated nations; and as the Romans acquired their divination from the conquered Etruscans, so the Chaldaeans acquired the same art from the races whose soil they had occupied as conquerors.

*He made his arrows bright* Rather, he shook his arrow; a mode of divination much in practice with the Arabians. It was usual to place in some vessel three arrows, on one of which was written, "My God orders me;" on the other, "My God forbids me;" on the third was no inscription. These three arrows were shaken together until one came out; if it was the first, the thing was to be done; if the second, it was to be avoided; if the third, the arrows were again shaken together, until one of the arrows bearing a decided answer should come forth.

*Images* Teraphim (<sup>319</sup>Genesis 31:19 note).

*He looked in the liver* It was the practice both of the Greeks and the Romans (derived from the Etruscans) to take omens from the inspection of the entrails (especially the liver) of animals offered in sacrifice.

**Ezekiel 21:22.** *The divination for Jerusalem* The lot fixing the campaign against Jerusalem.



**Ezekiel 21:23.** *It shalt be unto them* The Jews in their vain confidence shall look upon the hopes gathered from the divinations by the Babylonians as false and groundless.

*To them that have sworn oaths* According to some, “oaths of oaths are theirs;” i.e., they have the most solemn oaths sworn by God to His people, in these they trust, forgetful of the sin which broke the condition upon which these promises were given. More probably the allusion is to the oaths which the Jews had sworn to Nebuchadnezzar as vassals (<sup>31718</sup>Ezekiel 17:18,19); therefore they trust he will not attack them, forgetting how imperfectly they had kept their oaths, and that Nebuchadnezzar knew this.

*But he will call to remembrance the iniquity* The king of Babylon will by punishment remind them of their perjury (<sup>22316</sup>2 Kings 25:6,7; <sup>44317</sup>2 Chronicles 36:17).

**Ezekiel 21:25.** *Profane* Rather, “wounded,” — not dead but — having a death-wound. The prophet, turning from the general crowd, addresses Zedekiah.

*When iniquity shall have an end* i.e., at the time when iniquity shall be closed with punishment. So in <sup>31719</sup>Ezekiel 21:29.

**Ezekiel 21:26.** The diadem (“the mitre,” the unique head-dress of the high priest) shall be removed, and the crown taken off (this shall not be as it is), the low exalted, and the high abased. Glory shall be removed alike from priest and king; the present glory and power attached to the government of God’s people shall be quite removed.

**Ezekiel 21:27.** *It shall be no more* Or, “This also shall not be;” the present state of things shall not continue: all shall be confusion “until He come” to whom the dominion belongs of right. Not Zedekiah but Jeconiah and his descendants were the rightful heirs of David’s throne. Through the restoration of the true line was there hope for Judah (compare <sup>01910</sup>Genesis 49:10), the promised King in whom all power shall rest — the Son of David — Messiah the Prince. Thus the prophecy of destruction ends for Judah in the promise of restoration (as in <sup>31910</sup>Ezekiel 20:40ff).

**Ezekiel 21:28.** The burden of the Song of the Sword, also in the form of poetry, is again taken up, directed now against the Ammonites, who, exulting in Judah’s destruction, fondly deemed that they were

themselves to escape. For Judah there is yet hope, for Ammon irremediable ruin.

*Their reproach* The scorn with which they reproach Judah (marginal references).

*The sword ... the glittering* Or, “the sword is drawn for the slaughter; it is furbished that it may detour, in order that it may glitter.” In the Septuagint (and Vulgate) the sword is addressed; e.g., Septuagint, “Arise that thou mayest shine.”

⚔️ **Ezekiel 21:29.** *Whiles ... unto thee* A parenthesis. The Ammonites had their false diviners who deluded with vain hopes.

*To bring thee upon the necks of them that are slain* To cast thee (Ammon) upon the heap of slaughtered men.

*Shall have an end* Shall have its final doom.

⚔️ **Ezekiel 21:30.** *Shall I cause it to return ...* Or, Back to its sheath! The work of the sword is over.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 22

The fourth word of judgment (<sup>2201</sup>Ezekiel 22:1-16). The sins which have brought ruin upon Jerusalem are the sins which disgraced the pagan inhabitants of Canaan, whom the Israelites were to cast out (compare Leviticus 18). The commission of like sins would insure like judgment.

<sup>2204</sup>**Ezekiel 22:4.** *Thy days*, i.e., of judgment; “thy years,” i.e., of visitation (compare <sup>2205</sup>Ezekiel 20:25,39).

*A reproach ... a mocking* Judah shall be like the Ammonites (<sup>2208</sup>Ezekiel 21:28).

<sup>2205</sup>**Ezekiel 22:5.** i.e., Countries near and afar oft shall mock thee, saying, “Ah! defiled in name; Ah! full of turbulence!”

<sup>2206</sup>**Ezekiel 22:6.** Render it: Behold the princes of Israel, each according to his might (literally “arm”) have been in thee in order to shed blood. They looked to might not right.

<sup>2210</sup>**Ezekiel 22:10.** *Set apart for pollution* Or, “unclean by reason of impurity” (<sup>2211</sup>Leviticus 12:2).

<sup>2216</sup>**Ezekiel 22:16.** *Thou shalt take ...* Better as in the margin. Thou shalt by thine own fault forfeit the privileges of a holy nation.

<sup>2217</sup>**Ezekiel 22:17-22.** The fifth word of judgment. The furnace. In the besieged city the people shall be tried and purged.

<sup>2218</sup>**Ezekiel 22:18.** *Dross* A frequent metaphor which denotes not only the corruption of the people, who have become like base metal, but also a future purification whereby, the “dross” being burned away, the remnant of good may appear.

<sup>2223</sup>**Ezekiel 22:23-31.** The sixth word of judgment. The special sins of princes, priests, and people.

<sup>2226</sup>**Ezekiel 22:26.** *Violated* Better as in margin; to offer “violence” to the Law is to misinterpret it. It was the special office of the priests to keep

up the distinction between “holy” and “unholy,” “clean” and “unclean” (~~18100~~ Leviticus 10:10).

~~3528~~ **Ezekiel 22:28.** See the marginal reference note.

~~3529~~ **Ezekiel 22:30.** The land might be said to perish for the lack of such interpositions as saved their forefathers when Moses “stood in the gap.” This was a proof of the general corruption, that there was not in the city sufficient righteousness to save it from utter destruction. Prince, prophet, priest, all fail.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 23

<sup><521></sup>**Ezekiel 23:1.** The seventh word of judgment. The allegory of Aholah and Aholibah.

<sup><522></sup>**Ezekiel 23:2.** *Of one mother* Israel and Judah were branches of the same stock.

<sup><524></sup>**Ezekiel 23:4.** *Aholah ... and Aholibah* More correctly “Oholah” (“her own tent or tabernacle”) and “Oholibah” (“My tent or tabernacle is in her”): names chosen to express that after the division Israel set up her own tabernacle in the place of the temple in which God dwelt (<sup><1122></sup>1 Kings 12:32), while with Judah the Temple of God still remained. The presence of God aggravated Judah’s sins. In the times of the captivity it was customary among the Jews to give their children names connected with the temple or tabernacle.

<sup><526></sup>**Ezekiel 23:6.** The army of the Assyrians is described. War-horses formed an important part in the armies of Assyria and Egypt; Israel was deficient in this respect (<sup><2318></sup>Isaiah 36:8).

<sup><529></sup>**Ezekiel 23:9.** For the cause which at last brought destruction on Israel, see marginal reference.

<sup><530></sup>**Ezekiel 23:10.** *Famous* Or, “infamous among women;” literally as in the margin, i.e., a byword among women.

<sup><531></sup>**Ezekiel 23:11.** The idolatries of Manasseh’s reign exceeded all that had gone before either in Israel or in Judah (<sup><221></sup>2 Kings 21:1-16; <sup><1431></sup>2 Chronicles 33:1-10).

<sup><534></sup>**Ezekiel 23:14.** After Israel’s captivity Judah intrigued first with Assyria, then with Babylon, courting their monarchs, imitating their customs, and learning their idolatries.

*Pourtrayed upon the wall* The monuments of Nineveh show how the walls of its palaces were adorned with figures precisely answering to this description. There is evidence that these sculptures were highly colored with vermilion, or rather, red ochre.

<sup><6236></sup>**Ezekiel 23:16.** The sending of “messengers” refers to the act of Ahaz (<sup><12167></sup>2 Kings 16:7).

<sup><6237></sup>**Ezekiel 23:17.** After Josiah’s death and the usurpation of dominion by the Egyptians, the Babylonians were no doubt welcomed as friends (<sup><12141></sup>2 Kings 24:1). But the Jews were soon tired of their alliance and disgusted with their friends, and this led to the rebellion of Jehoiakim and the first captivity.

<sup><6239></sup>**Ezekiel 23:19.** *Egypt* The kings of Judah played alternately Egypt against Babylon, and Babylon against Egypt. Jehoahaz was displaced by Necho for Jehoiakim, who then turned to the Chaldaeans, and afterward rebelling sought aid from Egypt. So Zedekiah was continually meditating help from Egypt, against which Jeremiah and Ezekiel were continually protesting.

<sup><6223></sup>**Ezekiel 23:23.** *Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa* Possibly words expressive of rank, or names of small Chaldaean tribes, selected for their resemblance to expressive Hebrew words.

<sup><6224></sup>**Ezekiel 23:24.** *With chariots ...* Better “with armor, horsemen, and chariot.”

<sup><6225></sup>**Ezekiel 23:25.** *Take away thy nose and thine ears* Alluding to the barbarous custom of mutilating prisoners in the east (<sup><2115></sup>Daniel 2:5). An Egyptian law prescribed this punishment for an adulteress.

*Fire* A mode of capital punishment (<sup><3922></sup>Jeremiah 29:22; Daniel 3).

<sup><6235></sup>**Ezekiel 23:37.** *Blood* One of the chief sins of Manasseh was that he shed innocent blood (<sup><12116></sup>2 Kings 21:16, 24:4).

<sup><6238></sup>**Ezekiel 23:38.** *The same day* The day when they made their offerings. See <sup><6239></sup>Ezekiel 23:39.

<sup><6239></sup>**Ezekiel 23:39.** Yahweh was placed as it were in the list of deities, not acknowledged as the One God. Idols and idol-temples were erected close to the House of God, and yet the temple-service went on (<sup><3834></sup>Jeremiah 32:34).

<sup><6240></sup>**Ezekiel 23:40,41.** The figure is that of a woman decked in all her beauty, sitting on a couch (not bed) at a banquet prepared for those whom

she has invited. This further offence is not one of idolatry, but that of courting alliances with other powers which were not less readily made than broken.

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:40.** *That ye have sent* Better, “they (i.e., Israel and Judah) sent.”

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:42.** *A voice ...* Or, The voice of the tumult was stilled thereby. The tumultuous cries of the invading army were stilled by these gifts. Others render being at ease, “living carelessly.”

*Of the common sort* See the margin — a multitudinous crowd.

*Sabeans* Better as in the margin. The Chaldaeans were noted for their intemperance and revellings.

*The wilderness* The desert tract which the Chaldaeans had to pass from the north of Mesopotamia to the holy land. This verse describes the temporary effects of the alliance of Israel and Judah with the Assyrians and Babylonians. All became quiet, the allies received gifts (incense and oil) from Israel and Judah, and these in turn brought riches to Palestine, “bracelets upon their” (i.e., Aholah’s and Aholibah’s) “hands,” and crowns “upon their heads.”

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:43.** *Will they now commit ...* Rather, Now shall there be committed her whoredom, even this; i.e., when Israel and Judah had courted these alliances God said in wrath, “This sin too shall be committed, and so (not “yet) they went in;” the alliances were made according to their desires, and then followed the consequent punishment.

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:45-49.** The judgment to be executed by the hands of their allies.

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:45.** *The righteous men* Or, righteous men. The allies are so called as the instruments of God’s righteous judgments.

<sup><5234></sup> **Ezekiel 23:48.** *To cease* Because they are stricken and consumed. Compare marginal reference.

*All women* i.e., all countries.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 24

In Ezekiel 24, Ezekiel is commissioned to announce to his fellow-exiles that the destruction of Jerusalem, so long foretold, was now in course of execution, that the siege had actually begun. This he is to declare:

(1) by a parable — of the boiling pot,

(2) by a symbolic act — the abstaining from the usual outward mourning for his wife's death.

**Ezekiel 24:1.** The prophecies in this chapter were delivered two years and five months after those of the previous section (<sup>2410</sup>Ezekiel 20:1). The day mentioned here was the very day on which Nebuchadnezzar completed his arrangements for the siege, and closed in the city (marginal references). After the captivity this day was regularly observed as a fast day (<sup>3889</sup>Zechariah 8:19).

**Ezekiel 24:3.** *A pot* Or, the caldron; with reference to <sup>2410</sup>Ezekiel 11:3. The prophet indicates by the figure utter destruction. The caldron is the city, the fire is the surrounding army, the flesh and bones are the inhabitants shut in within the walls.

**Ezekiel 24:4.** *The pieces thereof* Or, that belong to it; i.e., the pieces which are designed for the caldron, and belong to it as the inhabitants belong to the city. The choice pieces are the choice members of the community (<sup>2410</sup>Ezekiel 11:3).

**Ezekiel 24:5.** *Burn* Rather, as in margin; the bones would serve for fuel.

**Ezekiel 24:6.** *Scum* Better, rust (and in <sup>2411</sup>Ezekiel 24:11,12).

*Bring it out piece by piece* It, the city; bring out the inhabitants, one by one, clear the city of them, whether by death, exile, or captivity.

*Let no lot fall upon it* In the captivity of Jehoiakim and in that of Jehoiachin, some were taken, others left. Now all shall be removed.

**Ezekiel 24:7,8.** *The top of a rock* The blood was poured upon a naked, dry, rock where it could not be absorbed or unnoticed.



**Ezekiel 24:10.** *Consume ... spice it well* i.e., “dress the flesh, and make it froth and bubble, that the bones and the flesh may be all boiled up together.”

**Ezekiel 24:16-27.** The death of Ezekiel’s wife took place in the evening of the same day that he delivered the foregoing prophecy. This event was to signify to the people that the Lord would take from them all that was most dear to them; and — owing to the extraordinary nature of the times — quiet lamentation for the dead, according to the usual forms of mourning, would be impossible.

**Ezekiel 24:17.** The priest in general was to mourn for his dead (<sup>(Leviticus 21:1ff)</sup>); but Ezekiel was to be an exception to the rule. The “tire” was the priest’s mitre.

*Eat not the bread of men* Food supplied for the comfort of the mourners.

**Ezekiel 24:23.** *Pine away* Compare <sup>(Leviticus 26:39)</sup> Leviticus 26:39. The outward signs of grief were a certain consolation. Their absence would indicate a heart-consuming sorrow.

**Ezekiel 24:27.** Ezekiel had been employed four years in foretelling the calamities about to come to pass. He had been utterly disregarded by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and received with apparent respect but with real incredulity by those in exile. Now until the city had been actually taken, the voice of prophecy should cease, so far as God’s people were concerned. Hence the intervening series of predictions relating to neighboring and foreign nations (Ezekiel 25—32). After which the prophet’s voice was again heard addressing his countrymen in their exile. This accounts for the apparently parenthetical character of the next eight chapters.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 25

It was a distinct part of scriptural prophecy to address pagan nations. In Isaiah (Isaiah 13—19), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 46—51), and here (Ezekiel 25—32), one section is specially devoted to a collection of such prophecies. Every such prediction had the general purpose of exhibiting the conflict ever waging between the servants of God and the powers of the world, the struggle in which the Church of Christ has still to wrestle against her foes (<sup>2002</sup>Ephesians 6:12), but in which she will surely prevail.

This series of prophecies, with one exception, was delivered at the time of the fall of Jerusalem; some shortly before, and some shortly after, the capture of the city. They were collected together to illustrate their original purpose of warning the nations not to exult in their neighbor's fall. Seven nations are addressed, which have had most contact with the children of Israel — on their eastern borders Moab and Ammon, to the south, Edom, on the south-west Philistia, northward Tyre (the merchant city) and the more ancient Sidon, and lastly Egypt, alternately the scourge and the false stay of the chosen people. The number “seven” is symbolic of completeness. “Seven” prophecies against Egypt the chief of “seven” nations, denote the completeness of the overthrow of the pagan power, the antagonist of the kingdom of God. While other prophets hold out to these pagan nations some prospect of future mercy (e.g., <sup>2164</sup>Isaiah 16:14; <sup>2406</sup>Jeremiah 49:6,11), Ezekiel speaks of their complete ruin. He was contemplating “national” ruin. In the case of Jerusalem there would be national restoration, but in the case of the pagan no such recovery. The “national” ruin was irretrievable; the remnant to whom the other prophets hold out hopes of mercy were to find it as individuals gathered into God's Church, not as nations to be again set up. Ezekiel does not, like other prophets, prophesy against Babylon; it was his mission to show that for the moment, Babylon was the righteous instrument of the divine wrath, doing God's work in punishing His foes. In prophesying against foreign nations, Ezekiel often adopts the language of those who preceded him.

In Ezekiel 25, the four nations most closely connected with one another by geographical position and by contact, are addressed in a few brief sentences concluding with the same refrain — “Ye shall know that I am the Lord” (e.g. <sup>2626</sup>Ezekiel 25:5). This prophecy was delivered immediately

after the capture of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, and so is later, in point of time, than some of the prophecies that follow it.

**Ezekiel 25:1-7.** The Ammonites were inveterate foes of the descendants of Abraham.

**Ezekiel 25:4.** *Men of the east* The wild wandering Arabs who should come in afterward upon the ruined land. The name was a common term for the nomadic tribes of the desert. Compare **Isaiah 13:20**.

*Palaces* encampments. The tents and folds of nomadic tribes. After subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar (**Ezekiel 21:28**), the land was subjected to various masters. The Graeco-Egyptian kings founded a city on the site of Rabbah (**Ezekiel 25:5**), called Philadelphia, from Ptolemy Philadelphus. In later times, Arabs from the east have completed the doom pronounced against Rabbah.

**Ezekiel 25:7.** *For a spoil* Or, for a portion.

**Ezekiel 25:8.** Prophecies against Moab which lay south of Ammon, and shared Ammon's implacable hostility to the children of Israel.

Seir was close to Moab. Edom is identified with Mount "Seir" in Ezekiel 35; and "Seir" is therefore probably coupled with "Moab" here because, being near neighbors closely leagued together, they expressed a common exultation at Jerusalem's fall.

**Ezekiel 25:9.** *I will open the side ...* i.e., lay it open to the attack of the enemy from the cities, from his cities, from his frontier (or, in every quarter). There is an ironical stress on "his" cities, because these cities belonged not to Moab but to Israel, having been assigned to the Reubenites (**Numbers 32:38**; **Joshua 13:20**). They lay to the north of the river Arnon, which was the proper boundary of Moab (**Numbers 21:13**). The Moabites had in the last days of the kingdom of Israel recovered this territory (**Isaiah 16**). They still occupied this land in the time of Ezekiel (see **Jeremiah 48**).

*The glory of the country* This tract, belonging to the district called by the Arabians "Al Belka," has been at all times highly valued on account of the excellence of its pastures for cattle. The most southern of these three cities is Kiriathaim, called on the Moabitic stone Kirjath, and now Kureiyat. The dual termination of the name Kiriath-"aim," is explained by the fact that

Kureiyat is situated on two sister hillocks half a mile apart, both covered by the ancient city. It is situated about eight miles north of the Arnon, and seven miles east of the shore of the Dead Sea. Baal-meon is about ten miles north of Kureiyat — known at present as Main. It is probable that Kiriathaim was the “Kirjath-Huzoth” (city of streets), and Baal-meon, the “Bamoth-Baal” (high places of Baal), to which Balak took Balaam (<sup>4029</sup>Numbers 22:39,41). Baal-meon occurs on the Moabitic stone as a place which Mesa built or fortified. He probably erected a stronghold on the old locality, reviving the ancient name. Beth-jeshimoth is identified with a knoll at the northeasternmost point of the Dead Sea.

<sup>3510</sup>**Ezekiel 25:10.** Ammon and Moab, of common origin, whose lands had so often been interchanged, shall now share a common ruin. To “the men of the east” (<sup>3504</sup>Ezekiel 25:4) shall Moab with Ammon be given, that Ammon may be remembered no more, and judgment be executed on Moab.

<sup>3512</sup>**Ezekiel 25:12.** Edom, so named from Esau, consisted of various tribes enumerated in Genesis 36. The Edomites became a powerful nation before the Israelites came out of Egypt. David conquered them, but in the reign of Joram they rebelled and were not again subdued (<sup>1180</sup>2 Kings 8:20). Under the name of Idumea the land was conquered by John Hyrcanus (compare <sup>3514</sup>Ezekiel 25:14), when many of the people adopted the religion of the Jews. In later times the Idumean Herod became king of Palestine, reckoning himself as a Jew. Mount Seir, deserted by its original inhabitants, was occupied by a tribe of Arabians (the Nabatheans), under whom Petra rose and continued a flourishing city under Roman dominion, until the tide of Mahometan conquest brought it to that ruin in which Edom at last found the complete fulfillment of the prophecies uttered against it (Ezekiel 35).

*Taking vengeance* Referring to the wrong done by Jacob to Esau (<sup>0275</sup>Genesis 27:36).

<sup>3513</sup>**Ezekiel 25:13.** *From Teman ...* Or “from Teman” even unto “Dedan,” “shall they fall.” Teman and Dedan were districts (not cities), the former in the south (<sup>3506</sup>Ezekiel 20:46 note), the latter in the north (“over the whole country”).

<sup><3515></sup>**Ezekiel 25:15-17.** The Philistines occupying lands to the south of Judah were a Hamite race (<sup><0104></sup>Genesis 10:14), but of a different branch from the Canaanites. They were a powerful people never dispossessed by the Israelites (<sup><0638></sup>Joshua 13:3). They were a thorn in the side of the chosen people throughout, and joined in attacking Jerusalem in the day of her trouble. They were much reduced by the Assyrians (<sup><2343></sup>Isaiah 14:31), and Egyptians (Jeremiah 47), before the time of this prophecy, but further destruction came upon them in the general ruin of the inhabitants of Canaan, which commenced with the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup><3516></sup>**Ezekiel 25:16.** *Cherethims* The inhabitants of the southern portion of Philistia (<sup><3015></sup>Zephaniah 2:5).

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 26

**Ezekiel 26:1.** Prophecies against Tyre. The siege of Tyre lasted thirteen years beginning 585 B.C., about three years after the capture of Jerusalem. While besieging Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar had driven Pharaoh Hophra back to the borders of Egypt. Tyre being thus relieved from a dangerous enemy, was exulting in her own deliverance, and in her neighbor's ruin, when Ezekiel predicted the calamity about to befall her. The name Tyre means rock, and was given to the city in consequence of its position. This island-rock was the heart of Tyre, and the town upon the continent — called "Old Tyre," possibly as having been the temporary position of the first settlers — was the outgrowth of the island city. The scanty records of ancient history give no, distinct evidence of the capture of insular Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar; but the fact is very probable. Compare especially **Ezekiel 26:7-12; 29:18.** The present state of Tyre is one of utter desolation, though the end was long delayed (compare Isaiah 23). Tyre was great and wealthy under Persian, Greek, Roman, and even Muslim masters. The final ruin of Tyre was due to the sultan of Egypt (1291 A.D.).

*In the first day of the month* The number of the month being omitted, many suppose "the month" to mean the month when Jerusalem was taken (the rebirth month), called "the month," as being so well known. The capture of the city is known to have taken place on "the ninth day of the fourth month" and its destruction on "the seventh day of the fifth month." This prophecy therefore preceded by a few days the capture of the city. The condition of Jerusalem in the latter months of its siege was such that the Tyrians may well have exulted as though it had already fallen.

**Ezekiel 26:2.** *Gates* i.e., one gate of two leaves.

*The people* Or, the peoples (and in **Ezekiel 27:3**), the plural expressing the fact that many peoples passed through Jerusalem, as the central place on the highway of commerce, e.g., in the reign of Solomon. This was viewed with jealousy by Tyre, who owed her greatness to the same cause, and in the true spirit of mercantile competition exulted in the thought that the trade of Jerusalem would be diverted into her markets. Render it: Aha!

She is broken — the gate of the peoples! She is turned unto me. I shall be filled. She is laid waste.

**Ezekiel 26:6.** *Her daughters ...* The subject states upon the mainland, on which she at this time relied for supplies.

**Ezekiel 26:7-14.** The description of the siege is that of a town invested by land.

**Ezekiel 26:7.** *Nebuchadrezzar* <sup><2010></sup>Jeremiah 21:2 note.

**Ezekiel 26:8.** *Lift up the buckler* i.e., set a wall of shields, under cover of which the walls could be approached.

**Ezekiel 26:9.** *Engines of war* Or, his battering ram. “axes” swords. They who would break down the towers, rush on with their swords to slay the defenders.

**Ezekiel 26:11.** *Garrisons* pillars, on which stood statues of some protecting god. Compare <sup><1210></sup>2 Kings 10:26.

**Ezekiel 26:14.** The siege had been on land, but the victory was to be completed by the subjection of the island-citadel.

**Ezekiel 26:15-21.** The effect of the fall of Tyre.

**Ezekiel 26:16.** *Clothe themselves with trembling* Mourners change their bright robes for sad garments.

**Ezekiel 26:17.** *Of seafaring men* literally, “from the seas,” i.e., occupied by men who come from the seas. Tyre was an inhabited city rising from out of the sea.

**Ezekiel 26:20.** Compare <sup><2140></sup>Isaiah 14:9. The image used by Isaiah and Jeremiah of Babylon is by Ezekiel applied to Tyre, as if to show that Tyre and Babylon alike represent the world-power. So, in the Book of Revelation, Babylon is the kingdom of Antichrist.

*The land of the living* The land of the true God, as opposed to the land of the dead, to which is gathered the glory of the world. Here then, together with the utter ruin of Tyre, rises the vision of renewed glory to Jerusalem. The coming Messiah is thus prophetically pointed out. The over-throw of

God's enemies shall be accompanied by the establishment of His true kingdom.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 27

<sup><570></sup>**Ezekiel 27:1.** The dirge of Tyre written in poetical form. Tyre is compared to a fair vessel, to whose equipment the various nations of the world contribute, launching forth in majesty, to be wrecked and to perish. The nations enumerated point out Tyre as the center of commerce between the eastern and western world. This position, occupied for a short time by Jerusalem, was long maintained by Tyre, until the erection of Alexandria supplanted her in this traffic. Compare the dirge of Babylon (<sup><240></sup>Isaiah 14:3-23); in each case the city named represents the world-power antagonistic to God.

<sup><570></sup>**Ezekiel 27:3.** *Entry* literally, “entries.” Ancient Tyre had two ports, that called the Sidonian to the north, the Egyptian to the south; the former exists to the present day. The term “entry of the sea” is naturally enough applied to a harbor as a place from which ships enter and return from the sea. The city was known in the earliest times as “Tyre the port.”

<sup><570></sup>**Ezekiel 27:5.** *Fir-trees (or, cypress) of Senir* The name by which the Amorites knew Mount Hermon.

<sup><570></sup>**Ezekiel 27:6.** *The company ... ivory* Rather, “thy benches (or, deck) made thy of ivory with boxwood” (or, larch), i.e., boxwood inlaid with ivory.

*The isles* (or, coasts) *of Chittim* is a phrase used constantly for Greece and the Grecian islands. It may probably be extended to other islands in the Mediterranean sea (<sup><0105></sup>Genesis 10:5), and there ivory may have been brought from the coasts of North Africa.

<sup><570></sup>**Ezekiel 27:7.** Or, “Fine linen (<sup><0142></sup>Genesis 41:42) with embroidery from Egypt was” thy sail that it might be to thee for a banner. Sails from Egypt were worked with various figures upon them which served as a device. Their boats had no separate pennons.

*Blue and purple* Tyrian purple was famous. The Tyrians no doubt imported from the neighboring coasts the mollusks from which they dyed the fine linen of Egypt.

*Isles of Elishah* See <sup><0100></sup>Genesis 10:4. Elishah is considered equivalent to the Greek AEolis on the western coast of Asia Minor. This and the islands adjacent would very naturally have commerce with the Tyrians. In early days the supply of the murex from the coast of Phoenicia had been insufficient for the Tyrian manufactures. The isles of Greece abounded in the mollusks.

*That which covered thee* As an awning.

<sup><370></sup>**Ezekiel 27:8.** *Arrad* See <sup><0100></sup>Genesis 10:18. An island off the coast of Sidon, now called Ruad.

<sup><370></sup>**Ezekiel 27:9.** *Gebal* i.e., Byblos (modern Gebeil) in Phoenicia, the chief seat of the worship of Adonis, and situated on an eminence overlooking the river Adonis, north of Beirut, not far from the Mediterranean sea. The “ancients” is a term for the council that presided over maritime cities.

<sup><370></sup>**Ezekiel 27:10,11.** The prophet here leaves the allegory of the ship to describe the armies of the Tyrians composed of mercenary soldiers.

<sup><370></sup>**Ezekiel 27:10.** *Persia* The name of this people does not occur in the more ancient books of the Old Testament; but in the books of the exile and after the exile it is frequent. This exactly corresponds with the record of history. It was just at the time that Ezekiel wrote that the rude and warlike people of Persia were rising into notice, soon about to seize, under Cyrus, the empire of the Asiatic world.

*Lud* See <sup><0100></sup>Genesis 10:13. The union here of “Lud with Phut,” an undoubtedly African tribe (compare <sup><370></sup>Ezekiel 30:5; <sup><270></sup>Isaiah 66:19) seems to indicate Lud to be of Hamitic race, not the Semitic race. Both names occur repeatedly on Egyptian inscriptions, especially as supplying mercenary soldiers.

*Phut* Libyans (see <sup><0100></sup>Genesis 10:6).

<sup><370></sup>**Ezekiel 27:11.** *Gammadims* Rendered by Septuagint “watchmen;” by others, “brave warriors;” but more probably the name of some nation of which we have no record. The custom of hanging shields upon the walls of a town by way of ornament seems to have been of purely Phoenician origin, and thence introduced by Solomon into Jerusalem (<sup><1100></sup>1 Kings 10:16).

<sup><3272></sup>**Ezekiel 27:12-24.** The thread broken at <sup><3278></sup>Ezekiel 27:8 is taken up, and the various nations are enumerated which traded with Tyre.

<sup><3272></sup>**Ezekiel 27:12.** *Tarshish* Tartessus in Spain (marginal references). Spain was rich in the metals named.

*Merchant* Especially applied to those who traveled about with caravans to carry on trade (see <sup><0236></sup>Genesis 23:16).

*Fairs* Or, “wares” (<sup><3273></sup>Ezekiel 27:33). The word occurs only in this chapter. The foreign merchants gave their wares in return for the products delivered to them by Tyre.

<sup><3273></sup>**Ezekiel 27:13.** *Jaran* Greece (Ion), including the Grecian colonies in Sicily and Italy.

*Tubal, and Meshech* The Tibareni and Moschi, whose lands were on the Caucasian highlands between the Euxine and Caspian Seas (see the marginal reference), were a fine race of men; from thence slaves have been continually sought. Greece too in ancient times was famous for furnishing slaves.

<sup><3274></sup>**Ezekiel 27:14.** *Togarmah* Armenia.

<sup><3275></sup>**Ezekiel 27:15.** *Dedan* There were two tribes (Shemite and Hamite), each bearing the name of “Dedan” (see <sup><0107></sup>Genesis 10:7). The Hamite (Ethiopian) Dedan may well have supplied for a payment (rather than “for a present”) horns, ivory, and ebony; the Shemite (Arabians), “clothes for chariots” (see <sup><3271></sup>Ezekiel 27:20).

<sup><3276></sup>**Ezekiel 27:16.** *Syria* “Aram” here included Mesopotamia; and Babylon was famous for its precious stones. Many read “Edom.”

*Emeralds* Rather, carbuncle.

*Fine linen* The word (*butz*)<sup><1948></sup> was used only in the times of the captivity. It is a Phoenician word, which in Greek assumed the form “byssus,” properly “cotton,” as distinguished from “linen;” the Phoenicians spinning their threads from cotton wool, the Egyptians from flax.

<sup><3277></sup>**Ezekiel 27:17.** *Minnith* A city of the Ammonites, whose country was famous for wheat (<sup><1275></sup>2 Chronicles 27:5). The wheat was carried through the land of Israel to Tyre.

*Pannag* This word occurs nowhere else, and has been very variously explained. Some take it to be “sweetwares.” Others see in it the name of a place, fertile like Minnith, perhaps identical with Pingi on the road from Baalbec to Damascus.

<sup><3718></sup>**Ezekiel 27:18.** *Helbon* Chalybon, near Damascus, whose wine was a favorite luxury with Persian kings.

*White wool* A product of flocks that grazed in the waste lands of Syria and Arabia.

<sup><3719></sup>**Ezekiel 27:19.** *Dan also* Hebrew Vedan, a place in Arabia, not elsewhere mentioned.

*Going to and fro* Better as in the margin, a proper name, “Meuzal,” or rather, “from Uzal” which was the ancient name of Senaa the capital of Yemen in Arabia. Greek merchants would carry on commerce between Uzal and Tyre.

*Bright iron* literally, “wrought iron;” iron worked into plates smooth and polished. Yemen was famous for the manufacture of sword-blades.

*Cassia* The inner bark of an aromatic plant.

*Calamus* A fragrant reed-like plant (see <sup><1213></sup>Exodus 30:23,24). Both are special products of India and Arabia.

<sup><3720></sup>**Ezekiel 27:20.** *Dedan* See <sup><3715></sup>Ezekiel 27:15. It is remarkable that “Dedan and Sheba” occur both among the descendants of Ham in <sup><1107></sup>Genesis 10:7, and among the descendants of Abraham and Keturah in <sup><1213></sup>Genesis 25:3. This seems to indicate that there were distinct nomad tribes bearing the same names of Hamite and of Semitic origin; or it may be that whereas some of the nomad Arabs were Hamite, others Semitic, these were of mixed origin, and so traced up their lineage alike to tiara and Shem. Here we have, at any rate, a number of Arabian nomad tribes mentioned together, and these tribes and their caravans were in those days the regular merchant travelers between east and west. By her ships, Tyre spread over Europe the goods which by these caravans she obtained from India and China.

*Precious clothes* Or “clothes of covering,” cloths of tapestry.

**Ezekiel 27:21.** *Kedar* The representative of the pastoral tribes in the northwest of Arabia.

**Ezekiel 27:22.** *Sheba* Sabaea, the richest country of Arabia, corresponded nearly with what is now called Yemen or Arabia Felix.

*Raamah* Closely connected with “Sheba,” whose seat is supposed to have been in the neighborhood of the Persian Gulf.

**Ezekiel 27:23.** *Haran* Charrae in Mesopotamia.

*Canneh* “Calneh” (<sup><0100></sup>Genesis 10:10), probably Ctesiphon on the Tigris.

*Eden* On the Euphrates (<sup><2372></sup>Isaiah 37:12). “the merchants of Sheba” Here the towns or tribes that traded with Sheba. Sheba maintained a considerable trade with Mesopotamia.

*Chilmad* Possibly Kalwada near Bagdad.

**Ezekiel 27:24.** *All sorts of things* See the margin, “made of cedar” Rather, made fast.

**Ezekiel 27:25.** *Did sing of thee* Or, were thy bulwarks, i.e., bulwarks of thy traffic. Others render it: “were thy caravans,” thy merchandise.


**Ezekiel 27:26.** *The east wind* Compare the marginal reference

**Ezekiel 27:27.** All who have been enumerated as sharing in, and constituting, the glory of Tyre are now recounted as partakers in her wreck.

**Ezekiel 27:28.** *The suburbs* Or, “precincts.” Tyre rose from the midst of the sea; her “precincts” were the surrounding waters and the adjoining coasts.

**Ezekiel 27:29.** As Tyre is figured by a large vessel, so are the subject-states by smaller boats which accompany the great ship. These terrified by the storm approach the land. Tyre is hopelessly swallowed up, crew and all, in the midst of the sea. The small crafts escape to shore.

**Ezekiel 27:31.** *Utterly bald* See <sup><2478></sup>Ezekiel 7:18 note.

 **Ezekiel 27:35.** The news of Tyre's ruin shall reach to distant isles, to merchant cities who trade with her. These in their selfish love of gain shall rejoice over her who was once paramount over them, hissing out against her curses and scorn.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 28

**Ezekiel 28:1-10.** The prophecy against the prince of Tyre. Throughout the east the majesty and glory of a people were collected in the person of their monarch, who in some nations was worshipped as a god. The prince is here the embodiment of the community. Their glory is his glory, their pride his pride. The doom of Tyre could not be complete without denunciation of the prince of Tyre. Idolatrous nations and idolatrous kings were, in the eyes of the prophet, antagonists to the true God. In them was embodied the principle of evil opposing itself to the divine government of the world. Hence, some of the fathers saw upon the throne, not simply a hostile monarch, but “the Prince of this world, spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high places.” Whenever evil in any way domineers over good, there is a “prince of Tyrus,” against whom God utters His voice. The “mystery of iniquity is ever working, and in that working we recognize the power of Satan whom God condemns and will destroy.

**Ezekiel 28:2.** *Thou hast said, I am a god* Compare <sup><3520B></sup>Ezekiel 29:3; <sup><20B></sup>Daniel 4:30; <sup><4122></sup>Acts 12:22; <sup><5304></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:4.

*I sit in the seat of God* Words denoting the speaker’s pride; but the situation of the island-city, full of beauty, in the midst of the blue water of the Mediterranean, gives force to the expression. Compare the words describing the lot of Tyre as having been in Eden (<sup><3583></sup>Ezekiel 28:13).

*Thou art a man* Rather, thou art man.

**Ezekiel 28:3.** *Thou art wiser than Daniel* The passage is one of strong irony. Compare <sup><2544></sup>Ezekiel 14:14; <sup><20B></sup>Daniel 6:3.

**Ezekiel 28:9.** *But thou shalt be a man* Rather, yet art thou man.

**Ezekiel 28:10.** *The uncircumcised* The pagan idolaters as opposed to the covenant-people.

**Ezekiel 28:11-19.** The dirge of the prince of Tyre, answering to the dirge of the state. The passage is ironical; its main purpose is to depict all the glory, real or assumed, of “the prince of Tyrus,” in order to show how deplorable should be his ruin.

**Ezekiel 28:12.** To “seal the sum” is to make up the whole measure of perfection. Compare the Septuagint

**Ezekiel 28:13.** *Thou hast been in Eden* “Thou” wast etc. The prince of Tyrus is ironically described as the first of creation; but at the same time the parallel is to be maintained in his fall from glory. Like Adam in the enjoyment of paradise, he shall be like Adam in his fall.

*Every precious stone* All the stones here named are found in the High priest’s breastplate (<sup>02817</sup>Exodus 28:17-20), but their order is different, and three stones named in Exodus (the third row) are wanting. The prophet may purposely have varied the description because the number twelve (that of the tribes of Israel) had nothing to do with the prince of Tyrus, and he wished to portray, not a high priest, but a king, having in view a figure which was to a Jew, especially to a priest, the very type of magnificence.

*Tabrets* (or, drums) and “pipes” were a common expression for festivity and triumph.

**Ezekiel 28:14.** *Thou art* Better, “Thou” wert. “the anointed cherub that covereth” In the temple the cherubim and all holy things were consecrated and anointed with oil (<sup>02305</sup>Exodus 30:26ff). The prince of Tyre was also anointed as a sovereign priest — covering or protecting the minor states, like the cherubim with outstretched wings covering the mercy-Seat.

*Thou wast upon the holy mountain* As the cherub was in the temple on the holy mountain, so the prince of Tyre was presiding over the island-city, rising like a mountain from the deep.

*Stones of fire* i.e., bright and shining. Decked with bright jewels, the prince walked among jewels in gorgeous splendor.

**Ezekiel 28:15.** The “perfection” was false, unsuspected until the “iniquity” which lay beneath was found out.

**Ezekiel 28:21.** Prophecy against Zidon. Zidon (mod. Saida) was more ancient than Tyre and was the original metropolis of Phoenicia (<sup>01009</sup>Genesis 10:19), but in the times of Phoenician greatness it ever played a subordinate part. Only once (<sup>07002</sup>Judges 10:12) do we find the “Zidonians” in conflict with Israel. The evil which they did was the seducing them to idolatry (compare <sup>02304</sup>Ezekiel 28:24), as in the case of Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians (<sup>01161</sup>1 Kings 16:31).



The capture of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar increased the importance of Zidon, which was a wealthy and flourishing town when Artaxerxes Ochus destroyed it. It has rallied from time to time, but has never attained to any great consequence, though not in such complete ruin as Tyre.

~~382~~ **Ezekiel 28:22.** *Be glorified ... be sanctified* Or, “get Me glory ... have shown Myself holy” (and in ~~382~~ Ezekiel 28:25).

~~382~~ **Ezekiel 28:25,26.** The contrast of the future of Israel with that of the surrounding nations. This prophecy reaches far beyond a mere temporal restoration. It points to times of more permanent security, when from all nations and kingdoms the Church of Christ, the Israel of God, shall be gathered in, when the power of the world shall be forever broken, and the kingdom of Christ shall be established forever.

This transition from the enemies to the people of God closes the portion of the prophecies against the nations in the immediate vicinity of the Israelites, before passing to the more distant Egypt.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 29

In Ezekiel 29—32 we read prophecies against Egypt which, uttered (with the exception of <sup><3207></sup>Ezekiel 29:17 to the end) in regular succession, predict the downfall of Pharaoh Hophra and the desolation of Egypt.

<sup><3201></sup>**Ezekiel 29:1-16:** The first prophecy against Egypt delivered some months before the preceding prophecies against Tyre (see <sup><3201></sup>Ezekiel 26:1), the prophecies against the nations being given, not in their chronological, but in their geographical order, according to their nearness to Jerusalem.

<sup><3201></sup>**Ezekiel 29:1.** *The tenth year* Jerusalem had been besieged, but not taken. Jeremiah delivered his prophecy against Egypt, about the time when the approach of Pharaoh Hophra's army caused the Chaldeans for the time to raise the siege (<sup><3205></sup>Jeremiah 37:5). This was the solitary instance of Egypt meddling with the affairs of Palestine or Syria after the battle of Carchemish (compare <sup><1247></sup>2 Kings 24:7); it met with speedy punishment.

<sup><3201></sup>**Ezekiel 29:3.** The king is addressed as the embodiment of the state.

*Dragon* Here the crocodile, the great monster of the Nile, which was regarded very differently in different parts of Egypt. By some it was worshipped and embalmed after death, and cities were named after it (e.g., in the Arsinoite nome). Others viewed it with the utmost abhorrence. An animal so terrible, so venerated, or so abhorred, was an apt image of the proud Egyptian monarch — the more so, perhaps, because it was in truth less formidable than it appeared, and often became an easy prey to such as assailed it with skill and courage.

*Lieth in the midst of his rivers* Sais, the royal city, during the twenty-sixth dynasty was in the Delta, in the very midst of the various branches and canals of the Nile.

*My river is mine own ...* It was the common boast of Hophra (Apries), that “not even a god could dispossess him of power.” The river was at all times the source of fertility and wealth to Egypt, but especially so to the Saite kings, who had their royal residence on the river, and encouraged contact with foreigners, by whose commerce the kingdom was greatly enriched.

**Ezekiel 29:4.** *Hooks in thy jaws* Compare <sup><844></sup>Job 41:2. The crocodile is thus rendered an easy prey.

*Fish of thy rivers* i.e., the allies of Egypt shall be involved in her ruin.

**Ezekiel 29:6.** *Staff of reed* The “reed” was especially appropriate to Egypt as the natural product of its river.

**Ezekiel 29:7.** So Egypt was continually proving to Israel, to Jehoiakim and to Zedekiah. The tenses are present not past.

*To be at a stand* Others, “to totter.”

**Ezekiel 29:10.** *From the tower of Syene* Or, as in the margin, “Migdol” (“tower”) was about two miles from Suez. “Syene” was the most southern town in Egypt, on the borders of Ethiopia, in the Thebaid, on the eastern bank of the Nile. The modern Assvan lies a little to the northeast of the ancient Syene.

**Ezekiel 29:10-12.** We have no record of the circumstances of the Chaldsaean invasion of Egypt, but it is possible that it did not take place until after the fall of Tyre. We gather of what nature it must have been by comparing the description of the results of Assyrian conquest (<sup><2372></sup>Isaiah 37:25ff). Minute fulfillment of every detail of prophecy is not to be insisted upon, but only the general fact that Egypt would for a time, described as 40 years, be in a state of collapse. No great stress is to be laid on the exact number of years. The number of years passed in the wilderness became to the Hebrews a significant period of chastisement.

Nebuchadnezzar’s occupation of Egypt was of no long duration, and his ravages, though severe, must have been partial. Peace with Babylon was favorable to the development of home-works, but since the peace was in truth subjugation, it was hollow and in fact ruinous. Further, it is to be remembered that God fulfils His decree by a gradual rather than an immediate process. The ravages of Nebuchadnezzar were the beginning of the end, and all the desolation which followed may be looked upon as a continuous fulfillment of God’s decree. The savage fury with which Cambyses swept over Egypt amply realized all that Ezekiel foretold. Many places recovered some wealth and prosperity, but from the time of Herodotus the kingdom never again became really independent. Egyptian rulers gave place to Persian, Persian to the successors of Alexander the

Great, who gave place in turn to Rome. So thoroughly was the prophecy of Ezekiel fulfilled (<sup>3593</sup>Ezekiel 29:14,15).

<sup>3593</sup>**Ezekiel 29:13.** A similar respite was promised to Moab (<sup>3487</sup>Jeremiah 48:47), to Ammon (<sup>3406</sup>Jeremiah 49:6), and to Tyre (<sup>3235</sup>Isaiah 23:15).

<sup>3594</sup>**Ezekiel 29:14.** *Pathros* The Thebaid or Upper Egypt, the original seat of the kingdom.

*The land of their habitation* Rather, as margin, i.e., the home of the restored exiles.

<sup>3596</sup>**Ezekiel 29:16.** The false confidence of the Israelites “brought to remembrance,” i.e., discovered in the sight of God and man their “iniquity,” i.e., their treachery and perjury to the Chaldeans; their falsehood being made evident when they “look after” (turn to) the Egyptians and seek their aid in rebellion. The ruin of Egypt shall put an end to all this.

<sup>3597</sup>**Ezekiel 29:17-21.** The prophet places this prediction out of chronological order, that he may point out what had not been stated in the foregoing prophecy, namely, that the agent who should strike the first blow on Egypt should be the Chaldean king, Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>3598</sup>**Ezekiel 29:18.** *Yet had he no wages* It is not improbable that the Tyrians before they surrendered their island-citadel managed to remove much of their treasure; but others explain the verse; that the siege and capture of Tyre is to be regarded as the “work” appointed, and the possession of Egypt as the “reward or wages” for the work.

<sup>3599</sup>**Ezekiel 29:21.** Egypt being the antagonist of the people of God, her overthrow inaugurated the triumph of good over evil.

*The horn ...* Or, “an horn to bud forth to the house of Israel.”

*I will give thee the opening of the mouth* When these things should begin to come to pass the prophet’s mouth should be opened to declare their meaning, and to make known the end to which all was tending.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 30

Third prophecy (<sup>2300</sup>Ezekiel 30:1-19) against Egypt, probably to be connected with the previous verses (compare <sup>2500</sup>Ezekiel 30:10 with the <sup>2597</sup>Ezekiel 29:17-21 note). Some consider it to belong to the earlier part of Ezekiel 29 (compare <sup>2390</sup>Ezekiel 29:10,12 with <sup>2305</sup>Ezekiel 30:5,6).

<sup>2505</sup>**Ezekiel 30:3.** *The time of the pagan* The time when the pagan (Egyptians) shall be judged.

<sup>2505</sup>**Ezekiel 30:5.** *Libya, and Lydia* Or, as in <sup>2570</sup>Ezekiel 27:10, Phut and Lud.

*The mingled people* Foreigners, who settled in Egypt. The Saite dynasty of Egyptian kings were especially favorable to foreign immigrants. Hophra employed many of them in his armies, and in this way, according to Herodotus, lost the affections of his Egyptian subjects. See <sup>2425</sup>Jeremiah 25:20 note.

*Chub* The word occurs here only. It was some tribe in alliance with Egypt, either of African race like Lud and Phut, or settlers like the “mingled people.” A not-improbable suggestion connects it with “Coptos,” of which the Egyptian form was “Qeb, Qebt or Qabt.”

*The men of the land that is in league* Rather, the children of the land of the covenant, i.e., of Israel (see <sup>2368</sup>Ezekiel 16:8). After the destruction of Jerusalem Jews withdrew into Egypt (<sup>2437</sup>Jeremiah 43:7). Many of them would naturally enough be found in the Egyptian armies. This is in favor of the later date assigned to this section.

<sup>2505</sup>**Ezekiel 30:6.** See the marginal reference note.

<sup>2509</sup>**Ezekiel 30:9.** *Careless Ethiopians* The Ethiopians, who were dwelling in fancied security (<sup>2305</sup>Zephaniah 2:15), shall tremble at Egypt’s ruin.

<sup>2503</sup>**Ezekiel 30:13.** *Noph* Memphis (<sup>2393</sup>Isaiah 19:13).

<sup>2504</sup>**Ezekiel 30:14.** *Zoan* Tanis, a city and nome of Lower Egypt (<sup>2402</sup>Numbers 13:22). See the marginal reference note.

*No* Diospolis. See the marginal reference note.

**Ezekiel 30:17.** *Aven* The same as “On” (<sup><0445></sup>Genesis 41:45), or “Heliopolis.” The word “Aven” means also “transgression” (compare <sup><3008></sup>Hosea 10:8). Some have thought that here too Ezekiel substituted the word “Aven” for “On” to mark the “sin” of idolatry there in full vogue.

*Pi-beseth* The Bubastis of Herodotus. The hieroglyphic name is “Pe-bast,” the house of Bast (the Egyptian Artemis, the cat-headed goddess). Bubastis was situated on the easternmost, the Pelusian, branch of the Delta. The road from Pelusium to Memphis lay through Bubastis and On. In the days of Herodotus Bubastis was the seat of one of the chief annual festivals of the Egyptians. The Persians took the town and razed the walls. The ruins bear the modern name Tel-Basta.

**Ezekiel 30:18.** *Tehaphnehes* See the marginal reference note. “break the yokes of Egypt” i.e., break the yokes imposed by Egypt, or break up the tyrannous dominion of Egypt over other lands.

**Ezekiel 30:20-26.** Fourth prophecy against Egypt spoken three months before the capture of Jerusalem (<sup><3301></sup>Ezekiel 26:1), and three months after the prophecy of <sup><3501></sup>Ezekiel 29:1. Meantime, Pharaoh-Hophra’s attempt on Jerusalem had been foiled, and the Egyptians driven back into their own country (<sup><2575></sup>Jeremiah 37:5 note).

**Ezekiel 30:21.** *I have broken* Especially by the defeat at Carchemish.

*A roller* Or, a bandage.

**Ezekiel 30:22.** *The strong* Such power as Egypt yet retained at home and abroad.

*That which was broken* The power which Egypt aimed at ineffectually, the conquest of Palestine and Syria.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 31

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:1.** *In the third month* More than a month before Jerusalem was taken (compare <sup>2490</sup>Jeremiah 39:2).

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:3-9.** Fifth prophecy against Egypt: a warning to Pharaoh from the fate of the Assyrians. The Assyrian empire, after having been supreme in Asia for four centuries, had been overthrown by the united forces of the Babylonians and Medes, in the year of the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), which had broken the power of Egypt. This gives force to the warning to Egypt from Assyria's fall.

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:4.** *His plants* Rather, her plantation. The water represents the riches and might which flowed into Assyria.

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:5.** *When be shot forth* Or, when the deep water sent forth its streams.

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:8.** *Garden of God* Paradise.

<sup>2590</sup>**Ezekiel 31:10-14.** Assyria's fall.

<sup>2591</sup>**Ezekiel 31:11.** More accurately: Therefore I will deliver him, etc ... he shall surely deal with him. I have driven him out, etc.

<sup>2594</sup>**Ezekiel 31:14.** *Their trees* Rather, as in the margin, "standing unto themselves" meaning "standing in their own strength." The clause will then run thus: "Neither all that drink water stand up" in their own strength. "All that drink water" means mighty princes to whom wealth and prosperity flow in. The Egyptians owed everything to the waters of the Nile. The substance is, that Assyria's fall was decreed in order that the mighty ones of the earth might learn not to exalt themselves in pride or to rely on themselves, seeing that they must share the common lot of mortality.

<sup>2595</sup>**Ezekiel 31:15-17.** Effect of Assyria's fall.

<sup>2595</sup>**Ezekiel 31:15.** *I covered the deep* To cover with sack-cloth was an expression of mourning (<sup>2573</sup>Ezekiel 27:31). The deep, the source of Assyria's prosperity (<sup>2590</sup>Ezekiel 31:4), was made to mourn, being dried up instead of giving forth its waters, its glad abundance.

*For him* Upon his account.

*Floods ... great waters* Or, rivers ... the multitude of waters (as in <sup><5104></sup>Ezekiel 31:4,5).

Lebanon represents the country which Assyria governed; “the trees,” the tributary princes.

<sup><5116></sup>**Ezekiel 31:16.** See the marginal references.

<sup><5117></sup>**Ezekiel 31:17.** *His arm ...* The subject princes who were his strength and support in war.

<sup><5118></sup>**Ezekiel 31:18.** Application to Pharaoh.

*The uncircumcised* The Egyptians, at least their nobles, were circumcised. Pharaoh should thus be dishonored with those whom the Egyptians themselves deemed unclean.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 32

**Ezekiel 32:1.** *In the twelfth month* About one year and seven months after the destruction of Jerusalem. In the meantime had occurred the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt of the Jews left behind by the Chaldeans (Jeremiah 41—43). Jeremiah, who had accompanied them, foretold their ruin (Jeremiah 44) in a prophecy probably contemporaneous with the present — the sixth against Egypt, delivered in the form of a dirge (<sup>344D</sup>Ezekiel 44:2-16).

**Ezekiel 32:2.** *Thou art like ...* Rather, Thou wouldest be like to (others, “wast likened unto”) a young lion.

*And thou art* In contrast to what thou wouldest be.

*A whale* Rather, crocodile (marginal reference note). Pharaoh should have been like the king of beasts, but he is a mere sea-monster. There is strong irony here, because the Egyptian king was proud of the comparison between himself and the mighty crocodile.

*Seas* The word is often used of the waters of a great river, like the Nile.

*Thou camest forth with thy rivers* Rather, thou didst burst forth in “thy rivers” as the crocodile does from the water into which he has plunged.

**Ezekiel 32:5.** The prophet passes from the image of the crocodile to that of dead bodies of the slain heaped up on the land. Some render “height,” “foulness.”

**Ezekiel 32:9.** *When I shall bring thy destruction* i.e., the news of thy destruction. The phenomena here mentioned are the accompaniments of “the day of the Lord” (<sup>310D</sup>Joel 2:10; <sup>425D</sup>Luke 21:25) or the day of judgment. The fall of Pharaoh represents the fall of the world-power before the sovereignty of God.

**Ezekiel 32:14.** A promise of a return of God’s favor. This concerns not the restoration of Egypt’s original power, but the establishment of the Divine Ruler in the place of a pagan God-opposing power.

**Ezekiel 32:16.** *Daughters of the nations* Pagan kingdoms.

**Ezekiel 32:17.** The seventh prophecy against Egypt (<sup>32:17</sup>Ezekiel 32:17-32). A funeral dirge founded on <sup>31:18</sup>Ezekiel 31:18. The figure is the same as in Isaiah 14, where see the notes. In this dirge Pharaoh is especially addressed. The other nations are represented by their kings, the nations' overthrow being depicted by the king's body laid low in the grave.

*The month* i.e., the twelfth (see <sup>32:1</sup>Ezekiel 32:1).

**Ezekiel 32:19.** *whom dost thou pass in beauty?* Thou art not more beautiful than other nations: thou shalt not escape their fate.

**Ezekiel 32:20.** *She is delivered to the sword* Rather, the sword is put forth. Draw her down as one dragged to execution.

**Ezekiel 32:21.** *The uncircumcised* throughout this dirge is equivalent to pagan viewed as impure (<sup>31:18</sup>Ezekiel 31:18 note).

**Ezekiel 32:22.** ... In Jeremiah 25 there is an enumeration of nations destined to be subject to the fury of the Chaldaeans. Here we find those of them who had already fallen not named by Jeremiah. Asshur is the king of Assyria, representing as usual the whole nation. The king is surrounded by the graves of his people.

**Ezekiel 32:24.** See the marginal referenc. Elam answers to the country known to the Greeks and Romans as Elymais, near Persia and Media. The Elamites were a fierce and warlike people. In the records of Assurbanipal his final triumph over Elam seems to have been one of his proudest boasts. Elam no doubt in the decline of Assyrian power again asserted its independence and was again crushed by the Chaldaean conqueror.

**Ezekiel 32:27.** *And they shall not lie* Better, "Shall they not lie?" or, "Are they not laid?" The custom of burying warriors with their swords, shields, or helmets, raider their heads is well known, and common to most warlike nations.

*But their iniquities ...* They, rested in all the glories of a warrior's sepulture, but their sins followed them to the grave.

**Ezekiel 32:30.** *The princes of the north* i.e., north of Palestine — The Tyrians and the Syrians.

*With their terror they are ashamed of their might* i.e., “When their might and power were terrible to all, they were shorn of their power and delivered over to shame and confusion.” There are here six nations, Asshur, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom, Zidon, which added to Egypt make up SEVEN (see the ~~32:1~~ Ezekiel 25:1 note). The section which contains the prophecies against the pagan, closing with this description of the kings who had gone down to the grave, accords with the general purport of the whole section, namely, the declaration that all the powers of the world shall be annihilated to make way for the kingdom of God.

~~32:31~~ **Ezekiel 32:31.** *Comforted* By the knowledge that his ruin is no more than that of every world-power.

~~32:32~~ **Ezekiel 32:32.** *My terror* Better “his terror,” the terror caused by him.

*The land of the living* The land of God’s people. It was Yahweh who caused Pharaoh to be terrible to His people, and now, when the time is come, Pharaoh is fallen, and he is laid etc.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 33

Ezekiel newly designated to the prophetic office, undertakes his new duty of encouraging his countrymen to hope for forgiveness and restoration.

<sup><33:1></sup>Ezekiel 33:1-20 are the introduction to this third group of prophecies. This is the beginning of the last section (Ezekiel 33—48).

<sup><33:1></sup>**Ezekiel 33:1.** *Again* And. For <sup><33:1></sup>Ezekiel 33:1-20, compare Ezekiel 18 notes.

<sup><33:21></sup>**Ezekiel 33:21.** The date shows an interval of 1 1/2 years from the taking of Jerusalem (<sup><33:21></sup>Jeremiah 52:12). The general news that the city was taken must have reached them, but it was only when the messenger arrived that the prophet's mouth was opened. It is not improbable that a body of men after the destruction of the city joined their brethren in Chaldaea; if so this would account for the lapse of time, and supply a reason why Ezekiel on their arrival should commence a new series of prophecies.

<sup><33:22></sup>**Ezekiel 33:22.** *Was upon me ... was opened* For was read "had been." The prophet was under the hand of God in ecstatic trance on the evening preceding the arrival of the messenger, and continued in this state until his arrival.

<sup><33:23></sup>**Ezekiel 33:23-33.** The exhortation to repentance. Ezekiel first addresses the remnant that still linger in their ancient home, and warns them against presumptuous hopes resting on false grounds (<sup><33:23></sup>Ezekiel 33:23-29); then he turns his eyes to those near him, and points out that their apparent attention to his words was illusory.

<sup><33:24></sup>**Ezekiel 33:24.** *Those wastes* The places in the holy land devastated by the conqueror.

*Abraham* The argument is, Abraham was but one man, and he had the promise of the land, though he did not at once possess it; much more shall we, the descendants of Abraham, being many, retain this promise and possess the land, though for a time we are depressed and subject. Compare <sup><11:19></sup>Matthew 3:9; <sup><11:33></sup>John 8:33,39.

~~4125~~ **Ezekiel 33:25.** To eat flesh with the blood was forbidden (see the marginal references). It seems to have been connected with the idolatries of Canaan. The prohibition was, on account of its connection with idolatry, continued in the enactment of the Council of Jerusalem (~~4159~~ Acts 15:29).

~~4130~~ **Ezekiel 33:26.** *Ye stand upon your sword* Ye put your trust in your swords.

~~4130~~ **Ezekiel 33:30-33.** God warns the prophet against being misled by the compliance of the people.

~~4130~~ **Ezekiel 33:30.** *Against thee* Rather, about “thee.” “by the walls” Rather, within “the walls.”

~~4130~~ **Ezekiel 33:31.** *As the people cometh* literally, as in the margin, i.e., in crowds. Render it: they shall come “unto thee” like the coming of a people, “and” shall “sit before thee as My people” etc., i.e., they assume the attitude of God’s people listening to His prophet. Compare ~~3141~~ Ezekiel 14:1; 20:1.

~~4130~~ **Ezekiel 33:33.** *And when this* But WHEN this.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 34

**Ezekiel 34:1.** The prophet has yet to pronounce a judgment upon unfaithful rulers, whose punishment will further the good of those whom they have misguided. He shows what the rulers should have been, what they have been, and what in the coming times they shall be when the True King shall reign in the true kingdom. Hence, follows a description of Messiah's reign.

**Ezekiel 34:2.** *Shepherds* Not priests or prophets, but rulers and kings (see the <sup><3118></sup>Jeremiah 2:8 note). The most ancient title for "ruler" is a monogram which occurs on the oldest monuments discovered in the cuneiform character. In the Assyrian language it became RIU (compare Hebrew *roeh*<sup><37462></sup> = shepherd). In the traditions of Berosus we find that Alorus, the first king in the world, received from the Divinity the title of Shepherd. The title, as well as the monogram, was preserved to the latest times of the Assyrian monarchy. While the distress and misery of the people daily increased, the last kings of Judah exacted more and more from their subjects and lavished more and more on personal luxury and show.

**Ezekiel 34:11.** Yahweh is the shepherd of His people. He will do all which the shepherds should have done and did not. These promises — partially fulfilled in the return from Babylon, and in the subsequent prosperity under the Maccabees — point to the ingathering of all nations in the Church of Christ the Good Shepherd. Compare <sup><4181></sup>Matthew 18:11: <sup><6101></sup>John 10:1-18; <sup><6125></sup>Romans 9:25-33.

**Ezekiel 34:12.** *The cloudy and dark day* Contrasted with the day in which the Lord will be among them like a shepherd to gather them together again.

**Ezekiel 34:16.** *With judgment* It is characteristic of Yahweh as a shepherd that He judges between sheep and sheep, rejecting the proud and accepting the penitent and broken-hearted.

**Ezekiel 34:20-31.** Yahweh having promised to be a Ruler of His people, the administration of the divine kingdom is now described, as carried on by One King, the representative of David, whose dominion

should fulfill all the promises originally made to the man after God's own heart. Ezekiel does not so much add to, as explain and develop, the original promise; and as the complete fulfillment of the spiritual blessings, which the prophets were guided to proclaim, was manifestly never realized in any temporal prosperity of the Jews, and never could and never can be realized in any earthly kingdom, we recognize throughout the Sacred Volume the one subject of all prophecy — the Righteous King, the Anointed Prince, the Son and the Lord of David.

**Ezekiel 34:23.** *One shepherd* One, as ruling over an undivided people, the distinction between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah having been done away.

*My servant David* David was a fit type of the True King because he was a true and faithful servant of Yahweh. That which David was partially and imperfectly, Christ is in full perfection (compare <sup>4028</sup>Matthew 12:18; <sup>4153</sup>John 5:30; <sup>5807</sup>Hebrews 10:7.)

**Ezekiel 34:26.** The blessings here foretold are especially those of the old covenant. The wilderness (or, pasture-country) and the woods, the places most exposed to beasts and birds of prey, become places of security. Under the new covenant Sion and the hills around are representative of God's Church; and temporal blessings are typical of the blessings showered down upon Christ's Church by Him who has vanquished the powers of evil.

**Ezekiel 34:29.** *A plant* Equivalent to the "Branch," under which name Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesy of the Messiah. The contrast in this verse to hunger seems to favor the idea that the "plant" was for food, i.e., spiritual food, and in this sense also, applicable to the Messiah (compare <sup>4165</sup>John 6:35.)

*The shame of the pagan* The shameful reproaches with which the pagan assail them.

**Ezekiel 34:31.** Translate "Ye are my flock, the flock of my pasture (compare <sup>4271</sup>Jeremiah 23:1); ye are men, and I am your God."

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 35

In Ezekiel 35—36 we see the devastation of Edom, and the restoration of Israel. Edom was included among the nations against which Ezekiel prophesied (<sup>35:12</sup>Ezekiel 25:12-14). But its fuller doom was reserved for this place, because Edom was one of the surrounding nations that profited at first by Judah's fall, and because it helps by way of contrast to bring out in a marked way the better future designed for Israel. Edom is the God-hating, God-opposing power, ever distinguished for its bitter hatred against Israel; and so the ruin of Edom is the triumph of Israel in the power of God.

<sup>35:5</sup>**Ezekiel 35:5.** *Shed blood* Omit "blood:" better as in the margin, i.e., and hast given up the children of Israel to the sword; thou hast scattered the children of Israel in confusion like stones poured down a mountain-side (Mic. 1:6).

*That their iniquity had an end* Or, "of the iniquity of the end," i.e., the time when by the capture of the city the iniquity of Israel came to an end (<sup>35:29</sup>Ezekiel 21:29).

<sup>35:9</sup>**Ezekiel 35:9.** *Return* Or, "be inhabited."

<sup>35:10</sup>**Ezekiel 35:10.** *These two nations* Israel and Judah.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 36

**Ezekiel 36:1-15** is the contrast to the preceding. Now, when the prophet speaks, Judaea is waste. The pagan nations around, and Edom in particular, rejoice in scorn: but the land of Israel is a holy land given by Yahweh to His people, and it shall be theirs. The promises are those of temporal blessings; and although these temporal blessings were typical of Messiah's reign, yet we may not doubt that this prophecy had for its first object the return of prosperity to the land and to the people, after their return from Babylon.

**Ezekiel 36:1.** The "mountains of Israel" are opposed to "Seir," the mount of Edom (**Ezekiel 35:3**).

**Ezekiel 36:3.** *The residue of the pagan* Those of the surrounding nations which had survived Jerusalem's fall, and may have profited by it.

**Ezekiel 36:6.** *The shame of the pagan* The taunts which the pagan heaped upon them.

**Ezekiel 36:7.** *I have lifted up mine hand* i.e., I have sworn. Compare marginal reference.

*Their shame* They shall find their taunts come home to themselves.

**Ezekiel 36:8.** *They are at hand to come* i.e., under Zerubbabel.

**Ezekiel 36:13.** The judgments which God sent upon the land, had so destroyed the inhabitants that men deemed it a fatal land, which brought destruction to all that should occupy it (compare **2 Kings 17:25**).

**Ezekiel 36:14.** *Bereave* Or, as in the margin: i.e., the land shall not prove the ruin of its inhabitants by tempting them (as of old time) to the sin of idolatry.

**Ezekiel 36:15.** *Hear in thee the shame of the pagan* Hear the pagan putting thee to shame by their contemptuous words.

*The reproach of the people* "Thy people" (thy rightful possessors) shall have no cause to reproach thee for want of fertility. Were the blessings

promised here merely temporal they could not be said to be fulfilled. The land is still subject to pagan masters. The words must point to blessings yet future, spiritual blessings.

In the following chapters to the end of Ezekiel 39 the conflict between the world and God is described in its most general form, and the absolute triumph of the kingdom of God fully depicted. The honor of God is asserted in the gathering together, and the purification of, His people. As the dispersion of the children of Israel was far wider and more lasting than the sojourn in Chaldaea, so the reunion here predicted is far more extensive and complete. The dispersion yet continues, the reunion will be in those days when Israel shall be gathered into the Church of God.

**Ezekiel 36:16-20.** The defilement of the people described in order to its removal.

**Ezekiel 36:20.** *They profaned my holy name* Caused it to be dishonored by the pagan who said in scorn, “This is the people of God.” The pagan, seeing the miserable state of the exiles, fancied that Yahweh was no more than a national god, powerless to protect his subjects.

**Ezekiel 36:21.** *I had pity for mine holy name* Render it: I “had” a pitiful regard to “Mine Holy Name.”

**Ezekiel 36:25.** Ezekiel the priest has in view the purifying rites prescribed by the Law, the symbolic purport of which is exhibited in Hebrews 9:13,14; 10:22. As the Levites were consecrated with sprinkling of water, so should the approved rite “sprinkling of water” thus prescribed by the Law and explained by the prophets, give occasion to the use of water at the admission of proselytes in later days, and so to its adoption by John in his baptism unto repentance. It was hallowed by our Lord when in His discourse with Nicodemus, referring, no doubt, to such passages as these, He showed their application to the Church of which He was about to be the Founder; and when He appointed Baptism as the sacrament of admission into that Church. In this sacrament the spiritual import of the legal ordinance is displayed — the second birth by water and the Spirit. As Israel throughout the prophecy of Ezekiel prefigures the visible Church of Christ, needing from time to time trim or purification — so does the renovated Israel represent Christ’s mystical Church (Ephesians 5:26). The spiritual character of the renovation presumes a

personal application of the prophet's words, which is more thoroughly brought out under the new covenant (e.g., <sup>48116</sup>Hebrews 11:16). Thus the prophecy of Ezekiel furnishes a medium through which we pass from the congregation to the individual, from the letter to the spirit, from the Law to the Gospel, from Moses to Christ.

<sup>4858</sup>**Ezekiel 36:28.** *Ye shall be my people* (Compare <sup>4706</sup>2 Corinthians 6:16-18; <sup>4880</sup>Hebrews 8:10. The writers of the New Testament appropriated these and similar phrases of the Old Testament to the Church of Christ. Between the restoration of the Jews (the first step) there are many steps toward the end — the spread of Christ's Church throughout the world, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the acknowledgment of the true God — which justify men in looking forward to a time when the Gospel shall be preached in all the world, and the earth become the kingdom of God in a fuller sense than it has ever yet been. But all these are "steps." Our prophecies look beyond all this to a new heaven to a new earth, and to a new Jerusalem (<sup>4803</sup>Revelation 21:3).

<sup>4886</sup>**Ezekiel 36:36.** *The pagan that are left* Gathered out of pagandom into the community of God — accepted and redeemed.

<sup>4887</sup>**Ezekiel 36:37.** Their sin had prevented God's hearing them. Now their purification opens God's ears to their words.

<sup>4888</sup>**Ezekiel 36:38.** *As the holy flock* A reference to the flocks and herds brought up to Jerusalem to be consecrated and offered unto the Lord (<sup>4887</sup>2 Chronicles 35:7). Thus, the idea is brought out:

- (1) of the multiplication of the people,
- (2) of their dedication to the service of God.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 37

In <sup><3501></sup>Ezekiel 37:1-14, Ezekiel sees in a vision dead men raised to life; its meaning is given (<sup><3571></sup>Ezekiel 37:11-14). In it, the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body is at least implied. Such a figure would only have force with those who were familiar with this idea (compare <sup><0006></sup>1 Samuel 2:6; <sup><18925></sup>Job 19:25-27; <sup><19610></sup>Psalms 16:10,11; Daniel 12). The vision was intended not only to comfort the despairing children of Israel — prefiguring the reinstatement of Israel now scattered and lifeless, as a community restored to their home, and rein-vigorated with spiritual life — but also to impress upon them the great truth of the Resurrection, which was greatly developed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but found its clear and unambiguous enunciation in the New. The prophecy concerns not only the Israel after the flesh but also the Israel of God; it points to a home in heaven and to a life of immortality.

<sup><3501></sup>**Ezekiel 37:1.** *The valley* The same word as “the plain” (<sup><31822></sup>Ezekiel 3:22; 8:4). The “dry bones” represented the Israelites dispersed abroad, destitute of life national and spiritual.

<sup><3504></sup>**Ezekiel 37:4.** *Prophecy* Not in the sense of predicting what was to come to pass, but simply in that of speaking under the inspiration of God. In <sup><3505></sup>Ezekiel 37:5, not “I will cause,” but I cause or am causing.

<sup><3501></sup>**Ezekiel 37:7.** *Bone to his bone* i.e., to its proper place in the frame.

<sup><3501></sup>**Ezekiel 37:9.** *The wind* Rather, as in the margin and as in <sup><3505></sup>Ezekiel 37:5. The bones are the bones of the “slain,” because the scene was one which was likely to occur in the time of the Chaldean invasion, and the fact of violent death reminded the prophet of the miserable condition of the people.

<sup><3571></sup>**Ezekiel 37:11.** *We are cut off for our parts* That is, “as for us, we are cut off.” The people had fallen into despair.

<sup><35716></sup>**Ezekiel 37:16-28.** A prophecy of the reunion of Israel and Judah, the incorporation of Israel under one Ruler, the kingdom of Messiah upon earth and in heaven.

**Ezekiel 37:16.** *One stick* So in the marginal reference the names of the tribes had been written on rods or sticks.

*For Judah ...* To the house of David had remained faithful, not only Judah, but also Benjamin, Levi, and part of Simeon, and individual members of various tribes (<sup>41112</sup>2 Chronicles 11:12-16). Compare the marginal references.

*Joseph ... Ephraim* Compare <sup>19857</sup>Psalm 78:67; <sup>20815</sup>Hosea 5:5ff “Joseph” is the general name here for the ten tribes, including “Ephraim,” the chief tribe, and his companions. Omit “for” before “all.” “All the house of Israel” is here the ten tribes.

**Ezekiel 37:19.** *In the hand of Ephraim* Because Ephraim was the ruling tribe; the words are contrasted with “in mine hand.”

**Ezekiel 37:20.** This sign was literally enacted in the presence of the people, not, like some signs, merely in vision (see the <sup>20815</sup>Ezekiel 3:1 note).

**Ezekiel 37:21.** The gathering together of the children of Israel was to take effect in the first place in the return from Babylon, when the distinction of Israel and Judah should cease. The full completion concerns times still future, when all Israel shall come in to acknowledge the rule of Christ.

**Ezekiel 37:22.** *One king* The restoration of Israel to their native soil will lead the way to the coming of the promised King, the Son of David, who will gather into His kingdom the true Israel, all who shall by faith be acknowledged as the Israel of God. The reign of the One King David is the reign of Christ in His kingdom, the Church.

**Ezekiel 37:25,26.** An enlargement of the promises. The kingdom is to be “forever,” the covenant “everlasting.” This looks forward to the consummation of all God’s promises (<sup>461524</sup>1 Corinthians 15:24,28).

**Ezekiel 37:27.** This gives a final blessing reserved for God’s accepted servants. The tabernacle and temple were outward symbols of His presence. The re-erection of the temple by Zerubbabel was the first step to a restoration of the presence of God. The second step was the presence of Christ, first in the flesh, then in His Church, and finally the eternal presence of God and of the Lamb in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21).

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 38

The last conflict of the world with God, and the complete overthrow of the former. This section (Ezekiel 38—39) refers to times subsequent to the restoration of Israel. As the Church (the true Israel) waxes stronger and stronger, more distant nations will come into collision and must be overthrown before the triumph is complete. Some have thought that this prophecy is directed against the Scythians who had possession of Asia twenty-three years, and in the course of this time had overrun Syria, and had probably made their appearance in the holy land. But in this prophecy there is little distinctive of one nation. It is a gathering together of the enemies of Yahweh to make their last effort, and to be overthrown. The seer passes to the final struggle between Good and Evil, and the triumphant establishment of the divine rule. It is the same struggle which is depicted in the Book of Revelation (<sup><5807></sup>Ezekiel 20:7-10), where John adopts words and phrases of Ezekiel.

There are four main divisions of this prophecy:

- (1) <sup><5801></sup>Ezekiel 38:1-13, describing Gog's march;
- (2) <sup><5804></sup>Ezekiel 38:14-23, describing his punishment;
- (3) <sup><5801></sup>Ezekiel 39:1-16, describing his ruin;
- (4) <sup><5807></sup>Ezekiel 39:17-29, the issue of Gog's ruin in Israel's redemption and sanctification.

Each division is broken up like a poem into stanzas.

<sup><5802></sup>**Ezekiel 38:2.** *Gog ...* Gog of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. "Gog" is here the name of a captain from "the land of Magog" (compare <sup><0102></sup>Genesis 10:2) the name of a people of the north, placed between "Gomer" (the Cimmerians) and "Madai" (the Medes). In the History of Assurbanipal from cuneiform inscriptions, a chief of the Saka (Scythians), called "Ga-a-gi," is identified by some with Gog. Rosh, if a proper name, occurs in this connection only.

<sup><5804></sup>**Ezekiel 38:4.** *With all sorts* Or, "gorgeously;" see the marginal reference. Omit "of armor."

**Ezekiel 38:5.** Libya and Ethiopia, mixed with the northern invaders, are tribes from the extreme south, to show that this is a general combination of the foes of God's people.

**Ezekiel 38:7.** Spoken ironically. Make all thy preparations, they will be in vain.

**Ezekiel 38:8.** As Gog was drawn on to his attack upon Israel in order to his ultimate ruin, therefore his preparations were the first step in his visitation from the Almighty.

*After many days* For "many days." Many a long day shall the hand of God be upon thee, drawing thee on to thy ruin, and in the latter days shalt thou come.

*The land* literally, a "land" once laid waste by the sword, but now delivered from it, whose inhabitants once scattered have been gathered together from out of many peoples.

*Always* Rather, a long time. The mountains were at the time of Gog's advance again cultivated and populous.

*And they shall dwell* Rather, and they dwell. It is a description of the actual condition at the time of Gog's invasion (compare **Judges 18:7**). Such was the condition of the restored Jews in their prosperous days, after which came invasion. Such shall be the condition of the Church previous to the final conflict between good and evil.

**Ezekiel 38:11.** *Unwalled villages* Compare **Zechariah 2:4,5**.

**Ezekiel 38:14.** God will mark the prosperous security of the people, and rise up against them as an easy prey.

**Ezekiel 38:16.** *I shall be sanctified in thee* I shall be shown to be holy and just in avenging Myself of Mine enemy.

**Ezekiel 38:17.** *Gog* is not mentioned by name in any existing prophecy before Ezekiel's time. The reference here shows

(1) that the conflict with Gog does not represent a particular event, but one of which the prophets in general had to speak;

(2) that in the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy we are to look beyond special fulfillments.

Events in the world's history come within a prophet's ken as parts of the divine administration whereby evil struggles against but is overcome by good. As every such conflict is a prelude to the final struggle, so its prediction has reference ultimately to the consummation here foretold.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 39

**Ezekiel 39:1.** The present chapter describes the defeat of Evil and the triumph of God and His people. As the prophet predicted the advance of Evil under the figure of the invasion of an actual army; so he declares the overthrow of Evil by the figure of a host routed and slain, and the consequent purification of a land, partially overrun and disturbed. Some forgetting that this is a figure, have searched history to find out some campaign in the land of Israel, some overthrow of invaders, on which to fix this prophecy, and have assigned localities to the burial-place “Hamon-Gog” (<sup>39:11</sup>Ezekiel 39:11).

**Ezekiel 39:2.** *the chief prince* Or, “prince of Rosh.”

*And leave but the sixth part of thee* Or, and lead thee along (Septuagint and Vulgate).

**Ezekiel 39:6.** The judgment is extended to “the isles” (or, seacoast) to show that it should fall not only on Gog and his land, but on those who share Gog’s feelings of hatred and opposition to the kingdom of God.

**Ezekiel 39:9,10.** *Burn them with fire* Or, “kindle fire with them;” or, as in the margin. The weapons of the army left on the field of battle shall be so numerous as to supply fuel for the people of the land for seven years. Seven was a number connected with cleansing after contact with the dead (<sup>40:11</sup>Numbers 19:11ff), and this purification of the land by the clearance of paganish spoils was a holy work (compare <sup>39:12</sup>Ezekiel 39:12).

**Ezekiel 39:11.** The prophet pictures to himself some imaginary valley (compare <sup>38:45</sup>Zechariah 14:5) at the “east of the sea,” the Dead Sea, a place frightful in its physical character, and admonitory of past judgments. He calls it “the valley of the passengers” (or, passers-by), because they who there lie buried were but as a passing cloud. In <sup>39:11</sup>Ezekiel 39:11-15 there is a play upon words — there were “passengers” to be buried, “passengers” to walk over their graves, “passengers” to bury them; (or, a play upon the treble meaning of passing in (invading), passing by, and passing through.)

*Stop the noses* The word thus rendered occurs only once more in Scripture (<sup><16234></sup>Deuteronomy 25:4) where it is rendered muzzle. See <sup><23418></sup>Isaiah 34:3.

*Hamon-gog* See the margin, compare <sup><33916></sup>Ezekiel 39:16.

<sup><33914></sup>**Ezekiel 39:14.** *Men of continual employment* literally, as margin, i.e., men regularly appointed to this business. As the land of Israel represents figuratively the Church of Christ, the purification of that land is a proper part of the figure to indicate such a sanctification and cleansing of His Church, as Paul describes (<sup><40535></sup>Ephesians 5:26,27).

<sup><33917></sup>**Ezekiel 39:17-29.** The purposes of the past dispensation shall be made clear to God's people themselves and to the pagan. His judgments were the consequence of their sins; and these sins once abandoned, the favor of their God will return in yet more abundance.

<sup><33919></sup>**Ezekiel 39:29.** Compare <sup><44217></sup>Acts 2:17. Peter distinctly appropriates these prophecies (marginal references) to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the inauguration of the Church of Christ by that miraculous event. This was the beginning of the fulfillment. They shall find their consummation when time shall be no more.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 40

The subject of the closing chapters of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40—48) is the restitution of the kingdom of God. This is expressed by a vision, in which are displayed not only a rebuilt temple, but also a reformed priesthood, reorganized services, a restored monarchy, a reapportioned territory, a renewed people, and, as a consequence, the diffusion of fertility and plenty over the whole earth. The return from Babylon was indeed the beginning of this work, but only a beginning, introductory to the future kingdom of Christ, first upon earth, finally in heaven. The vision must therefore be viewed as strictly “symbolical;” the symbols employed being the Mosaic ordinances. These ordinances had indeed in themselves a hidden meaning. The tabernacle in the midst of the tents of the tribes, and afterward the temple in the capital of the land of inheritance, was intended to signify the dwelling of Yahweh among His people; the priesthood denoted the mediation between God and man, the monarchy the sovereignty of God, the people the saints of God, the territory their inheritance.

It was probably a jubilee year when this vision was seen (see the note at ~~340E~~ Ezekiel 40:1). The temple and city were in ruins, but God was pleased in this way to revive the hopes of His people.

An examination of the vision shows the insufficiency of the explanation, which conceives that Ezekiel was simply guided to leave behind patterns on the basis of which the temple should in after days be rebuilt, and its services restored. Not only was this plan never carried out, but it was incapable of execution. The physical features of the land would not admit of the separation of precincts a mile square, surrounded by a territory sixteen miles by forty-eight (~~2680E~~ Ezekiel 48:10). The river, though connected with the stream brought by conduit pipes into the actual temple (see Ezekiel 47), soon passes into a condition wholly ideal, and the equal apportionment of the land to each of the twelve tribes is compatible neither with history nor geography.

The minuteness of the details is due to the fact that it is of the essence of a vision that the seer has before him every line, as in a carefully drawn picture. The numbers and figures employed are not without their meaning. The symbolic numbers of the Temple of Solomon were repeated in the vision of Ezekiel. Among the Hebrews the perfect figure was the square or

the cube, and harmony was thought to be attained by exact equality, or by the repetition of like dimensions. Thus in the ideal temple, as in the real, we find the fundamental measure of 100 cubits square, which is maintained in the temple-court (A, Plan II) and in the court of sacrifice (B). By a repetition of this measurement are formed the other courts, the outer court (o) being a square of 500 cubits, the precincts (B, Plan IV) a square whose sides were exactly six times as long. Further, the “oblation” set apart for the priests and Levites and the city was to be “foursquare” (48:20), 25,000 reeds, and the city itself 4,500 reeds square with twelve gates, three on each side. The courts communicate with each other and with the precincts by six gates (D and G, Plan II) equal to each other and similarly situated. The enclosing wall of the outer court has strange dimensions in order that height, width, and thickness, may all be equal. The minute details are after the same pattern. The guard-chambers, the bases of the columns, are all square. The series of chambers for the Levites and for the priests are in fixed numbers and symmetrically placed. The dimensions of the brasen altar are changed that one part may be the double of another throughout (see <sup>3613</sup>Ezekiel 43:13). The number of sacrifices is in certain instances increased and made more uniform.

Most readers, when they have come to Ezekiel 46, will have been struck with the small number of services described, and with the omission of one of the three great festivals (see <sup>3625</sup>Ezekiel 45:25) and even of the Day of Atonement. Now if we were to expect to find in the vision directions for the reenactment of the temple-ritual, this would be quite unaccountable. But if we view these selected rites in relation to the temple-building, and give to that building its true symbolic character, all is found to be just and harmonious. The vision is intended to depict the perpetual worship of the God of heaven in the Kingdom of Christ. To the mind of an Israelite the proper figure to represent this would be the temple and its services, with people, priest, and prince, each doing their fitting part. The most appropriate services to exhibit this worship would be those of continual recurrence, in which day by day, week by week, month by month, prayer and praise ascended to the throne of heaven; namely, the Morning Sacrifice, the Sabbath and the New moon festival. Here we have the Israelite symbol of perpetual public adoration.

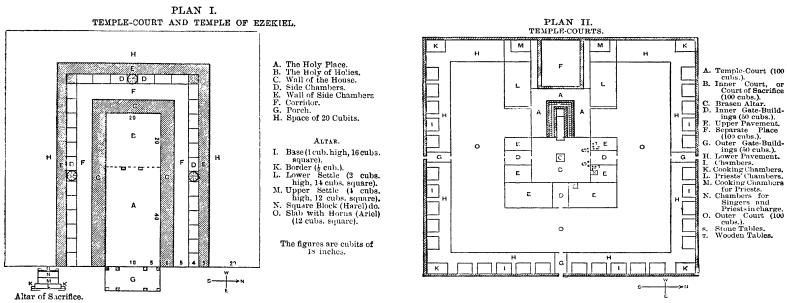
This will also account for the absence of all mention of the high priest and his office. In the old dispensation the chief function of the high priest was the performance of the great Act, which typified the atonement worked by

the sacrifice and death of Christ for the sins of the world. This atonement was effected once for all upon the Cross, and in the new dispensation Christ appears in the midst of His people as their Prince and Head, leading and presenting their prayers and praises day by day to His Father in heaven.

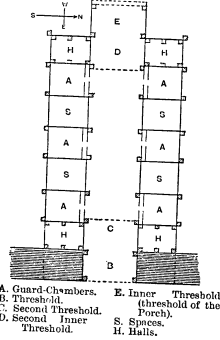
The vision represents the coming dispensation as a kingdom (compare <sup><3604></sup>Ezekiel 34:24). Solomon took a special part in the temple services as king, and here there are new and remarkable provisions for the prince. Special offerings are to be made by him; there is a particular order for the prince's inheritance; and one of the gateways is reserved for him as that by which the Lord, the God of Israel, entered in (<sup><3642></sup>Ezekiel 44:2); and thus is brought forth, as a leading feature in the vision, the figure of a king reigning in righteousness, the representative of Yahweh upon earth.

<sup><3604></sup>**Ezekiel 40:1.** *In the fire and twentieth year* This was the fiftieth year from the 18th of Josiah, the year of his memorable Passover (<sup><4232></sup>2 Kings 23:22). See the <sup><3000></sup>Ezekiel 1:1 note. If that was a jubilee year, which is highly probable, this vision also falls in a jubilee year, which seems appropriate. The jubilee year began with the month of Tisri, a sufficient reason for speaking of the time as "the beginning of the year." The tenth day of this month was the day of atonement (<sup><1865></sup>Leviticus 16:29,30).

<sup><3604></sup>**Ezekiel 40:2.** *By which* Better as in the margin. (compare <sup><3632></sup>Ezekiel 43:12).

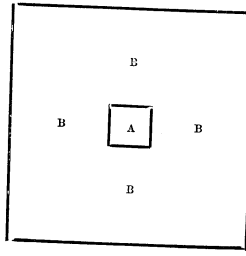


PLAN III.  
GATE-BUILDING OF ONE OF THE  
COURTS OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE.



A. Guard-chambers.  
B. Threshold.  
C. Second Threshold.  
D. Second Inner Threshold.  
E. Inner Threshold (threshold of the Porch).  
S. Synces.  
H. Halls.

PLAN IV.  
THE TEMPLE COURTS AND THE  
PRECINCTS.



A. The Temple and its Courts, 600 cubits square.  
B. The Precincts, 500 reeds (3000 cubits) square.

*As the frame of a city* It is not “a city” which is seen, but a building (the temple and its courts) like a city in its construction, surrounded by massive walls.

*On the south* southward, i.e., on the southern slope, just as the temple actually stood on Mount Moriah. The temple was at the northeast corner of the city — part of the western portion of the city being more to the north, but no part directly north of the temple.

~~360~~ **Ezekiel 40:3.** *The appearance of brass* Brightly shining.

*A line of flax* For measuring the ground plan.

*A measuring reed* For the walls (compare ~~2438~~ Jeremiah 31:38,39). To measure implied a separation for sacred purposes. The measurements are:

- (1) exact, to show that the promise is certain;
- (2) equal, to denote harmony;
- (3) vast, to mark majesty and grandeur.

~~361~~ **Ezekiel 40:5.** The boundary wall of the temple-courts. See Plan II.

*A wall on the outside of the house* The wall enclosing the courts in which were the entrance gates.

*By the cubit and an hand breadth* The Jews first used a cubit of fifteen inches, applying it principally to the vessels and furniture of the temple; next a cubit of eighteen inches (“a hand-breadth” longer than the former cubit); and lastly, after the captivity, the Babylonian cubit of twenty-one inches (a “hand-breadth” more). In the temple measurements they used

only the cubit of eighteen inches; hence, the “cubit and hand-breadth” is the cubit of eighteen inches.

<sup><3416></sup>**Ezekiel 40:6-16.** The east gate-building. See Plan III.

<sup><3416></sup>**Ezekiel 40:6.** *Stairs* Seven in number (<sup><3412></sup>Ezekiel 40:22). Each threshold of the gate (was) one reed broad (or 9 ft.). The measurements are being taken from East to west, i.e., in depth.

<sup><3417></sup>**Ezekiel 40:7.** *Every little chamber* The guard-chambers (A) for the use of the Levites who kept watch in the temple.

*The threshold of the gate by the porch* The second threshold in the easternmost gate-way (c).

*Porch* Hebrew *ulam*<sup><h197></sup>; the Septuagint: *αἶλαμ*; Vulgate: “vestibulum.” The word probably means porch or portico, connected with “ail”= post or pillar.

<sup><3418></sup>**Ezekiel 40:9.** The porch is now measured from north to south in “wide.” “The breadth of the entry of the gate” was “ten cubits,” made up of the “eight cubits,” with “a cubit” for “a post” or pillar on each side (<sup><3411></sup>Ezekiel 40:11).

*Posts* A projection like a ram’s horn; in architecture, a column projecting from the wall with its base, shaft, and capital, or it may be the “base” only (<sup><3416></sup>Ezekiel 40:16,49). Here “post” represents the lower part of the column. and the dimensions given are those of the section of the base.

<sup><3419></sup>**Ezekiel 40:10.** In front of each guard-chamber were columns, whose “posts” (bases) were each one cubit square.

<sup><3411></sup>**Ezekiel 40:11.** *The length of the gate* The length of the gateway (including the porch, E.) from the court to the uncovered space. The threshold was “six cubits,” and the porch “six.” In addition one cubit was probably allowed in front of the porch, as before the porch of the temple itself (<sup><3419></sup>Ezekiel 40:49).

<sup><3413></sup>**Ezekiel 40:13.** This measurement is across the gate-building from north to south. The breadth of the gate-building was exactly half its length (<sup><3415></sup>Ezekiel 40:15).

**Ezekiel 40:14.** *Posts of threescore cubits* Sixty cubits were the length of a series of columns. This gives us another feature of the gate-building. Between the porch (E) and the two most western guard-chambers was a space of five cubits (through which the road passed), forming a kind of hall with columns along the sides. This hall is called the “arches” (<sup>3406</sup>Ezekiel 40:16). A hall of the same dimensions was between the boundary wall and eastern guard-chambers (<sup>3408</sup>Ezekiel 40:31). It is probable that in one of these halls (that of the eastern gateway of the inner court) the prince “ate bread” on solemn festivals (<sup>3418</sup>Ezekiel 44:3).

*Unto the post of the court round about the gate* This hall or colonnade extended the whole breadth of the building to the pavement (<sup>3408</sup>Ezekiel 40:18, H, Plan II). Outside the building on the pavement was a series of pillars.

**Ezekiel 40:15.** The whole length of the gate-building was thus made up:

The thickness of the boundary wall	6 cubits
The hall of the entrance	5 cubits
The three guard-chambers (6 cubits each)	18 cubits
The spaces between the guard-chambers	10 cubits
The hall of the porch	5 cubits
The porch	6 cubits
_____	50 cubits

**Ezekiel 40:16.** The “narrow” (closed and (?) latticed “windows” lit up both the guard-chambers and the hall. On the square base of the “post” stood the shaft in the form of a palm-tree, as we see in ancient buildings in the east.

**Ezekiel 40:17-19.** The “outward” or outer “court” (o, Plan II) corresponds to what was in Herod’s temple the court of Women, into which all Jews, but not Gentiles were admitted.

**Ezekiel 40:17.** *Chambers* (I) See <sup>3812</sup>Jeremiah 35:2.

*A pavement* (H) Of mosaic work (<sup>4008</sup>2 Chronicles 7:3; <sup>4006</sup>Esther 1:6) which formed a border of forty-four cubits. On each side of the court in which there were gates, i.e., on east, north, and south. It was called the



“lower pavement” to distinguish it from the pavement of the inner court; the outer court being lower than the inner (<sup>2481</sup>Ezekiel 40:31).

<sup>2489</sup>**Ezekiel 40:19.** There were eastern, northern, and southern gates of entrance from the outer to the inner court (B).

*Without* Not as in the margin, but looking outward, i.e., the outward front of the inner gate toward the outer court.

<sup>2490</sup>**Ezekiel 40:20-23.** The gates both of the outer and of the inner court. Compare Plan II.

<sup>2491</sup>**Ezekiel 40:31.** *Utter court* Translate outward court (<sup>2492</sup>Ezekiel 40:37; 42:1,7,14, 44:19; 46:20,21).

*Arches toward the outward court* See <sup>2494</sup>Ezekiel 40:14 note.

*Eight steps* So for the east (<sup>2494</sup>Ezekiel 40:34) and north gates (<sup>2497</sup>Ezekiel 40:37). From the precincts to the outer court were “seven” steps, from the outer to the inner court “eight,” making together the number of the Psalms (Psalm 120—134), supposed by some to have been called Psalms of Degrees, because they were sung by the choir of Levites upon the steps (“degrees”) of the temple-courts. In later times these Psalms were used as pilgrims’ songs by the Jews who went up from their abodes in foreign countries to Jerusalem on the solemn feasts.

<sup>2498</sup>**Ezekiel 40:38.** *The chambers* Render it: and chambers, not yet described. They were north of the altar, by the “posts” or pillars in front and along the sides of the gate-building. There were several gates in the gate-building.

<sup>2499</sup>**Ezekiel 40:39.** *In the porch* Not under the covered portico, which was only ten cubits broad (<sup>2500</sup>Ezekiel 40:9), but in the angles formed by the porch and gate-front. If the gate-building projected with its porch forward on to the pavement of the inner court, the tables were fitly placed for carrying out the directions of the Law.

<sup>2500</sup>**Ezekiel 40:40.** On either side of the entrance of the north gate (from the inner court), were two tables on the one side and two tables on the other side of the porch.

<sup>360B</sup>**Ezekiel 40:42.** Omit “the” and “were.” These “four tables” are not the same as those mentioned before. The eight tables (T) were for slaying and preparing the victims, and were probably of wood, these (s) were of “hewn stone.” There may be in the number twelve a reference to the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>360B</sup>**Ezekiel 40:43.** *Hooks* The alternative renderings given in the margin indicate the doubtfulness of the translation of the original word. The form is dual, and indicates that it is some object usually found in pairs. Some suggest that they were borders or ledges set, on either side of the tables, a handbreadth from the edges, to prevent the instruments placed on them from falling off. If the rendering “hooks” be adopted, it is to be explained thus: that these hooks were set on the wall “within,” that each hook was forked (hence, the “dual” form), and projected from the wall one span; and that on these hooks were hung the carcasses of the slain animals.

<sup>360H</sup>**Ezekiel 40:44.** *Without* Outside of the gate in the inner court. See N, Plan II.

*Singers* These were Levites of particular families, those of Heman, Asaph, and Merari, whose genealogy is carefully traced up to Levi (see marginal reference). These chambers (N, Plan II) may have been for the “singers and priests” who were for the time being engaged in the services of the temple. Other chambers (<sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 42:1ff) were for the use of the “priests” at other times; and the Levites and singers, when “not” on duty, would find accommodation in the thirty chambers of the outer court. If there is a departure here from the symmetry elsewhere observed, it may be accounted for by the fact that as the sacrifices were to be made on the “north” side of the altar, and therefore the “tables” for the sacrifices were on that side only, so those who had charge of the house and its singers might have rooms near. Others correct the Hebrew text by the Septuagint, and read the passage thus: And without the “inner gate” two chambers (i.e., rows of chambers) “in the inner court, one at the side of the north gate, and their prospect toward the south, one at the side of the south gate, and the prospect toward the north.”

<sup>360E</sup>**Ezekiel 40:45.** The priests, whose chambers (L) are here provided, were those whose business it was to exercise this oversight which had devolved upon them as descendants of Aaron (<sup>01B2</sup>Numbers 3:32).

**Ezekiel 40:46.** The position of the “chamber” looking to the north commanded a view of the brasen altar and the sacrifices, which were prepared at the north side of the altar.

*The sons of Zadok* The priests were all descended from one or other of the two sons of Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar. David distributed the priestly offices between the families of Zadok, the representative of Eleazar, and Ahimelech, the representative of Ithamar (<sup>134B</sup>1 Chronicles 24:3). From the time of Solomon not only the high priesthood, but the priesthood itself, so far as concerned its service, that of offering upon the two altars, seems to have been confined to the descendants of Zadok (see <sup>135B</sup>1 Chronicles 6:49-53). Perhaps the other offices, such as those mentioned in <sup>345</sup>Ezekiel 40:45, were performed by the descendants of Abiathar and Ithamar. Compare <sup>405</sup>1 Samuel 2:36, and below, <sup>369</sup>Ezekiel 43:19; 44:15; 48:11. The priests who had charge of the sacrifices were distinguished from the rest of the Levitical priests, “as they which come near to the Lord, and (<sup>323</sup>Ezekiel 42:13) the priests that approach unto the Lord.”

**Ezekiel 40:47.** *The court* The inner court (B) where was the brass altar (<sup>363</sup>Ezekiel 43:13).

The new chapter would begin better at <sup>348</sup>Ezekiel 40:48.

**Ezekiel 40:48,49.** The Porch of the House. The front of the temple-porch (see G, Plan I) consisted of a central opening with two columns on either side. Two columns with the space between them were called “a post of the gate.” “The breadth of the gate” on either side was a side opening, that is, the opening between two columns. The columns having bases of a cubit square, two columns and the “breadth of the gate,” which we are told was three cubits, made up the “five cubits” on either side the central entrance, which, like the entrance into the temple itself, was ten cubits. Thus we have twenty cubits for the porch-front.

**Ezekiel 40:49.** The porch of Solomon’s Temple was twenty cubits broad and ten deep (<sup>108B</sup>1 Kings 6:3). This corresponds nearly with the dimensions of Ezekiel’s porch; the difference in the breadth may be explained by supposing a space of one cubit in front of the porch (as <sup>301</sup>Ezekiel 40:11,12). The circumstance of this porch being approached by stairs of probably ten steps makes this more probable, a small space in front of the porch being naturally required.

*Pillars by the posts* literally, to “the posts,” meaning that upon the bases (posts) stood shafts (pillars). These shafts were probably in the form of palm-trees (<sup>36016</sup>Ezekiel 40:16). The porch with its steps must have jutted into the inner court.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 41

The temple (<sup><3401></sup>Ezekiel 41:1-11). See Plan I.

<sup><3401></sup>**Ezekiel 41:1.** *The Temple* Properly the holy place (A), as distinguished from the porch (G) and the holy of holies (B) (<sup><1067></sup>1 Kings 6:17; 7:50).

*The posts* The outer wall of the temple was six cubits thick (<sup><3405></sup>Ezekiel 41:5). The eastern posts of this wall forming part of the front of the temple were ornamented with pillars, six cubits on each side.

*He measured the breadth* This breadth was twenty cubits (<sup><3402></sup>Ezekiel 41:2). Omit “which was.” “tabernacle” is here the interior (the covered portion) of the temple.

<sup><3402></sup>**Ezekiel 41:2.** The measurements are internal, the same as in the Temple of Solomon.

<sup><3405></sup>**Ezekiel 41:3.** *Went he inward* Toward the holy of holies. It is not said, “he brought me in,” but “he went in,” because the holy of holies was not to be entered even by a priest like Ezekiel, but only by the high priest once a year. So the “angel” enters and announces: the measurements.

*The post of the door* On either side of the entrance was a pillar, the two together making up two cubits. The first measurement of the door was from “post to post,” six cubits; and the second measurement, the “breadth of the door,” was the breadth of the actual doors which shut off the holy of holies (<sup><3423></sup>Ezekiel 41:23), and which may have been so, hung that each of the “posts” projected half a cubit beyond the hinge of the door (which opened inwards), so as to secure the complete closure of the holy of holies.

<sup><3404></sup>**Ezekiel 41:4.** *The Temple* here is the holy place as distinguished from the most holy, “the Oracle,” which is “before” the holy place, inwards.

<sup><3405></sup>**Ezekiel 41:5.** *The wall of the house* This was the outer wall of the temple itself. Its thickness of six cubits corresponds with the colossal proportions of the architecture of the east.

*Every side chamber* the side-chambers (D). These were a marked feature in Solomon’s Temple, and were probably used as storehouses for the

furniture and property of the temple. The arrangement of these side-chambers differed in some respects from that of Solomon's Temple, the object of Ezekiel's vision being throughout to bring all things to a more exact proportion.

**Ezekiel 41:6.** *Three, one over another, and thirty in order* i.e., there were three stories, and each story was divided into thirty chambers.

*The wall which was of the house for the side chambers* Not the wall of the temple but another wall (<sup>3409</sup>Ezekiel 41:9) parallel to it, which might be said to be "of the house," i.e., belonging to it. The side-chambers of Solomon's Temple were built against the temple-wall, but in Ezekiel's vision the desire to keep the temple still more separate and holy led to a fresh arrangement, namely, that another wall should be built at such a distance from the temple-wall as to allow of chambers being built against it, facing the temple-wall, and opening into a passage or corridor (F), separating them from the temple itself.

*That they might have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house* that they might have hold but not have hold on the wall of the house, i.e., entirely separating the chambers from the temple-wall proper.

**Ezekiel 41:7.** *An enlarging* The "wall for the side-chambers" had for the ground story its full thickness of five cubits (<sup>3409</sup>Ezekiel 41:9) — then it was diminished one cubit, so as to form a ledge whereon to rest the beams of the floor of the second story, and again was further diminished one cubit for the floor of the third story. Thus there was an "enlarging" of the second story of the chambers by one cubit, and of the third story by two cubits beyond the breadth of the chambers on the ground-floor.

*A winding about still upward* Winding stairs led "upward" from one story to another.

*The winding about of the house* A collective expression for the various winding staircases to the side-chambers which extended on the north, west, and south sides.

*And so increased ...* Rather, "and the lowest story was such that one went by the middle story up to the highest." The winding stairs were not visible outside, so that one could not go to the upper story without passing through the middle story.

<sup><3408></sup>**Ezekiel 41:8.** *The foundations of the side chambers* Therefore the height of the side-chambers from the floor was six cubits there being three stories, which corresponds sufficiently with the twenty cubits which was the height of the temple. “A great cubit” is probably an architectural term to denote the line of junction between two stories, which would be that of the ceiling of the lower and the floor of the upper story.

<sup><3409></sup>**Ezekiel 41:9.** *And that which was left* i.e., the passage (F) between the side-chambers and the temple-wall, was five cubits (<sup><3411></sup>Ezekiel 41:11).

*The place of the side chambers that were within* Within the side-chambers which belong to the house. The seer is giving first the height of the side-chambers (<sup><3408></sup>Ezekiel 41:8), and then the breadth, from the outside of the wall of these chambers to the temple-wall.

<sup><3410></sup>**Ezekiel 41:10.** See H, Plan I.

<sup><3411></sup>**Ezekiel 41:11.** The doors of the side-chambers opened on to the passage or corridor, between the chambers and the temple-wall.

<sup><3412></sup>**Ezekiel 41:12.** *The separate place* See F, Plan II. The word occurs only in this chapter. The name, which seems one of discredit, has led to the conjecture that the purpose of this place and its building was to receive the offal of the sacrifices and sweepings of the courts, to be carried thence by a postern gate (compare <sup><3421></sup>Ezekiel 43:21). The building itself was, we are told, seventy cubits wide, with walls five cubits thick (eighty cubits in all), leaving ten cubits on each side to make up the 100 cubits from north to south. The length was ninety cubits, which, adding as before the thickness of the walls, gives 100 cubits in length. The whole temple-building was 500 cubits from west to east, and from north to south, 500 cubits.

<sup><3414></sup>**Ezekiel 41:14.** *Toward the east* The separate place was measured on its eastern side, for the western was not approachable for the purpose of measurement.

<sup><3415></sup>**Ezekiel 41:15.** The description of certain details is introduced by a summary statement of what had been already done.

*Galleries* On either side of the eastern front of the building on the separate place was a gallery of ten feet, under which was an approach to the

building, by which the refuse was to be carried in by openings in the north and south, and then carried out by a western postern.

<sup><3416></sup>**Ezekiel 41:16.** *Galleries* The upper story of the side-chambers was probably built in the form of an open gallery.

*Over against the door* The rows of the side-chambers extended to the front of the temple, so that they were “over against” the opening, but did not extend so far as the porch.

*Cieled* Overlaid. Pillars, galleries, narrow windows were overlaid with wood (<sup><1065></sup>1 Kings 6:15,16).

*Were covered* With wood.

<sup><3417></sup>**Ezekiel 41:17.** *To that ...* Over above the door ... “within and without” was “by measure.” This verse asserts that all the overlaying was done by careful measurement.

<sup><3418></sup>**Ezekiel 41:18.** On the symbolism of the “cherubim” see <sup><3001></sup>Ezekiel 1:1 note ...

*Every cherub had two faces* Not as in Ezekiel 1, “four faces.” Convenience of delineation upon a wall may have suggested the alteration. The cherubic devices on the curtains of the tabernacle (<sup><1201></sup>Exodus 26:1; 36:8) were no doubt like the cherubim over the ark, of which we have no reason to suppose that each had “two faces.” The symbolic character here admitted of the deviation.

<sup><3421></sup>**Ezekiel 41:21.** *The posts* Not the word used before (see <sup><3409></sup>Ezekiel 40:9 note). These “posts” are rather pilasters forming part of the inner walls.

*The appearance ... other* i.e., the appearance in this vision was the same as in the actual temple (compare <sup><3408></sup>Ezekiel 43:3); (or, according to others, the front of the sanctuary resembled, the front of the holy place).

<sup><3422></sup>**Ezekiel 41:22.** *The altar of wood* The altar for incense (marginal reference); “altar of gold” (see <sup><1078></sup>1 Kings 7:48).

*Walls* The corner pieces of the altar, rising into projections called in Exodus horns, here corners.



*table* “table and altar” were convertible terms (~~30007~~ Malachi 1:7).

~~36423~~ **Ezekiel 41:23-25.** See the marginal reference.

~~36425~~ **Ezekiel 41:25.** *Thick planks* Others render it: leaves in wood (and in  
~~36426~~ Ezekiel 41:26).

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 42

**Ezekiel 42:1.** *Utter court* Outward court, so <sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 42:3.

*Into the chamber ... before the building* to the chambers (See L, Plan II) ... over against etc. “The building” is the temple-building, for this row of chambers was built against eighty cubits of the wall bounding “the separate place” and twenty cubits of the wall of the temple-court.

**Ezekiel 42:2.** He brought me “before” a row of chambers 100 cubits long, east and west. “The door” of which lay on the north side of the chambers. The priests entered from the outer court (o); the breadth of this block of chambers was fifty cubits, north and south (<sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 42:8).

**Ezekiel 42:3.** These “chambers” (compare <sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 46:19) did not reach to the western wall; between it and them lay a court for cooking (M), probably forty cubits by thirty; such court with its approaches filled up the corner of fifty cubits square, as in the case of the kitchen-courts for the people. In these chambers were dining-rooms for the priests (see <sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 42:13), and baths, for no priest could enter upon his daily ministry without having first bathed. “The chambers” extended beyond “the separate place” to the wall of the temple-court, on the other side of which wall was the twenty cubits space. The “pavement” (H) was no doubt continued along the temple-wall, so that these priests’ chambers, like the thirty chambers, stood upon “a pavement,” and were, on the east side, “over against this pavement.”

Translate <sup>360B</sup>Ezekiel 42:1-3, “Then he brought me forth into the outward court, the way toward the north, and he brought me to the chambers which were over against the separate place, and which were over against the building, toward the north along the front of the length of an hundred cubits, with the door by the north, and the breadth fifty cubits over against the twenty cubits which were in the inner court, and over against the pavement which was in the outward court, gallery upon gallery in three stories.”

**Ezekiel 42:4.** Or, In the front “of the chambers” was a gangway “of ten cubits” breadth (leading) “inward,” a path “of one cubit, and their doors toward the north.” The “gangway” had stairs to the upper stories,

while along the north front of the building there was a kerb of one cubit, as before the guard-chambers (<sup>3612</sup>Ezekiel 40:12), on which kerb the north doors (leading to the basement) opened. Others follow the Septuagint “And opposite the chambers a walk 10 cubits in width to 100 cubits in length.”

<sup>3615</sup>**Ezekiel 42:5.** Render: “And the upper chambers were” shortened, for galleries took off from them, from “the lower” and from “the middle-most [chambers) of the building.” The building rose in terraces, as was usual in Babylonian architecture, and so each of the two upper stories receded from the one below it.

<sup>3616</sup>**Ezekiel 42:6.** The front of the higher stories was not supported on pillars, but there was a narrowing from “the lowest” (chambers) “and” from “the middlemost” (chambers) “from the ground.”

<sup>3617</sup>**Ezekiel 42:7.** The “wall” here must be one from north to south, fencing off from the outer court the passage along the east side of the chambers, and therefore fifty cubits long.

<sup>3618</sup>**Ezekiel 42:8.** *The length* From north to south.

*Before the temple* This describes their position in a general way; more precisely they lay over against partly the “separate place” and partly the “temple-court” (<sup>3619</sup>Ezekiel 42:1).

<sup>3620</sup>**Ezekiel 42:9.** The entry from these chambers to the temple-court was by a passage lying to the east fenced off by the “wall” (<sup>3621</sup>Ezekiel 42:7). This passage is described as lying under the chambers, being on the basement, and also having access by steps to the temple-court, which was raised many steps above the outer court.

<sup>3622</sup>**Ezekiel 42:10.** Render it: Breadth-wise (was) the wall (<sup>3623</sup>Ezekiel 42:7) toward the east; in front of the separate place and of the building (were) the chambers: i.e., on the east was “the wall” (“geder”); along the boundary wall of “the separate place” and of the “building” (the temple) lay the “chambers.”

<sup>3624</sup>**Ezekiel 42:11,12.** Translate: And along the front of them — like (literally as the appearance of) the chambers which were toward the north, as long as they and as broad as they, and (like) all their goings out, and like

their fashions, and like their doors, even so were the doors of the chambers which were toward the south; (with) a door at the head of the way, the way of the wall adjoined eastward as one entereth into them (the chambers).

**Ezekiel 42:13.** In <sup><B1013></sup>Leviticus 10:13 it was prescribed that the priests should eat of the sacrifices in the “holy place.” This was originally before the altar in the inner court — now separate chambers are assigned, and these become “the holy place” for this purpose. Of the “trespass-offering” and “meat-offering” what was not consumed was eaten (<sup><B1016></sup>Leviticus 7:6), but the “sin-offering” was burned without the camp (<sup><B1421></sup>Ezekiel 43:21). Probably the carcass was brought from the altar to the chamber before being carried out.

**Ezekiel 42:14.** Compare <sup><B1623></sup>Leviticus 16:23.

*Those things which are for the people* namely, the outer court.

**Ezekiel 42:15-19.** The Precincts. The temple and its courts were surrounded by an area of exact dimensions 3,000 cubits (1,500 yards) square. See Plan IV.

**Ezekiel 42:15.** *The inner house* The temple and its courts, all that lay within the “wall on the outside of the house (<sup><B1415></sup>Ezekiel 40:5); the gate” is the eastern gate of the outer court.

*Measured it round about* The precincts, into which he had brought the seer through the eastern gate of the outer court.

**Ezekiel 42:20.** The “sanctuary” proper is probably here the most holy place as distinguished from the rest of the temple (<sup><B1423></sup>Ezekiel 41:23; 45:3); but the term was capable of extension first to the whole temple, then to all the ground that was separated to “holy” as distinguished from “profane,” i.e., common uses.

In the vision the courts rose on successive platforms, the outer court being raised seven steps above the precincts, the inner court eight steps above the outer, and the temple itself ten steps above the court of sacrifice.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 43

The consecration of the new temple (<sup><360></sup>Ezekiel 43:1-11). The glory of the God of Israel must take possession of the new sanctuary, as, in time past, of the tabernacle and of Solomon's Temple. But it is in a different form. The glory was of old veiled in a cloud resting on the mercy-Seat of the ark between cherubim of carved wood. Now the glory appears in the form with which Ezekiel is familiar, in all its symbolic significance (see <sup><360></sup>Ezekiel 1:1 note). A personal and living God enters the sanctuary (<sup><360></sup>Ezekiel 43:2), condescending to occupy it, not merely as a fixed dwelling-place, but as a center from where His Power and mercy radiate freely to the utmost ends of the earth. Hence, amidst the detailed preparations of the house no mention is made of the ark or mercy-Seat, so important a part in the former sanctuary. The living cherubim, the firmament and the rainbow of mercy, replace the cherubic figures and the golden chest.

The ark, having been in some way destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's siege, was never replaced. In its stead there was within the veil a flat stone on which the high priest poured the blood on the Day of Atonement.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:1.** *The gate* This was the eastern gate from the precincts to the outer court.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:4.** By this gate the glory of the Lord had departed. See the marginal reference.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:5.** *The glory of the LORD filled the house* Compare the marginal reference; <sup><100></sup>Exodus 40:34,35.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:6.** *The man* A "man." Probably an angel different from "the man" who had hitherto accompanied the seer. That angel guided, measured, and explained; this is present only to guide.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:7.** *He said* i.e., God "said." Both the Septuagint and the Vulgate break this verse into two, so as to make the first half the solemn words of dedication. place a full stop after "forever;" the words mark the distinction between the new and the former sanctuary.

<sup><360></sup>**Ezekiel 43:7,8.** The palace of Solomon abutted upon the southern side of the embankment of the temple-platform; there was but "a wall

between Yahweh and them.” When the kings gave themselves up to idolatry, this vicinity was to the temple a pollution and defilement. Thus it has been conjectured that “the garden of Uzza” in which Manasseh and Amon were buried (<sup><2218></sup>2 Kings 21:18,26), and on which now stands the mosque of Omar, was on the temple area itself; if so, this would explain the mention of “high places” in connection with the defilement by the “carcasses of kings,” since the platform of the mosque of Omar at the time of Ezekiel rose to a considerable height above the temple.

Besides this, idolatrous kings of Judah did actually introduce their idolatries into the temple courts themselves (compare <sup><2161></sup>2 Kings 16:11; 21:4).

<sup><3610></sup>**Ezekiel 43:10.** Deviation from the exact rules of the Mosaic ordinances was connected with the transgression of the people. So the restoration, according to the pattern of the Law, was symbolic of their return to obedience.

<sup><3612></sup>**Ezekiel 43:12.** See also <sup><3572></sup>Ezekiel 47:12. This is the law of the ordinance of the new sanctuary. After the consecration, God pronounces the “law” which is to govern the ordinances of the sanctuary (compare 1 Kings 8), first briefly repeating the general rule that the place must be kept holy to the Lord (compare <sup><6217></sup>Revelation 21:27), and then proceeding to specific ordinances commencing with the altar.

<sup><3613></sup>**Ezekiel 43:13.** The altar of sacrifice which stood in the inner court, not the altar of incense described <sup><3612></sup>Ezekiel 41:22. In the temple of the vision the dimensions differ from those of the tabernacle (<sup><12701></sup>Exodus 27:1,) and of Solomon’s Temple (<sup><1401></sup>2 Chronicles 4:1), with a view to introduce definite propositions and symbolic numbers. See Plan L.

*The bottom* The base (I) of the altar so called, because it forms with its “border” (K) a kind of socket to receive the “lower settle” (L). It was to be “a cubit” in depth.

The “breadth” is the breadth of that portion of the base which was not covered by the “lower settle.”

*The higher place* the base, literally back; the base is called the back because the altar rested upon it.

<sup><3614></sup>**Ezekiel 43:14.** *The bottom* The basement just described is now called “the bottom upon the ground.” The altar (independently of the bottom) was composed of two stages called “settles,” the base of the “upper settle” (M) being less than that of the “lower” (L).

*To the lower settle* That is, to the top of “the lower settle,” which was to be “two cubits high.”

*From the lesser settle ... to the greater settle* i.e., from the top of the “lower settle” to the top of the “upper settle,” called “lesser” and “greater,” because the height of the lower is less than that of the “upper; The breadth” here is the part of the lower settle not covered by the upper settle, projecting one cubit on every side.

<sup><3615></sup>**Ezekiel 43:15.** *The altar ... the altar* See the margin. The two words may denote, the first a square block (N) placed upon the upper settle, the second a slab (O), the thickness of which is not given, from which rose four horns (<sup><1271></sup>Exodus 27:2); and to which it seems probable that the victims of sacrifice were at times bound. (<sup><1887></sup>Psalms 118:27). Why the names Harel and Ariel were used must be conjectural. Mount of God may have been a title naturally given to the place of sacrifice as elsewhere to the place of worship (<sup><3616></sup>Ezekiel 40:2); Lion of God was a term used for the Holy City itself (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 29:1).

<sup><3616></sup>**Ezekiel 43:16.** *altar* Ariel was to be an exact square on all sides. Compare <sup><1271></sup>Exodus 27:1; <sup><6216></sup>Revelation 21:16.

<sup><3617></sup>**Ezekiel 43:17.** *The settle* The “lower settle” (L), projecting beyond the “upper settle” (M) one cubit on every side.

*His stairs* Jewish tradition says that the approach to the altar was by an inclined plane, because to go up “by steps” was forbidden (<sup><1216></sup>Exodus 20:26).

The number “twelve” was symbolic of the twelve tribes, “four,” of the earth; “sixteen” is the square of “four,” and “fourteen” the double of “seven,” the number of the covenant, as being composed of “three,” the number of God, and of “four,” the number of the world. Thus we have in the altar a special instance of Hebrew symbolism.

<sup><3618></sup>**Ezekiel 43:18.** The rites here described are not those of the regular service, but those to be observed on the day of dedication. (Compare

<sup><1880></sup>Leviticus 8:10ff; <sup><1085></sup>1 Kings 8:63ff; <sup><4704></sup>2 Chronicles 7:4ff, In the tabernacle the priest killed the victims, but Moses sprinkled the blood. In the vision the seer is addressed as though he were to perform the part of Moses.

<sup><3619></sup>**Ezekiel 43:19.** *The seed of Zadok* See <sup><3616></sup>Ezekiel 40:46 note.

<sup><3621></sup>**Ezekiel 43:21.** *In the appointed place of the house* A place within the temple-court, but “without the sanctuary” properly so called, that is to say, without the temple and inner court. This was probably the “separate place” (see <sup><3612></sup>Ezekiel 41:12).

<sup><3622></sup>**Ezekiel 43:22.** *They shall cleanse* By sprinkling the blood (<sup><3618></sup>Ezekiel 43:18). Here “they” marks the act as that of the priests. Moses did his part before the priests were consecrated, and the seer could act through them.

<sup><3623></sup>**Ezekiel 43:23-26.** There was, on each of the seven days, a burnt-offering of a bullock and a ram, preceded by a “sin-offering of a bullock” on the first day, and of a “kid of the goats” on the other days.

<sup><3624></sup>**Ezekiel 43:24.** Salt is here added to the “burnt-offering” to express still more the idea of purification. In the second temple no sacrifice was complete without the use of salt, and the rabbis assert that there was a great heap of salt close to the altar, always ready for use, and that the inclined plane to the altar was kept covered with salt. Compare <sup><4099></sup>Mark 9:49.

<sup><3625></sup>**Ezekiel 43:26.** *Consecrate themselves* literally, as in the margin. (<sup><1827></sup>Leviticus 8:27). The priests are already consecrated, but the memory of their consecration was thus kept up at the dedication of the altar.

<sup><3627></sup>**Ezekiel 43:27.** After this inauguration the regular service shall be resumed, and be acceptable unto God (compare <sup><3011></sup>Malachi 1:11).

The Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 8—10) helps us to recognize in this vision the symbol of the purification of the Church of God by the cleansing blood of Christ, Victim and priest.



## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 44

The relation of the different classes of people to the temple and its courts.

**Ezekiel 44:1-3.** The position of the Prince.

**Ezekiel 44:1.** *Outward sanctuary* The court of the priests, as distinguished from the temple itself. This gate was reserved for the prince, to whom it was opened on certain days. Only a prince of the house of David might sit down in the priests' court (compare Ezekiel 46:1,2).

**Ezekiel 44:2.** *The LORD hath entered in* See Ezekiel 43:2.

**Ezekiel 44:3.** *The prince* Foretold under the name of David (Ezekiel 34:24). The rabbis understood this to be the Messiah.

*To eat bread* See Leviticus 2:3; 24:9; according to the old Law these feasts belonged only to the priests; none of the rest of the congregation, not even the king, might partake of them. The new system gives to the "prince" a privilege which he did not before possess; the prince, as the representative of the Messiah, standing in a higher position than the kings of old. "To eat bread" may also include participation in the animals sacrificed, portions of which were reserved for those of the people who offered them.

**Ezekiel 44:4-16.** Admonition to the ministering priests, grounded upon former neglect.

**Ezekiel 44:4.** *The north gate before the house* The north gate of the inner court. God expostulates with His people in the seat of their former idolatries (Ezekiel 8:3).

**Ezekiel 44:5.** *Mark well* The careful arrangements made had all been intended to keep the temple and its surroundings from profanation. Hence, attention to these particulars is enjoined.

**Ezekiel 44:7.** *Strangers* This refers especially to the sin of unauthorized and unfaithful priests ministering in the services of the temple. Compare marginal references.

**Ezekiel 44:8.** *Mine holy things* The altar, its sacrifices, the sacred utensils, and the like.

*For yourselves* According to your own pleasure, not My ordinances (<sup>4060</sup>Numbers 16:40).

**Ezekiel 44:10.** The Levites as a body had remained true to the temple-service at Jerusalem (<sup>4413</sup>2 Chronicles 11:13); but individuals among them deserted to Israel probably from the first (see the marginal references), as in later years some went over to the worship of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim. These apostate Levites “shall bear their iniquities,” they shall not be restored to their former rank and privileges.

**Ezekiel 44:11.** *Ministers* As, according to the new system, the Levites, as a body, were to receive their portion in the “oblation” (<sup>3875</sup>Ezekiel 45:5); the only manner in which the Levites of <sup>3440</sup>Ezekiel 44:10 could live at all, was as part of the whole body, to which they were therefore reunited, but in the lowest grade. It is remarkable that the number of Levites who returned after the captivity was very small, not exceeding 400, of whom only 74 were priests’ assistants (<sup>3180</sup>Ezra 2:40-42; compare <sup>3185</sup>Ezekiel 8:15-19). The gap in their number was filled up by 220 Nethinim (“given” ones), probably originally strangers and captives, who, although employed in the temple services, were held by the Jews in the lowest repute.

**Ezekiel 44:12.** *Lifted up mine hand* i.e., “The Lord sware” (<sup>3315</sup>Ezekiel 20:5), that they should bear their iniquities.

**Ezekiel 44:17-31.** Regulations as to the priests’ services. The garments of the priests are defined and various rules prescribed in the Law are repeated with some additions in order to denote additional care to avoid uncleanness.

**Ezekiel 44:18.** The material of which the four vestments of the ordinary priest were made was “linen,” or, more accurately, “byssus,” the cotton stuff of Egypt. The two special qualities of the byssus — white and shining — are characteristic, and on them part of the symbolic meaning depended. Compare <sup>6618</sup>Revelation 19:8.

**Ezekiel 44:19.** *They shall not sanctify the people* They shall not touch the people with their holy garments. The word “sanctify” is used

because the effect of touching was to separate as holy the persons or things so touched (<sup><1237></sup>Exodus 29:37; 30:29; compare <sup><1768></sup>Leviticus 6:18). The priests wore the distinctive dress, only while performing in the temple strictly sacrificial services.

The holy chambers; see <sup><361></sup>Ezekiel 42:1ff.

<sup><342></sup>**Ezekiel 44:22.** Restrictions and exceptions intended to mark the holiness of the office of a priest, imposing on him additional (compare the marginal reference) obligations to purity, and communicating it in some degree to his wife. In the Christian Church all the members are “priests” (<sup><1115></sup>1 Peter 2:5; <sup><1006></sup>Revelation 1:6; 20:6). Hence, the directions for maintaining the holiness of the “priesthood” in the new order, represent the necessity for holiness in all Christians, and the exclusion of the “uncircumcised in heart and in flesh” is equivalent to the exclusion of “all that defileth” from the New Jerusalem (<sup><627></sup>Revelation 21:27).

<sup><343></sup>**Ezekiel 44:24.** There was in Herod’s Temple a council of priests, whose special duty it was to regulate every thing connected with the sanctuary. They did not ordinarily busy themselves with criminal questions, although they took a leading part in the condemnation of Jesus (<sup><415></sup>Mark 15:1).

<sup><348></sup>**Ezekiel 44:28.** *It shall be unto them* The remains of the sacrifices were a chief source of the priests’ support. The burnt-offerings being entirely consumed, the priests had the skins, which yielded a considerable revenue; meat-offerings and drink-offerings belonged entirely to them. sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, except in particular cases, also belonged to the priests and were partaken of in the temple. Of the peace-offerings a portion dedicated to the Lord by waving was left for the priests, and the rest eaten by the officers and their friends, either in the courts of the temple, or at least within Jerusalem. The kitchen-courts (K, Plan II <sup><342></sup>Ezekiel 46:21-24), were provided in order to prepare these public meals.

<sup><343></sup>**Ezekiel 44:30.** *Oblation* Offering, margin “heave-offering” (see <sup><361></sup>Ezekiel 45:1; <sup><1237></sup>Exodus 25:2; 29:27; Notes and Pref. to Leviticus).

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 45

This chapter describes the portion of territory reserved for the priests, in the middle of which is to be the temple with its courts and precincts, for the Levites, for the city, and for the prince.

**Ezekiel 45:1.** *By lot* Not by casting lots, but by “allotment,” the several portions being assigned by rule (<sup>4613b</sup>Joshua 13:6).

*Oblation* The oblation (properly “heaveoffering”) was regarded as the Lord’s portion (<sup>4627b</sup>Leviticus 27:30). This “oblation” is given here as part of the provision made for the priests, and was probably in lieu of tithes (<sup>4627b</sup>Leviticus 27:30; <sup>4682b</sup>Numbers 18:21), just as the prince had his definite portion of land instead of being supported by the contributions of the people. The priests and Levites had, in addition, the sacrifices (<sup>3442b</sup>Ezekiel 44:28, note). This provision for them, out of proportion in any actual arrangement, is no doubt intended to symbolize the reverence and honor due to God, and expressed by liberality to His services and His ministers. The Septuagint read “the breadth twenty thousand;” and those who adopt this, read <sup>3681b</sup>Ezekiel 45:3 “and from this” whole measure is to be deducted the priests’ special portion 25,000 from east to west, and 10,000 from north to south. Others, retaining the reading of the text, suppose the term oblation here to denote the portion assigned to the priests alone (as in <sup>3681b</sup>Ezekiel 48:9), and “of this measure” (<sup>3681b</sup>Ezekiel 45:3) to mean not “deducted from this measure,” but “computed by this measure.” The King James Version rightly supplies “reeds,” since the precincts (<sup>3621b</sup>Ezekiel 42:20) were 500 “reeds” square. 25,000 reeds = about 42 1/2 statute miles, 36 1/2 geographic miles.

**Ezekiel 45:2.** The “sanctuary” here probably means the whole temple precincts.

*Suburbs* literally, as margin. To mark out more distinctly the sacred precincts, a vacant space of fifty cubits was left on all sides.

**Ezekiel 45:5.** *For a possession for twenty chambers* literally, “For a possession twenty chambers,” possibly twenty out of the thirty chambers in the outer court (<sup>3607b</sup>Ezekiel 40:17), and assigned for their use during

residence in the sanctuary. The Septuagint reads “for cities to dwell in” (compare <sup><0612></sup>Numbers 35:2) which some adopt here.

<sup><3616></sup>**Ezekiel 45:6.** This portion is to belong to the whole people, not to be subject to the encroachments made by the later kings of Judah (<sup><0213></sup>Jeremiah 22:13). The Levites’ portion 10,000 reeds, the priests’ portion 10,000 reeds, and the city portion 5,000 reeds. make in all 25,000 reeds from north to south. The measure of each of these portions from east to west has been defined to be 25,000 reeds (<sup><3611></sup>Ezekiel 45:1 note), and thus we have a square of 25,000 in all.

<sup><3617></sup>**Ezekiel 45:7,8.** On either side of the 25,000 reeds a strip of land, running westward to the sea, eastward to the Jordan, formed the possession of the prince (see <sup><3618></sup>Ezekiel 46:18 note). For the other tribes the limits from west to east are the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan (<sup><3618></sup>Ezekiel 48:8).

<sup><3617></sup>**Ezekiel 45:7.** *And the length shall be over against* Or, “and” in length “over against.”

The definition of the prince’s territory was to prevent the oppressions foretold (<sup><0084></sup>1 Samuel 8:14ff), described (<sup><0235></sup>2 Kings 23:35), and reproved (Jeremiah 22).

<sup><3619></sup>**Ezekiel 45:9.** The princes are exhorted to execute judgment, and abstain from “exaction” (literally “ejection”) such as that of Naboth by Ahab (<sup><0219></sup>1 Kings 21:19).

<sup><3610></sup>**Ezekiel 45:10.** A general exhortation to honesty, expressed by true weights and measures (marginal references). This fitly introduces the strict regulation of quantities in the prescribed offerings.

<sup><3611></sup>**Ezekiel 45:11.** The ephah was in use for dry measure, the bath for liquid. The homer seems to have contained about 75 gallons (see <sup><0294></sup>Exodus 29:40; <sup><0195></sup>Leviticus 19:36, notes).

*After the homer* i.e., according to the standard of the homer.

<sup><3612></sup>**Ezekiel 45:12.** *The shekel* See the marginal reference.

The “maneh” shall be of true weight, but it would seem that in Ezekiel’s time there were “manehs” of different value.

<sup><3613></sup>**Ezekiel 45:13-17.** The offerings. to be made by the people through the prince for the service of the sanctuary. In the Mosaic Law the offerings for the sacrifices of the ordinary festivals were left to the free will of the people. Here they are reduced to regular order and the amounts ordained. In later days there were often shortcomings in these respects (<sup><3408></sup>Malachi 3:8). This is obviated, and regularity ensured in the new order of things. No mention is made of wine for the drink-offering, or of bullocks for the burnt-offering, so that the enumeration is not complete.

<sup><3614></sup>**Ezekiel 45:14.** *Cor* Translated “measure” in <sup><1051></sup>1 Kings 5:11, ... Here it is a synonym of “homer.”

<sup><3617></sup>**Ezekiel 45:17.** The people’s gifts were to be placed in the hands of the prince, so as to form a common stock, out of which the prince was to provide what was necessary for each sacrifice. Compare <sup><1062></sup>1 Kings 8:62; <sup><1577></sup>Ezra 7:17. The prince handed the gifts to the priests, whose part it was to sacrifice and offer. But the prominent part assigned to the prince in “making reconciliation for the sins of the people” seems to typify the union of the kingly and priestly offices in the person of the Mediator of the New covenant.

<sup><3618></sup>**Ezekiel 45:18-25.** This order of certain solemn services does not follow exactly the order of Moses, of Solomon, or of Ezra. The deviation can scarcely have been accidental, and furnishes a fresh indication that the whole vision is symbolic, representative of the times when, after the oblation of the one Sacrifice, reconciliation and sanctification were effected for man through the presence of God dwelling in the midst of the people.

<sup><3618></sup>**Ezekiel 45:18.** *In the first day* If this is only a special Passover for the dedication, the prolongation of the festival may be compared with that under Solomon (<sup><4478></sup>2 Chronicles 7:8). But it is more probably a general ordinance, and, in this case, we have an addition to the Mosaic ritual (compare <sup><10215></sup>Leviticus 23:5). Here the “first day” is marked by the rites of expiation, which are repeated on the seventh day (<sup><3650></sup>Ezekiel 45:20), for the purpose of including those who transgressed from ignorance rather than willfulness.

<sup><3623></sup>**Ezekiel 45:23.** Comparing this with the daily sacrifices of the Paschal week (<sup><10389></sup>Numbers 28:19-24), and those of the daily sacrifices of the week of the Feast of tabernacles (see <sup><10912></sup>Numbers 29:12 ...), it will be seen that

here the covenant number seven is preserved throughout to indicate a perfect, in lieu of an imperfect, covenant with God.

~~3625~~ **Ezekiel 45:25.** The Feast of tabernacles (compare the marginal references). Some think that the other great festival, the Feast of Weeks, is intended.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 46

**Ezekiel 46:1.** The prophet beholds in vision people, priest, and prince uniting in most solemn worship before the throne of God. The character of the rites here described is symbolic.

**Ezekiel 46:2.** In the time of Solomon, priest, king, and people each took his due part in the temple-service. Of the later kings some forsook Yahweh for false gods, some encroached upon the prerogative of the priest. Now all should be set right. The prince occupies a position analogous to that of Solomon (<sup><46:2></sup>2 Chronicles 6:12,13), standing in front of the porch of the eastern gate of the inner court, and at the head of his people to lead their worship, while the priests are sacrificing before him.

**Ezekiel 46:3.** *At the door of this gate* In Herod's Temple the place for worshipping "before the Lord" was the court of Israel, west of the court of Women, separated from the inner court by a low parapet. In Ezekiel's the worshippers were admitted into the inner court itself. The upper pavement (E. Plan II) on either side of the eastern gate provided room for such worshippers.

**Ezekiel 46:4ff.** The offerings prescribed here (<sup><34:4></sup>Ezekiel 46:4-15) are generally in excess of those enjoined by the Law, to note not only the greater devotion and magnificence under the new state of things, but also the willingness (compare <sup><51:17></sup>Deuteronomy 16:17) of king and people ready to give of their substance to the utmost of their means.

**Ezekiel 46:5.** *As he shall be able to give* Rather, "as he shall be willing to give." So also in <sup><34:7></sup>Ezekiel 46:7.

**Ezekiel 46:6.** Compare with Numbers 28. The enumeration of the offerings both for the Sabbath and new moon is here less complete than there; e.g., the drink offerings are passed by, and in the case of the new moon festival no mention is made of the blowing of trumpets (compare <sup><10:10></sup>Numbers 10:10).

**Ezekiel 46:8.** *That gate* The eastern gate of the inner court. See <sup><34:2></sup>Ezekiel 46:2.



<sup><3419></sup>**Ezekiel 46:9.** The whole body of the people gathered together in the outer court, and from thence bodies went in turn into the inner court to worship, and then again out into the outer court.

<sup><3413></sup>**Ezekiel 46:13.** Compare with marginal references. The evening sacrifice is here omitted, because the seer is selecting a few only of the sacrifices of the Law, with a particular object in view.

<sup><3416></sup>**Ezekiel 46:16-18.** The prince was robe provided with possessions of his own, in order to prevent exactions from his subjects; further enactments are added to prevent the alienation of the prince's land. Any gifts made to his servants must revert to the prince in the "year of liberty," or jubilee (see the marginal reference note).

<sup><3419></sup>**Ezekiel 46:19-24.** The careful provision here made to keep separate the offerings of priests and people was to prevent collision, just as the enactments (<sup><3416></sup>Ezekiel 46:16-18) were intended to secure their respective rights to prince and people.

<sup><3419></sup>**Ezekiel 46:19.** *At the side of the gate* The entrance to the inner court at the same side as the northern gate (<sup><3409></sup>Ezekiel 42:9).

<sup><3419></sup>**Ezekiel 46:20.** See M Plan II.

*Boil* It was unique to the Paschal lamb, that it was to be eaten roasted. The flesh of the other sacrifices was to be "sodden" or boiled (see <sup><1163></sup>Leviticus 6:28; <sup><1023></sup>1 Samuel 2:13; <sup><1244></sup>2 Chronicles 24:14 margin). The "meat-offering" (flour and honey) was baked (<sup><1104></sup>Leviticus 2:4).

<sup><3412></sup>**Ezekiel 46:21.** See K. Plan II.

<sup><3412></sup>**Ezekiel 46:22.** *courts joined* enclosed courts, and entered by doors in the walls, which shut them out from the great court. The marginal rendering, "made with chimnies," is based upon another interpretation of the word.

*These four corners* Or, "these four corner-courts were of one measure."

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 47

**Ezekiel 47:1.** The vision of the waters; or, the blessings which flow from this source to animate and refresh all the inhabitants of the earth. Compare <sup><344B></sup>Isaiah 44:8 ...; <sup><248B></sup>Joel 3:18. Ezekiel's description is adopted and modified by Zechariah and in Revelation (compare the marginal references) Hebrew tradition speaks of a spring of water, named Etham, said to be identical with the well-waters of Nephtoah (<sup><688B></sup>Joshua 18:15), on the west of the temple, whose waters were conducted by pipes into the temple-courts for the uses needed in the ministration of the priests. The waters of Shiloah (<sup><944B></sup>Psalms 46:4; <sup><238B></sup>Isaiah 8:6) flowed from the rocks beneath the temple-hill. It is quite in the manner of Ezekiel's vision to start from an existing feature and thence proceed to an ideal picture from where to draw a spiritual lesson. The deepening of the waters in their course shows the continual deepening of spiritual life and multiplication of spiritual blessings in the growth of the kingdom of God. So long as the stream is confined to the temple-courts, it is merely a small rill, for the most part unseen, but when it issues from the courts it begins at once to deepen and to widen. So on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the company of believers, little then but presently to develop into the infant Church in Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 47:2.** *Out of the way of the gate northward* Rather, by the way of the northward gate.

**Ezekiel 47:3.** *The ancles* This may coincide with the step gained in the baptism of Cornelius (Acts 10), and the opening of the Church to the Gentiles. The dispersion which had followed the martyrdom of Stephen (<sup><411B></sup>Acts 11:19), had carried believers into various countries, and so paved the way for the foundation of Gentile Churches.

**Ezekiel 47:4.** *The knees* The mission of Paul and Barnabas (<sup><411B></sup>Acts 13:1-4) is another marked epoch in the Church's history; and the time of Paul's martyrdom denotes an increase in the Gentile Church, which corresponds with the waters reaching the loins.

**Ezekiel 47:5.** The rivers in Palestine were for the most part mere watercourses, dry in summer, in winter carrying the water along the wadys to the sea. The river of the vision is to have a continuous flow.

*Waters to swim in* When under Constantine the Roman empire had become Christian, the Church may be contemplated as the full river, to flow on through time until the final completion of Isaiah's prophecy (**Isaiah 11:9**).

**Ezekiel 47:7.** Trees naturally flourish where there is abundance of water (**Psalm 1:3**).

**Ezekiel 47:8.** "The sea" is a term commonly applied to the Dead Sea. Compare **Deuteronomy 3:17**, "the sea of the plain (Arabah), even the salt sea." The more literal rendering of the verse in this sense would be, "and go into the sea; into the sea go the waters that issue forth, and the waters shall be healed."

*Healed* Every living thing (of which there were none before) shall abound in the "healed" waters. The absence of living creatures in the Dead Sea has been remarked by ancient and modern writers. So the water which Jesus should give should bring life to the dead in trespasses and sins. Compare **John 4:14**; **Revelation 22:2,3**.

**Ezekiel 47:9.** *The rivers* literally, as in the margin. Perhaps with reference to the circumstance that this "brook or river" is to come into the Dead Sea through the same plain as the Jordan. The one river (Jordan) always flowed, but now, when another river comes in, and "two rivers" flow into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

**Ezekiel 47:10.** "En-gedi" (see **1 Samuel 23:29**) was about the middle of the western shore of the Dead Sea.

En-eglaim does not occur elsewhere. Its form indicates that it was one of the double cities of Moab (see **Ezekiel 25:9** note). It has been identified with "Ain-el-Feshkah" to the north on the western bank of the Dead Sea. On this supposition, "from En-eglaim to En-gedi" would be the line of coast from the most northern fountain to the principal fountain southward.

**Ezekiel 47:11.** The exception, which reserves for sterility places to which the living water does not reach, probably indicates that the life and

health are solely due to the stream which proceeds from beneath the throne of God. Compare <sup><257D></sup>Isaiah 57:20,21.

<sup><357I3></sup>**Ezekiel 47:13.** The ideal reallocation of the land to the twelve tribes of Israel is found in <sup><357I3></sup>Ezekiel 47:13—48:14. See the following plan:

The special mention of Joseph's portions was in order to express that the twelve portions were to be exclusive of Levi's land, which was to be provided out of the "oblation."

<sup><357I4></sup>**Ezekiel 47:14.** *As well as* Or, as. Ezekiel is speaking of "tribes," not "individuals." Each tribe is to have an equal "breadth" of land assigned to it.

<sup><357I5></sup>**Ezekiel 47:15.** The borders of the land follow closely Numbers 34, where they begin from the south, as the people came up from Egypt; in Ezekiel, they begin from the north, as they might return from Babylon. The occupation is ideal, but is grounded, as usual, on an actual state of things.

*The border of the land toward the north* Names of places in the actual northern border are given (marginal references) not to mark exact geographical position, but to show that the original promise will be fulfilled.

IDEAL ALLOTMENT OF THE LAND.

	Dan	
	Asher	
	Naphthali	
	Manasseh	
	Ephraim	
	Reuben	
	Judah	
Joseph's Portion. (Gen. 48:1-22)	Levi's	Joseph's Portion. (Gen. 48:22)
	Private	
	Sanctuary	
	City	
	City	
	Benjamin	
	Simeon	
	Issachar	
	Zebulun	
	God	

The way of Hethlon, was probably the defile between the ranges of Libanus and Anti-libanus, from the sea to Hamath. "Hamath" (<sup><308D></sup>Amos 6:2), at the foot of Mount Hermon, on the Orontes. was the ancient capital of the Hittites. Its Scripture history may be traced in <sup><110B></sup>Genesis 10:18; <sup><108D></sup>2 Samuel 8:9; <sup><12834></sup>2 Kings 18:34. It was never included in the possessions of Israel. The border ran considerably south of the town at the "entrance of Hamath," the northern opening of Coele-Syria.

<sup><34716></sup>**Ezekiel 47:16.** “Berothah,” probably the same as “Berothai” (marginal reference), lay between Hamath and Damascus, as did “Sibraim.” “Hazar-hatticon” is probably, as in the margin, “the middle Hazar,” to distinguish it from Hazar-enan (<sup><34717></sup>Ezekiel 47:17).

<sup><34717></sup>**Ezekiel 47:17.** *And the north ...* Or, “and on the north, the border on the north shall be” etc.

<sup><34718></sup>**Ezekiel 47:18.** The eastern boundary is to commence by separating off the territory of Damascus and Hauran, and then to follow the line of the Jordan to the Dead Sea. Further, the land occupied by the trans-Jordanic tribes was also to be separated off from the land of Israel. The trans-Jordanic tribes in fact occupied their ground (in Joshua’s allotment) by sufferance. This did not belong to Canaan proper, the land of promise. Hence, the tribes, formerly on the east of the Jordan, have here allotments in Canaan, though “the oblation” (<sup><34801></sup>Ezekiel 45:1) extends to a considerable distance beyond the Jordan (see Plan, Ezekiel 48). The whole arrangement being ideal and symbolic, the vision here, as in the case of “the waters” (<sup><34801></sup>Ezekiel 47:1 note), departs from the physical features of the land for the purpose of maintaining symbolic numbers.

<sup><34719></sup>**Ezekiel 47:19.** The south border (compare <sup><34804></sup>Numbers 34:4) commences with “Tamar,” probably a village near the southern end of the Dead Sea. The word means “palm-tree;” and is given to more than one city in the holy land.

*The river to the great sea* literally, “riverward to the great sea.” By the “river” is meant the torrent-stream entering the Mediterranean near “Rhinocolura” (El Arish).

<sup><34722></sup>**Ezekiel 47:22.** *And to the strangers* Here is quite a new feature in the distribution of the land. Not only the Israelites by descent, but those who join themselves to Israel by allegiance to the true GOD, shall have a right of inheritance. Here are opened out the blessings which were to accrue to the Gentiles through the seed of Abraham. Compare <sup><34924></sup>Romans 9:24, following. The difference which existed under the old covenant between Jew and Gentile is now at last done away. But while pagandom thus unites itself with God’s people, Israel is still as ever the chosen people, the center of this union. No new Church is founded side by side with the old. Pagandom is absorbed in Israel — the standard which God has set up

for the nations — i.e., in the One True Church, which has subsisted from the beginning, and will subsist in eternity.

## NOTES ON EZEKIEL 48

The distribution of the holy land is seen in detail throughout Ezekiel 48. The order of the original occupation by the tribes under Joshua is partly, but only partly, followed. It is a new order of things — and its ideal character is evinced as elsewhere, by exact and equal measurements. From north to south seven tribes succeed each other. Then comes a portion, separated as an offering to the Lord, subdivided into:

- (1) a northern portion for the Levites,
- (2) a central portion for the priests and the temple,
- (3) a southern portion for the city and those who serve it.

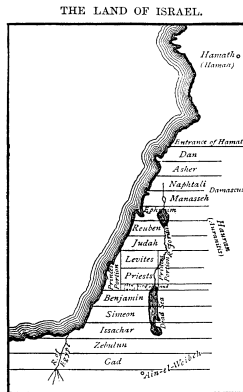
These three form a square, which does not occupy the whole breadth of the land, but is flanked on either side, east and west, by portions assigned to the prince. Then follow, south of the city, five portions for the five remaining tribes — similar to those assigned to the seven. Thus the Levites, the temple, and city, are guarded by Judah and Benjamin, the two tribes who had throughout preserved their allegiance to the true sovereignty of Yahweh, and thus the plan expresses the presence of Yahweh among His people, summed up in the name of the city, with which Ezekiel's prophecy closes, THE LORD IS THERE.

The breadth of the portions is not given, but since the exact breadth of the oblation was about 30 geog. miles (<sup><3650></sup>Ezekiel 45:1 note), and seven tribes were between the entrance of Hamath and the oblation, the “breadth of one portion” was about 17 geog. miles. The breadth of the Levites' portion and of the priests' portion was in each case about 15 geog. miles. Ain-el-Weibeh, if Kadesh, ((?), see <sup><04133></sup>Numbers 13:26) would be very nearly the southern border.

The general lines of existing features are followed with considerable fidelity, but accommodation is made to give the required symbolic expression. “Dan” had originally an allotment west of Benjamin, but having colonized and given its name to Laish in the north, was regarded as the most northern occupant of Canaan (<sup><07182></sup>Judges 18:29). “Zebulun and Issachar” are removed to the south to make room for the second half of “Manasseh” brought over from the east of Jordan. “Reuben,” brought over

from the east, is placed between “Ephraim and Judah.” “Benjamin” comes immediately south of the city, and “Gad” is brought over from the east to the extreme south.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:8.** “Length” is throughout measured from west to east, as breadth is from north to south.



The offering (<3680> Ezekiel 48:9-22), or, “oblation,” here includes all the land given to priests, Levites, city, and prince; the different parts being distinguished. All these together are to extend from west to east in the same way as the portions of the other tribes, the imaginary Jordan being the eastern boundary of all.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:10.** *Toward the north ... toward the east ...* i.e., the measurements are “along the north and east sides,” etc.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:15.** *The five thousand ...* The remainder of the square of 25,000 reeds from north to south.

*Profane* For common use, as distinguished from that which is holy unto the Lord.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:17.** The city being 4500 reeds square, 250 reeds are marked off north, south, east, west from the city land.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:18,19.** *Then, that serve* i.e., the cultivators or farmers.

<3680> **Ezekiel 48:19.** Of old the city belonged to Benjamin and Judah, and its inhabitants were mainly from these tribes. Now all the tribes are to have equal part in it, and avoid jealousies (compare <1094> 2 Samuel 19:43).



**Ezekiel 48:20.** *The holy ... with ...* Or, “a fourth part as the holy oblation, for” etc.

**Ezekiel 48:21.** Or, “And the residue shall be for the prince — on the one side and on the other side of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city over against the 25,000 of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the 25,000 toward the west border, over against the portions (of Judah and Benjamin, between which the oblation was included), shall be “for the prince; and it shall be that the holy oblation and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof.” This exactly describes the position of the prince’s allotments on the borders of the “oblations.”

**Ezekiel 48:30.** *The goings out of the city* The gates described in Ezekiel 48:31. “Measures” (reeds) concern the sides. Divide the verses thus: Ezekiel 48:30. “And these are the goings out of the city.

Ezekiel 48:31. On the north side 4500 measures: and the gates of the city after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward etc.”

**Ezekiel 48:35.** The circuit of the city walls, a square of 4500 reeds, was 18,000 reeds, not quite 37 English miles. The circuit of Jerusalem in the time of Josephus was reckoned by him to be about four miles.

*The names ...* The manner of expressing a spiritual meaning by giving a name to a city, a people, or the like, is familiar to the prophets (see Ezekiel 43:15 note). Jerome explains it: “The name of the city shall be no longer Jerusalem (“the vision of peace”), but Adonai-shama (“the Lord is there”) (rather, Jehovah-shammah, “Jehovah is there”), because Yahweh will never again withdraw from it, as He once withdrew, but will hold it as His everlasting possession.” The visible presence of God’s glory, once represented in the tabernacle and in the temple, had departed, and should not return in the same form. Yet Ezekiel in “visions of God” sees a temple reconstructed to receive the glory of the divine presence, a prophetic vision fulfilled in Emmanuel (“God with us”), who tabernacled among men (John 1:14). Compare Romans 9:25; Revelation 21:2,3.