

AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE BOOK OF

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL

Ezekiel was one of the priests; he was carried captive to Chaldea with Jehoiachin. All his prophecies appear to have been delivered in that country, at some place north of Babylon. Their chief object appears to have been to comfort his brethren in captivity. He is directed to warn of the dreadful calamities coming upon Judea, particularly upon the false prophets, and the neighboring nations. Also to announce the future restoration of Israel and Judah from their several dispersions, and their happy state in their latter days, under the Messiah. Much of Christ will be found in this book, especially in the conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

*Ezekiel's vision of God, and of the angelic host. (1-14) The conduct of Divine Providence. (15-25) A revelation of the Son of man upon his heavenly throne. (26-28)*

**Ezekiel 1:1**

**Vs. 1-14:** It is a mercy to have the word of God brought to us, and a duty to attend to it diligently, when we are in affliction. The voice of God came in the fullness of light and power, by the Holy Spirit. These visions seem to have been sent to possess the prophet's mind with great and high thoughts of God. To strike terror upon sinners. To speak comfort to those that feared God, and humbled themselves. In ver. 4-14, is the first part of the vision, which represents God as attended and served by a vast company of angels, who are all his messengers, his ministers, doing his commandments. This vision would impress the mind with solemn awe and fear of the Divine displeasure, yet raise expectations of blessings. The fire

is surrounded with a glory. Though we cannot by searching find out God to perfection, yet we see the brightness round about it. The likeness of the living creatures came out of the midst of the fire; angels derive their being and power from God. They have the understanding of a man, and far more. A lion excellencies in strength and boldness. An ox excellencies in diligence and patience, and unwearied discharge of the work he has to do. An eagle excellencies in quickness and piercing sight, and in soaring high; and the angels, who excellencies man in all these respects, put on these appearances. The angels have wings; and whatever business God sends them upon, they lose no time. They stood straight, and firm, and steady. They had not only wings for motion, but hands for action. Many persons are quick, who are not active; they hurry about, but do nothing to purpose; they have wings, but no hands. But wherever the angels' wings carried them, they carried hands with them, to be doing what duty required. Whatever service they went about, they went every one straight forward. When we go straight, we go forward; when we serve God with one heart, we perform work. They turned not when they went. They made no mistakes; and their work needed not to be gone over again. They turned not from their business to trifle with any thing. They went whithersoever the Spirit of God would have them go. The prophet saw these living creatures by their own light, for their appearance was like burning coals of fire; they are seraphim, or "burners;" denoting the ardor of their love to God, and fervent zeal in his service. We may learn profitable lessons from subjects we cannot fully enter into or understand. But let us attend to the things which relate to our peace and duty, and leave secret things to the Lord, to whom alone they belong.

### Ezekiel 1:15

**Vs. 15-25:** Providence, represented by the wheels, produces changes. Sometimes one spoke of the wheel is uppermost, sometimes another; but the motion of the wheel on its own axletree is regular and steady. We need not despond in adversity; the wheels are turning round and will raise us in due time, while those who presume in prosperity know not how soon they may be cast down. The wheel is near the living creatures; the angels are employed as ministers of God's providence. The spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels; the same wisdom, power, and holiness of God, that guide and govern the angels, by them order all events in this

lower world. The wheel had four faces, denoting that the providence of God exerts itself in all parts. Look every way upon the wheel of providence, it has a face toward you. Their appearance and work were as a wheel in the middle of a wheel. The disposals of Providence seem to us dark, perplexed, and unaccountable, yet are all wisely ordered for the best. The motion of these wheels was steady, regular, and constant. They went as the Spirit directed, therefore returned not. We should not have to undo that by repentance which we have done amiss, if we followed the guidance of the Spirit. The rings, or rims of the wheels were so vast, that when put in motion the prophet was afraid to look upon them. The consideration of the height and depth of God's counsel should awe us. They were full of eyes round about. The motions of Providence are all directed by infinite Wisdom. All events are determined by the eyes of the Lord, which are in every place beholding the evil and the good; for there is no such thing as chance or fortune. The firmament above was a crystal, glorious, but terribly so. That which we take to be a dark cloud, is to God clear as crystal, through which he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth. When the angels had roused a careless world, they let down their wings, that God's voice might be plainly heard. The voice of Providence is to open men's ears to the voice of the word. Sounds on earth should awaken our attention to the voice from heaven; for how shall we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaks from thence.

### Ezekiel 1:26

**Vs. 26-28:** The eternal Son, the second Person in the Trinity, who afterwards took the human nature, is here denoted. The first thing observed was a throne. It is a throne of glory, a throne of grace, a throne of triumph, a throne of government, a throne of judgment. It is good news to men, that the throne above the firmament is filled with One who appears, even there, in the likeness of a man. The throne is surrounded with a rainbow, the well-known emblem of the covenant, representing God's mercy and covenanted love to his people. The fire of God's wrath was breaking out against Jerusalem, but bounds should be set to it; he would look upon the bow, and remember the covenant. All the prophet saw was only to prepare him for what he was to hear. When he fell on his face, he heard the voice of One that spake. God delights to teach the humble. Let sinners, then, humble themselves before him. And let believers think upon

his glory, that they may be gradually changed into his image by the Spirit of the Lord.

## CHAPTER 2

*The prophet is directed what he is to do. (1-5) And encouraged to be resolute, faithful, and devoted. (6-10)*

### Ezekiel 2:1

**Vs. 1-5:** Lest Ezekiel should be lifted up with the abundance of the revelations, he is put in mind that still he is a son of man, a weak, mortal creature. As Christ usually called himself the Son of man, it was also an honorable distinction. Ezekiel's posture showed reverence, but his standing up would be a posture of greater readiness and fitness for business. God will speak to us, when we stand ready to do what he commands us. As Ezekiel had not strength of his own, the Spirit entered into him. God is graciously pleased to work in us whatever he requires of us. The Holy Spirit sets us upon our feet, by unequalled our wills to our duty. Thus, when the Lord calls upon the sinner to awake, and attend to the concerns of his soul, the Spirit of life and grace comes with the call. Ezekiel is sent with a message to the children of Israel. Many might treat his message with contempt, yet they should know by the event that a prophet had been sent to them. God will be glorified, and his word made honorable, whether it be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death.

### Ezekiel 2:6

**Vs. 6-10:** Those who will do any thing to purpose in the service of God, must not fear men. Wicked men are as briars and thorns; but they are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned. The prophet must be faithful to the souls of those to whom he was sent. All who speak from God to others, must obey his voice. The discoveries of sin, and the warnings of wrath, should be matter of lamentation. And those acquainted with the word of God, will clearly perceive it is filled with woe to impenitent sinners; and that all the precious promises of the gospel are for the repenting, believing servants of the Lord.

## CHAPTER 3

*The preparation of the prophet for his work. (1-11) His office, as that of a watchman. (12-2) The restraining and restoring his speech. (22-27)*

### **Ezekiel 3:1**

**Vs. 1-11:** Ezekiel was to receive the truths of God as the food for his soul, and to feed upon them by faith, and he would be strengthened. Gracious souls can receive those truths of God with delight, which speak terror to the wicked. He must speak all that, and that only, which God spake to him. How can we better speak God's mind than with his words? If disappointed as to his people, he must not be offended. The Ninevites were wrought upon by Jonah's preaching, when Israel was unhumiliated and unreformed. We must leave this unto the Divine sovereignty, and say, Lord, thy judgments are a great deep. They will not regard the word of the prophet, for they will not regard the rod of God. Christ promises to strengthen him. He must continue earnest in preaching, whatever the success might be.

### **Ezekiel 3:12**

**Vs. 12-21:** This mission made the holy angels rejoice. All this was to convince Ezekiel, that the God who sent him had power to bear him out in his work. He was overwhelmed with grief for the sins and miseries of his people, and overpowered by the glory of the vision he had seen. And however retirement, meditation, and communion with God may be sweet, the servant of the Lord must prepare to serve his generation. The Lord told the prophet he had appointed him a watchman to the house of Israel. If we warn the wicked, we are not chargeable with their ruin. Though such passages refer to the national covenant made with Israel, they are equally to be applied to the final state of all men under every dispensation. We are not only to encourage and comfort those who appear to be righteous, but they are to be warned, for many have grown high-minded and secure, have villainy, and even died in their sins. Surely then the hearers of the gospel should desire warnings, and even reproofs.

**Ezekiel 3:22**

**Vs. 22-27:** Let us own ourselves for ever indebted to the mediation of Christ, for the blessed intercourse between God and man; and a true believer will say, I am never less alone than when thus alone. When the Lord opened Ezekiel's mouth, he was to deliver his message boldly, to place life and death, the blessing and the curse, before the people, and leave them to their choice.

## CHAPTER 4

*The siege of Jerusalem. (1-8) The famine the inhabitants would suffer. (9-17)*

### **Ezekiel 4:1**

**Vs. 1-8:** The prophet was to represent the siege of Jerusalem by signs. He was to lie on his left side for a number of days, supposed to be equal to the years from the establishment of idolatry. All that the prophet sets before the children of his people, about the destruction of Jerusalem, is to show that sin is the provoking cause of the ruin of that once flourishing city.

### **Ezekiel 4:9**

**Vs. 9-17:** The bread which was Ezekiel's support, was to be made of coarse grain and pulse mixed together, seldom used except in times of urgent scarcity, and of this he was only to take a small quantity. Thus was figured the extremity to which the Jews were to be reduced during the siege and captivity. Ezekiel does not plead, Lord, from my youth I have been brought up delicately, and never used to any thing like this; but that he had been brought up conscientiously, and never had eaten any thing forbidden by the law. It will be comfortable when we are brought to suffer hardships, if our hearts can witness that we have always been careful to keep even from the appearance of evil. See what woeful work sin makes, and acknowledge the righteousness of God herein. Their plenty having been abused to luxury and excess, they were justly punished by famine. When men serve not God with cheerfulness in the abundance of all things, God will make them serve their enemies in the want of all things.



## CHAPTER 5

*A type of hair, showing the judgments about to come upon the Jews.  
(1-4) These awful judgments are declared. (5-17)*

### Ezekiel 5:1

**Vs. 1-4:** The prophet must shave off the hair of his head and beard, which signifies God's utter rejecting and abandoning that people. One part must be burned in the midst of the city, denoting the multitudes that should perish by famine and pestilence. Another part was to be cut in pieces, representing the many who were slain by the sword. Another part was to be scattered in the wind, denoting the carrying away of some into the land of the conqueror, and the flight of others into the neighboring countries for shelter. A small quantity of the third portion was to be bound in his shirts, as that of which he is very careful. But few were reserved. To whatever refuge sinners flee, the fire and sword of God's wrath will consume them.

### Ezekiel 5:5

**Vs. 5-17:** The sentence passed upon Jerusalem is very dreadful, the manner of expression makes it still more so. Who is able to stand in God's sight when he is angry? Those who live and die impenitent, will perish for ever unpitied; there is a day coming when the Lord will not spare. Let not persons or churches, who change the Lord's statutes, expect to escape the doom of Jerusalem. Let us endeavor to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Sooner or later God's word will prove itself true.

## CHAPTER 6

*The Divine judgments for idolatry. (1-7) A remnant shall be saved. (8-10) The calamities are to be lamented. (11-14)*

### **Ezekiel 6:1**

**Vs. 1-7:** War desolates persons, places, and things esteemed most sacred. God ruins idolatries even by the hands of idolaters. It is just with God to make that a desolation, which we make an idol. The superstitions to which many trust for safety, often cause their ruin. And the day is at hand, when idols and idolatry will be as thoroughly destroyed from the professedly Christian church as they were from among the Jews.

### **Ezekiel 6:8**

**Vs. 8-10:** A remnant of Israel should be left; at length they should remember the Lord, their obligations to him, and rebellion against him. True penitents see sin to be that abominable thing which the Lord hates. Those who truly loathe sin, loathe themselves because of sin. They give glory to God by their repentance. Whatever brings men to remember Him, and their sins against him, should be regarded as a blessing.

### **Ezekiel 6:11**

**Vs. 11-14:** It is our duty to be affected, not only with our own sins and sufferings, but to look with compassion upon the miseries wicked people bring upon themselves. Sin is a desolating thing; therefore, stand in awe, and sin not. If we know the worth of souls, and the danger to which unbelievers are exposed, we shall deem every sinner who takes refuge in Jesus from the wrath to come, an abundant recompense for all contempt or opposition we may meet with.

## CHAPTER 7

*The desolation of the land. (1-15) The distress of the few who should escape. (16-22) The captivity. (23-27)*

### **Ezekiel 7:1**

**Vs. 1-15:** The abruptness of this prophecy, and the many repetitions, show that the prophet was deeply affected by the prospect of these calamities. Such will the destruction of sinners be; for none can avoid it. Oh that the wickedness of the wicked might end before it bring them to an end! Trouble is to the impenitent only an evil, it hardens their hearts, and stirs up their corruptions; but there are those to whom it is sanctified by the grace of God, and made a means of much good. The day of real trouble is near, not a mere echo or rumor of troubles. Whatever are the fruits of God's judgments, our sin is the root of them. These judgments shall be universal. And God will be glorified in all. Now is the day of the Lord's patience and mercy, but the time of the sinner's trouble is at hand.

### **Ezekiel 7:16**

**Vs. 16-22:** Sooner or later, sin will cause sorrow; and those who will not repent of their sin, may justly be left to pine away in it. There are many whose wealth is their snare and ruin; and the gaining the world is the losing of their souls. Riches profit not in the day of wrath. The wealth of this world has not that in it which will answer the desires of the soul, or be any satisfaction to it in a day of distress. God's temple shall stand them in no stead. Those are unworthy to be honored with the form of godliness, who will not be governed by its power.

### **Ezekiel 7:23**

**Vs. 23-27:** Whoever break the bands of God's law, will find themselves bound and held by the chains of his judgments. Since they encouraged one another to sin, God would dishearten them. All must needs be in trouble, when God comes to judge them according to their deserts. May the Lord enable us to seek that good part which shall not be taken away.

## CHAPTER 8

*The idolatries committed by the Jewish rulers. (1-6) The superstitions to which the Jews were then devoted, the Egyptian. (7-12) The Phoenician. (13,14) The Persian. (15,16) The heinousness of their sin. (17,18)*

### **Ezekiel 8:1**

**Vs. 1-6:** The glorious personage Ezekiel beheld in vision, seemed to take hold upon him, and he was conveyed in spirit to Jerusalem. There, in the inner court of the temple, was prepared a place for some base idol. The whole was presented in vision to the prophet. If it should please God to give any man a clear view of his glory and majesty, and of all the abominations committing in any one city, he would then admit the justice of the savors punishments God should inflict thereon.

### **Ezekiel 8:7**

**Vs. 7-12:** A secret place was, as it were, opened, where the prophet saw creatures painted on the walls, and a number of the elders of Israel worshipped before them. No superiority in worldly matters will preserve men from lust, or idolatries, when they are left to their own deceitful hearts; and those who are soon wearied in the service of God, often grudge no toil nor expense when following their superstitions. When hypocrites screen themselves behind the wall of an outward profession, there is some hole or other left in the wall, something that betrays them to those who look diligently. There is a great deal of secret wickedness in the world. They think themselves out of God's sight. But those are ripe indeed for ruin, who lay the blame of their sins upon the Lord.

### **Ezekiel 8:13**

**Vs. 13-18:** The yearly lamenting for Tammuz was attended with infamous practices; and the worshippers of the sun here described, are supposed to have been priests. The Lord appeals to the prophet concerning the heinousness of the crime; "and lo, they put the branch to their nose," denoting some custom used by idolaters in honor of the idols they served.

The more we examine human nature and our own hearts, the more abominations we shall discover; and the longer the believer searches himself, the more he will humble himself before God, and the more will he value the fountain open for sin, and seek to wash therein.

## CHAPTER 9

*A vision denoting the destruction of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the departure of the symbol of the Divine presence.*

### **Ezekiel 9:1**

**Vs. 1-4:** It is a great comfort to believers, that in the midst of destroyers and destructions, there is a Mediator, a great High Priest, who has an interest in heaven, and in whom saints on earth have an interest. The representation of the Divine glory from above the ark, removed to the threshold, denoted that the Lord was about to leave his mercy-seat, and to pronounce judgment on the people. The distinguishing character of this remnant that is to be saved, is such as sigh and cry to God in prayer, because of the abominations in Jerusalem. Those who keep pure in times of general wickedness, God will keep safe in times of general trouble and distress.

### **Ezekiel 9:5**

**Vs. 5-11:** The slaughter must begin at the sanctuary, that all may see and know that the Lord hates sin most in those nearest to him. He who was appointed to protect, reported the matter. Christ is faithful to the trust reposed in him. Is he commanded by his Father to secure eternal life to the chosen remnant? He says, Of all that thou hast given me, I have lost none. If others perish, and we are saved, we must ascribe the difference wholly to the mercy of our God, for we too have deserved wrath. Let us still continue to plead in behalf of others. But where the Lord shows no mercy he does no injustice; he only recompense men's ways.

## CHAPTER 10

*A vision of the burning of the city. (1-7) The Divine glory departing from the temple. (8-22)*

### **Ezekiel 10:1**

**Vs. 1-7:** The fire being taken from between the wheels, under the cherubim, ch. <sup>31B</sup>1:13, seems to have signified the wrath of God to be executed upon Jerusalem. It intimated that the fire of Divine wrath, which kindles judgment upon a people, is just and holy; and in the great day, the earth, and all the works that are therein, will be burnt up.

### **Ezekiel 10:8**

**Vs. 8-22:** Ezekiel sees the working of Divine providence in the government of the lower world, and the affairs of it. When God is leaving a people in displeasure, angels above, and all events below, further his departure. The Spirit of life, the Spirit of God, directs all creatures, in heaven and on earth, so as to make them serve the Divine purpose. God removes by degrees from a provoking people; and, when ready to depart, would return to them, if they were a repenting, praying people. Let this warn sinners to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call on him while he is near, and cause us all to walk humbly and watchfully with our God.

## CHAPTER 11

*Divine judgments against the wicked at Jerusalem. (1-13) Divine favor towards those in captivity. (14-21) The Divine presence forsakes the city. (22-25)*

### Ezekiel 11:1

**Vs. 1-13:** Where Satan cannot persuade men to look upon the judgment to come as uncertain, he gains his point by persuading them to look upon it as at a distance. These wretched rulers dare to say, We are as safe in this city as flesh in a boiling pot; the walls of the city shall be to us as walls of brass, we shall receive no more damage from the besiegers than the caldron does from the fire. When sinners flatter themselves to their own ruin, it is time to tell them they shall have no peace if they go on. None shall remain in possession of the city but those who are buried in it. Those are least safe who are most secure. God is often pleased to single out some sinners for warning to others. Whether Pelatiah died at that time in Jerusalem, or when the fulfillment of the prophecy drew near, is uncertain. Like Ezekiel, we ought to be much affected with the sudden death of others, and we should still plead with the Lord to have mercy on those who remain.

### Ezekiel 11:14

**Vs. 14-21:** The pious captives in Babylon were insulted by the Jews who continued in Jerusalem; but God made gracious promises to them. It is promised, that God will give them one heart; a heart firmly fixed for God, and not wavering. All who are made holy have a new spirit, a new temper and dispositions; they act from new principles, walk by new rules, and aim at new ends. A new name, or a new face, will not serve without a new spirit. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The carnal heart, like a stone, cannot be made to feel. Men live among the dead and dying, and are neither concerned nor humbled. He will make their hearts tender and fit to receive impressions: this is God's work, it is his gift by promise; and a wonderful and happy change is wrought by it, from death to life. Their practices shall be agreeable to those principles. These two must and will go together. When the sinner feels his need of these blessings, let him present the promises as prayers in the name of Christ, they will be performed.



**Ezekiel 11:22**

**Vs. 22-25:** Here is the departure of God's presence from the city and temple. It was from the Mount of Olives that the vision went up, typifying the ascension of Christ to heaven from that very mountain. Though the Lord will not forsake his people, yet he may be driven away from any part of his visible church by their sins, and woe will be upon them when He withdraws his presence, glory, and protection.

## CHAPTER 12

*The approaching captivity. (1-16) An emblem of the consternation of the Jews. (17-20) Answers to the objections of scoffers. (21-28)*

### **Ezekiel 12:1**

**Vs. 1-16:** By the preparation for removal, and his breaking through the wall of his house at evening, as one desirous to escape from the enemy, the prophet signified the conduct and fate of Zedekiah. When God has delivered us, we must glorify him and edify others, by acknowledging our sins. Those who by afflictions are brought to this, are made to know that God is the Lord, and may help to bring others to know him.

### **Ezekiel 12:17**

**Vs. 17-20:** The prophet must eat and drink in care and fear, with trembling, that he might express the condition of those in Jerusalem during the siege. When ministers speak of the ruin coming upon sinners, they must speak as those that know the terrors of the Lord. Afflictions are happy ones, however grievous to flesh and blood, that improve us in the knowledge of God.

### **Ezekiel 12:21**

**Vs. 21-28:** From that forbearance of God, which should have led them to repent, the Jews hardened themselves in sin. It will not serve for an excuse in speaking evil, to plead that it is a common saying. There is but a step between us and an awful eternity; therefore it concerns us to get ready for a future state. No one will be able to put from himself the evil day, unless by seeking peace with the Lord.

## CHAPTER 13

*Heavy judgments against lying prophets. (1-9) The insufficiency of their work. (10-16) Woes against false prophetesses. (17-23)*

### **Ezekiel 13:1**

**Vs. 1-9:** Where God gives a warrant to do any thing, he gives wisdom. What they delivered was not what they had seen or heard, as that is which the ministers of Christ deliver. They were not praying prophets, had no intercourse with Heaven; they contrived how to please people, not how to do them good; they stood not against sin. They flattered people into vain hopes. Such widen the breach, by causing men to think themselves deserving of eternal life, when the wrath of God abides upon them.

### **Ezekiel 13:10**

**Vs. 10-16:** One false prophet built the wall, set up the notion that Jerusalem should be victorious, and made himself acceptable by it. Others made the matter yet more plausible and promising; they daubed the wall which the first had built; but they would, ere long, be undeceived when their work was beaten down by the storm of God's just wrath; when the Chaldean army desolated the land. Hopes of peace and happiness, not warranted by the word of God, will cheat men; like a wall well daubed, but ill built.

### **Ezekiel 13:17**

**Vs. 17-23:** It is ill with those who had rather hear pleasing lies than unpleasing truths. The false prophetesses tried to make people secure, signified by laying them at ease, and to make them proud, signified by the finery laid on their heads. They shall be confounded in their attempts, and God's people shall be delivered out of their hands. It behooves Christians to keep close to the word of God, and in every thing to seek the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Let us so trust the promises of God as to keep his commandments.

## CHAPTER 14

*Threatenings against hypocrites. (1-11) God's purpose to punish the guilty Jews, but a few should be saved. (12-23)*

### **Ezekiel 14:1**

**Vs. 1-11:** No outward form or reformation can be acceptable to God, so long as any idol possesses the heart; yet how many prefer their own devices and their own righteousness, to the way of salvation! Men's corruptions are idols in their hearts, and are of their own setting up; God will let them take their course. Sin renders the sinner odious in the eyes of the pure and holy God; and in his own eyes also, whenever conscience is awakened. Let us seek to be cleansed from the guilt and pollution of sins, in that fountain which the Lord has opened.

### **Ezekiel 14:12**

**Vs. 12-23:** National sins bring national judgments. Though sinners escape one judgment, another is waiting for them. When God's professing people rebel against him, they may justly expect all his judgments. The faith, obedience, and prayers of Noah prevailed to the saving of his house, but not of the old world. Job's sacrifice and prayer in behalf of his friends were accepted, and Daniel had prevailed for the saving his companions and the wise men of Babylon. But a people that had filled the measure of their sins, was not to expect to escape for the sake of any righteous men living among them; not even of the most eminent saints, who could be accepted in their own case only through the sufferings and righteousness of Christ. Yet even when God makes the greatest desolations by his judgments, he saves some to be monuments of his mercy. In firm belief that we shall approve the whole of God's dealings with ourselves, and with all mankind, let us silence all rebellious murmurs and objections.

## CHAPTER 15

*Jerusalem like an unfruitful vine.*

### **Ezekiel 15:1**

If a vine be fruitful, it is valuable. But if not fruitful, it is worthless and useless, it is cast into the fire. Thus man is capable of yielding a precious fruit, in living to God; this is the sole end of his existence; and if he fails in this, he is of no use but to be destroyed. What blindness then attaches to those who live in the total neglect of God and of true religion! This similitude is applied to Jerusalem. Let us beware of an unfruitful profession. Let us come to Christ, and seek to abide in him, and to have his words abide in us.

## CHAPTER 16

*A parable showing the first low estate of the Jewish nation, its prosperity, idolatries, and punishment.*

### Ezekiel 16:1

**Vs. 1-58:** In this chapter God's dealings with the Jewish nation, and their conduct towards him, are described, and their punishment through the surrounding nations, even those they most trusted in. This is done under the parable of an exposed infant rescued from death, educated, espoused, and richly provided for, but afterwards guilty of the most abandoned conduct, and punished for it; yet at last received into favor, and ashamed of her base conduct. We are not to judge of these expressions by modern ideas, but by those of the times and places in which they were used, where many of them would not sound as they do to us. The design was to raise hatred to idolatry, and such a parable was well suited for that purpose.

### Ezekiel 16:59

**Vs. 59-63:** After a full warning of judgments, mercy is remembered, mercy is reserved. These closing verses are a precious promise, in part fulfilled at the return of the penitent and reformed Jews out of Babylon, but to have fuller accomplishment in gospel times. The Divine mercy should be powerful to melt our hearts into godly sorrow for sin. Nor will God ever leave the sinner to perish, who is humbled for his sins, and comes to trust in His mercy and grace through Jesus Christ; but will keep him by his power, through faith unto salvation.

## CHAPTER 17

*A parable relative to the Jewish nation. (1-10) to which an explanation is added. (11-21) A direct promise of the Messiah. (22-24)*

### **Ezekiel 17:1**

**Vs. 1-10:** Mighty conquerors are aptly likened to birds or beasts of prey, but their destructive passions are overruled to forward God's designs. Those who depart from God, only vary their crimes by changing one carnal confidence for another, and never will prosper.

### **Ezekiel 17:11**

**Vs. 11-21:** The parable is explained, and the particulars of the history of the Jewish nation at that time may be traced. Zedekiah had been ungrateful to his benefactor, which is a sin against God. In every solemn oath, God is appealed to as a witness of the sincerity of him that swears. Truth is a debt owing to all men. If the professors of the true religion deal treacherously with those of a false religion, their profession makes their sin the worse; and God will the more surely and severely punish it. The Lord will not hold those guiltless who take his name in vain; and no man shall escape the righteous judgment of God who dies under unrepented guilt.

### **Ezekiel 17:22**

**Vs. 22-24:** The unbelief of man shall not make the promise of God of none effect. The parable of a tree, used in the threatening, is here presented in the promise. It appears only applicable to Jesus, the Son of David, the Messiah of God. The kingdom of Satan, which has borne so long, so large a sway, shall be broken, and the kingdom of Christ, which was looked upon with contempt, shall be established. Blessed be God, our Redeemer is seen even by the ends of the earth. We may find refuge from the wrath to come, and from every enemy and danger, under his shadow; and believers are fruitful in him.

## CHAPTER 18

*God has no respect of persons. (1-20) The Divine providence is vindicated. (21-29) A gracious invitation to repentance. (30-32)*

### Ezekiel 18:1

**Vs. 1-20:** The soul that sinneth it shall die. As to eternity, every man was, is, and will be dealt with, as his conduct shows him to have been under the old covenant of works, or the new covenant of grace. Whatever outward sufferings come upon men through the sins of others, they deserve for their own sins all they suffer; and the Lord overrules every event for the eternal good of believers. All souls are in the hand of the great Creator: he will deal with them in justice or mercy; nor will any perish for the sins of another, who is not in some sense worthy of death for his own. We all have sinned, and our souls must be lost, if God deal with us according to his holy law; but we are invited to come to Christ. If a man who had shown his faith by his works, had a wicked son, whose character and conduct were the reverse of his parent's, could it be expected he should escape the Divine vengeance on account of his father's piety? Surely not. And should a wicked man have a son who walked before God as righteous, this man would not perish for his father's sins. If the son was not free from evils in this life, still he should be partaker of salvation. The question here is not about the meritorious ground of justification, but about the Lord's dealings with the righteous and the wicked.

### Ezekiel 18:21

**Vs. 21-29:** The wicked man would be saved, if he turned from his evil ways. The true penitent is a true believer. None of his former transgressions shall be mentioned unto him, but in the righteousness which he has done, as the fruit of faith and the effect of conversion, he shall surely live. The question is not whether the truly righteous ever become apostates. It is certain that many who for a time were thought to be righteous, do so, while ver. 26, 27 speaks the fullness of pardoning mercy: when sin is forgiven, it is blotted out, it is remembered no more. In their righteousness they shall live; not for their righteousness, as if that were an atonement for their sins, but in their righteousness, which is one of the



blessings purchased by the Mediator. What encouragement a repenting, returning sinner has to hope for pardon and life according to this promise! In verse 28 is the beginning and progress of repentance. True believers watch and pray, and continue to the end, and they are saved. In all our disputes with God, he is in the right, and we are in the wrong.

 **Ezekiel 18:30**

**Vs. 30-32:** The Lord will judge each of the Israelites according to his ways. On this is grounded an exhortation to repent, and to make them a new heart and a new spirit. God does not command what cannot be done, but admonishes us to do what is in our power, and to pray for what is not. Ordinances and means are appointed, directions and promises are given, that those who desire this change may seek it from God.

## CHAPTER 19

*A parable lamenting the ruin of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim. (1-9)*

*Anther describing the desolation of the people. (10-14)*

### **Ezekiel 19:1**

**Vs. 1-9:** Ezekiel is to compare the kingdom of Judah to a lioness. He must compare the kings of Judah to a lion's whelps; they were cruel and oppressive to their own subjects. The righteousness of God is to be acknowledged, when those who have terrified and enslaved others, are themselves terrified and enslaved. When professors of religion form connections with ungodly persons, their children usually grow up following after the maxims and fashions of a wicked world. Advancement to authority discovers the ambition and selfishness of men's hearts; and those who spend their lives in mischief, generally end them by violence.

### **Ezekiel 19:10**

**Vs. 10-14:** Jerusalem was a vine, flourishing and fruitful. This vine is now destroyed, though not plucked up by the roots. She has by wickedness made herself like tinder to the sparks of God's wrath, so that her own branches serve as fuel to burn her. Blessed be God, one Branch of the vine here alluded to, is not only become a strong rod for the sceptre of those that rule, but is Himself the true and living Vine. This shall be for a rejoicing to all the chosen people of God throughout all generations.

## CHAPTER 20

*The elders of Israel are reminded of the idolatry in Egypt. (1-9) In the wilderness. (10-26) In Canaan. (27-32) God promises to pardon and restore them. (33-44) Prophecy against Jerusalem. (45-49)*

### Ezekiel 20:1

**Vs. 1-9.** Those hearts are wretchedly hardened which ask God leave to go on in sin, and that even when suffering for it; see ver.

**Vs. 32.** God is justly angry with those who are resolved to go on still in their trespasses. Cause the people to know the evil deeds of their fathers, that they may see how righteous it was with God to cut them off.

### Ezekiel 20:10

**Vs. 10-26:** The history of Israel in the wilderness is referred to in the new Testament as well as in the Old, for warning. God did great things for them. He gave them the law, and revived the ancient keeping of the Sabbath day. Sabbaths are privileges; they are signs of our being his people. If we do the duty of the day, we shall find, to our comfort, it is the Lord that makes us holy, that is, truly happy, here; and prepares us to be happy, that is, perfectly holy, hereafter. The Israelites rebelled, and were left to the judgments they brought upon themselves. God sometimes makes sin to be its own punishment, yet he is not the Author of sin: there needs no more to make men miserable, than to give them up to their own evil desires and passions.

### Ezekiel 20:27

**Vs. 27-32:** The Jews persisted in rebellion after they settled in the land of Canaan. And these elders seem to have thought of uniting with the heathen. We make nothing by our profession if it be but a profession. There is nothing got by sinful compliances; and the carnal projects of hypocrites will stand them in no stead.

**Ezekiel 20:33**

**Vs. 33-44:** The wicked Israelites, notwithstanding they follow the sinful ways of other nations, shall not mingle with them in their prosperity, but shall be separated from them for destruction. There is no shaking off God's dominion; and those who will not yield to the power of his grace, shall sink under the power of his wrath. But not one of God's jewels shall be lost in the lumber of this world. He will bring the Jews to the land of Israel again; and will give them true repentance. They will be overcome with his kindness: the more we know of God's holiness, the more we see the hateful nature of sin. Those who remain unaffected amidst means of grace, and would live without Christ, like the world around them, may be sure it is the way to destruction.

**Ezekiel 20:45**

**Vs. 45-49:** Judah and Jerusalem had been full of people, as a forest of trees, but empty of fruit. God's word prophesies against those who bring not forth the fruits of righteousness. When He will ruin a nation, who or what can save it? The plainest truths were as parables to the people. It is common for those who will not be wrought upon by the word, to blame it.

## CHAPTER 21

*The ruin of Judah under the emblem of a sharp sword. (1-17) The approach of the king of Babylon described. (18-27) The destruction of the Ammonites. (28-32)*

### **Ezekiel 21:1**

**Vs. 1-17:** Here is an explanation of the parable in the last chapter. It is declared that the Lord was about to cut off Jerusalem and the whole land, that all might know it was his decree against a wicked and rebellious people. It behooves those who denounce the awful wrath of God against sinners, to show that they do not desire the woeful day. The example of Christ teaches us to lament over those whose ruin we declare. Whatever instruments God uses in executing his judgments, he will strengthen them according to the service they are employed in. The sword glitters to the terror of those against whom it is drawn. It is a sword to others, a rod to the people of the Lord. God is in earnest in pronouncing this sentence, and the prophet must show himself in earnest in publishing it.

### **Ezekiel 21:18**

**Vs. 18-27:** By the Spirit of prophecy Ezekiel foresaw Nebuchadnezzar's march from Babylon, which he would determine by divination. The Lord would overturn the government of Judah, till the coming of Him whose right it is. This seems to foretell the overturnings of the Jewish nation to the present day, and the troubles of states and kingdoms, which shall make way for establishing the Messiah's kingdom throughout the earth. The Lord secretly leads all to adopt his wise designs. And in the midst of the most tremendous warnings of wrath, we still hear of mercy, and some mention of Him through whom mercy is shown to sinful men.

### **Ezekiel 21:28**

**Vs. 28-32:** The diviners of the Ammonites made false prophecies of victory. They would never recover their power, but in time would be wholly forgotten. Let us be thankful to be employed as instruments of

mercy; let us use our understandings in doing good; and let us stand aloof from men who are only skillful to destroy.

## CHAPTER 22

*The sins of Jerusalem. (1-16) Israel is condemned as dross. (17-22) As the corruption is general, so shall be the punishment. (23-31)*

### Ezekiel 22:1

**Vs. 1-16:** The prophet is to judge the bloody city; the city of bloods. Jerusalem is so called, because of her crimes. The sins which Jerusalem stands charged with, are exceeding sinful. Murder, idolatry, disobedience to parents, oppression and extortion, profanation of the Sabbath and holy things, seventh commandment sins, lewdness and adultery. Unmindfulness of God was at the bottom of all this wickedness. Sinners provoke God because they forget him. Jerusalem has filled the measure of her sins. Those who give up themselves to be ruled by their lusts, will justly be given up to be portioned by them. Those who resolve to be their own masters, let them expect no other happiness than their own hands can furnish; and a miserable portion it will prove.

### Ezekiel 22:17

**Vs. 17-22:** Israel, compared with other nations, had been as the gold and silver compared with baser metals. But they were now as the refuse that is consumed in the furnace, or thrown away when the silver is refined. Sinners, especially backsliding professors, are, in God's account, useless and fit for nothing. When God brings his own people into the furnace, he sits by them as the refiner by his gold, to see that they are not continued there any longer than is fitting and needful. The dross shall be wholly separated, and the good metal purified. Let those who suffer pains, or lingering sickness, and find that their hearts can scarcely bear these light and momentary afflictions, take warning to flee from the wrath to come; for if these trials are not sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit, to the cleansing their hearts and hands from sin, far worse things will come upon them.

**Ezekiel 22:23**

**Vs. 23-31:** All orders and degrees of men had helped to fill the measure of the nation's guilt. The people that had any power abused it, and even the buyers and sellers find some way to oppress one another. It bodes ill to a people when judgments are breaking in upon them, and the spirit of prayer is restrained. Let all who fear God, unite to promote his truth and righteousness; as wicked men of every rank and profession plot together to run them down.



## CHAPTER 23

*A history of the apostasy of God's people from him, and the aggravation thereof.*

### **Ezekiel 23:1**

In this parable, Samaria and Israel bear the name Aholah, “her own tabernacle;” because the places of worship those kingdoms had, were of their own devising. Jerusalem and Judah bear the name of Aholibah, “my tabernacle is in her,” because their temple was the place which God himself had chosen, to put his name there. The language and figures are according to those times. Will not such humbling representations of nature keep open perpetual repentance and sorrow in the soul, hiding pride from our eyes, and taking us from self-righteousness? Will it not also prompt the soul to look to God continually for grace, that by his Holy Spirit we may mortify the deeds of the body, and live in holy conversation and godliness?

## CHAPTER 24

*The fate of Jerusalem. (1-14) The extent of the sufferings of the Jews. (15-27)*

### Ezekiel 24:1

**Vs. 1-14:** The pot on the fire represented Jerusalem besieged by the Chaldeans: all orders and ranks were within the walls, prepared as a prey for the enemy. They ought to have put away their transgressions, as the scum, which rises by the heat of the fire, is taken from the top of the pot. But they grew worse, and their miseries increased. Jerusalem was to be leveled with the ground. The time appointed for the punishment of wicked men may seem to come slowly, but it will come surely. It is sad to think how many there are, on whom ordinances and providences are all lost.

### Ezekiel 24:15

**Vs. 15-27:** Though mourning for the dead is a duty, yet it must be kept under by religion and right reason: we must not sorrow as men that have no hope. Believers must not copy the language and expressions of those who know not God. The people asked the meaning of the sign. God takes from them all that was dearest to them. And as Ezekiel wept not for his affliction, so neither should they weep for theirs. Blessed be God, we need not pine away under our afflictions; for should all comforts fail, and all sorrows be united, yet the broken heart and the mourner's prayer are always acceptable before God.

## CHAPTER 25

*Judgments against the Ammonites. (1-7) Against the Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines. (8-17)*

### Ezekiel 25:1

**Vs. 1-7:** It is wicked to be glad at the calamities of any, especially of God's people; it is a sin for which he will surely reckon. God will make it appear that he is the God of Israel, though he savors them for a time to be captives in Babylon. It is better to know Him, and to be poor, than to be rich and ignorant of him.

### Ezekiel 25:8

**Vs. 8-17:** Though one event seem to the righteous and wicked, it is vastly different. Those who glory in any other defense and protection than the Divine power, providence, and promise, will, sooner or later, be ashamed of their glorying. Those who will not leave it to God to take vengeance for them, may expect that he will take vengeance on them. The equity of the Lord's judgments is to be observed, when he not only avenges injuries upon those that did them, but by those against whom they were done. Those who treasure up old hatred, and watch for the opportunity of manifesting it, are treasuring up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath.

## CHAPTER 26

### *A prophecy against Tyre.*

#### Ezekiel 26:1

**Vs. 1-14:** To be secretly pleased with the death or decay of others, when we are likely to get by it; or with their fall, when we may thrive upon it, is a sin that easily besets us, yet is not thought so bad as really it is. But it comes from a selfish, covetous principle, and from that love of the world as our happiness, which the love of God expressly forbids. He often blasts the projects of those who would raise themselves on the ruin of others. The maxims most current in the trading world, are directly opposed to the law of God. But he will show himself against the money-loving, selfish traders, whose hearts, like those of Tyre, are hardened by the love of riches. Men have little cause to glory in things which stir up the envy and rapacity of others, and which are continually shifting from one to another; and in getting, keeping, and spending which, men provoke that God whose wrath turns joyous cities into ruinous heaps.

#### Ezekiel 26:15

**Vs. 15-21:** See how high, how great Tyre had been. See how low Tyre is made. The fall of others should awaken us out of security. Every discovery of the fulfillment of a Scripture prophecy, is like a miracle to confirm our faith. All that is earthly is vanity and vexation. Those who now have the most established prosperity, will soon be out of sight and forgotten.

## CHAPTER 27

*The merchandise of Tyre. (1-25) Its fall and ruin. (26-36)*

### Ezekiel 27:1

**Vs. 1-25:** Those who live at ease are to be lamented, if they are not prepared for trouble. Let none reckon themselves beautified, any further than they are sanctified. The account of the trade of Tyre intimates, that God's eye is upon men when employed in worldly business. Not only when at church, praying and hearing, but when in markets and fairs, buying and selling. In all our dealings we should keep a conscience void of offense. God, as the common Father of mankind, makes one country abound in one commodity, and anther in anther, serviceable to the necessity or to the comfort and ornament of human life. See what a blessing trade and merchandise are to mankind, when followed in the fear of God. Besides necessaries, an abundance of things are made valuable only by custom; yet God allows us to use them. But when riches increase, men are apt to set their hearts upon them, and forget the Lord, who gives power to get wealth.

### Ezekiel 27:26

**Vs. 26-36:** The most mighty and magnificent kingdoms and states, sooner or later, come down. Those who make creatures their confidence, and rest their hopes upon them, will fall with them: happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their Help, and whose hope is in the Lord their God, who lives for ever. Those who engage in trade should learn to conduct their business according to God's word. Those who possess wealth should remember they are the Lord's stewards, and should use his goods in doing good to all. Let us seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

## CHAPTER 28

*The sentence against the prince or king of Tyre. (1-19) The fall of Zidon. (20-23) The restoration of Israel. (24-26)*

### **Ezekiel 28:1**

**Vs. 1-19:** Ethbaal, or Ithobal, was the prince or king of Tyre; and being lifted up with excessive pride, he claimed Divine honors. Pride is peculiarly the sin of our villainy nature. Nor can any wisdom, except that which the Lord gives, lead to happiness in this world or in that which is to come. The haughty prince of Tyre thought he was able to protect his people by his own power, and considered himself as equal to the inhabitants of heaven. If it were possible to dwell in the garden of Eden, or even to enter heaven, no solid happiness could be enjoyed without a humble, holy, and spiritual mind. Especially all spiritual pride is of the devil. Those who indulge therein must expect to perish.

### **Ezekiel 28:20**

**Vs. 20-26:** The Zidonians were borderers upon the land of Israel, and they might have learned to glorify the Lord; but, instead of that, they seduced Israel to the worship of their idols. War and pestilence are God's messengers; but he will be glorified in the restoring his people to their former safety and prosperity. God will cure them of their sins, and ease them of their troubles. This promise will at length fully come to pass in the heavenly Canaan: when all the saints shall be gathered together, every thing that offends shall be removed, all griefs and fears for ever banished. Happy, then, is the church of God, and every living member of it, though poor, afflicted, and despised; for the Lord will display his truth, power, and mercy, in the salvation and happiness of his redeemed people.

## CHAPTER 29

*The desolation of Egypt. (1-16) Also a promise of mercy to Israel. (17-21)*

### Ezekiel 29:1

**Vs. 1-16:** Worldly, carnal minds pride themselves in their property, forgetting that whatever we have, we received it from God, and should use it for God. Why, then, do we boast? Self is the great idol which all the world worships, in contempt of God and his sovereignty. God can force men out of that in which they are most secure and easy. Such a one, and all that cleave to him, shall perish together. Thus end men's pride, presumption, and carnal security. The Lord is against those who do harm to his people, and still more against those who lead them into sin. Egypt shall be a kingdom again, but it shall be the basest of the kingdoms; it shall have little wealth and power. History shows the complete fulfillment of this prophecy. God, not only in justice, but in wisdom and goodness to us, breaks the creature-stays on which we lean, that they may be no more our confidence.

### Ezekiel 29:17

**Vs. 17-21:** The besiegers of Tyre obtained little plunder. But when God employs ambitious or covetous men, he will recompense them according to the desires of their hearts; for every man shall have his reward. God had mercy in store for the house of Israel soon after. The history of nations best explains ancient prophecies. All events fulfill the Scriptures. Thus, in the deepest scenes of adversity, the Lord sows the seed of our future prosperity. Happy are those who desire his favor, grace, and image; they will delight in his service, and not covet any earthly recompense; and the blessings they have chosen shall be sure to them for ever.

## CHAPTER 30

*A prophecy against Egypt. (1-19) Anther. (20-26)*

### **Ezekiel 30:1**

**Vs. 1-19:** The prophecy of the destruction of Egypt is very full. Those who take their lot with God's enemies, shall be with them in punishment. The king of Babylon and his army shall be instruments of this destruction. God often makes one wicked man a scourge to another. No place in the land of Egypt shall escape the fury of the Chaldeans. The Lord is known by the judgments he executes. Yet these are only present effects of the Divine displeasure, not worthy of our fear, compared with the wrath to come, from which Jesus delivers his people.

### **Ezekiel 30:20**

**Vs. 20-26:** Egypt shall grow weaker and weaker. If lesser judgments do not prevail to humble and reform sinners, God will send greater. God justly breaks that power which is abused, either to put wrongs upon people, or to put cheats upon them. Babylon shall grow stronger. In vain do men endeavor to bind up the arm the Lord is pleased to break, and to strengthen those whom he will bring down. Those who disregard the discoveries of his truth and mercy, shall know his power and justice, in the punishment for their sins.



## CHAPTER 31

*The glory of Assyria. (1-9) Its fall, and the like for Egypt. (10-18)*

### Ezekiel 31:1

**Vs. 1-9:** The falls of others, both into sin and ruin, warn us not to be secure or high-minded. The prophet is to show an instance of one whom the king of Egypt resembled in greatness, the Assyrian, compared to a stately cedar. Those who excellencies others, make themselves the objects of envy; but the blessings of the heavenly paradise are not liable to such alloy. The utmost security that any creature can give, is but like the shadow of a tree, a scanty and slender protection. But let us flee to God for protection, there we shall be safe. His hand must be owned in the rising of the great men of the earth, and we must not envy them. Though worldly people may seem to have firm prosperity, yet it only seems so.

### Ezekiel 31:10

**Vs. 10-18:** The king of Egypt resembled the king of Assyria in his greatness: here we see he resembles him in his pride. And he shall resemble him in his fall. His own sin brings his ruin. None of our comforts are ever lost, but what have been a thousand times forfeited. When great men fall, many fall with them, as many have villainy before them. The fall of proud men is for warning to others, to keep them humble. See how low Pharaoh lies; and see what all his pomp and pride are come to. It is best to be a lowly tree of righteousness, yielding fruit to the glory of God, and to the good of men. The wicked man is often seen flourishing like the cedar, and spreading like the green bay tree, but he soon passes away, and his place is no more found. Let us then mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.

## CHAPTER 32

*The fall of Egypt. (1-16) It is like that of other nations. (17-32)*

### Ezekiel 32:1

**Vs. 1-16:** It becomes us to weep and tremble for those who will not weep and tremble for themselves. Great oppressors are, in God's account, no better than beasts of prey. Those who admire the pomp of this world, will wonder at the ruin of that pomp; which to those who know the vanity of all things here below, is no surprise. When others are ruined by sin, we have to fear, knowing ourselves guilty. The instruments of the desolation are formidable. And the instances of the desolation are frightful. The waters of Egypt shall run like oil, which signifies there should be universal sadness and heaviness upon the whole nation. God can soon empty those of this world's goods who have the greatest fullness of them. By enlarging the matters of our joy, we increase the occasions of our sorrow. How weak and helpless, as to God, are the most powerful of mankind! The destruction of Egypt was a type of the destruction of the enemies of Christ.

### Ezekiel 32:17

**Vs. 17-32:** Divers nations are mentioned as gone down to the grave before Egypt, who are ready to give her a scornful reception; these nations had been lately ruined and wasted. But though Judah and Jerusalem were about this time ruined and laid waste, yet they are not mentioned here. Though they suffered the same affliction, and by the same hand, yet the kind design for which they were afflicted, and the mercy God reserved for them, altered its nature. It was not to them a going down to the pit, as it was to the heathen. Pharaoh shall see, and be comforted; but the comfort wicked ones have after death, is poor comfort, not real, but only in fancy. The view this prophecy gives of ruined states shows something of this present world, and the empire of death in it. Come and see the calamitous state of human life. As if men did not die fast enough, they are ingenious at finding out ways to destroy one another. Also of the other world; though the destruction of nations as such, seems chiefly intended, here is plain allusion to the everlasting ruin of impenitent sinners. How are men

deceived by Satan! What are the objects they pursue through scenes of bloodshed, and their many sins? Surely man disquiets himself in vain, whether he pursues wealth, fame, power, or pleasure. The hour cometh, when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of Christ, and shall come forth; those that have done good to the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

## CHAPTER 33

*Ezekiel's duty as a watchman. (1-9) He is to vindicate the Divine government. (10-20) The desolation of Judea. (21-29) Judgments on the mockers of the prophets. (30-33)*

### Ezekiel 33:1

**Vs. 1-9:** The prophet is a watchman to the house of Israel. His business is to warn sinners of their misery and danger. He must warn the wicked to turn from their way, that they may live. If souls perish through his neglect of duty, he brings guilt upon himself. See what those have to answer for, who make excuses for sin, flatter sinners, and encourage them to believe they shall have peace, though they go on. How much wiser are men in their temporal than in their spiritual concerns! They set watchmen to guard their houses, and sentinels to warn of the enemies' approach, but where the everlasting happiness or misery of the soul is at stake, they are offended if ministers obey their Master's command, and give a faithful warning; they would rather perish, listening to smooth things.

### Ezekiel 33:10

**Vs. 10-20:** Those who despaired of finding mercy with God, are answered with a solemn declaration of God's readiness to show mercy. The ruin of the city and state was determined, but that did not relate to the final state of persons. God says to the righteous, that he shall surely live. But many who have made profession, have been ruined by proud confidence in themselves. Man trusts to his own righteousness, and presuming on his own sufficiency, he is brought to commit iniquity. If those who have lived a wicked life repent and forsake their wicked ways, they shall be saved. Many such amazing and blessed changes have been wrought by the power of Divine grace. When there is a settled separation between a man and sin, there shall no longer be a separation between him and God.

### Ezekiel 33:21

**Vs. 21-29:** Those are unteachable indeed, who do not learn their dependence upon God, when all creature-comforts fail. Many claim an

interest in the peculiar blessings to true believers, while their conduct proves them enemies of God. They call this groundless presumption strong faith, when God's testimony declares them entitled to his threatenings, and nothing else.

 **Ezekiel 33:30**

**Vs. 30-33:** Unworthy and corrupt motives often lead men to the places where the word of God is faithfully preached. Many come to find somewhat to oppose: far more come of curiosity or mere habit. Men may have their hearts changed. But whether men hear or forbear, they will know by the event that a servant of God has been among them. All who will not know the worth of mercies by the improvement of them, will justly be made to know their worth by the want of them.

## CHAPTER 34

*The rulers reprov'd. (1-6) The people are to be restored to their own land. (7-16) The kingdom of Christ. (17-31)*

### Ezekiel 34:1

**Vs. 1-6:** The people became as sheep without a shepherd, were given up as a prey to their enemies, and the land was utterly desolated. No rank or office can exempt from the reproofs of God's word, men who neglect their duty, and abuse the trust reposed in them.

### Ezekiel 34:7

**Vs. 7-16:** The Lord declared that he intended mercy towards the scattered flock. Doubtless this, in the first place, had reference to the restoration of the Jews. It also represented the good Shepherd's tender care of the souls of his people. He finds them in their days of darkness and ignorance, and brings them to his fold. He comes to their relief in times of persecution and temptation. He leads them in the ways of righteousness, and causes them to rest on his love and faithfulness. The proud and self-sufficient, are enemies of the true gospel and of believers; against such we must guard. He has rest for disquieted saints, and terror for presumptuous sinners.

### Ezekiel 34:17

**Vs. 17-31:** The whole nation seemed to be the Lord's flock, yet they were very different characters; but he knew how to distinguish between them. By good pastures and deep waters, are meant the pure word of God and the dispensing of justice. The latter verses, 23-31, prophesy of Christ, and of the most glorious times of his church on earth. Under Him, as the good Shepherd, the church would be a blessing to all around. Christ, though excellencies in himself, was as a tender plant out of a dry ground. Being the Tree of life, bearing all the fruits of salvation, he yields spiritual food to the souls of his people. Our constant desire and prayer should be, that there may be showers of blessings in every place where the truth of Christ is preached; and that all who profess the gospel may be filled with fruits of righteousness.

## CHAPTER 35

*A prophecy against Edom.*

### Ezekiel 35:1

**Vs. 1-9:** All who have God against them, have the word of God against them. Those that have a constant hatred to God and his people, as the carnal mind has, can only expect to be made desolate for ever.

### Ezekiel 35:10

**Vs. 10-15:** When we see the vanity of the world in the disappointments, losses, and crosses, which others meet with, instead of showing ourselves greedy of worldly things, we should sit more loose to them. In the multitude of words, not one is unknown to God; not the most idle word; and the most daring is not above his rebuke. In the destruction of the enemies of the church, God designs his own glory; and we may be sure that he will not come short of his design. And when the fullness of the Jews and Gentiles shall come into the church, all antichristian opposers shall be destroyed.

## CHAPTER 36

*The land shall be delivered from heathen oppressors. (1-15) The people are reminded of former sins, and promised deliverance. (16-24) Also holiness, and gospel blessings. (25-38)*

### Ezekiel 36:1

**Vs. 1-15:** Those who put contempt and reproach on God's people, will have them turned on themselves. God promises favor to his Israel. We have no reason to complain, if the more unkind men are, the more kind God is. They shall come again to their own border. It was a type of the heavenly Canaan, of which all God's children are heirs, and into which they all shall be brought together. And when God returns in mercy to a people who return to him in duty, all their grievances will be set right. The full completion of this prophecy must be in some future event.

### Ezekiel 36:16

**Vs. 16-24:** The restoration of that people, being typical of our redemption by Christ, shows that the end aimed at in our salvation is the glory of God. The sin of a people defiles their land; renders it abominable to God, and uncomfortable to themselves. God's holy name is his great name; his holiness is his greatness, nor does any thing else make a man truly great.

### Ezekiel 36:25

**Vs. 25-38:** Water is an emblem of the cleansing our polluted souls from sin. But no water can do more than take away the filth of the flesh. Water seems in general the sacramental sign of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost; yet this is always connected with the atoning blood of Christ. When the latter is applied by faith to the conscience, to cleanse it from evil works, the former is always applied to the powers of the soul, to purify it from the pollution of sin. All that have an interest in the new covenant, have a new heart and a new spirit, in order to their walking in newness of life. God would give a heart of flesh, a soft and tender heart, complying with his holy will. Renewing grace works as great a change in the soul, as the turning a dead stone into living flesh. God will put his Spirit within, as



a Teacher, Guide, and Sanctifier. The promise of God's grace to fit us for our duty, should quicken our constant care and endeavor to do our duty. These are promises to be pleaded by, and will be fulfilled to, all true believers in every age.

## CHAPTER 37

*God restores dried bones to life. (1-14) The whole house of Israel is represented as enjoying the blessings of Christ's kingdom. (15-28)*

### Ezekiel 37:1

**Vs. 1-14:** No created power could restore human bones to life. God alone could cause them to live. Skin and flesh covered them, and the wind was then told to blow upon these bodies; and they were restored to life. The wind was an emblem of the Spirit of God, and represented his quickening powers. The vision was to encourage the desponding Jews; to predict both their restoration after the captivity, and also their recovery from their present and long-continued dispersion. It was also a clear intimation of the resurrection of the dead; and it represents the power and grace of God, in the conversion of the most hopeless sinners to himself. Let us look to Him who will at last open our graves, and bring us forth to judgment, that He may now deliver us from sin, and put his Spirit within us, and keep us by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

### Ezekiel 37:15

**Vs. 15-28:** This emblem was to show the people, that the Lord would unite Judah and Israel. Christ is the true David, Israel's King of old; and those whom he makes willing in the day of his power, he makes to walk in his judgments, and to keep his statutes. Events yet to come will further explain this prophecy. Nothing has more hindered the success of the gospel than divisions. Let us study to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; let us seek for Divine grace to keep us from detestable things; and let us pray that all nations may be obedient and happy subjects of the Son of David, that the Lord may be our God, and we may be his people for evermore.

## CHAPTER 38

*The army and malice of Gog. (1-13) God's judgments. (14-23)*

### Ezekiel 38:1

**Vs. 1-13:** These events will be in the latter days. It is supposed these enemies will come together to invade the land of Judea, and God will defeat them. God not only sees who are now the enemies of his church, but he foresees who will be so, and lets them know by his word that he is against them; though they join together, the wicked shall not be unpunished.

### Ezekiel 38:14

**Vs. 14-23:** The enemy should make a formidable descent upon the land of Israel. When Israel dwell safely under the Divine protection, shalt not thou be made to know it by finding that endeavors to destroy them are made in vain? Promises of security are treasured up in the word of God, against the troubles and dangers the church may be brought into in the latter days. In the destruction of sinners, God makes it appear that he is a great and holy God. We should desire and pray daily. Father, glorify thine own name.

## CHAPTER 39

*The destruction of Gog. (1-10) Its extent. (11-22) Israel again favored. (23-29)*

### Ezekiel 39:1

**Vs. 1-10:** The Lord will make the most careless and hardened transgressors know his holy name, either by his righteous anger, or by the riches of his mercy and grace. The weapons formed against Zion shall not prosper. Though this prophecy is to be fulfilled in the latter days, it is certain. From the language used, it seems that the army of Gog will be destroyed by miracle.

### Ezekiel 39:11

**Vs. 11-22:** How numerous the enemies which God destroyed for the defense of his people Israel! Times of great deliverances should be times of reformation. Every one should help the utmost he can, toward cleansing the land from reproach. Sin is an enemy every man should strive against. Those engaged in public work, especially of cleansing and reforming a land, ought to be men who will go through with what they undertake, who will be always employed. When good work is to be done, every one should further it. Having received special favors from God, let us cleanse ourselves from all evil. It is a work which will require persevering diligence, that search may be made into the secret recesses of sin. The judgments of the Lord, brought upon sin and sinners, are a sacrifice to the justice of God, and a feast to the faith and hope of God's people. See how evil pursues sinners, even after death. After all that ambitious and covetous men do and look for, "a place of graves" is all the Lord gives them on earth, while their guilty souls are doomed to misery in another world.

### Ezekiel 39:23

**Vs. 23-29:** When the Lord shall have mercy on the whole house of Israel, by converting them to Christianity, and when they shall have born the shame of being cast off for their sins, then the nations shall learn to know, worship, and serve him. Then Israel also shall know the Lord, as revealed

in and by Christ. Past events do not answer to these predictions. The pouring out of the Spirit is a pledge that God's favor will continue. He will hide his face no more from those on whom he has poured out his Spirit. When we pray that God would never cast us from his presence, we must as earnestly pray that, in order thereto, he would never take his Holy Spirit from us.

## CHAPTER 40

### *The Vision of the Temple.*

#### **Ezekiel 40:1**

Here is a vision, beginning at ch. 40, and continued to the end of the book, ch. 48, which is justly looked upon to be one of the most difficult portions in all the book of God. When we despair to be satisfied as to any difficulty we meet with, let us bless God that our salvation does not depend upon it, but that things necessary are plain enough; and let us wait till God shall reveal even this unto us. This chapter describes two outward courts of the temple. Whether the personage here mentioned was the Son of God, or a created angel, is not clear. But Christ is both our Altar and our Sacrifice, to whom we must look with faith in all approaches to God; and he is Salvation in the midst of the earth, <sup><1741></sup>Psalm 74:12, to be looked unto from all quarters.

## CHAPTER 41

### **Ezekiel 41:1**

After the prophet had observed the courts, he was brought to the temple. If we attend to instructions in the plainer parts of religion, and profit by them, we shall be led further into an acquaintance with the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

## CHAPTER 42

### Ezekiel 42:1

In this chapter are described the priests' chambers, their use, and the dimensions of the holy mount on which the temple stood. These chambers were many. Jesus said, In my Father's house are many mansions: in his house on earth there are many; multitudes, by faith, are lodging in his sanctuary, and yet there is room. These chambers, though private, were near the temple. Our religious services in our chambers, must prepare for public devotions, and further us in improving them, as our opportunities are.



## CHAPTER 43

### **Ezekiel 43:1**

After Ezekiel had surveyed the temple of God, he had a vision of the glory of God. When Christ crucified, and the things freely given to us of God, through Him, are shown to us by the Holy Ghost, they make us ashamed for our sins. This frame of mind prepares us for fuller discoveries of the mysteries of redeeming love; and the whole of the Scriptures should be opened and applied, that men may see their sins, and repent of them. We are not now to offer any atoning sacrifices, for by one offering Christ has perfected for ever those that are sanctified, <sup>5814</sup> Hebrews 10:14; but the sprinkling of his blood is needful in all our approaches to God the Father. Our best services can be accepted only as sprinkled with the blood which cleanses from all sin.

## CHAPTER 44

### Ezekiel 44:1

This chapter contains ordinances relative to the true priests. The prince evidently means Christ, and the words in ver. 2, may remind us that no other can enter heaven, the true sanctuary, as Christ did; namely, by virtue of his own excellencies, and his personal holiness, righteousness, and strength. He who is the Brightness of Jehovah's glory entered by his own holiness; but that way is shut to the whole human race, and we all must enter as sinners, by faith in his blood, and by the power of his grace.

## CHAPTER 45

### Ezekiel 45:1

In the period here foretold, the worship and the ministers of God will be provided for; the princes will rule with justice, as holding their power under Christ; the people will live in peace, ease, and godliness. These things seem to be represented in language taken from the customs of the times in which the prophet wrote. Christ is our Passover that is sacrificed for us: we celebrate the memorial of that sacrifice, and feast upon it, triumphing in our deliverance out of the Egyptian slavery of sin, and our preservation from the destroying sword of Divine justice, in the Lord's supper, which is our Passover feast; as the whole Christian life is, and must be, the feast of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

## CHAPTER 46

### **Ezekiel 46:1**

The ordinances of worship for the prince and for the people, are here described, and the gifts the prince may bestow on his sons and servants. Our Lord has directed us to do many duties, but he has also left many things to our choice, that those who delight in his commandments may abound therein to his glory, without entangling their own consciences, or prescribing rules unfit for others; but we must never omit our daily worship, nor neglect to apply the sacrifice of the Lamb of God to our souls, for pardon, peace, and salvation.

## CHAPTER 47

### ◀540 Ezekiel 47:1

These waters signify the gospel of Christ, which went forth from Jerusalem, and spread into the countries about; also the gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost which accompanied it, by virtue of which is spread far, and produced blessed effects. Christ is the Temple; and he is the Door; from him the living waters flow, out of his pierced side. They are increasing waters. Observe the progress of the gospel in the world, and the process of the work of grace in the heart; attend the motions of the blessed Spirit under Divine guidance. If we search into the things of God, we find some things plain and easy to be understood, as the waters that were but to the unequaled; others more difficult, which require a deeper search, as the waters to the knees, or the loins; and some quite beyond our reach, which we cannot penetrate; but must, as St. Paul did, adore the depth,

◀5139 Romans 11:33. It is wisdom to begin with that which is most easy, before we proceed to that which is dark and hard to be understood. The promises of the sacred word, and the privileges of believers, as shed abroad in their souls by the quickening Spirit, abound where the gospel is preached; they nourish and delight the souls of men; they never fade nor wither, nor are exhausted. Even the leaves serve as medicines to the soul: the warnings and reproofs of the word, though less pleasant than Divine consolations, tend to heal the diseases of the soul. All who believe in Christ, and are united to him by his sanctifying Spirit, will share the privileges of Israelites. There is room in the church, and in heaven, for all who seek the blessings of that new covenant of which Christ is Mediator.

## CHAPTER 48

### Ezekiel 48:1

Here is a description of the several portions of the land belonging to each tribe. In gospel times, behold all things are become new. Much is wrapped up in emblems and numbers. This method God has used to state mysterious truths in his word, not to be more clearly revealed till the proper time and season. But into the church of Christ, both in its state of warfare and triumph, there is free access by faith, from every side. Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven for all believers. Whoever will, may come, and take of the water of life, of the tree of life, freely. The Lord is there, in his church, to be nigh unto them in all they call upon him for. This is true of every real Christian; whatever soul has in it a living principle of grace, it may truly be said, The Lord is there. May we be found citizens of this holy city, and act agreeably to that character; and have the benefit of the Lord's presence with us, in life, in death, and for evermore.