

## **“The Book of Ezekiel” (Route 66)**

All right, let's turn in our Bibles... to the Book of EZEKIEL... This is the TWENTY-SIXTH Book of the Bible...

BY THIS POINT, we should have... SOME KIND OF understanding regarding WHO the prophets of Isaiah, Micah, Jonah, Amos, Hosea... Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk were...

WHEN they wrote, WHO they wrote TO... WHAT the OCCASION was for their writing...

LAST WEEK, we looked at Jeremiah... And—up to THIS POINT—MOST of the PROPHETS have been warning that JUDGEMENT WAS COMING upon the Northern Kingdom... or the Southern Kingdom of Judah...

But—LAST WEEK—JEREMIAH actually SAW IT HAPPEN... He was an EYEWITNESS to the Babylonian Invasion—and the Destruction of the Temple—in Judah... THIS WEEK...

EZEKIEL GOES WITH THEM INTO CAPTIVITY... Jon Courson points-out: “*Babylon invaded Judah on 3 separate occasions before finally [destroying the temple]... in 586 BC.*”

David Guzik ELABORATES... “*In 605 B.C. – Jerusalem was attacked, and Daniel and other captives were taken to Babylon...*” – We'll look at DANIEL next week...

“*[In] 597 B.C. – Jerusalem [is] attacked... with more captives taken to Babylon...*” – About 10,000 people... “*[And in] 586 B.C., Jerusalem falls and almost everyone remaining in the kingdom is exiled... Ezekiel [is] taken captive in the second phase... 2nd Kings 24 describes the conquest that led to Ezekiel's captivity. There is no indication that he ever returned to Judah.*”

So, Ezekiel is writing FROM BABYLON DURING the Exile... And he will have AMAZING VISIONS and PROPHECIES from God...

Ezekiel is a GREAT FOLLOW-UP to Jeremiah—almost a “*Spiritual Sequel.*” – Where JEREMIAH talked a LOT about the people coming back into their own land, Ezekiel touches-upon the SAME THING, MANY TIMES throughout his writing...

Whereas Jeremiah is the first to introduce the phrase “New Covenant,” Ezekiel develops the idea FURTHER, this morning...

Now, LIKE Jeremiah and Habakkuk BEFORE him—Ezekiel was a PRIEST BEFORE he was called to be a PROPHET... In Chapter 1, Verse 3, he refers to himself as a “**Ezekiel the priest**”

Verse 1 says: “**..it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month...**” – So, this reference to “**the thirtieth year**” is MOST LIKELY a reference to EZEKIEL'S OWN AGE... Which is interesting...

Numbers Chapter, Verse 3 says PRIESTS would BEGIN their **temple** service in their 30<sup>th</sup> year. – One commentator writes: “*Ezekiel’s prophetic ministry was—in a sense—compensation for the priestly ministry which the... exile had snatched... from him. When his moment of ministry was... to begin, God summons him to another... work. The priest [is] commissioned as a prophet.*”

Verse 2 says it was “**On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s captivity...**” – So, this gives us a GOOD TIME-FRAME for the WRITING of Ezekiel... In the International Theological Commentary... we read:

“*If Ezekiel were 30 years old in 593 BC... he would have been born about 622, during the reign of the [godly] King Josiah.*” – “*About 600, when he was some 23 years old, the prophet married. With his wife he went to Babylon as an exile in 597 at the age of 26. The last dated prophecy of his book is Chapter 29:17, in the year 571, when he would have been 51.*”

Ezekiel says he: “**was among the captives by the River Chebar,**” when “**the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.**”

So—in Chapter 1—Ezekiel has this AMAZING VISION of God’s GLORY... I LIKE the way the Bible Project summarizes this: “[Ezekiel]... sees a storm cloud approaching, and within the cloud, he sees four strange creatures... Each of the creatures has four faces—a human, a lion, an ox, and an eagle—and each of the creatures is atop a wheel. Their wings support a dazzling platform that holds a throne with a mysterious human-like figure shrouded in fire and glowing light. Ezekiel... describes [what he is seeing] as the “*appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord*” riding on His royal throne chariot.”

Now, THIS is a WONDERFUL passage to compare alongside Isaiah’s ‘Vision of the Lord’ in Isaiah 6... and JOHN’S VISION of the Heavenly Throne Room, in Revelation 4... John sees:

“**4 LIVING CREATURES...**” – “**The first... was like a lion, the second... like a calf, the third... like a man, and the fourth... was like [an] eagle.**” – So, there’s TREMENDOUS CONSISTENCY between the WRITINGS of Ezekiel & John (more about that later)...

But, KEEP IN MIND the **TIMELINE** of Ezekiel. – At **THIS POINT**—according to the DATES—the TEMPLE has NOT **YET** BEEN DESTROYED in Jerusalem...

So, WHY is Ezekiel seeing the GLORY OF THE LORD—which is USUALLY ONLY associated with GOD’S PRESENCE in the TEMPLE... WHY is GOD’S GLORY NOW APPEARING in BABYLON??? – Well—in a ‘PARTNER PASSAGE’ to THIS one...

Ezekiel Chapters 8—11... God TRANSPORTS EZEKIEL—IN A VISION—to the TEMPLE back in JERUSALEM... And God shows him all of the IDOLATRY going on there...

Ezekiel sees what is called the: “**image of jealousy**” in the temple... He sees “**women... weeping for Tammuz.**” – Tammuz was a Canaanite, Phoenician, Babylonian, deity... Charles Feinberg says: “*With the worship of this god in ancient times were... the basest immoralities. With the greatest of abandon women gave themselves... to most shameful practices.*”

God says to him: “**Do you see... the... abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary?**” – And—by the END of this vision... Ezekiel 10:18 says: “**the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple...**”

HOWEVER... God says—in Ezekiel 11:16—“**Although I have cast [My people] far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.”**”

Daniel Block says: “*Here Yahweh promises to be for the exiles what the temple had... been in Jerusalem.*” – It WASN’T so much that God “SENT” His people to Babylon... God went WITH them to Babylon! – And THIS is HOW Ezekiel sees THE GLORY OF THE LORD **IN** Babylon

Now—in Chapters 2 and 3—God CALLS Ezekiel to be a prophet... But—He TELLS him, UP FRONT—people AREN’T GOING TO LISTEN TO HIM...

In Chapter 2, Verse 3, He says: “**Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me...**” – In Chapter 3, Verse 5, the Lord says:

“**You are not sent to a people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language... whose words you cannot understand. Surely, had I sent you to them, they would have listened to you. But the house of Israel will not listen to you,**” Ezekiel... “**because they will not listen to Me...**” – What a DISCOURAGING CALL this must have been!!!

And—you MAY have noticed that—God **CALLS** Ezekiel ‘**Son of Man.**’ – This phrase is USED 93 TIMES of Ezekiel in this Book... But this title ALSO applies to Jesus more than 80 TIMES in the Gospels!

One author writes: “*This title was appropriated by Jesus as His favorite self-designation. Therefore, Ezekiel **may be regarded** as a type of Christ.*” – And, it’s also interesting to consider that they started their PUBLIC MINISTRIES at the SAME AGE...

Now, one of the things that’s INTERESTING about Ezekiel’s ministry is the **WAY** he was to DISPLAY—or **PERFORM**—certain messages to the people... Dr. Graham Scroggie says: “*Symbolic action often supplied the text for [Ezekiel’s] message.*”

For instance... God tells Ezekiel to PORTRAY A MODEL of the city of Jerusalem and to act-out a SIEGE against it... David Guzik writes: “*Like a child playing with toy soldiers...*” – God says: “**This will be a sign to the house of Israel.**”

Ezekiel is told to lay on his LEFT SIDE for 390 days... and then, to lay on his RIGHT SIDE for 40 days... This represented the NUMBER OF YEARS that NORTHERN KINGDOMS and the SOUTHERN KINGDOMS had persisted in their sin...

God says it was: “**...a day for each year.**” – And that He would “**restrain [Ezekiel] so that [he could not] turn from one side to another...**”

He's told to make VERY UNUSAL BREAD, mixing all types of GRAINS together, and to COOK IT over HUMAN WASTE... That's right: **POOP BREAD...**

You've heard of the "*Daniel Diet?*" – Well... This was to DEMONSTRATE HOW SCARCE & DESPERATE—things would become... during the INVASION and EXILE...

He's told to "**Pound [his] fists and stamp [his] feet...**" – In Chapter 24, God actually TELLS Ezekiel that his WIFE is going to die, and EZEKIEL is NOT TO MOURN... God says:

**"I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep..."** – And, God DOES this... because the people had started to VALUE the TEMPLE... to regard it as their "**the desire of [their] eyes...**"

And, God says: "**I will profane My sanctuary... And you shall do as [Ezekiel has] done...**" – They were NOT TO MOURN the DESTRUCTION of the TEMPLE...

In an earlier passage, God tells Ezekiel to cut off all his HAIR and BEARD using a SWORD, and to WEIGH IT, and then ONE THIRD he was to BURN... another THIRD he was to STRIKE with the SWORD... and the FINAL THIRD he was to SCATTER TO THE WIND...

God says: "**This is Jerusalem... [Because My people] have defiled My sanctuary with... [their] detestable things...**" – "**One-third of you shall die of the pestilence... one-third shall fall by the sword... I will scatter another third to all the winds...**" – HOWEVER...

Even though Ezekiel's message was LARGELY one of JUDGMENT and ACCUSATION... Like so many of the OTHER prophets—his ministry ALSO contained a MESSAGE of HOPE...

At the END of Chapter 11... This is AFTER the Lord has shown Ezekiel the vision of God's GLORY DEPARTING from the temple, He says:

**"Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and... scattered them among the countries..."** – He says: "**I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel."**"

So, this is SIMILAR to what JEREMIAH had prophesied LAST week... Not ONLY the return to their OWN LAND (after SEVENTY YEARS)... But also 'The New Covenant.'

ALL THE WAY BACK in Deuteronomy 30... Moses told the people that: "**It [would] come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among... the nations where the LORD your God drives you...**" (That's the EXILE)... Moses says if you:

**"Return to the LORD... and obey His voice... with all your heart and... soul... the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and... the nations [from] where the LORD your God has scattered you."** – He says: "**the LORD your God will circumcise your heart... to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live."**

One author writes: “*This vivid metaphor says something is fundamentally wrong with Israel’s heart... [But] God is going to transform [their] hearts, so that they can actually listen to and love God from the heart and discover true life. This is the promise of the new heart.*”

In Jeremiah Chapter 31, God calls it: “**A new covenant.**” – He says: “**I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people... I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.**”

And, this morning—in Ezekiel 11—we get a GLIMPSE of **HOW** the Lord DOES this... He says: “**I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.**”

So, this is the **NEW COVENANT**—the **NEW BIRTH**—that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ... Where God deposits HIS OWN SPIRIT inside of us...

No longer are we trying to conform to an **OUTWARD STANDARD**... We are **TRANSFORMED** by God’s Spirit working **WITHIN** us... This is **SPOKEN** of by both **JEREMIAH & EZEKIEL**...

Now—in **ANOTHER** passage—Ezekiel speaks AGAIN of the people being restored to their own land... but there is **ANOTHER DIMENSION** to it... In Chapter 36, the Lord says:

“**...when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds... So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries...**” – “**But I had concern for My holy name,**” God says...

“**I will take you from among the nations, gather you [from] all countries, and bring you into your own land.**” – “**I will sprinkle clean water on you... I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and... all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes... Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave... your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.**” – Adam Clarke says: “*This [promise] does not relate to the restoration from Babylon [alone].*”

David Guzik writes: “*The restoration after the Babylonian exile was [merely] a shadow of this promise. This was a promise to bring the Jewish people from among [all] the nations, from a scattering much broader than the Babylonian captivity... This [looks] forward to a restoration much greater than what happened in the days of Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah.*”

See, when the Jews are finally allowed to return to their own land under the decree of CYRUS in 538 BC... only a **SMALL PERCENTAGE** of them actually **leave BABYLON**...

MOST of them STAY! – ALSO; many Jews had fled to places like Ammon, and Moab, and Egypt during the Babylonian invasion... CRETE and CYRENIA...

THIS—along with the LATER Roman Siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD—led to the Jews being scattered THROUGHOUT the world in what is known as the “*Dispersion*,’ or the ‘*Diaspora*.’

Peter opens his 1st EPISTLE by saying: “**To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...**” – THIS is what he’s referring to... In fact, here’s a MAP DEPICTING all the JEWISH POPULATIONS AROUND the world because of the ‘*Dispersion*.’

BUT... in 1948, something HAPPENED... Because of the ATROCITIES committed AGAINST THE JEWS by Hitler during World War 2... For a BRIEF MOMENT the WORLD had COMPASSION on the Jewish People... and GAVE THEM their OWN LAND BACK...

And—at THAT MOMENT—all of these Old Testament prophecies about the Jews being BACK IN THEIR LAND... which had—for a LONG time (to Bible scholars)—seemed IMPOSSIBLE... began to MAKE SENSE... It’s a MIRACLE...

At NO OTHER TIME in HUMAN HISTORY has a group of people been CONQUERED... DISPERSED across the world... and yet PRESERVE their OWN LANGUAGE, their own CULTURE, their own RELIGION... and—eventually—return to their OWN LAND...

And—in Ezekiel Chapter 37... the famous “**Valley of Dry Bones Prophecy**”—God SHOWS EZEKIEL how the once “**dead**” nation of ISRAEL will be—once again—REASSEMBLED... and STAND ON THEIR FEET as a mighty army... He says:

“**The hand of the LORD... set me down... in the midst of [a] valley; and it was full of bones... there were very many in the... valley; and indeed they were very dry.**” – He says:

“...suddenly [there was] a rattling; and the bones came together...” And “as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them...” – And then, “...breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.” –

The Lord says: “**Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.**” – God says: “**I will put My Spirit in [them], and [they] shall live, and I will place [them] in [their] own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it...**”

And this is—ESSENTIALLY—what we have seen the LORD DOING with Israel EVER SINCE 1948... He has PLACED THEM IN THEIR LAND... and—OVER TIME—added MUSCLE, and SINEW, and FLESH, and SKIN, and BUILT THEM BACK-UP into their OWN NATION...

Now... what is the VERY NEXT THING we read about in Ezekiel Chapters 38 & 39? – It is the [somewhat] famous “**Gog & Magog Prophecy**.”

Now—we don’t have time to do a DEEP DIVE this morning... So, I’ll just refer you to one of my FAVORITE BIBLE TEACHERS... We have a full-length Bible Study on our YouTube Channel called “**God & Magog**” (which I HIGHLY recommend... It’s very RELEVANT to what’s happening in the world today).

But—BRIEFLY—these Chapters see a **MASSIVE MILITARY ATTACK** that comes **AGAINST ISRAEL**... by a CONFEDERATION OF NATIONS that SURROUND ISRAEL...

And – at the HEIGHT OF THIS BATTLE – God Himself SUPERNATURALLY INTERVENES and PROTECTS ISRAEL, resulting in ISRAEL FINALLY ACKNOWLEDGING Who God is, and the Lord being exalted throughout the whole earth... That's a very **QUICK SUMMARY**...

Now, there's several things we LEARN from Ezekiel Chapters 38 & 39... TWICE, Ezekiel says this will be "**IN THE LATTER YEARS**," or "**IN THE LATTER DAYS...**" – This is a **CLEAR**, END-TIMES INDICATION...

The **LEADER** of this CONFEDERATION that comes AGAINST Israel is referred to as "**Gog...**" – That name APPEARS 11 TIMES in these Chapters... And, we're told that he is "**of the land of Magog...**"

"**Magog**"—according to JEWISH HISTORIAN **JOSEPHUS**—was identified as the "*mountainous region around the Black & Caspian seas.*" – Joseph Alexander writes: "*This position is generally accepted.*" – Dr. David Jeremiah says:

*"If you trace [Magog] back in history, you will [find] that [it] is a land surrounding Russia... [which he calls] the "**STAN**" nations—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan. These are all... nations that USED to be part of the Soviet Union."*

Now, THAT brings us to the phrase where **GOG** is called "**THE PRINCE OF ROSH**." – SOME PEOPLE suggest that the word "**ROSH**" is the HEBREW WORD for "**RUSSIA...**" – (It's actually '**ROSHIA**')... And this is **DISPUTED**...

BUT... **The Imperial Dictionary of the English Language** says: "*Evidence exists of an ancient people called Rosh... supposed to be the original stem from which the... modern Russians derived their... name... taken as a proper name, in Ezekiel, it signifies the inhabitants of Scythia... from whom modern Russians derived their name.*"

Andrew Davidson – who was a Professor of Hebrew & Oriental languages – said: "*Ezekiel's "Gog invasion" points irrefutably... to the Russians.*" – AND **ROSH** is referred to as being "**in the FAR NORTH...**" **twice** – Which **FITS**... where Russia is located in relation to Isreal.

Now, we do not know this FOR SURE... HOWEVER... We **DO** know what several of the OTHER NAMES of countries—or nations—in these Chapters mean... TO SUMMARIZE:

We read of: **PERSIA** (which is modern-day **IRAN**... Up until 1935, Iran was CALLED 'Persia'... 'Iran' is the Farsi word for 'Persia')... We read of: **Turkey, Ethiopia, Libya, Armenia**... perhaps **Germany**... **SHEBA** and **DEDAN** are the **ARABIAN PENINSULA**...

So, in the **LATTER DAYS**... a CONFEDERATION... comprised of **ETHIOPIA, LIBYA, IRAN, TURKEY**... certain ARAB COUNTRIES... possibly Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan,

Afghanistan... PORTIONS OF EUROPE... led by a LEADER from the NORTH, perhaps CONNECTED to modern-day RUSSIA... coming against Israel... The question is:

**Do we SEE a CONNECTION between MODERN-DAY RUSSIA and this ASIATIC BAND of COUNTRIES? – The answer is: WE ABSOLUTELY DO...**

From **GEOPOLITICA**, we read: “*The Collective Security Treaty Organization formed in 2002, bringing together Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, as well as Armenia and Belarus... President Vladimir Putin campaigned on his ambitious plan to build a Eurasian Union, which has broad-backing and is moving ahead... Russia [has attempted] to move forward with Turkey towards a new axis that would replace the U.S. presence in the Middle East... Russia [has offered] Syria and Egypt nuclear power stations... Russia and Turkey are creating an alliance in the Middle East... Russia and Iran have forged a long-term alliance in Central Asia with implications for Eurasia as a whole.*”

In fact, if you wanna have your mind blown... Google the “**Eurasian Economic Union**,” or the “**Commonwealth of Independent States**”... and see how it’s history & development lines-up with this passage of scripture... It’s mind-boggling...

People talk a LOT about the European Union—in connection with the end times—but keep an ear to the ground when it comes to the Eurasian Economic Union...

And – **BEAR IN MIND** – these are RELATIVELY RECENT developments... Up until the 1970’s, IRAN was ISRAEL’s greatest ALLY... It wasn’t until 1979 when Iran became an **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC**—under the Ayatollah Khomeini—that they TURNED on Israel...

Israel and **TURKEY** used to be ALLIES... “*In 1999, the strategic partnership between Turkey and Israel had the potential to alter Mid-East politics: Trade and tourism were booming, the Israeli Air Force practiced maneuvers in Turkish airspace and Israeli technicians were modernizing Turkish combat jets.*”

In 2005... **the Prime Minister of Turkey**... said that his Justice Department regarded anti-Semitism as “*a crime against humanity...*” – **ALSO** just a few years ago...

When RUSSIA ATTACKED UKRAINE... ISRAEL spoke-out in DEFENSE of Ukraine... and IMMEDIATELY, Vladimir Putin said Russia does NOT recognize Israel’s sovereignty... And that **HE** is committed to seeing a Palestinian State established...

In December 2020—Newsweek Magazine ran the headline: “**Russia Calls Israel ‘the Problem’ in the Middle East, [and] Defends Iran and Its Allies.**” – Now, WHY **MENTION** THAT?

Because, these Chapters SAY that GOD will “**put hooks into [Gog’s] jaws...**” and will do **SOMETHING** to DRAW THIS CONFEDERATION into an ATTACK against Israel, where God will MIRACULOUSLY DEFEND His people...

Now... Am I SAYING that the GOG/MAGOG war is **HAPPENING** right now... Not NECESSARILY... However, I **DO** believe that we're seeing it **SET-UP**... And **ALL THE PLAYERS** are coming into **VIEW** who **WILL** be on the world stage to fulfill this prophecy...

And the **RESULT** of this ATTACK... will be God's PROTECTION of Israel... and HIS PEOPLE finally recognizing WHO GOD IS... David Guzik writes:

*"God uses the remarkable victory over Gog & his allies to bring His people to RESTORED RELATIONSHIP... though Israel [is] gathered **TO** the land & [lives] in relative safety now – a TRUE relationship with Yahweh has not yet been restored. It **WILL** as the result of this battle."*

So, I would say... keep your eyes on RUSSIA and its GROWING RELATIONSHIP with all the EURASIAN-ISLAMIC COUNTRIES surrounding Israel...

Now—in Chapter 40—We **SHIFT GEARS**... And Ezekiel has an ENTIRELY NEW VISION... He says it was **"In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity... in the fourteenth year after the city was captured..."** – So, this is TWELVE YEARS **AFTER** his preceding prophecies...

And—**FROM** HERE to the END OF THE BOOK—Ezekiel provides a DETAILED DESCRIPTION of a BRAND-NEW TEMPLE... It's very ELABORATE...

He says—in Chapter 40, Verse 2... The Lord: **"Took me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain,"** he says **"toward the south was something like the structure of a city."** – **"There was a man whose appearance was like... bronze."** – Probably an ANGEL...

**"He had a... measuring rod in his hand... And the man said to me, 'Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you. Declare to the house of Israel everything you see."** – Now, there's **FOUR BASIC SCHOOLS** of **INTERPRETATION** when it comes to this TEMPLE that Ezekiel sees...

The FIRST is that Ezekiel is describing a REBUILT TEMPLE that comes into existence when the Jews return to their land after the Babylonian Captivity... This is known as the **LITERAL PROPHETIC VIEW**...

Now, we **DO** KNOW that a temple was REBUILT in the days of Ezra & Nehemiah... The PROBLEM is... THESE measurements DO NOT CORRESPOND to that rebuilt temple of 516 BC... nor of HEROD'S LATER EXPANSION in 18 BC...

In fact, the measurements that God shows Ezekiel absolutely **DWARF** Solomon's ORIGINAL Temple... **THIS** temple is about 1.5 miles SQUARE... it's HUGE...

The SECOND INTERPRETATION is the **SYMBOLIC CHRISTIAN VIEW**, that this Temple speaks SYMBOLICALLY of the CHURCH... Now—it **IS** true—that Paul SPEAKS of the church being a **"temple,"** but... what do the MEASUREMENTS mean?

David Guzik writes: “*The entire tone of Ezekiel... points to... something real, not spiritualized... There is no explanation of—or pointing toward—a symbolic interpretation, only a detailed tour and specific dimensions.*”

Charles Feinberg says: “*This [view] is entirely too subjective and would mean nothing...*” – Joseph Alexander says AT THAT POINT: “*Different aspects of [the] passage [can] mean whatever the interpreter desires.*” – So, it’s a HIGHLY SPIRITUALIZED INTERPRETATION

A THIRD VIEW is the **APOCALYPTIC VIEW**... and that is, that Ezekiel is **measuring** the **SAME TEMPLE** that John measures in Revelation Chapter 11...

And, it IS true that both JOHN and EZEKIEL **measure** TEMPLES... But, the REST of the events of the Book of Revelation place JOHN’S TEMPLE at a different TIME... It speaks of an ACTUAL TEMPLE that will be ON EARTH during the Great Tribulation...

David Guzik writes: “*The temple of Revelation 11 seems to be **before** the temple of Ezekiel... [and] the temple in Ezekiel is best understood as the temple of the millennial earth.*”

This brings us to the **DISPENSATIONALIST VIEW**... This is the view to which I, personally, subscribe... And that is: That Ezekiel is MEASURING—a REAL & LITERAL TEMPLE that will exist during the Millennial Kingdom when Jesus Christ REIGNS and RULES on the earth...

Warren Wiersbe says: “*Ezekiel isn’t the only prophet who said there would be a holy temple during the [Millennial] Age. You find a [Millennial] temple... mentioned in Isaiah 2 and 60... Jeremiah 33... Joel 3... Micah 4... Haggai 2... and Zechariah 6, 14, and 20.*”

And, passages like Jeremiah 30, and—EARLIER in Ezekiel Chapter 37—seem to indicate that a **RESURRECTED DAVID** will once-again sit upon the throne over Israel DURING THIS TIME

And, there are OTHER SIMILARITIES between EZEKIEL and the Book of Revelation... In Chapter 47, Ezekiel sees: “**...water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple...**” – This water becomes “**a river that I could not cross.**” “[it] was too deep...” – He writes: “**Along the bank of the river, on this side and that... grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine.**”

Now—in Revelation 22—John is shown: “**...a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.**” – “**And on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**”

So, these passages are SO SIMILAR that SOME PEOPLE believe that John and Ezekiel are seeing the **SAME** THING... But there are some KEY DIFFERENCES...

Ezekiel sees this water flowing from **THE TEMPLE**... But John sees the water flowing from the **THRONE OF GOD**... In fact, John says, there IS “**no temple... for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.**”

So, I BELIEVE these two writers are seeing something VERY SIMILAR, but DIFFERENT... Joseph Alexander says: “*The Millennium is only a beginning—sort of a microcosm—of the eternal state and transition into it. To observe... Ezekiel 40–48 in the picture of the eternal state revealed in Revelation 21–22 should be expected and... not surprise the reader.*”

Almost as if the MILLENIUM is a SNAPSHOT of what will **EVENTUALLY** COME in the New Heaven and the New Earth... Wherein “**righteousness dwells,**” and **that** you and I “**according to His promise**”—Peter says—should be LOOKING for... Amen?

All-told, Ezekiel is just an AMAZING BOOK... This is one of those studies, where—I FULLY RECOGNIZE—we have just started to scratch the surface...

I hope—if nothing else—these studies serve to INTRODUCE you to some of these Books of the Bible... And, I HIGHLY ENCOURAGE you to go back, and read these—and study them—more thoroughly... there is SO MUCH stuff here...

Now... NEXT WEEK... we have ANOTHER PROPHET who is writing from Babylon DURING THE EXILE... And—like Ezekiel—a LOT of his prophecies will extend BEYOND the immediate and into what we think of as ‘**The End Times.**’

Of course, I’m talking about DANIEL... If you’ve never studied the Book of DANIEL before, I encourage you to READ IT THIS WEEK (it’s much SHORTER than Ezekiel)...

And then, come back NEXT week—PRAYED up... HEARTS open—ready to STUDY the Book of Daniel, and receive God’s Word... That is where we are headed... when Route 66 continues!