

Meet the Prophets

Ezekiel the Prophet in Exile

Shevat 2, 5778; Jan 17, 2018

Lesson Ten

Historical Background

2 Kings 24:10–18.

In 598–597 BCE, eleven years prior to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, marched against Jerusalem to take control of Judah and quash King Jehoiakim's alliance with Egypt. Jehoiakim died in the campaign, and his son Jehoiachin surrendered. Nebuchadnezzar placed Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah on the throne and exiled young King Jehoiachin and all of Jerusalem's leading men to Babylon.

Ezekiel the son of Buzi went out among the exiles. Ezekiel and a contingency of the exiles settled on the banks of the Chebar River in a Babylonian city called Tel Aviv (Tel-abib). The exiles in Babylon found themselves in the midst of a much larger, impressive, and advanced civilization. Monumental architecture surrounded them. Temples and public buildings displayed relief sculptures depicting ancient near eastern, mythological bestiary. The towering idols of the Babylonian pantheons seemed to overshadow the quaint, imageless monotheism the people of Judah had known at home.

Meanwhile, back in Jerusalem, the Torah-revival initiated by King Josiah had ebbed. Idolatry and apostasy had seeped back into the national religious life. Violence, political intrigue, and social justice went unabated as King Zedekiah maneuvered into alliances and coalitions with pagan nations. Through the voice of the prophet Jeremiah, the LORD warned of an impending day of reckoning. Jeremiah announced that the LORD was prepared to abandon His Temple and give the city of Jerusalem over to siege and destruction. (Torah Club Voice of the Prophets)

Jehoiachin (598-597, three months)

AKA Coniah, Jeconiah

Jehoiachin takes throne (2 Kings 24:8)

Babylon besieges Jerusalem, king surrenders, deportation of nobility (2 Kings 24:10-16)

King Jehoiachin's Exile (Ezekiel 1:2)

Zedekiah (596-568)

Nebuchadnezzar puts Zedekiah on Throne (2 Kings 24:17-20)

The Conspiracy against Babylon (593 BCE)

Zedekiah summoned to Babylon

The Merkavah (the Chariot) (593)

Ezekiel 1 (fifth year of Jehoiachin)

Ezekiel's Vision of the Merkavah

Cherubim – Chayot (Living Creatures)

Foundation of Mysticism

[Certain subjects] may not be taught in the presence of three. The [esoteric secrets of the] Work of Creation may not be taught in the presence of two. The Chariot may not be taught in the presence of one, unless the student is a sage and is already versed in the subject. (m.Chagigah 2:1)

The king of the wild animals is the lion; the king of the domesticated animals is the bull; the king of the birds is the eagle; and man is placed above them. The Holy One, blessed be He, is exalted over all of them, and over the whole world. (b.Chagigah 13b)

Commissioning of Ezekiel

Ezekiel 2-3

Ezekiel's Sign Acts

A Mystical Trip to the Temple (592)

Ezekiel 8:1ff

The Merkavah Leaves the Temple

Ezekiel 10

Elders Approach Ezekiel (591)

Ezekiel 20:1-3

Pharaoh Hophra's Promises to Zedekiah (588)

2 Kings 24:20b (Zedekiah rebels)

Ezekiel 17:11-18

The Siege of Jerusalem (588-586 BCE)

Zedekiah Rebels (2 Kings 24:20-25:1)

Ezekiel 24:1-2 Siege begins

Ezekiel 33:21 "The city has fallen"

12th year of Jehoiachin

Vision of the Redemption (573)

Redemption Ezekiel 36

Resurrection Ezekiel 37

Two Sticks Ezekiel 37

Gog and Magog Ezekiel 38-39

Jehoiachin takes throne (2 Kings 24:8)

Ezekiel 40ff

Vision of the Third Temple (573)

25th year of Jehoiachin

Ezekiel 40-46

Vision of the Temple

Return of the Shechinah

"The Prince"

River of Life Ezekiel 47

Allotment of the Land Ezekiel 48