

SESSION 4 STARTS HERE

David A. Lewis, "The Amazing Ezekiel Tablets"

There are researchers in Israel, who believe that they have found the original book of Ezekiel. It is engraved on stone tablets. ... If this theory can be proven and brought to public light it will be the most astounding archaeological discovery of all time. It could either authenticate the text of our modern Bible, or tend to discredit it. Up until this generation there has been no hint that the actual, original text of one of the books of the Bible might still be in existence. Until now the oldest known manuscript has been one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating to about 250 BC (BCE). This would be a manuscript prepared 350 years after the original documents. Actually, our Bible is based on copies of copies of copies of the original, unless there is one possible exception.¹²



Ezekiel Chapter 3:12-15 יְחִזְקָאֵל JPS 1917

יב וַתִּשָּׂאֵנִי רוּחַ--וַאֲשַׁמַּע 12 Then a spirit lifted me up, and I heard
אַחֲרַי, קוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל: בְּרוּךְ behind me the voice of a great rushing:
כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה, מִמְּקוֹמוֹ. 'Blessed be the glory of the LORD from
His place';

יג וְקוֹל כְּנָפֵי הַחַיּוֹת, מְשִׁיקוֹת 13 also the noise of the wings of the
אִשָּׁה אֶל-אַחֹתָהּ, וְקוֹל living creatures as they touched one
הָאֹפָנִים, לְעִמָּתָם; וְקוֹל, רַעַשׁ another, and the noise of the wheels
גָּדוֹל. beside them, even the noise of a great
rushing.

¹² David A. Lewis, "The Amazing Ezekiel Tablets," Jerusalem Courier & Prophecy Digest, December 2006, 1.

יד וְרוּחַ נִשְׁאַתָּנִי, וַתִּקְחֵנִי; 14 So a spirit lifted me up, and took me
וְאֵלַי מַר בְּחִמַּת רוּחִי, וְיָד- away; and I went in bitterness, in the
יְהוָה עָלַי חֲזָקָה. LORD was strong upon me.

טו וָאָבִוּא אֶל-הַגּוֹלָה תֵּל 15 Then I came to them of the captivity
אָבִיב הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶל-נָהָר-כְּבָר, at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river
וְאֲשֶׁר (וְאֲשֶׁב)--הָמָּה, יוֹשְׁבִים Chebar, and I sat where they sat; and I
שָׁם; וְאֲשֶׁב שָׁם שְׁבַעַת יָמִים, remained there appalled among them
מִשָּׁמַיִם בְּתוֹכָם. seven days.

The Departure and Return of the Glory

An amazing detail and the actual theme of the Book of Ezekiel is one I'd never seen until I studied the *ArtScroll* commentaries. And yet, it is very plain in the book itself if you just know what to look for. I just needed those Hebrew scholars, who have studied this book for centuries, to point it out.

The theme of the Book of Ezekiel is the departure and the return of the Shechinah Glory.

The Chariot (Hebrew speakers call it the *Merkavah*), came to escort the Glory away from the Temple. The Book describes the stations of the departure. It tells how the Glory lifted from between the *Cherubim*, went out into the court, proceeded over the threshold, and then crossed to the Mount of Olives, where it ascended into Heaven.

The Glory had to depart. For if the Glory had remained over the Mercy Seat, the Babylonians would never have been able to burn the Temple.

After the Glory departed, the Temple was just a building. No longer was it filled with the Glorious Presence. The *Shechinah* Glory, as manifested in a cloud over the Mercy Seat, was never in the Second Temple. The return of the *Shechinah* to the Millennial Temple is prophesied in this amazing Book.

Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, *Yechezkel*

So intense was the holiness of the *Shechinah*, God's Presence, as it rested in a cloud upon the Tabernacle that even Moses feared to enter (Exodus 40:34-35), and so total was its presence on the Temple that the priests could not enter (I Kings 8:11). But God's *Shechinah* rests ultimately on His people, not on their architecture. His purpose is Man, not man's temples. So, when Israel descended from ... spiritual grandeur to the earthly depths of lust and iniquity, the *Shechinah* ascended from Israel's Temple which had become no more than a shell — beautiful but empty — and returned to the heavens ...

It was the lot of Yechezkel to witness the tragedy ... the departure of the *Shechinah* ... In ten agonizing stages, the *Shechinah* slowly withdrew from the Holy City and the

Holy Temple, leaving them naked to the onslaught of Nebuchadnezzar ... All this Yechezkel saw ...

But Yechezkel's visions were not all bleak. He was more than the prophet of destruction ... he saw the future, the glorious future when the Temple ... eternal ... would stand enveloped in a glory that would eclipse all which had gone before. Yechezkel had suffered the ... torment of hearing the angels describe God's withdrawal from the Temple saying ... *Blessed is the glory of God [as He departs] 'from' His place* (3:12). He would exult with another vision as God transported him to Eretz Yisrael, and set him down on a high mountain overlooking Jerusalem (40:2). ... Yechezkel would see the glory of God borne on a chariot that was not drawing away from Zion — but was *returning* to it, never again to depart:

... *And the glory of God was coming to the House by way of the gate which faced eastward* (43:4).¹³

Brim Note: The Chariot of God (*Merkavah*) was sent to escort the *Shechinah*. Consider this opening to the first chapter of Ezekiel from Rabbi Moshe Eisemann's ArtScroll Tanach Series book *Yechezkel*:

Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, *Yechezkel*,

Some five years after the arrival in Babylon of the first wave of exiles who had been led into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar's hordes, Yechezkel ben Buzi, the priest, was granted a prophecy. As he stood on the banks of the river Kevar 'the heavens were opened' and he was shown 'the visions of God.'

These 'visions' are known in Talmudic literature as ... *Merkavah* [lit. 'Chariot'] or, ... *Ma'aseh Merkavah*, [lit. 'the Work,' or 'the Account' of the Chariot].¹⁴

Ezekiel: Watchman With a Mission

Ezekiel Chapter 3:17 יְהוֹנָדָאֵל JPS 1917

17 יְהוֹנָדָאֵל, צִפָּה נִתְּתִיךָ לְבֵית
יִשְׂרָאֵל; וְשָׁמַעְתָּ מִפִּי דְבָרִי,
וְהִזְהַרְתָּ אוֹתָם מִמֶּנִּי. 'Son of man, I have appointed thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; and when thou shalt hear a word at My mouth, thou shalt give them warning from Me.

Dr. Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Ezekiel, 2021 Edition"

The first part of Ezekiel's ministry consisted of predicting the fall of Jerusalem (chs. 1–24). When it fell in 586 B.C., he then began predicting God's judgment on the Gentile nations (chs. 25–32) and the restoration of Israel (chs. 33–48).¹⁵

¹³ Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, *Yechezkel—The Book of Ezekiel: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic Sources*, 3rd edition (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications Ltd, ArtScroll, 1988), xx–xxi.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁵ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Ezekiel, 2021 Edition," Soniclight.com. Accessed June 1, 2021. <https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/ot/ezekiel/ezekiel.htm>

Another *Merkavah* Vision

Ezekiel 3:22 יְחִזְקָאֵל JPS 1917

22 And the **hand of the LORD** came there upon me; and He said unto me: **יָד-יְהוָה**; **וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי**, קוּם צֵא אֶל-**הַבִּקְעָה**, וְשָׁם, אֲדַבֵּר אִתְּךָ. 'Arise, go forth into **the plain**, and I will there speak with thee.'

Ezekiel 3:22 ESV And the hand of the Lord was upon me there. And he said to me, "Arise, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you."

"plain"

Strong's H1237 **בִּקְעָה** **biq'âh, bik-aw'**; from [H1234](#); properly, a split, i.e. a wide level *valley* between mountains:—plain, valley.

Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, *Yechezkel*

In preparation for another *Merkavah* vision, the prophet is told to isolate himself once more from the people and to go to a valley ... The use of the definite article ... indicates that a particular valley is meant.¹⁶

Brim Challenge: Can you locate the definite article?

Ezekiel 3:23-26 יְחִזְקָאֵל JPS 1917

23 Then I arose, and went forth into the plain; and, behold, the **glory of the LORD** stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. **כֹּג** וָאָקוּם, וָאֵצֵא אֶל-הַבִּקְעָה, וַהֲנִיָּה-שָׁם **כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה** עֹמֵד, כְּכְבוֹד אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי עַל-גֶּחַר-כְּבָר; וָאָפַל, עַל-פָּנַי.

24 Then spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet; and He spoke with me, and said unto me: 'Go, shut thyself within thy house. **כֹּד** וַתְּבֹא-בִי רוּחַ, וַתַּעֲמִדְנִי עַל-רַגְלִי; וַיְדַבֵּר אֵתִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי, בֵּא הִסְגֵּר בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתְךָ.

25 But thou, **son of man**, behold, bands shall be put upon thee, and thou shalt be bound with them, and thou shalt not go out among them; **כֶּה** וְאַתָּה **בֶּן-אָדָם**, הִנֵּה נָתַנִּי עָלֶיךָ עֲבוֹתִים, וָאֶסְרוּךָ, בָּהֶם; וְלֹא תֵצֵא, בְּתוֹכָם.

¹⁶ Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, *Yechezkel—The Book of Ezekiel: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic Sources*, 3rd edition (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications Ltd, ArtScroll, 1988), 105.

26 כו וְלִשְׁוֹנְךָ, אֶדְבִּיק אֶל-חִפְּךָ, וְנִבֵּל מִפִּי. וְלֹא-תִהְיֶה לָּהֶם לְאִישׁ מוֹכִיחַ: כִּי בֵּית מְרִי הֵמָּה. 26 and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprove; for they are a rebellious house.

The people refused to believe that the Temple, their connection to God, could be destroyed. False prophets prophesied the destruction of Babylon and the soon return to Zion.

The Lord gave Ezekiel a mission, but God closed his mouth because the people would not receive his message. He had to remain dumb (verses 25-27) until the twelfth year of the captivity when an escapee came with the news that Jerusalem was destroyed (Ezekiel 33:21-22). God would then open his mouth and his message would be received.

Ezekiel 3:27 יְחִזְקֵאל JPS 1917

27 כֹּז וּבְדַבְרִי אוֹתָךְ, אֶפְתַּח אֶת-פִּיךָ, וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם, כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה: הַשְׁמַע יִשְׁמַע וְהַחֲדַל יִחְדַּל, כִּי בֵּית מְרִי הֵמָּה. {פ} 27 But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them: Thus saith the Lord GOD; he that heareth, let him hear, and he that forbear, let him forbear; for they are a rebellious house. {P}

HEBREW VOCABULARY

בֶּן-אָדָם	<i>ben adam</i>	son of man
אֱלֹהִים	<i>Elohim</i>	God
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל	<i>bet Yisreal</i>	House of Israel
יַד-יְהוָה	<i>yad Yehovah</i>	hand of the LORD
כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה	<i>kavod Yehovah</i>	Glory of the LORD
רוּחַ	<i>ruach</i>	spirit, wind, breath
חַיּוֹת	<i>chayot</i>	living creatures
אוֹפָן	<i>ofan</i>	wheel
אוֹפָנִים	<i>ofanim</i>	wheels

SESSION 4 CONTINUES IN LESSON 5

יְחֶזְקֵאל YEchezkel

EZEKIEL 4-5

SESSION 4 CONTINUES HERE

Ezekiel 4

God commands Yechezkel to act out the forthcoming siege of Jerusalem.

He must then “lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it” by laying down in the sight of the people—a day for every year—symbolizing the years of their sin.

390 Days of immobility for the Family of Israel—The Ten Tribes of the Northern Kingdom (verse 5)

40 days of immobility for the Family of Judah—The Two Tribes of the Southern Kingdom—Judah and Benjamin (v. 6)

Ezekiel Chapter 4:1-6 יְחֶזְקֵאל JPS 1917

א וְאַתָּה בֶּן-אָדָם קח-לךָ לֵבֶנָה, וְנָתַתָּה אוֹתָהּ לְפָנֶיךָ; וַחֲקוֹת עָלֶיהָ עִיר, אֶת-יְרוּשָׁלַם. 1 Thou also, **son of man**, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and trace upon it a city, even **Jerusalem**;

ב וְנָתַתָּה עָלֶיהָ מְצוֹר, וּבָנִיתָ עָלֶיהָ דְּיִק, וּשְׂפָכְתָּ עָלֶיהָ, סִלְלָה; וְנָתַתָּה עָלֶיהָ מַחֲנוֹת וְשִׁים-עָלֶיהָ כָּרִים, סָבִיב. 2 and lay siege against it, and build forts against it, and cast up a mound against it; set camps also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

ג וְאַתָּה קח-לךָ, מַחֲבֶת בַּרְזֶל, וְנָתַתָּה אוֹתָהּ קִיר בַּרְזֶל, בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָעִיר; וַחֲכִינְתָהּ אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ אֵלֶיהָ וְהִיתָה בְּמִצּוֹר, וְצָרְתָּ עָלֶיהָ-אֹת הַיָּא, לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל. {פ} 3 And take thou unto thee an iron griddle, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city; and set thy face toward it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign **to the house of Israel**. {P}

ד וְאַתָּה שָׁכַב עַל-צִדְךָ הַשְּׂמָאלִי, וּשְׂמַתָּ אֶת-עוֹן בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלָיו: 4 Moreover lie thou upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the **house of Israel** upon it; according to the number of the days that thou

מִסְפַּר הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁכַּב עָלָיו, shalt lie upon it, thou shalt bear
תִּשָּׂא אֶת-עֲוֹנָם. their iniquity.

5 For I have appointed the years of
ה' וְאֲנִי, נָתַתִּי לָךְ אֶת-שְׁנֵי עֲוֹנָם, their iniquity to be unto thee a
לְמִסְפַּר יָמִים, שְׁלֹשׁ-מֵאוֹת וְתִשְׁעִים number of days, even three
יָוֵם; וְנִשְׂאֵתָ, עֲוֹן בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל. hundred and ninety days; so shalt
thou bear the iniquity of the **house**
of Israel.

6 And again, when thou hast
וְכִלִּיתָ אֶת-אֱלֹהֶהּ, וְשָׁכַבְתָּ עַל- accomplished these, thou shalt lie
צִדְךָ הַיְמָיִי (הַיְמָנִי) שְׁנִיתָ, on thy right side, and shalt bear the
וְנִשְׂאֵתָ, אֶת-עֲוֹן בֵּית-יְהוּדָה-- iniquity of the **house of Judah**; forty
אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, יוֹם לַשָּׁנָה יוֹם לַשָּׁנָה days, each day for a year, have I
נָתַתִּיו לָךְ. appointed it unto thee.

Ezekiel 5

Ezekiel was commanded to shave his hair and beard and to use the hair to demonstrate what will happen to Jerusalem's peoples individually.

This chapter deals with the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel's audience in Babylon would experience this only vicariously.

Ezekiel 5:1-2, 12 JPS 1917

1 And thou, **son of man**, take thee a
א וְאַתָּה בֶּן-אָדָם קַח-לָךְ חֶרֶב sharp sword, as a barber's razor
חֲדָה, תַּעַר הַנִּלְבִּים תִּקְחָנָה לָךְ, shalt thou take it unto thee, and
וְהַעֲבַרְתָּ עַל-רֹאשְׁךָ, וְעַל-זִקְנְךָ; and cause it to pass upon thy head and
וְלִקְחָתָ לָךְ מֵאֲזִנֵּי מִשְׁקָל, upon thy beard; then take thee
וְחִלַּקְתָּם. balances to weigh, and divide the
hair.

2 A third part shalt thou burn in the
ב שְׁלִשִׁית, בְּאוּר תִּבְעִיר בְּתוֹךְ fire in the midst of the city, when
הָעִיר, כְּמִלְאָתָהּ, יָמֵי הַמָּצוֹר; the days of the siege are fulfilled;
וְלִקְחָתָ אֶת-הַשְּׁלִשִׁית, תִּכֶּה and thou shalt take a third part, and
בְּחֶרֶב סְבִיבוֹתֶיהָ, וְהַשְּׁלִשִׁית smite it with the sword round about
her; and a third part thou shalt

תִּזְרֶה לָרוּחַ, וְחָרַב אֶרֶץ אֲחֵרֵיהֶם. scatter to the wind, and I will draw out a sword after them.

יב שְׁלִשְׁתֵּיךְ בְּדָבָר יָמוּתוּ, וּבָרָעַב יִכָּלוּ בְּתוֹכָהּ, וְהַשְׁלִשִּׁית, בַּחֶרֶב יִפְּלוּ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ; וְהַשְׁלִשִּׁית לְכָל-רוּחַ אֲזָרָה, וְחָרַב אֶרֶץ אֲחֵרֵיהֶם. 12 A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and a third part I will scatter unto all the winds, and will draw out a sword after them.

God continuously warned his people and their leaders through the prophets. God had previously warned King Zedekiah through Jeremiah and gave him a way of escape:

Jeremiah 38:17-18 KJV

Jer. 38:17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house:

Jer. 38:18 But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

Zedekiah refused and kept Jeremiah in prison.

Jeremiah 38:28 KJV So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

Compare with the warning given by Jesus forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus the Roman (Luke 21:20-24).

Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book VI, Chapter 5, Sections 3 and 4, is printed in the Supplement Section of this manual under "4 Kingdoms Rome." God's mercy is clearly seen in these examples.

Also, here is the link to see the whole book:

https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2850/2850-h/2850-h.htm#link62H_4_0001

Consider God's revealed will for all that were carried away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:4-7 KJV

Jer. 29:4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;

Jer. 29:5 Build ye houses, and dwell *in them*; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;

Jer. 29:6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

Jer. 29:7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

God's will for them, even in captivity, was to thrive, not just survive. He wanted them to grow there. He promised to be with them.

Zechariah 1:12-17 KJV

Zech. 1:12 Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?

Zech. 1:13 And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with good words and comfortable words*.

Through Zechariah, God was giving them words of comfort, even though, at the moment, they were in captivity.

Zech. 1:14 So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

Zech. 1:15 And I am very sore displeased with the heathen [nations] *that are at ease*: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.

Zech. 1:16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

Zech. 1:17 Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

God chose the nations to punish Israel, but they were unnecessarily cruel to His people. It has been that way throughout history.

Excerpted from Supplement Section, Appendix 14 Joseph Samuels, "When the Mob Came for the Jews of Baghdad"

We heard screams all through the night. Today only four known Jews remain in Iraq.

I was 10 when mobs attacked the Jewish community of Baghdad, my community, with cruel and unimaginable violence. Rioters maimed, raped, killed and robbed the unsuspecting Jews. This massacre, which began June 1, 1941, was called the *Farhud*, Arabic for "violent dispossession" or pogrom.¹⁷

¹⁷ Joseph Samuels, "When the Mob Came for the Jews of Baghdad," Wall Street Journal/Opinion, May 8, 2021. Accessed May 29, 2021.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/when-the-mob-came-for-the-jews-of-baghdad-11622237901>

Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial*

The Iraqi Jews took pride in their distinguished Jewish community, with its history of scholarship and dignity. Jews had prospered in what was then Babylonia for twelve hundred years before the Muslim conquest in A.D. 634; it was not until the ninth century that *dhimma* laws such as the yellow patch, heavy head tax, and residence restrictions were enforced.¹⁸

HEBREW VOCABULARY

בֶּן-אָדָם	<i>ben adam</i>	son of man
בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל	<i>bet Yisreal</i>	House of Israel
בֵּית-יְהוּדָה	<i>bet Yehudah</i>	House of Judah
יְרוּשָׁלַּיִם	<i>Yerushalayim</i>	Jerusalem

Closing Thoughts

After the Fall, throughout the ages, God has been careful about where He has chosen to manifest His glory:

First, it was in a BUSH,

then on a MOUNTAIN,

then in a TABERNACLE,

then in a TEMPLE,

and now in the CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST.

SESSION 4 ENDS HERE

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¹⁸ Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial* (Chicago, IL: JKAP Publications, 1984) 43.