

## EZEKIEL: BLOSSOMING DURING LIFE'S MOST SEVERE CRISES

### Part I: "God's Preparation of His Saint For Life's Deepest Waters"

(Ezekiel 1:1-3:27)

#### I. Introduction

- A. There are times of great blessing and ease for the believer; there are also times of deep waters when those who like Job of old experience crises that are too difficult even to comprehend.
- B. God sent a man of God named Ezekiel to minister in the time of Israel's national captivity, and God sent him to be a captive **in Babylon!** (Ezekiel 1:1) This time was the time of Israel's greatest crisis as a people; compare Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, vol. 2 page 455.
- C. Chapters 1-3 of Ezekiel detail how God prepared this man to minister in this incredibly difficult time. We study those chapters to see how we should expect to be prepared by God to face overwhelming times, too:

#### II. God's Preparation Of His Saint For Life's Most Severe Crises, Ezekiel 1:1-3:27:

- A. God prepares his saint for deep crises in life through a great **insight** of **Himself**, Ezekiel 1:1-2:7:
  1. Ezekiel had every reason to be depressed and defeated as he had just been taken captive with his people and placed in Babylon, Ez. 1:1a.
  2. To offset Ezekiel's feeling hopeless by the trauma of Babylonian domination and mistreatment, God gave Ezekiel an overwhelming vision of His great and **sovereign** glory:
    - a. God gave Ezekiel a vision of the great angelic creatures that propel His incredibly mobile, glorious throne around the universe, Ezekiel 1:4-14.
    - b. God gave Ezekiel a vision of the power of these angelic beings to move and do God's bidding, 5-21.
    - c. God gave Ezekiel a symbolic vision of His own immense glory on that mobile throne, 1:22-28b.
    - d. When Ezekiel had seen this splendor, he was so overwhelmed by the **greatness** of his **God** that he fell upon his face, Ez. 1:28c.
  3. To offset Ezekiel's feeling of powerlessness and vulnerability, God empowered him by the Holy Spirit:
    - a. Ezekiel had several reasons to sense deep vulnerability and powerlessness: (Ez. 2:1-2)
    - b. Accordingly, the Lord empowered Ezekiel with God, the Holy Spirit for ministry, Ez. 2:2a.
  4. To offset Ezekiel's lack of knowing what to say due to human deprivation and depression in captivity, God gave him a message to speak, and directed how and when he was to speak it, Ez. 2:8-3:27:
    - a. In figurative fashion, God made Ezekiel eat the scroll containing the Words of God that he was to proclaim to the people: when Ezekiel did this, the scroll, though containing judgment, tasted sweet, picturing the goodness of God's Word even when given in judgment, Ez. 2:8-3:3.
    - b. Ezekiel was to speak to the difficult people in captivity, Ez. 3:4-8. God would make Ezekiel tough to minister even though the people would not hear his words, 3:9-11.
    - c. The Holy Spirit then guided Ezekiel supernaturally to his place of ministry, 3:12-15.
    - d. God then appointed him as a watchman who had to give a warning cry or lose his life, 3:16-21.
    - e. God put physical restraints on Ezekiel so he would NOT do what he was not supposed to do, 22-27!

***Lesson: The tougher the life crisis, the more God goes before to prepare His people with the power, insight, gifting and leading they need in the crisis. Just follow the Lord through your wilderness!***

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