

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

EZEKIEL 1

Ezekiel 1

Ezekiel was a priest in exile in Babylon and was also a prophet. The name *Ezekiel* means "The Strength of God" coming from two words in Hebrew, **chazaq**, to strengthen, and **El**, meaning, God. Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, as well as the prophet Jeremiah. Daniel and his three companions were taken away in the first phase of the Babylonian exile in 605 B.C., and Daniel's ministry was to King Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, as well as to the Persian King, Cyrus the Great. Ezekiel on the other hand, was taken away during the second phase of the exile which began in 597 B.C. Ezekiel's ministry was centered in the Mesopotamian Valley near a water channel, called the "River Chebar" (pronounced, Key-bar). He was among the common people of the captives from Judah. Jeremiah was alone in Jerusalem as a voice to those remaining behind, until the final blow of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. when the King came back to Jerusalem and totally destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the spectacular temple which Solomon, son of David had built in the 960's. Ezekiel is an apocalyptic writer using signs and symbols to communicate God's messages to his generation and the generations to come. Many of Ezekiel's prophesies have

already been fulfilled, but many are still awaiting their fulfillment in time to come.

The first verse of chapter one refers to the thirtieth year. This is most likely a reference to Ezekiel's age. He was thirty years of age. This means that he would have been preparing to begin his work as a priest in the temple in Jerusalem when he and his family were taken away as captives to Babylon. In the Torah it is dictated that a man could not serve in the priesthood until he was thirty and he only served for 20 years until he was 50. Age thirty is beginning of a man's maturity in the Scriptures. A male was not considered a man until he was 20, this is emphasized over and over again in the Bible. He could not serve as a Levite, as an assistant to the priests in the temple until he was 25. Ezekiel came into his place of service while in captivity. **God's calling knows no geographical boundaries.**

Prayer and Action Steps

Father, thank you that you can use me in any location, even when it is in an unpleasant place where I would not rather be. Amen

Date _____ Scripture _____

- Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.
- Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.
- Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act? _____

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing? _____

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions? _____

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible? _____
