

# Revelation Is Ezekiel

By Jonathan Welton

The most important Old Testament book to a proper understanding of the Book of Revelation is Ezekiel. Ezekiel prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem in the Old Testament and gives a most stunning parallel of the Book of Revelation.

Examine carefully the following list of parallels between the contents of Revelation and Ezekiel:

- 1.The Throne Vision (Rev. 4; Ezek. 1)
- 2.The Book (Rev. 5; Ezek. 2–3)
- 3.The Four Plagues (Rev. 6:1–8; Ezek. 5)
- 4.The Slain under the Altar (Rev. 6:9–11; Ezek. 6)
- 5.The Wrath of God (Rev. 6:12–17; Ezek. 7)
- 6.The Seal on the Saint's Foreheads (Rev. 7; Ezek. 9)
- 7.The Coals from the Altar (Rev. 8; Ezek. 10)
- 8.No More Delay (Rev. 10:1–7; Ezek. 12)
- 9.The Eating of the Book (Rev. 10:8–11; Ezek. 2)
- 10.The Measuring of the Temple (Rev. 11:1–2; Ezek. 40–43)
- 11.Jerusalem and Sodom (Rev. 11:8; Ezek. 16)
- 12.The Cup of Wrath (Rev. 14; Ezek. 23)
- 13.The Vine of the Land (Rev. 14:18–20; Ezek. 15)
- 14.The Great Harlot (Rev. 17–18; Ezek. 16, 23)
- 15.The Lament over the City (Rev. 18; Ezek. 27)
- 16.The Scavengers' Feast (Rev. 19; Ezek. 39)
- 17.The First Resurrection (Rev. 20:4–6; Ezek. 37)
- 18.The Battle with Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:7–9; Ezek. 38–39)
- 19.The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21; Ezek. 40–48)
- 20.The River of Life (Rev. 22; Ezek. 47)

Ezekiel is to the Old Testament what the Book of Revelation is to the New Testament. Ezekiel laid out the coming destruction of Jerusalem (by the Babylonians) in the Old Testament, and John used the same prophetic language to speak of the imminent coming destruction of Jerusalem in the New Testament [by the Romans]. With that framework, the symbolism of Revelation is set in place and becomes simpler to interpret.

Also, Ezekiel is the turning point of the Old Testament. Before Ezekiel, from Adam to Solomon, the kingdom of Israel continually gained momentum. This momentum began to slow with the divided kingdom, but Ezekiel brought any remaining momentum to a screeching halt. His prophecy was followed by captivity, exile, a post-exilic return to Jerusalem, and a painful rebuilding process while still under a measure of captivity. After four hundred years of silence, the story of the Jews is resumed in the New Testament with Jerusalem under Roman oppression.

One crucial difference exists between Ezekiel's (as well as Jeremiah's, and Isaiah's) prophecies of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the apostle John's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah all prophesied a future return to Jerusalem, which manifested through Ezra and Nehemiah. In contrast, John declared the utter devastation of Jerusalem with no re-gathering to the land.

1. Ezekiel prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.
2. John prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.
1. Ezekiel prophesied the post-exilic return and rebuilding of Jerusalem (see Ezek. 34–37).
2. John prophesied no such return and no rebuilding of Jerusalem.

Many scholars have struggled with and debated over the somewhat odd and choppy version of Greek the apostle John used to write the Book of Revelation. I believe this is simply solved by observing that John was taking on a different prose and style in order to prophesy in the manner of Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, his Old Testament shadows.

Thus, we can see the backdrop of the whole Bible is needed to understand the point and purpose of Revelation. The painting is painted in this manner because of the biblical surroundings and backdrop of John's day and the historical precedent of Ezekiel. John's readers in the first century Church would have known the recent history of the Jews and would have recognized the parallels between Ezekiel's prophecy and John's. The fact that the modern Church has so poorly understood the meaning of Revelation demonstrates our lack of understanding regarding these very things.

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