

AP 48

Ezekiel / **יְחִזְקֵאל** / God Strengthens

Ezekiel was a priest/prophet who lived through the fall of Jerusalem and was among the first group of exiles who were deported to Babylon. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and Daniel, who are the only two prophets focused on the Exiles in Babylon. Both prophets are unique, so unique that the Book of Daniel is not included among the prophets in the Hebrew Bible – It's categorized as one of the Writings. Ezekiel is unique in his use of extreme imagery – sometimes these are related as visions and sometimes as parables. They are so unusual that many have commented that it's easy to miss Ezekiel's message. The main point of Ezekiel is answering the question of the Exiles, "Has God abandoned us?" To which he answers, "NO... you abandoned him... yet there is still hope."

Sunday, Nov 20

Ezekiel 1:28b-3:11

For Reflection: Chapter 1 begins with visions. Chapter 2 is the call of Ezekiel. In the NRSV Ezekiel is referred to as Mortal, in the Hebrew and most English versions he is referred to as the Son of Man. This phrase is how the gospels typically refer to Jesus. *In what sense has the Word of God been food to you?*

Lagniappe: Revelation 10:8-10

Monday, Nov 21

Ezekiel 3:12-27

For Reflection: In verse 17 Ezekiel is referred to as a sentinel (NRSV) or a watchman in most versions. *In a spiritual sense, who are you watching over/protecting/warning? Is anyone else watching them?* Ezekiel's speechlessness reminds me of John the Baptist's father, Zachariah who was also made mute and then prophesied about Jesus and John.

Lagniappe: Luke 1:67-79

Tuesday, Nov 22

Ezekiel 11

For Reflection: These 25 verses conclude Ezekiel's Temple Vision that began in 8:1. I chose this chapter because it includes judgement (1-13) and hope (14-25). Verse 19 speaks of a spiritual heart transplant. A heart of stone (dead and cold) is replaced by a living heart. *How's your heart? What keeps your heart healthy and alive?*

Lagniappe: Matthew 13:3-10

Wednesday, Nov 23 Ezekiel 22

For Reflection: Verse 30 has shaped much of my sense of call. *What has shaped your sense of call? What would it mean to repair the wall and stand in the breach this week?*

Lagniappe: Psalm 106:23

Thursday, Nov. 24 Ezekiel 34

For Reflection: Clearly, Jesus' teaching in John 10 about being the Good Shepherd and his teaching in Luke 15 about the lost sheep have some basis in a prophet among exiles. How has Jesus guided and led you this year?

Lagniappe: John 10:11-15

Friday, Nov 19 Ezekiel 36

For Reflection: A promised future, the people overhear as Ezekiel has a sermon for the bit of creation called the promised land. Israel as the people of God appear a historical and extinct people to the nations, but they do not know Israel's God. *When is the last time God shocked you, with an incredible reversal?*

Lagniappe: Psalm 96:10-13

Saturday, Nov 20 Ezekiel 37:1-11

For Reflection: Ezekiel moves from prophesying to mountains and hills (yesterday) to a new, and an equally odd audience of dry bones. This is probably the most well-known of Ezekiel's vision. Because it seems like a commentary on the resurrection story. *Where are you seeing God bring life to dry bones?*

Lagniappe: John 5:21