

WEEK 33 — WARNINGS FROM THE PROPHET EZEKIEL

Date: about 593-588 BC

The Story: God's judgment on Judah, the last remaining part of Israel, is growing worse and worse. False prophets both in Jerusalem and among the exiles in Babylonia assure the people that God will restore Israel and bring back their exiled people home. But both Jeremiah (in Jerusalem) and Ezekiel (in exile) insist it will not be so. God is furious with his people's wickedness; Ezekiel especially makes this clear in stark, graphic, repulsive imagery [parents of young children take note]. God's people have rejected him in spite of his goodness to them; therefore he will destroy what remains of Israel. Even so, he will restore them one day.

* Kids' readings may not align with the daily full readings. Parents, see the content ratings on the back page.

AUGUST 14 EZEKIEL 6-7 • JEREMIAH 28

Today's reading starts with more from Ezekiel: prophecies of destruction God will soon send on Israel because of its wickedness. These prophecies sound similar to prophecies from Ezekiel's contemporary, Jeremiah, who meanwhile, in Jerusalem, deals with the false prophet Hananiah. Hananiah foretells that Jerusalem will soon be free from enemy oppression—but Jeremiah prophesies judgment from God. Who is right?

Date: probably 593-592 BC (Ezekiel 6-7) • July-August and September-October, 593 BC (Jeremiah 28)

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 6-7 • Jeremiah 28

Kids' Reading*: Jeremiah 28

AUGUST 15 EZEKIEL 8-11

Today's reading reports a single vision Ezekiel received from God that brought Ezekiel (far away in Babylonia) into the temple courts in Jerusalem, where he witnessed idolatry and detestable conduct. Because of this wickedness, God will bring judgment on his people. Ezekiel sees God and his angelic entourage rise up into the air and leave his temple and Jerusalem. What will happen when God departs from his people?

Destruction will come on Israel. But God will give the exiles of his people a new heart and bring them home.

Date: September 17, 592 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 8-11

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 8

AUGUST 16 EZEKIEL 12-15

Today's reading begins with Ezekiel acting out the future attempt of the king of Judah to escape the Babylonians when they capture Jerusalem. Then the Lord gives Ezekiel messages concerning the prophets of Israel who falsely proclaim peace rather than judgment and destruction. The Lord condemns Israel's idolatry, even among the exiles, and affirms that he will send his dreadful judgments against Jerusalem.

Date: probably 592 or 591 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 12-14

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 10

AUGUST 17 EZEKIEL 16-17

Today's reading contains, first, a very graphic portrayal [parents of young children take note] of Jerusalem as a wife loved by, but unfaithful to, her husband (the Lord) who had saved and chosen. This rough telling of the story of Israel's unfaithfulness explains why God will judge her. Afterward, though, God will reestablish his covenant with Israel; there is still hope. Second, this reading presents an allegory describing King Zedekiah's rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, breaking their treaty, and what God will do about it.

Date: probably 592 or 591 BC (Ezekiel 16) • probably about 591 BC (Ezekiel 17)

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 16:1-22 • Ezekiel 16:43 to 17:24

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 11:14-25

AUGUST 18 EZEKIEL 18-20

Today's reading prophesies the downfall of Israel's leaders (chapter 19). It recounts God's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness from the exodus to Ezekiel's time; God will therefore discipline his people (20:1-44). It foretells destruction on the south (probably Judah and Jerusalem; 20:45-49). But first it expresses God's justice (chapter 18): he punishes those who sin, but not those who repent. But will the Israel repent?

Date: probably about 591 BC (Ezekiel 18-19, 20:45-49) • August 14, 591 BC (Ezekiel 20:1-44)

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 18 • Ezekiel 20:1-44

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 12:1-14

AUGUST 19 EZEKIEL 21-22

Today's reading proclaims that Babylon is the Lord's weapon to bring judgment on Israel; it is he, not the Babylonians, who ultimately brings the coming destruction on his people. He will even direct the king of Babylon to besiege Jerusalem. Then today's reading presents a blunt list of Israel's many sins.

Date: probably about 591 BC

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 21-22

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 12:15-28

AUGUST 20 EZEKIEL 23-24

Today's reading is rough throughout [parents of young children take note]. Chapter 23 portrays Israel and Judah as two sisters who prostitute themselves to lovers (that is, other nations and their gods) and are ruined by those they pursued. This vulgar chapter communicates what will become of God's people who turn to idolatry and every sort of evil. On the day the Babylonians launch their siege of Jerusalem, the message of 24:1-14 comes to Ezekiel; it foretells Jerusalem's purification through destruction. Finally, in chapter 24, Ezekiel receives a tragic, personal message from God linked to the temple's coming destruction.

Date: probably about 591 BC (Ezekiel 23) • January 15, 588 BC (Ezekiel 24:1-14) • probably 588 BC (Ezekiel 24:15-27)

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Ezekiel 23-24

Kids' Reading*: Ezekiel 17

Parents' Guide

PG preview for young children

Jer 28:8 (T), 16-17 (T)
 Ezek 6:8-10 (S, T, V)
 Ezek 7:5-16 (T, V), 18-27 (T, V)
 Ezek 8:17-18 (T)
 Ezek 9:8-10 (V)
 Ezek 10:2 (T)
 Ezek 11:6-13 (T, V)
 Ezek 12:1-11 (T), 12-16 (T, V), 17-20 (T)
 Ezek chapter 13 (T)
 Ezek 14:3-11 (T), 13-22 (T, V)
 Ezek 15:6-8 (T)
 Ezek 16:44-57 (T), 58 (S, T), 59 (T)
 Ezek 17:12-16 (T), 17-21 (T, V)
 Ezek 18:6-18 (N, S, T, V), 19-32 (T)

Ezek 19:3 (V), 6-9 (V)
 Ezek 20:8 (T), 13 (T), 21 (T), 23-25 (T), 28 (T), 30 (S, T), 33-39 (T), 43-44 (T), 47-48 (T)
 Ezek 21:2-6 (T), 9-24 (V), 25-27 (T), 28-32 (V)
 Ezek 22:2-8 (T, V), 13-31 (T, V)
 Ezek 23:22-24 (T, V), 26-28 (N, T), 32-35 (S, T)
 Ezek 24:2 (V), 6-12 (T, V), 13 (S, T), 14-24 (T)

PG-13 preview for under age 13

Ezek 6:3-7 (V), 11-14 (T, V)
 Ezek 7:17 (T)
 Ezek 9:5-7 (V)

Ezek 16:4-9 (N, S, T), 15-17 (S), 22 (N, S, T), 27-35 (N, S, T), 43 (S, T)
 Ezek 21:7 (T)
 Ezek 23:25 (T, V), 29-30 (N, S, T), 42-49 (S, T, V)

R shocking, graphic, or disturbing
 Ezek 16:20-21 (V), 25-26 (S), 36-42 (N, S, T, V)
 Ezek 20:26 (V), 31 (V)
 Ezek 22:9-12 (S, T, V)
 Ezek 23:3

(S), 5-21
 (N, S, T, V), 36-39
 (S, T, V)

C = Circumcision
 N = Nudity
 S = Sexuality
 T = Dark/Sensitive Themes
 V = Violence