

Week 15 **Scripture Reading**

- Aug 14 Ezekiel 27:1-25
- Aug 15 Ezekiel 27:26-36
- Aug 16 Ezekiel 28:1-10
- Aug 17 Ezekiel 28:11-19
- Aug 18 Ezekiel 28:20-24

Week 16 **Scripture Reading**

- Aug 21 Ezekiel 28:25-26
- Aug 22 Ezekiel 29:1-21
- Aug 23 Ezekiel 30:1-26
- Aug 24 Ezekiel 31:1-18
- Aug 25 Ezekiel 32:1-16

Week 17 **Scripture Reading**

- Aug 28 Ezekiel 32:17-32
- Aug 29 Ezekiel 33:1-9
- Aug 30 Ezekiel 33:10-20
- Aug 31 Ezekiel 33:21-33
- Sept 1 Ezekiel 34:1-10

Week 18 **Scripture Reading**

- Sept 4 Ezekiel 34:11-24
- Sept 5 Ezekiel 34:25-31
- Sept 6 Ezekiel 35:1-15
- Sept 7 Ezekiel 36:1-15
- Sept 8 Ezekiel 36:16-21

Week 19 **Scripture Reading**

- Sept 11 Ezekiel 36:22-38
- Sept 12 Ezekiel 37:1-14
- Sept 13 Ezekiel 37:15-28
- Sept 14 Ezekiel 38:1-23
- Sept 15 Ezekiel 39:1-24

Week 20 **Scripture Reading**

- Sept 18 Ezekiel 39:25-29
- Sept 19 Ezekiel 40:1-49
- Sept 20 Ezekiel 41:1-26
- Sept 21 Ezekiel 42:1-20
- Sept 22 Ezekiel 43:1-12

Week 21 **Scripture Reading**

- Sept 25 Ezekiel 43:13-27
- Sept 26 Ezekiel 44:1-14
- Sept 27 Ezekiel 44:15-31
- Sept 28 Ezekiel 45:1-25
- Sept 29 Ezekiel 46:1-18

Week 22 **Scripture Reading**

- Oct 2 Ezekiel 46:19-24
- Oct 3 Ezekiel 47:1-12
- Oct 4 Ezekiel 47:13-23
- Oct 5 Ezekiel 48:1-35

QUIET TIME

JAMES

and

EZEKIEL

MAY 8 - OCTOBER 5, 2023

The Book of James

The Epistle of James is the first in a group of epistles customarily called General Epistles, which includes James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude. They are designated as general epistles in the sense that they are universal, not being addressed to any particular individual or church, but to the church as a whole.

The problem of authorship is a major one. There is no question that James wrote the Epistle of James, but which James was the author? You can find at least four men by the name of James in the New Testament. I believe that you can find three who are clearly identified: 1. James, the brother of John and one of the sons of Zebedee. These two men were called “Sons of Thunder” by our Lord (Mark 3:17). He was slain by Herod who, at the same time, put Simon Peter into prison (Acts 12:1–2). 2. James, the son of Alphaeus, called “James the Less” (Mark 15:40). He is mentioned in the list of apostles, but very little is known concerning him. I would dismiss him as the author of this epistle. 3. James, the earthly brother of our Lord Jesus. He was a son of Mary and of Joseph, which made him a half-brother of the Lord Jesus.

In Matthew 13:55 we read: “Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?” In the beginning, the Lord’s brothers did not believe in Him at all, but the time came when James became head of the church at Jerusalem. In Acts 15 James seems to have presided over that great council in Jerusalem. At least he made the summation and brought the council to a decision under the leading of the Holy Spirit. I believe it was this James whom Paul referred to in Galatians 2:9, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision.” This James is the man whom I believe to be the author of this epistle.

The epistle of James was written about A.D. 45–50. There have been those who have said that James wrote his epistle to combat the teachings of Paul; they argue that James emphasizes works while Paul emphasizes faith. However, the earliest of Paul’s epistles, 1 Thessalonians, was written about A.D. 52–56. Therefore, even Paul’s first epistle was not written until after the Epistle of James, which was the first book of the New Testament to be written.

By the time you finish this study I believe it will be clear that James’ theme is not works, but faith - the same as Paul’s theme, but James emphasizes what faith produces. Both James and Paul speak a great deal of faith and works. They give us the two aspects of justification by faith, both of which are clear in the writings of Paul:

Quiet Time Text

Week 5

- June 5 Ezekiel 1:22-28
- June 6 Ezekiel 2:1-7
- June 7 Ezekiel 2:8-3:15
- June 8 Ezekiel 3:16-27
- June 9 Ezekiel 4:1-17

Week 6

- June 12 Ezekiel 5:1-17
- June 13 Ezekiel 6:1-14
- June 14 Ezekiel 7:1-9
- June 15 Ezekiel 7:10-27
- June 16 Ezekiel 8:1-18

Week 7

- June 19 Ezekiel 9:1-11
- June 20 Ezekiel 10:1-8
- June 21 Ezekiel 10:9-22
- June 22 Ezekiel 11:1-13
- June 23 Ezekiel 11:14-25

Week 8

- June 26 Ezekiel 12:1-7
- June 27 Ezekiel 12:8-20
- June 28 Ezekiel 12:21-28
- June 29 Ezekiel 13:1-16
- June 30 Ezekiel 13:17-23

Week 9

- July 3 Ezekiel 14:1-11
- July 4 Ezekiel 14:12-23
- July 5 Ezekiel 15:1-8
- July 6 Ezekiel 16:1-22
- July 7 Ezekiel 16:23-34

Week 10

- July 10 Ezekiel 16:35-43
- July 11 Ezekiel 16:44-52
- July 12 Ezekiel 16:53-58
- July 13 Ezekiel 16:59-63
- July 14 Ezekiel 17:1-15

Week 11

- July 17 Ezekiel 17:16-24
- July 18 Ezekiel 18:1-18
- July 19 Ezekiel 18:19-32
- July 20 Ezekiel 19:1-14
- July 21 Ezekiel 20:1-17

Week 12

- July 24 Ezekiel 20:18-32
- July 25 Ezekiel 20:33-49
- July 26 Ezekiel 21:1-17
- July 27 Ezekiel 21:18-32
- July 28 Ezekiel 22:1-16

Week 13

- July 31 Ezekiel 22:17-31
- Aug 1 Ezekiel 23:1-27
- Aug 2 Ezekiel 23:28-49
- Aug 3 Ezekiel 24:1-14
- Aug 4 Ezekiel 24:15-27

Week 14

- Aug 7 Ezekiel 25:1-7
- Aug 8 Ezekiel 25:8-11
- Aug 9 Ezekiel 25:12-14
- Aug 10 Ezekiel 25:15-17
- Aug 11 Ezekiel 26:1-21

said, “What’s the big idea?” Ezekiel had a message for them, and he gave it to them (see Ezek. 12:8–16).

Ezekiel is the prophet of the glory of the Lord. There were three prophets of Israel who spoke when they were out of the land. They are Ezekiel, Daniel, and John (who wrote from the Island of Patmos). All three of these men wrote what is called an apocalypse. They all used highly symbolic language; yet they saw the brightest light and held the highest hope of all the prophets. Ezekiel saw the Shekinah glory of the Lord leave Solomon’s temple, but he also saw the return of the glory of the Lord which was projected into the future and will come to pass during the kingdom age, the millennium. Ezekiel looked beyond the sufferings of Christ to the glory that should follow. As Peter said of the prophets, they saw the sufferings and they saw the glory that would follow (1 Peter 1:11). I think Ezekiel saw it better than any of the other prophets.

The following web links are to an animated overview of the Book of Ezekiel. There are two web links, part 1 and part 2. You may be able to click on the links to see the videos or you may need to copy the title and paste the title into your web browser. These animated videos were produced by the BibleProject. I believe these are very well done and you will find the overview very helpful in understanding what is happening in the Book of Ezekiel.

Part 1 – 7 minutes and 24 seconds

[Book of Ezekiel Summary: A Complete Animated Overview \(Part 1\) - Bing video](#)

Part 2 – 7 Minutes and 12 seconds (199)

[Book of Ezekiel Summary: A Complete Animated Overview \(Part 2\) - YouTube](#)

1. Faith - we are not justified by works. Paul wrote, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians. 2:8–9 [ESV]). And Paul also wrote, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us ...” (Titus 3:5).

2. Works - we are justified for works. In Titus 3:8 Paul says, “The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.” In Ephesians 2:10 he tells us, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Faith is the root of salvation - Paul emphasizes that; works are the fruit of salvation - that is the thing James emphasizes. We can express it this way: Faith is the cause of salvation, and works are the result of salvation.

When Paul says that works will not save you, he is talking about the works of the Law. When James emphasizes that works are essential, he is talking about works of faith, not works of the Law. James said, “But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” (James 2:18).

God looks down and sees your heart, and He knows whether you believe or not - that is justification by faith. But your neighbor next door doesn’t see your heart; he can only judge by your works, the fruit of your faith.

The following are what I consider to be the two key verses of this epistle.

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22).

“Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?” (James 2:20).

The Epistle of James deals with the ethics of Christianity, not doctrine. James is going to bear down on the practical, but he will not get away from the subject of faith. James was evidently a very practical individual. Tradition says that he was given the name “Old Camel Knees” because he spent so much time in prayer.

James argues that justification by faith is demonstrated by works; it must be poured into the test tube of works (chapters 1–2), of words (chapter 3), of worldliness (chapter 4), and of a warning to the rich (chapter 5).

Quiet Time Text

<u>Week 1</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>	<u>Week 3</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
May 8	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:1-8	May 22	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4:1-3
May 9	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:9-11	May 23	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4:4-10
May 10	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:12-15	May 24	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4:11-12
May 11	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:16-18	May 25	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4:13-17
May 12	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:19-25	May 26	<input type="checkbox"/> James 5:1-6
<u>Week 2</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>	<u>Week 4</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
May 15	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1:26-27	May 29	<input type="checkbox"/> James 5:7-12
May 16	<input type="checkbox"/> James 2:1-13	May 30	<input type="checkbox"/> James 5:13-18
May 17	<input type="checkbox"/> James 2:14-26	May 31	<input type="checkbox"/> James 5:19-20
May 18	<input type="checkbox"/> James 3:1-12	June 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezekiel 1:1-14
May 19	<input type="checkbox"/> James 3:13-18	June 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezekiel 1:15-21

The Book of Ezekiel

Ezekiel was a priest (Ezekiel 1:3), but he never served in that office because he was taken captive to Babylon during the reign of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:10–16), who was the king of Judah who followed Jehoiakim. It was during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim that the first deportation took place when Daniel was taken captive. Jehoiachin then came to the throne and reigned only three months. In 597 B.C. the second deportation took place, and Ezekiel was taken captive.

Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah and Daniel. Jeremiah was an old man at this time. He had begun his ministry as a young man during the reign of young King Josiah. He had remained with the remnant in the land and then was taken by them down into Egypt. Therefore, his ministry at this time was confined to the remnant in Egypt. Daniel had been taken into the court of the king of Babylon and had become his prime minister.

Ezekiel was with the captives who had been brought down to the rivers of Babylon. The captives had been placed by the great canal that came off the River Euphrates, which was several miles from Babylon itself. Ezekiel's ministry was among those people. Psalm 137 is the psalm of the remnant in Babylon: "By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our lyres." (Psalm 137:1–2 [ESV]). But at the same time Ezekiel writes: "In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." (Ezek. 1:1[ESV]). What a contrast! While these people had already put their harps on a willow tree and sat down to weep, this man Ezekiel was seeing visions of God!

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were all prophets, but each had a particular and peculiar ministry to a certain group of people, and apparently they never came into contact with each other. From the record in the Book of Daniel you would not gather that Daniel ever visited his people in Babylon where Ezekiel was; yet he had a great concern for them and he actually defended them. But did Daniel and Jeremiah know each other? We know from his book that Daniel was acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah. I would think that as a young man in his teens he listened to Jeremiah in Jerusalem. Ezekiel also was a young man when he was taken captive, and he too had probably heard Jeremiah, but had no personal acquaintance with Daniel.

The message of Ezekiel is the most spiritual of all the prophets because he dealt particularly with the Person of God. Someone has said, "Ezekiel is the prophet of the Spirit, as Isaiah is the prophet of the Son, and Jeremiah the prophet of the Father."

During the first years of the captivity, the false prophets were still saying that the people were going to return to Jerusalem and that the city would not be destroyed. The city was not destroyed even at the time of the second deportation. It was not until about 586 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar came against the city the third time, that he burned and destroyed Jerusalem. Therefore, for a period of about ten years, these false prophets were saying that the people would return and the city would not be destroyed. Jeremiah had sent a message to Babylon saying the city would be destroyed, and Ezekiel confirmed his message. Ezekiel warned the people that they must turn to God before they could return to Jerusalem. When the time came, a very small remnant did turn to God, and they returned to Jerusalem very discouraged.

Ezekiel began his ministry five years after he was taken captive at about the age of thirty. In many ways, he spoke in the darkest days of the nation. He stood at the bottom of a valley in the darkest corner. He had to meet the false hope given by the false prophets and the indifference and despondency begotten in the days of sin and disaster. The people would not listen to his message. Therefore, he resorted to a new method. Instead of speaking in parables, he acted out the parables. He actually did some very interesting stunts. We read in Ezekiel 24:24 [ESV]: "Thus shall Ezekiel be to you a sign; according to all that he has done you shall do. When this comes, then you will know that I am the Lord GOD." The people would not listen to his words, so he would act them out, and he attracted a great deal of attention that way. There are people who use this very same method today. We have placard carriers, flagpole sitters, and walkathons. People do these things to attract attention and gain publicity. This was Ezekiel's method. One time he walked into a house, locked himself in, and then started digging to create a tunnel to get himself out. When he came out, he came out in the middle of the street! When Ezekiel came up in the middle of the street, people naturally gathered around and