

Week Thirty-One

Days 211–217



Exile Narrative: Isaiah 43–56 | Supplemental: Ezekiel 4–16; Proverbs 12:5–13:4

THE VALUE OF VISUALIZATIONS



Ezekiel Prophesies to Jews
in Babylon During Exile

Isaiah and Ezekiel are prophets who speak to God's people in their own times. However, their words, actions, and writings also carry meanings oriented toward a future fulfillment in Jesus Christ. This dual nature of prophecy enables us to see the complexity of God's work and understand that both levels of meaning are meant to teach and guide the Church.

- Isaiah again warns the people about their rejection of God and the consequences. His imagery is particularly powerful.
- Isaiah 45:9 says, “Woe to him who strives with his Maker, an earthen vessel with the potter! Does the clay say to him who fashions it, ‘What are you making?’” Here, Isaiah proclaims the foolishness of treating God as if he were ours to command.
- In Isaiah 49:14–15, God says that even if a mother could forsake her child, God will remember his people. Then God says he has carved the names of his people on the palms of his hands—a way of saying he will never forget us or stop loving us.
- After his Resurrection, Jesus shows his apostles the wounds on his hands and feet. He allowed himself to be pierced for our sins; the marks show his love for us.
- Ezekiel says that God speaks in many different ways.
- In Ezekiel 4 and 5, the prophet acts out a vision that God gave him. He cuts off his hair and his beard and divides it into thirds. The first portion is burned up, representing fire, pestilence, or famine. The second is destroyed by the sword. The third is scattered to the winds.
- Ezekiel is enacting in visual form what is happening to God's people because they rebelled against him.
- Ezekiel 13 says there are many false prophets who tell the people what they want to hear, offering words of consolation when they needed to hear words of condemnation.
- Do we hear only what we want to hear? Do we only tell others what they want to hear? Do we hear and speak the words of God?

