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## The Call of Ezekiel

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
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or Roget's Thesaurus - **July 23, 2017**

### Ezekiel 3:1-11

**Introduction:** The great significance of this call of Ezekiel and its remarkable **vision** of God's GLORY lies in the fact that **it came in Babylon**, the **land of Israel's captivity**, far from the honored precincts of the Holy Land, and at a time when the fortunes of the Chosen People were at a low ebb indeed.

**Ezekiel himself was a captive**, having been removed to Babylon in the **second wave** of captives about EIGHT YEARS following the group of captives that included Daniel and his companions. **Daniel's captivity** had begun about **606 B.C.**, and **Ezekiel's began in 597 B.C.** The **final destruction** of **Jerusalem** was destined to occur soon, as Jeremiah had FORETOLD; and even the holy temple would be destroyed. In the eventuality of such events, it must have appeared to the great mass of the Babylonian captives that Israel was indeed finished and forever terminated. This wonderful **prophet brought HOPE to the fallen people**, convincing them that God was indeed NOT through with them, and that WONDERFUL things were yet PLANNED for Israel, even their RESTORATION to Palestine!

This **great VISION** of God's GLORY dramatically demonstrated that God was in no manner whatever limited to Palestine, that he was the God, NOT merely of the so-called "Holy Land," but of all the world; and that **his presence was just as REAL in Babylon** as it had ever been, **even in the Holy Temple** itself. The great meaning of the marvelous vision was that God was just as much the God of the captives as he had been in the days of their glory, and that God was just as ABLE to BLESS or PUNISH Israel in Babylon, as he was in Judea.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/ezekiel-1.html>)

**Ezekiel 3:1**, Moreover **HE** said unto me, Son of man, **eat that thou findest; eat this roll (scroll)**, and **go SPEAK** unto the house of Israel.

**NOTE:** In ancient times a **scroll** was a **long strip** of **papyrus, parchment**, or even **leather** to be used for writing. Some of the most impressive scrolls ever discovered in archaeology were known as the **Dead Sea scrolls**, which were uncovered at the site of Qumran near the Dead Sea in Israel. The scroll of Isaiah was 24 feet long and contains 17 sheets of **sheepskin** which was joined together by threads of **linen**.

(Source: <http://www.bible-history.com/sketches/ancient/ancient-torah-scroll.html>)

**NOTE:** Moreover he said unto me,.... The same **glorious Person** who had been speaking all along in the preceding chapter; and who was seen by the prophet on a sapphire throne, and described in Ezekiel 1:26; the first fifteen verses of this chapter are by Junius and Tremellius made a part of the second:

**son of man, eat that thou findest;** NOT anything, **but what he found IN the hand sent** unto him; wherefore the Targum is, "son of man, receive what is given thee;" which was the **ROLL**, as follows:

**EAT this roll** (scroll); not literally, but figuratively, as John is bid to eat the little book, Rev. 10:9; that is, **READ it, MEDITATE upon** the things contained therein; and **digest them**, that he might be able to impart them, and make them known to others: it is explained in Ezekiel 3:10; by **hearing** and **receiving** the **WORDS** of the **prophecy**; and so the Targum, "receive what is written in this ROLL;" this is to eat it; as great readers of books are called "helluones librorum", **eaters of books, gluttons** at them; **read them greedily, deeply meditate upon** what is in them, and thoroughly digest them; so it becomes all good men to eat the word, to MIX it with FAITH, to receive it in the LOVE of it, and constantly meditate on it, Ps. 1:1; and especially ministers of the gospel, 1 Thess. 4:15; **and go, speak unto the house of Israel**; or, as the Targum, "go, and prophesy to the house of Israel;" for by eating the ROLL, in the sense given, he was fit for it; and when ministers of the word have read, and thought of, and digested the truths of the Gospel themselves, then they are PREPARED to go and enter upon their work, and **FEED others** with **knowledge** and **understanding**.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Psalm 1:1-2, Blessed (how happy!) is the man that walketh NOT** in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the **scornful** (insolent, grossly rude or DISRESPECTFUL). But **HIS delight** is **IN** the LAW of the LORD; and in **his LAW** doth **he MEDITATE** DAY and NIGHT.

MEDITATE, to contemplate (view or consider [FIX the MIND on, with a view to a careful examination] with continued attention); to STUDY (to read and examine for the purpose of learning and understanding; to MUSE [to mutter {utter words indistinctly or with a low voice and lips partly closed }]).

**2 Timothy 2:15, STUDY** to shew thyself **APPROVED unto God**, a workman that needeth NOT to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**Study defined 4710, to make effort, be diligent** (CONSTANT in effort or exertion to accomplish what is undertaken; NOT idle or negligent;) **STUDY** (READ and EXAMINE for the purpose of learning and understanding; to MUSE [to mutter {utter words indistinctly or with a low voice and lips partly closed }]).

**2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture** is GIVEN by inspiration of God, and is **profitable** for doctrine, for **reproof (conviction: evidence)**, for **correction**, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect (fresh** [having new vigor {active **STRENGTH** or force of body or MIND }]), **thoroughly furnished** unto ALL good works.

**Ezekiel 3:2, So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to EAT that ROLL.**

**NOTE: So I opened my mouth,....** To take in the roll, and eat it; he was NOT disobedient to the heavenly vision; he did all that he could towards eating it, but was not sufficient of himself; and therefore it follows:

**and he caused me to eat that roll;** he, the Lord, put it into his mouth, caused him to eat it, and tilled him with it, according to his promise, Psalm 81:10. The efficacy (power to produce effects) and sufficiency to think of good things, to meditate upon them, receive and digest them, are of (FROM) God; it is he that makes men prophets, and able ministers. The Targum is, "and I inclined my soul, and he taught me (or **made me WISE "with"**) what was **written in this roll** (scroll).'

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Psalm 81:10, I am the LORD (Yahweh) thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will FILL it.**

**Ezekiel 3:3, And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with**

this **roll** that I give thee. Then did **I eat it**; and it was in **my mouth** as **honey for sweetness**.

**NOTE:** This symbolical action of **eating** the **roll** teaches that, **(1)** the words of Ezekiel would NOT be HIS WORDS but the Word of God; **(2)** the written word of God would become the **very life** of the prophet; **(3)** the eating of the roll by Ezekiel indicated his **ACCEPTANCE** of the commission God was here giving him; and **(4)** that he would need to **digest it**, assimilate it into his very being, and speak nothing else, absolutely, to the people except as God would direct him. As Feinberg stated it, "He who gives forth the Word of the Lord must feed on it himself."<sup>[2]</sup>

The similar symbolical action of the apostle John (Rev. 10) comes to mind instantly as this passage is read; and the remembrance that in the New Testament incident the taste of the **ROLL** **changed into bitterness** "in his belly," and one wonders why a similar thing was not mentioned here. We believe with Plumptre that, "Perhaps verse 14 implies the very same bitterness that John experienced when the first **ecstatic joy** passed away and the sense of the awfulness of the task came upon the prophet."<sup>[3]</sup>

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Psalm 19:7-10**, The **LAW** of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the **testimony** of the LORD is sure, making **WISE** the simple. The **statutes** of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the **commandment** of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The **FEAR** of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the **judgments (verdict [favorable or unfavorable], justice)** of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. **More to be DESIRED** are THEY than gold, yea, than much fine gold: **SWEETER** also than **honey** and the **honeycomb**.

**Revelation 10:9**, And I went unto the **angel**, and said unto him, Give me the little **BOOK**. And he said unto me, **TAKE it**, and **EAT it up**; and it shall make thy **belly bitter**, but it shall be in thy **mouth** **SWEET as honey**.

**Ezekiel 3:4**, And he said unto me, Son of man, go, **get thee unto the house of Israel**, and **SPEAK with MY WORDS** unto them.

**NOTE:** After he had eaten the roll (scroll); for then was he **QUALIFIED** to prophesy: **get thee unto the house of Israel**; to whom he was to prophesy: **and speak with my words unto them**: NOT with his own words; nor with the words of men, the enticing words of man's wisdom; but with the words of Christ; with the taught words of the Holy Ghost; with what is written in the roll; the words of this prophecy are meant. So the Targum, "and thou shalt prophesy the words of my prophecy unto them;" in like manner John after he had eaten the little book, is told that he must **prophesy** before **many people, nations, tongues, and kings**, Rev. 10:11; though Ezekiel was only **SENT** to ONE nation... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**2 Timothy 4:1-4**, **I CHARGE** thee therefore (for this reason) before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; **PREACH the WORD**; be **INSTANT** in SEASON, out of SEASON; **reprove (convince, tell a fault)**, **REBUKE**, exhort with all **LONGSUFFERING** and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves **teachers**, having **itching ears**; and they shall **turn away their ears from the TRUTH**, and shall be turned unto **fables (fiction)**.

**Instant** defined 2186, **be present** (being at hand); **assault** (AGGRESSIVE, ATTACKING [*teachings and thinking; NOT people*] by WORDS, arguments with a view to shake, impair [decrease; weaken; reduce; deteriorate] or overthrow).

**Rebuke** defined 2008, **censure** (find fault with and condemn as wrong; express disapprobation (disapproval of), **rebuke** (utter words in ANGER; to check,

silence, or put down, with reproof; to reprehend (chide: scold) **SHARPLY** and summarily [in a few words]; **CHASTEN** [buffet: give a whipping]).

**Longsuffering defined 3115, forbearance** (the exercise of patience, [CONSTANCY in LABOR or application; perseverance {persistence in anything undertaken } or **(subjectively) fortitude** (1. POWER to resist attack; strength; firmness. 2. to bear pain or adversity [distress; misery; trouble; suffering] WITHOUT murmuring, depression, or DESPONDENCY; resolute (determined) endurance).

Despondency, loss of HOPE and cessation (STOP, PAUSE) of EFFORT; discouragement; depression or dejection [lowness of spirits occasioned by GRIEF; mental depression] of the MIND.

**Ezekiel 3:5-7**, For thou art NOT sent to a **people** of a **strange speech** and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst NOT understand. Surely, **HAD I sent thee** to them, **they would have hearkened unto thee**. But the house of Israel **will NOT hearken** unto thee; for they will NOT hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are **impudent** (insolent: grossly RUDE or disrespectful) and **hardhearted** (cruel, **STUBBORN**).

**NOTE:** He must remember that they are the house of Israel whom he is sent to speak to, God's house and his own and therefore such as he ought to have a particular concern for and to deal **faithfully** and **tenderly** with. They were such as he had an intimate acquaintance with, being NOT only their countryman, but their **companion in tribulation** they and he were **fellow-sufferers**, and had lately been fellow-travelers, in very melancholy circumstances, from Judea to Babylon, and had often mingled their tears, which could NOT but knit their affections to each other. It was well for the people that they had a prophet **who knew experimentally** how to **sympathize** with them, and could NOT but be touched with the FEELING of their infirmities (weakness; feebleness).  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Thought 1.** He was sent to his OWN people. But, they would NOT properly honor him.

**Matthew 13:54, 57**, And when he was come into his **OWN country**, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?  
...And they were OFFENDED in him. But **Jesus said** unto them, A **prophet is NOT without honour**, save (**EXCEPT**) in his OWN country, and in his OWN house.

**John 7:2-5**, Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. **His brethren** therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that **thy** disciples also may see the **works** that thou **doest**. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For **neither did HIS brethren BELIEVE** in him.

**Ezekiel 3:8**, Behold, **I HAVE MADE thy face strong against their faces**, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

**NOTE:** Behold, I have made the, face strong against their faces,.... Not that the prophet should have the same sort of impudence and confidence they had; but that God would "give"dedi faciem tuam", V. L. Vatablus, Cocceius, Starckius. him such a face, as it is in the Hebrew text, such **SPIRIT** and **COURAGE**, that he should **neither be ashamed of** the words of the Lord, nor AFRAID to speak them to this people; so that HE should be a match for them; they should NOT be able to outface him, or look him out of countenance; he should behave with an **undaunted** (NOT subdued or depressed by fear) **spirit**, and with great intrepidity (FEARLESS bravery; COURAGE), amidst all opposition made to him:

the Lord fits **his ministers** for the people he sends them to, and **gives them courage** and **strength** proportionate to the opposition they meet with; as their day is, their strength is; and all that invincible **courage, boldness, and strength**, with which they are ENDOWED, it is all from the Lord, and a GIFT of his:

**and thy forehead strong against their foreheads;** which is the same thing in different words. (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**2 Timothy 1:3-7** ...I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy rears, that I may be filled with JOY. When I call to remembrance the **unfeigned FAITH** that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou **STIR UP (re-ignite)** [ignite {rouse into action} again]) the GIFT of God, which is IN thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath NOT given us the **spirit (mental disposition) of FEAR**, but of **POWER**, and of **LOVE**, and of a **SOUND MIND**.

**FEAR defined 1167, timidity** (state of being Timid: PUSILLANIMOUS [1. destitute (wanting) of a manly or courageous STRENGTH and firmness of MIND; of **WEAK spirit**; 2. Evincing [manifesting], or characterized by, **weakness of mind**]; Fainthearted [easily depressed, or YIELDING to FEAR]).

**Thought 1.** As you see, the use of the word "TIMIDITY" here is NOT referring to the EMOTION of FEAR that has its source in the SOUL. But, this describes his SPIRIT (mental disposition: frame of MIND) being WEAK, so that he does NOT have the STRENGTH to fight off fear. That MIND didn't come from God.

**Ezekiel 3:9**, As an **adamant (a gem, probably the diamond) harder than flint** **have I MADE thy forehead:** FEAR them NOT,

neither be **dismayed (discouraged)** at their LOOKS, though they be a **rebellious** house.

**NOTE:** The more impudent **wicked people** are in **their opposition** to religion the **MORE** openly and resolutely should God's people appear in the practice and DEFENCE of it. Let the innocent stir up himself against the hypocrite, Job 17:8. When vice is daring, let NOT virtue (MORAL goodness) be sneaking. And, when God has work to do, he will animate men for it and **give them strength** according to the day. If there be occasion, God can and will by his GRACE make the foreheads of FAITHFUL ministers as an adamant, so that the most threatening powers shall NOT dash them out of countenance (encouragement). (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/mhm/ezekiel-3.html>)

**2 Timothy 2:1-2**, Thou therefore, my son, be **STRONG** in the **GRACE** that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to **FAITHFUL men**, who shall be **ABLE** to **teach others** also.

**Strong defined 1743, increase in STRENGTH, be (make) STRONG.**

**Ezekiel 3:10**, Moreover **he said unto me**, Son of man, **ALL MY WORDS** that I **shall speak** unto thee **RECEIVE** in thine HEART, and **HEAR** with thine EARS.

**NOTE: Moreover he said unto me, son of man,....** The same glorious Person as before continued speaking to him, and added, as follows: **all my words that I shall speak unto thee;** NOT only what he had spoken to him, but what he should hereafter; for he did NOT tell all at once what he should say, but gradually, **revealing his mind** to him by little and little; but then he was to **RECEIVE** all that he should say, and REJECT nothing, nor shun to declare the whole counsel of God: **receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears;** what the Lord says should not only be diligently attended to, and **heard with eagerness**, but should be received, in the love of it,

into the heart, and laid, up in the mind and memory, in order to be delivered out to others at a proper time. (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Ezekiel 3:11**, And **GO**, get thee **to them of the captivity**, unto the children of thy people, and **SPEAK** unto them, and **tell them**, Thus saith the Lord (Yahweh) **GOD**; whether they will **HEAR**, or whether they will **forbear** (**REFUSE**).

**NOTE:** He must go to those of the captivity, who, being in affliction, it was to be hoped would receive instruction he must look upon them as the children of his people, to whom he was nearly allied, and for whom he therefore ought to have a very **tender concern**, as Paul for his kinsmen, Romans 9:3. And he must tell them NOT only what the Lord said, but that the Lord said it. Let him speak in God's name, and back what he said with his authority: Thus saith the Lord God tell them so, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. Not that it may be indifferent to us what success our ministry has, but, whatever it be, we must go on with our work and leave the issue to God. We must NOT say "Here are some SO GOOD that we do NOT need to speak to them," or, "Here are others SO BAD that it is to no purpose to speak to them " but, however it be, **deliver** thy message **faithfully**, tell them, The Lord God saith so and so, let them reject it at their peril. (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/mhm/ezekiel-3.html>)

**Acts 20:26-27**, Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am **pure** from the **blood** of all men. For **I have NOT shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God.**

**Ezekiel 3:12-15**, Then the **spirit took me UP**, and **I heard** behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, *Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the SPIRIT lifted me UP, and took me away, and I went in bitterness* (vexation; deep distress of mind), in the **heat (hot displeasure)** of MY spirit; but the **hand (power)** of the LORD (Yahweh) was strong UPON me. Then **I came to them of the captivity** at Telabib, that dwelt by the **river of Chebar**, and **I SAT** where they SAT, and remained there **astonished** (amazed, dumbfounded) among them **SEVEN DAYS**.

**NOTE:** Then the spirit took me up,.... Not the wind, nor an angel, but the **SPIRIT** of God; who TOOK UP the prophet from the ground, from the place where he was, among the **captives** by the **river Chebar**, and had seen the glorious **vision** described in the first chapter; and had had his call and mission, as expressed in the second chapter, and hitherto in this; and was **CARRIED by him** to another company of captives, who were at another place by the same river, as appears by comparing Ezekiel 1:1, with Ezekiel 3:15; for this was NOT done in a visionary way, as Kimchi thinks, but **in reality**; NOT in spirit, but IN BODY; just as the Spirit **CAUGHT AWAY Philip** from the eunuch, Acts 8:39... **So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away,....** Lifted him up from the earth, and carried him through the air:

**and I went in bitterness**; full of **trouble** and **sorrow**, that the Lord was departing from the temple; that his people had been guilty, of such crimes they had, and were such an impudent, and hardhearted people they were; and that such judgments were coming upon them he had seers written in the roll, full of **lamentations, mourning, and woe...**

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/ezekiel-3.html>)

**NOTE:** He would gladly have been excused, but must own, as another prophet does (Jeremiah 20:7), Thou was stronger than I, and hast prevailed. Ezekiel would willingly have kept all he heard and saw to himself, that it might go no further, but the **hand** of the Lord was strong upon him and **overpowered him**. He was carried on, contrary to his own inclinations, by the **prophetical impulse**, so that he could NOT but speak the things which he had HEARD and SEEN, as the apostles, Acts 4:20.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/mhm/ezekiel-3.html>)