

---

EZEKIEL 17: 1 the LORD's word came to me, saying,

---

This chapter begins with a new allegory or parable, Eze 17:1-10; to which an explanation is immediately subjoined, Eze 17:11-21. In the remaining verses the prophet, by a beautiful metaphor, makes an easy and natural transition to the Messiah, and predicts the security, increasing prosperity, and ultimate universality of his kingdom, Eze 17:22-24. From the beauty of its images, the elegance of its composition, the perspicuity of its language, the rich variety of its matter, and the easy transition from one part of the subject to another, this chapter forms one of the most beautiful and perfect pieces of its kind that can possibly be conceived in so small a compass; and then the unexpected change from objects that presented nothing to the view but gloom and horror, to a prospect of ineffable glory and beauty, has a most happy effect. Every lowering cloud is dispelled, and the fields again smile in the beams of midday. The traveler, who this moment trembled as he looked around for shelter, now proceeds on his way rejoicing.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 2 Son of man, tell a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel;

---

#### Verse 2

Son of man, put forth a riddle - Riddle, Anglo-Saxon, from to divine; a thing that must be curiously investigated and sifted, to find out the meaning; and hence, riddle, a sort of coarse sieve to clean corn, to separate coarse chaff and straws from the pure grain. An instrument formerly used for divination. This is not far removed from the Hebrew חִידָה chidah, from חָדַד chad, to penetrate; not that which penetrates the mind, but which we must penetrate to find out the sense.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 3 and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: A great eagle with great wings and long feathers, full of feathers, which had various colours, came to Lebanon, and took the top of the cedar:

---

#### Verse 3

A great eagle - Nebuchadnezzar. See Jer 48:40; Jer 49:22; Dan 7:4. And see here, Dan 7:12, where it is so applied.

Great wings - Extensive empire.

Long-winged - Rapid in his conquests.

Full of feathers - Having multitudes of subjects.

Divers colors - People of various nations.

Came unto Lebanon - Came against Judea.

The highest branch - King Jehoiachin he took captive to Babylon.

The cedar - The Jewish state and king.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 4 he cropped off the topmost of the young twigs of it, and carried it to a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants.

---

Verse 4

The top of his young twigs - The princes of Judah.

A land of traffic - Chaldea.

A city of merchants - Babylon; for which this city was the most celebrated of all the cities of the east. Its situation procured it innumerable advantages; its two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, and the Persian Gulf, gave it communication with the richest and the most distant nations.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 5 He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful soil; he placed it beside many waters; he set it as a willow tree.

---

Verse 5

The seed of the land - Zedekiah, brother of Jehoiachin.

Planted it in a fruitful field - Made him king of Judea in place of his brother.

Placed it by great waters - Put him under the protection of Babylon, situated on the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates.

And set it as a willow tree - Made him dependent on this city of great waters, as the willow is on humidity.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 6 It grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and its roots were under him: so it became a vine, and produced branches, and shot out sprigs.

---

Verse 6

A spreading vine of low stature - The Jewish state having then no height of dominion, it must abide under the wings or branches of the Chaldean king.

Those branches turned toward him, and the roots - under him - Zedekiah was wholly dependent on Nebuchadnezzar, both for his elevation to the throne, and his support on it.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him, and shot out its branches toward him, from the beds of its plantation, that he might water it.

---

Verse 7

Another great eagle - Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries, king of Egypt.

With great wings - Extensive dominion.

And many feathers - Numerous subjects.

Did bend her roots - Looked to him for support in her intended rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 8 It was planted in a good soil by many waters, that it might produce branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

---

Verse 8

It was planted in a good soil - Though he depended on Babylon, he lived and reigned as Nebuchadnezzar's vicegerent in the land of Judea.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 9 Say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up its roots, and cut off its fruit, that it may wither; that all its fresh springing leaves may wither? and not by a strong arm or many people can it be raised from its roots.

---

Verse 9

Shall it prosper? - Shall Zedekiah succeed in casting off the yoke of the king of Babylon, to whom he had sworn fealty?

Shall he not pull up the roots - Nebuchadnezzar will come and dethrone him.

And cut off the fruit - The children of Zedekiah.

The leaves - All the nobles; all shall perish with Zedekiah.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 10 Yes, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind touches it? it shall wither in the beds where it grew.

---

Verse 10

Shall - utterly whither - The regal government shall be no more restored. Zedekiah shall be the last king, and the monarchy shall finally terminate with him.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 11 Moreover the LORD's word came to me, saying,

EZEKIEL 17: 12 Say now to the rebellious house, Don't you know what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took its king, and its princes, and brought them to him to Babylon:

---

Verse 12

Know ye not what these things mean? - They are explained in this and the following verses.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 13 and he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty of the land;

EZEKIEL 17: 14 that the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping his covenant it might stand.

---

Verse 14

That the kingdom might be base - Have no political consequence, and at last sink into a miserable government under Gedaliah.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 15 But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and many people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape who does such things? shall he break the covenant, and yet escape?

---

Verse 15

Sending his ambassadors into Egypt - Zedekiah must have sent his ambassadors into Egypt, between the sixth month of his sixth year, and the fifth month of his seventh year. Compare Eze 8:1, with Eze 20:1. - See Newcome.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 16 As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he broke, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

---

Verse 16

In the midst of Babylon he shall die - His eyes were put out; he was carried to Babylon, and never returned.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 17 Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company help him in the war, when they cast up mounds and build forts, to cut off many persons.

EZEKIEL 17: 18 For he has despised the oath by breaking the covenant; and behold, he had given his hand, and yet has done all these things; he shall not escape.

---

Verse 18

Seeing he despised the oath - This God particularly resents. He had bound himself by oath, in the presence of Jehovah, to be faithful to the covenant that he made with Nebuchadnezzar, and he took the first opportunity to break it; therefore he shall not escape.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, surely my oath that he has despised, and my covenant that he has broken, I will even bring it on his own head.

EZEKIEL 17: 20 I will spread my net on him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will enter into judgement with him there for his trespass that he has trespassed against me.

---

Verse 20

I will spread my net upon him - See the note on Eze 12:13.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 21 All his fugitives in all his bands shall fall by the sword, and those who remain shall be scattered toward every wind: and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it.

---

Verse 21

All his fugitives - All who attempted to escape with him, and all that ran to Egypt, etc., shall fall by the sword.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 22 Thus says the Lord GOD: I will also take of the lofty top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I will plant it on a high and lofty mountain:

---

Verse 22

I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar - I will raise up another monarchy, which shall come in the line of David, namely, the Messiah; who shall appear as a tender plant, as to his incarnation; but he shall be high and eminent; his Church, the royal city, the highest and purest ever seen on the face of the earth.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 23 in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall produce boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all birds of every wing; in the shade of its branches shall they dwell.

---

Verse 23

In the mountain of the height of Israel - He shall make his appearance at the temple, and found his Church at Jerusalem.

Shalt bring forth boughs - Apostles, evangelists, and their successors in the Gospel ministry.

And bear fruit - Multitudes of souls shall be converted by their preaching.

And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing - All the nations of the earth shall receive his Gospel.

In the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell - Trust in him alone for salvation, and be saved in their trusting.

---

EZEKIEL 17: 24 All the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish; I, the LORD, have spoken and have done it.

---

Verse 24

All the trees of the field shall know - All the people of Israel and of Chaldea.

I the Lord have brought down the high tree - Have dethroned Jehoiachin.

Have exalted the low tree - Put Zedekiah, brother of Jehoiachin, in his place.

Have dried up the green tree - Zedekiah, who had numerous children, but who were all slain before his eyes at Riblah.

And have made the dry tree to flourish - Have raised up a rod out of the stem of Jesse, the family of David being then apparently dried up and extinct. This was the promised Messiah, of the increase and government of whose kingdom and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever. The Zeal of The Lord of Hosts Will Perform This.

The high and green tree, says Newcome, refers to Nebuchadnezzar; the low and the dry tree, to the Jews.