

Hope for the Jews of the Prophet's Time

Ezekiel was, in the first instance, a preacher to the Jews of his own day. And God, through the prophet, was encouraging his people to look forward to the time when he would end their captivity and restore them to their land. As Ezekiel's fellow-prophet, Jeremiah, predicted, he would do this for them after seventy years in Babylon (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10). Daniel based his prayers upon the promise, arguing it out before the LORD (Dan. 9:2). While Ezekiel was not so precise as to timing, nevertheless, he also went on holding out hope to the Jews in their captivity, exhorting them to look forward to that better day, spelling it all out in detail. The promised day of restoration would surely come. This is the first layer of interpretation: hope for the Jews in Babylon. And, after the predicted seventy years, the day of restoration dawned, and Judah returned to their homeland (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-5).