Here is a brief insight into Ezekiel's use of figurative language showing his usage in the Hebrew scriptures, and how that usage illuminates some of the motifs of end-time used by Jesus and John in the New Testament. Eg. Lion, Wolf, Nation spoken of as a single (corporate) entity, Covenant land as a woman, as a tree, as a vine, as raised above the clouds, face-to-face as judgment, day of the Lord as judgment, lightning as war, clouds as judgment, lions and wolves as princes and false prophets, earth as a country, covenanted city as an ornamented woman, Jerusalem, a harlot, as Samaria and Sodom.

By Morrison Lee.

Ever felt neglected? In my family my older sister and younger siblings always seemed to get more attention than me. My folks probably didn't mean to have favorites, but sometimes I feel a bit left out of things. Perhaps that's what makes me sympathize with Ezekiel. Many prophetic studies quote the triumvirate of John, Daniel and Isaiah with only a nod to the amazing son of Buzi. Of course Isaac Newton would have considered Ezekiel a bone-fide prophet, but when writing of the unity of the biblical prophets he only mentions his Fab-Three favorites.

John did not write in one language, Daniel in another, Isaiah in a third, and the rest in languages peculiar to themselves, but they all write in one and the same mystical language. [which] which as far as I can find, was as certain and definite in its significations as is the vulgar language of any nation whatsoever. ¹

Sure, I can see the great scientist is making the point about the integral-unity of the Hebrew prophets, but I thought fiery old Zeke is worth a jersey also, or at least an odd mention here and there. There are studies on Ezekiel around, but I rarely see any major advertising for him or word studies. He seems a bit neglected to me, especially since his use of prophetic terms was used by Jesus in His Olivet Discourse and John in Revelation. Digging around in the Hebrew scriptures myself, I came across some cool examples of his prophetic language usage, ergo I thought I’d like to do this ad for him.

So in this brief article I’d like to advertise some samples of Ezekiel's use of end-time terms. These figurative terms deserve to be a little better known for the meaning they throw on later writings,

and serve not only as curious examples of (what appear at first glance to be) 'literal' biblical terms, but serve as a basis for comparison for later explanations of end-time prophecy. (The identity of Revelation's Harlot was an eye-opener for me, but I get ahead of myself.)

Observing the list of Ezekiel's words below, it is possible to give each ancient term a modern literal-meaning. However the problem is many people say “Bosh” and “Pooh pooh” to figurative language. “Doesn't exist – all literal.” they say. But ancient words can't just be given a modern make-over of meaning. This is playing the game with loaded dies, because Literalism detaches old facts from their original (covenant) state of affairs, and applies them to the present. It effectively clothes old Zeke in a modern polyester suit and sticks him on a corner in downtown Sydney (maybe King's Cross) surrounded by peak-hour traffic shouting; 'The end is nigh!' (This is a little awkward for an ancient hero.) The difficulty is that Literalism prescribes how an ancient word should function before it discovers how it actually did function. More simply, it rather places the cart of conclusion before the horse of observation.

The following observations from Ezekiel’s use of words gives a brief view of a prophet who really needs more advertising, to my mind. In this entry-level article to Ezekiel we find the natural covenantal-context of an ancient Hebrew prophet prophesying to a Hebrew nation about Hebrew things.

Here then is a small selection of the meanings of terms and motifs from the prophet Ezekiel. The selection show his usage of: Lion, Wolf, Nation spoken of as a single (corporate) entity, Covenant land as a woman, as a tree, as a vine, as raised above the clouds, face-to-face as judgment, day of the Lord as judgment, lightning as war, clouds as judgment, lions and wolves as princes and false prophets, earth as a country, covenanted city as an ornamented woman, covenant city as Jerusalem, Jerusalem as a harlot, as Samaria and Sodom.

I. A BRIEF INTRO TO EZEKIEL'S USE OF FIGURATIVE TERMS.

**Term: Princes of Israel as a Lion.** Meaning: Strong, kingly, powerful. Ezek 19:1-3

1"As for you, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel 2and say, ‘What was your mother? A lioness among lions!
She lay down among young lions, She reared her cubs. 3\*When she brought up one of her cubs, He became a lion, And he learned to tear his prey; He devoured men.

**Term: Covenant land as Woman.** Meaning: Land gave birth to a Prince-Lion. Ezek 19:5-8

5\*When she saw, as she waited, That her hope was lost, She took another of her cubs, [ie. 2] Ezekiel is the major source of identifying covenantal-Jerusalem as; the Woman, the Bride, the woman in labor, Sodom, the adulteress, the killer of prophets, and the Harlot of Revelation in whom was found all the blood. Jerusalem's harlotry is referred to over fifty (50) times in Ezekiel 16 and 23 alone, not to mention Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos, . This infamous appellation of 'harlot' to Jerusalem was pointed out to me by a Jewish friend who never read Revelation, but as a boy in the back row of synagogue school avidly poured over these lurid descriptions of the harlot in Ezekiel (Friendship keeps his name buried securely under anonimity.)
Prince] And made him a young lion. 6'And he walked about among the lions; He became a young lion, He learned to tear his prey; He devoured men. 7'He destroyed their fortified towers And laid waste their cities; And the land and its fullness were appalled Because of the sound of his roaring. 8'Then nations set against him On every side from their provinces, And they spread their net over him; He was captured in their pit.


9'They put him [Princes of Israel] in a cage with hooks And brought him to the King of Babylon; They brought him in hunting nets So that his voice would be heard no more On the mountains of Israel. 10'Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, Planted by the waters; It was fruitful and full of branches Because of abundant waters.


11'And it had strong branches fit for scepters of rulers, And its height was raised above the clouds So that it was seen in its height with the mass of its branches.

Term: Face-to-face. Meaning: Judgment. Ezek 20:33

33"As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. 34"I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; 35 and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. 36"As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord GOD. 37"I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

Term: Lightning. Meaning: Sword of War. Ezek 21:8-12; 28

8Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9"Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the LORD.’ Say, ‘A sword, a sword sharpened And also polished! 10'Sharpened to make a slaughter, Polished to flash like lightning!’ Or shall we rejoice, the rod of My son despising every tree? 11“It is given to be polished, that it may be handled; the sword is sharpened and polished, to give it into the hand of the slayer. 12“Cry out and wail, son of man; for it is against My people, it is against all the officials of Israel. 28'And you, son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the sons of Ammon and concerning their reproach,’ and say: ‘A sword, a sword is drawn, polished for the slaughter, to cause it to consume, that it may be like lightning—


3“For the day is near, Even the day of the LORD is near; It will be a day of clouds, A time of doom for the nations. 4“A sword will come upon Egypt, And anguish will be in Ethiopia; When the slain fall in Egypt,
They take away her wealth, And her foundations are torn down.

**Term:** Lions and wolves.  **Meaning:** False Prophets and Princes. Ezek 22:25-27

25“There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her. 26Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. 27Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain.

**Term:** Earth. (LXX Greek Ge; country, land, soil)  **Meaning:** A Country of People. Ezek 14:12-14

12Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, 13“Son of man, if a country [ge. Earth] sins against Me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, destroy its supply of bread, send famine against it and cut off from it both man and beast 16though these three men [Noah, Daniel, Job] were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the country [ge. Earth] would be desolate.

**Term:** Famous city as ornamented Woman.  **Meaning:** Covenant Jerusalem. Ezek 16:2-14

2“Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, “Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. 8Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine,” declares the Lord GOD. 9Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil. 10I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck. 11I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 12Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. 13Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you,” declares the Lord GOD.

**Term:** Covenant city as Harlot.  **Meaning:** Woe to Covenant Jerusalem as Harlot. Ezek 16:15-41

15“But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing. 16You took some of your clothes, made for yourself high places of various colors and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen. 17You also took your beautiful jewels made of My gold
and of My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images that you might play the harlot with them. ....20"Moreover, you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter? 21"You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire. 22"Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood.

23“Then it came about after all your wickedness (‘Woe, woe to you!’ declares the Lord GOD), 24that you ... multiply your harlotry. 26"You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and multiplied your harlotry to make Me angry....28"Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. 29"You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied.' 30“How languishing is your heart,” declares the Lord GOD, “while you do all these things, the actions of a bold-faced harlot. 31”When you built your shrine at the beginning of every street and made your high place in every square, in disdaining money, you were not like a harlot. 32“You adulteress wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!

33“Men give gifts to all harlots, but you give your gifts to all your lovers to bribe them to come to you from every direction for your harlotries. 34“Thus you are different from those women in your harlotries, in that no one plays the harlot as you do, because you give money and no money is given you; thus you are different.”

35Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD. 36Thus says the Lord GOD, “Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols ...38”Thus I will judge you like women who commit adultery or shed blood are judged; and I will bring on you the blood of wrath and jealousy. 39”I will also give you into the hands of your lovers, and they will tear down your shrines, demolish your high places, strip you of your clothing, take away your jewels, and will leave you naked and bare. 40“They will incite a crowd against you and they will stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. 41“They will burn your houses with fire and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women. Then I will stop you from playing the harlot, and you will also no longer pay your lovers. ...

Term: Covenant city as Samaria, Sodom
Meaning: Covenant Jerusalem Apostate. Ezek 16:44-48

44“Behold, everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this proverb concerning you, saying, ‘Like mother, like daughter.’ 45“You are the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and children. You are also the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. 46”Now your older sister is Samaria, who lives north of you with her daughters; and your younger sister, who lives south of you, is Sodom with her daughters. 47”Yet you have not merely walked in their ways or done according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you acted more corruptly in all your conduct than they. 48“As I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “Sodom, your sister and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done.

II. A SUMMARY OF EZEKIEL’S USE OF FIGURATIVE TERMS.
Term: **Princes of Israel as a Lion.**  
Meaning: **Elevated in status.**  
Ezek 19:1-3

Term: **Covenant land as Woman.**  
Meaning: **Land gave birth to a Prince-Lion.**  
Ezek 19:5-8

Term: **Covenant people like a Tree, Vine.**  
Meaning: **Covenant Preference.**  
Ezek 19:9-10

Term: **Raised above clouds.**  
Meaning: **Elevated in status.**  
Ezek 19:11

Term: **Face-to-face.**  
Meaning: **Judgment**  
Ezek 20:33

Term: **Lightning.**  
Meaning: **Sword of War.**  
Ezek 21:8-12; 28

Term: **Day of Clouds.**  
Meaning: **Time of doom -Judgment by Sword.**  
Ezek 30:3

Term: **Earth.** (LXX Greek Ge; country, land, soil) Meaning: **A People.**  
Ezek 14:12-14; 16

Term: **Famous city as ornamented woman.**  
Meaning: **Covenant Jerusalem.**  
Ezek 16:2-14

Term: **Wicked city as Harlot.**  
Meaning: **Woe to Covenant Jerusalem as Harlot.**  
Ezek 16:15-41

Term: **Covenant city as Samaria, Sodom**  
Meaning: **Covenant Jerusalem Apostate.**  
Ezek 16:44-48

### III. COMPARING EZEKIEL'S USE OF FIGURATIVE TERMS WITH SOME NT PROPHECIES.

Term: **Jesus as a Lion.**  
Meaning: **Powerful, Kingly status.**

*First Century Covenant context*

Rev 5:5  And one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”

9:17  And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions;

10:1-3  And I saw another strong angel ... clothed with a cloud ... and his face was like the sun. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; 3and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars ..

Term: **Israel as a Body (corporate entity.)** Meaning: **Nation as a wife - corporate body**

*First Century Covenant context*
Old Covenant Israel always considered as a corporate entity with JHWH as husband / national body as a bride.'
Jer 3:1-10. God says, “If a husband divorces his wife And she goes from him And belongs to another man, Will he still return to her? Will not that land be completely polluted? But you are a harlot with many lovers; Yet you turn to Me,” declares the LORD.... And you have polluted a land With your harlotry and with your wickedness. 6Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. 9“Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.10"Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart...

New Covenant Israel considered as a corporate entity, with Jesus as 'a man /husband, His body as the 'bride' In Ephesians 5. 
22Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Term: Covenant Land as Woman. Meaning: Land gave birth to a Prince-Lion.

First Century Covenant context

Gal 4:1. In the fullness of (Covenant) time, Jesus born of a (Covenant) woman, born under the (Mosaic) Law

Rev 12:1-4 1. A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; 2and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. 3Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.4And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

5And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Term: Covenant people like a Tree, a Vine. Meaning: Covenant Preference.

First Century Covenant context

Kingdom of Israel like a tree, a Vine.

Mtt 21:33-45. The physical kingdom of Israel as a vineyard who rejected God's prophets then killed Jesus His son. 33"Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. 34“When the harvest time approached,
he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. 35“The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. 36AGAIN he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. 37“But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38“But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ 39“They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40“Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?” 41They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.” 42Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures,‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone . . .’ 43“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. 44“And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.” 45When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that HE WAS SPEAKING ABOUT THEM.

Mtt 13:32  The Kingdom of Heaven as a tree.  “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; 32and this is smaller than all other seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR come and NEST IN ITS BRANCHES.”

John 15:1-5 Jesus as a vine.  1“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5“I am the vine, you are the branches...”

Term: Raised above clouds.  Meaning: Elevated in status over enemies.

First Century Covenant context.

Eph 2:1-6. Ephesians elevated in status while still living.  1And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.  4But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love ... made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus

1  Thess 4:15-17.  The living in Thessalonica were to be likewise elevated in status.  15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming [parousia] of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

Rev 11:11-12 Elevated above their enemies.  11But after the three and a half days, the breath of
life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. 12And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.

Term: Face-to-face.  
Meaning: Judgment

First Century Covenant context

Clouds signify knowledge of His presence - God is ‘seen face to face’ in clouds, not literally, but through knowing:

- Jacob saw God face to face (Gen 32:30)
- Moses spoke to God face to face (Ex 33:11)
- Israel saw God eye to eye in cloud (Num 14:14)
- Gideon saw God's angel face to face (Judg 6:22)
- Manoah saw God (Judg 13:22)
- Job saw God face to face (Job 42:5)

In this sense seeing Jesus in clouds is seeing the glory of God, His presence, the judge of all in clouds of judgment.

Everywhere He said He would come in clouds with power. 3

... coming in the cloud of heaven with power  Mt 24:30
... coming in the clouds of heaven with power  Mt 26:64
... coming in the clouds with great power  Mk 13:26
... coming in the clouds of heaven  Mk 14:62
... Son of man coming in a cloud with power  Lk 21:27
... from heaven clothed with a cloud  Rev 10:1
... they ascended up to heaven in a cloud  11:12
... And I looked and behold a white cloud  14:14
... upon the cloud sat one like unto the  14:14
... voice to him that sat on the cloud  14:15
... he that sat on a cloud thrust in his sickle  14:16

Jesus made a relation between His presence in clouds, the temple, and end-of-the-Mosaic age. Comparing 1 Kings 8 illuminates this.

930 BC. God’s presence in covenant temple in clouds on condition of obedience to Law.

1 Kgs 8:10-12  The cloud filled the house of the Lord ..for the glory of the Lord filled the house; the Lord has said 'He would dwell in thick cloud.'

1 Kgs 9:6-9   “BUT IF ... you disobey I will cast out Israel and this house will become a heap of ruins.”

30 AD  Jesus foretells destruction of covenant temple in clouds because of disobedience to Law.

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3. In bible college I was taught and tested on the fact Jesus would return; ‘personally, physically and visibly.’ Later I did the test of checking an exhaustive concordance to discover NONE of these terms appear anywhere in scripture!
70 AD. Covenant temple destroyed in catastrophic national judgment, Mosaic age in the land forever ended. The temple became a heap of ruins.

God's presence in clouds was in the temple. His presence in the land was dependent on Israel's obedience. (BUT IF) By the first century Israel had become disobedient and forfeited the terms of God's presence. Jesus' presence returned to the temple in clouds to judge that wicked generation. The land was forfeited and the temple became a heap of ruins. 1 Kgs 9:6-9 Cause and Effect.

Term: Lightning. Meaning: Sword of War.

First Century Covenant context of war on Jerusalem the Holy city turned Harlot

Mtt 24:27-28 War as destruction as lightning. 27“For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28”Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

Rev 4:5 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder.

Rev 16: 18-19 Contextually this war would fall upon the great harlot city titled 'Babylon.' 18And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake ... 19The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God ... 17:4 4The woman [who] was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls


First Century Covenant context – Day of divine judgment in clouds.

Day of Judgment to come in that generation before they traveled its length. Mtt 10:15. 15”Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the DAY OF JUDGMENT, than for that city. 23“But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

11:16 16“But to what shall I compare this generation? ...20Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. 21“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.22“Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the DAY OF JUDGMENT, than for you. 23“And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.24“Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the DAY OF JUDGMENT, than for you.”

Mtt 12:41 41“The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than
Jonah is here. 42“The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Rev 16: 14-17 14... the war of the great DAY OF GOD, the Almighty.... 17Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, “It is done.

Term: Earth. (LXX Greek Ge; country, land, soil) Meaning: A Country of People, a nation.

First Century Covenant context

Isaiah addresses the nation of Israel as heaven and earth in Isaiah 1:2. 2. “Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, But they have revolted against Me. Israel does not know, My people do not understand.”

Mtt 24:34-35 The Hebrew heavens and earth (divine institution of temple and land) passed away in that generation forty years after Jesus’ foretold it. 32”Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 34”Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35”Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Jesus said the temple would pass away in that generation and in the seasonal time of year of Summer. Forty years later in that generation the temple was destroyed. The date is curious. It was the 9th day of Ab, a Summer month. This is the same day the first temple was destroyed in 586 BC.

When the [prophets] describe the ruin of a KINGDOM or the destruction of a great NATION [they use] phrases like the following:--”The STARS have fallen,” ”The HEAVENS are overthrown,” ”The SUN is darkened,” ”The EARTH is waste, and trembles,” and similar metaphors. The Arabs likewise say of a person who has met with a serious accident, ”His HEAVENS, together with his EARTH, have been covered”; and when they speak of the approach of a nation’s prosperity, they say, ”The light of the SUN AND MOON has increased,” ”A new heaven and a new earth has been created,” or similar phrases.

Maimonides. (1135-1204 AD)


First Century Covenant context

Rev 17:4-7 John describes the Harlot city - 4The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, 5and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, ”BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”6And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and
with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

2 Sam 1:23-24  David describes Jerusalem.  23“Saul and Jonathan, beloved and pleasant in their life, And in their death they were not parted; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions. 24 “O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet, Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

Ezekiel (our friend) in 16:10-13 describes harlot Jerusalem. 10“I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk. 11“l adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck. 12“I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13”Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth ... you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.

Jesus Mt 23:34-38 in the first century describes Jerusalem as filled with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. “I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, 35so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36“Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets... 38“Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!”

Term: Wicked city as Harlot.  Meaning: WOE to wicked Jerusalem as Harlot.

Covenant context – woe to Jerusalem

Isaiah 5:1-14  1. Let me sing a .. song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.2He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it And also hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones. 3“ 0 inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard. 7For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel. Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; 8WOE to those who add house to house and join field to field,Until there is no more room, 9In my ears the LORD of hosts has sworn, “Surely, many houses shall become desolate.” 11WOE to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink, 14Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure;And Jerusalem’s splendor, her multitude, her din of revelry and the jubilant within her, descend into it.

Mtt 23:13-33 Woes pronounced upon Jerusalem. 13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,
14 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows’ houses, 15“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,
16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘ 22“And whoever swears by heaven, swears both by the
throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.
23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous ... but you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32“Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. 33“You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?
23:36. 36"Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Revelation's harlot
Revel 8:13 13Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth."
Revel 9:12. 12The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.
Revel 11:14 14The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.
Revel 12:12 12"Rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, [and] has only a short time."

Term: Covenant city titled Samaria, Sodom  Meaning: Covenant Jerusalem (Apostate.)

Covenant context of Jerusalem

This destruction upon foretold by Isaiah 1:2-10. 2. Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, But they have revolted against Me. Israel does not know, My people do not understand."4Alas, sinful nation, 8The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard,9Unless the LORD of hosts Had left us a few survivors, We would be like Sodom ... like Gomorrah. 10Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, You people of Gomorrah.

Rev 11:8 Explains the dead lie in the streets of the great city titled 'Sodom' for its immorality, the same city where their Lord was crucified. 8And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

IV. DEMONSTRATING THE UNITY OF EZEKIEL'S USE OF FIGURATIVE TERMS WITH NT PROPHECY – BLOOD MOTIF

These meanings of Ezekiel and related observations can be summed up in eight statements related to the first century state of affairs in Jerusalem. Most simply this scenario matches Figurative Language with First Century Circumstances. (Check the facts are true and the logic valid.)

1. Jerusalem had intentionally killed ALL God's prophets. (Lk 13:34 “O Jerusalem who KILLS the prophets.”)
2. That generation was the sons of those who intentionally murdered the prophets. (Mtt 23:31 “You are their SONS.”)

3. They crucified the Son of God Himself and claimed guilt. (Mtt 27:25 “His blood be ON US.”)

4. ALL the guilt for the blood of all prophets on this generation. (Lk 11:50 “Blood of ALL prophets on THIS GENERATION.”)

5. ALL guilt for all the righteous blood since creation on that generation. (Mtt 23:35 “GUilt for ALL righteous BLOOD SINCE ABEL on THIS GENERATION.”)

6. Upon Revelation’s corrupt city Babylon was found all blood of prophets and all those slain on earth. (Rev 18:24 'In her was found the BLOOD OF ALL PROPHETS and ALL those slain ON EARTH.’)

7. Upon the great Harlot City ‘where their Lord was crucified’ was avenged the blood of bond-servants. (Rev 19:2 He has avenged THE BLOOD of His BONDSERVANTS on her.)

8. Is another option possible? Is it possible a prophet perished outside Jerusalem? That option is impossible in the words of Jesus; “It cannot be a prophet dies outside Jerusalem.” (Lk 13:33)

Summary of these facts

ALL the blood for guilt was in the TEMPLE
ALL the blood of the righteous IN JERUSALEM
ALL the blood of those slain on earth IN THE HARLOT CITY
ALL the blood from Abel shed upon IN THAT GENERATION
ALL the guilt for ALL THE BLOOD to come on THIS GENERATION

These facts now serve as a basis for making some rather pointed arguments about ALL THE BLOOD.

1. Re: All the blood in the harlot city

ALL the BLOOD was in Jerusalem. (Lk 11:34)
ALL the BLOOD was in the harlot city. (Rev 18:24)
Therefore Jerusalem is the HARLOT CITY.

2. Re: All the blood in that generation

ALL the BLOOD was in Jerusalem. (Mtt 23:35-36)
ALL the BLOOD was to come ON THAT GENERATION. (Lk 13:34)
Therefore all the blood came on Jerusalem in THAT GENERATION.

3. Re: All the blood since Abel on that generation
ALL the BLOOD was in Jerusalem.
All GUILT was to come upon for ALL the righteous blood SINCE ABEL was to come on that generation.  (Mtt 23:35ff)

Therefore ALL the blood OF ALL TIME SINCE ABEL came upon that generation in Jerusalem.

4. Re: All the blood since creation

ALL the BLOOD shed since CREATION was in Jerusalem.  (Mtt 23:35ff)
ALL the BLOOD was to come upon THAT GENERATION.  (Lk 11:50)

Therefore ALL THE BLOOD SINCE CREATION came upon THAT GENERATION.

5. Re: Vengeance in that generation

ALL the GUILT for sin was in Jerusalem temple but could not be forgiven. (Heb 10:4)
VENGEANCE for ALL THE GUILT was to come on that generation.  (Lk 21:22)

Therefore VENGEANCE came upon Jerusalem in THAT GENERATION.

6. Re: All the guilt in Jerusalem temple

ALL the SYMBOLIC GUILT was in the temple.  (Hebrews 10:4)
The GUILT was to come upon THAT GENERATION.  (Mtt 23:32)

Therefore ALL THE SYMBOLIC GUILT came upon THAT GENERATION.

7. Re: All past sins remembered in the temple

ALL the BLOOD OF GUILT-SACRIFICE was in the temple.  (Heb 10:1)
The temple sacrifices were A REMINDER of past sins.  (Heb 10:3)

Therefore ALL PAST SINS were REMEMBERED in the TEMPLE.

8. Re: The temple as a prophetic symbol (parable) to that generation

The temple was a Prophetic SYMBOL for the PRESENT TIME.  (Heb 9:8-9)
The temple existed in THAT GENERATION.  (Mtt 24:1-3)

Therefore the temple was a Prophetic SYMBOL to THAT GENERATION.

9. Re: Jerusalem killed all the prophets

Logic is inexorable. Once begun it cannot be turned off while there are facts. Logic only fails when facts fail. The fact is put – Jerusalem killed all the prophets, hence all the blood was to come upon Jerusalem. True statements correspond to relevant facts in the same terms.

Also, a past view combines the covenant context of **Punishment** with **Fulfilment**. The options for fulfillment are only three: ALL fulfilled, SOME fulfilled, NONE fulfilled. It would seem to be some kind of accident that **ALL the blood since creation** was to come upon that generation AND a **fulfilment of ALL prophecy** also. Yet this is what is seen in the facts.
We observe that ALL prophecy was to be fulfilled in that C.1\textsuperscript{st} generation. This is no accident. History tells us Jerusalem, the temple, the Mosaic age and the entire population was razed and annihilated. One thousand years of civilization in Jerusalem disappeared in a mere 1260 days, or 42 months, or in three and a half years from 66-70 AD. Sources are secular (Wikipedia) Jewish, Roman, and Christian respectively.\footnote{Wiki -\url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Jerusalem_(AD_70)} \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Jewish%E2%80%93Roman_War}}\footnote{Jewish - \url{http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/revolt.html}}\footnote{Christian - \url{http://biblehub.com/library/schaff/history_of_the_christian_church_volume_i/section_38_the_jewish_war.htm}}

So where has our neglected prophet led us? His use of language has led us a merry chase back in time. This usage has connected the last day, the climactic \textit{Day of the Lord}, factually and semantically back to the first century.

CONCLUSION.

Our dabbling into how an olde prophet used language has not been entirely barren. Ezekiel's
figurative language raises many wider issues. The most basic one is the relation between bible LANGUAGE and bible TIME.

Current end-time theory largely dismisses chronological facts, and claims Only Literal meanings of prophetic language, but THEN it rather arbitrarily makes a 2000 year time-deduction because, (and get this) it can’t explain it literally in the past!

Did you get that?
Futurism is a theory that has ignored the figurative use of language. Instead it makes first century Time-facts Figurative, and marries them 'supposed' twenty-first century Descriptive language Literal. (This is kind of making an idol after ones own modern-image and likeness.)

Here we have seen that respecting biblical Time-facts saves their appearances – they say what it looks like they say, hence 'soon, shortly, quickly, near at hand' and 'without delay' mean just that.

We have also seen that understanding the use of ancient figurative language is more helpful and relevant, because a past (Preterist) perspective does three things:
1) It brings end time-facts under observation and
2) Restores end-time events their natural covenant-context
3) Allows rationality to operate between biblical facts

While still little known and understood, a first century perspective offers more explanatory power than competing theories,

-Morrison Lee

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