



Prophet Ezekiel

(Ezekiel 1: 2)

In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month,... the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God (Ezekiel 1: 1)... As I looked, behold a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, with brightness round about it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming bronze. And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the form of men, but each had four faces and each of them had four wings (Ezekiel 1: 4-6)... And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form (Ezekiel 1: 26)... Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking. And he said to me, "Son of man, stand upon your feet, and I will speak to you". And when he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me upon my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. (Ezekiel 1: 28; 2: 1)

Ezekiel is portrayed as an old man in deep conversation with a young man on his right. He was the first prophet of Israel and was active outside his land. He was in fact deported into exile in Babylon (approx. 593 B.C.) where he tried to call the Jews to their moral responsibility for the deportation in Mesopotamia and for the destruction of Jerusalem, caused by their unfaithfulness to the alliance with God. The book of the prophecies of Ezekiel can be divided into three sections. The first includes the exposure of the sins of the chosen people which will lead to unavoidable punishment by God, that will reach its apex in the fall of Jerusalem (Ezekiel, ch. 1-24). The second regards the announcement of the ruin of the idolatrous people (ch. 25-32), while in the last chapters (33-48) God entrusts the prophet with the task of calling the Jewish people to conversion from their sins (**33: 10-20**) and of announcing their future with the vision of a new Jerusalem, the founding of a new cult and of a new land under the leadership of a new shepherd, that is David.