

Structure of the Sign-Acts of Ezekiel 4:1-5:4

וְאַתָּה And You, (Son of Man) (4:1-2)

קַח-לְךָ TAKE A BRICK

וְנִתְּתָה Lay it before you, Engrave on it a city (even Jerusalem)

וְנִתְּתָה Put siegeworks against it, build siege wall against it, cast up mound against it

וְנִתְּתָה Set camps against it, plant battering rams against it *all around*

וְאַתָּה And You, (4:3)

קַח-לְךָ TAKE AN IRON GRIDDLE

וְנִתְּתָה Place it as an iron wall between you and the city, *set your face toward it*

Let it be in a state of siege and press the siege against it.

This is a sign for the house of Israel

וְאַתָּה And You, [left out of the ESV translation] (4:4-8)

LIE ON LEFT SIDE AND PLACE THE PUNISHMENT OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL ON IT

For the Number of the Days that You Lie On It, You Shall Bear their Punishment

וְאֶנִּי נֹתֵתִי לְךָ I Assign to You 390 Days, a year = days of punishment (for House of Israel)

Bear the Punishment of the House of Israel

When you have completed these:

LIE ON RIGHT SIDE AND BEAR THE PUNISHMENT OF THE HOUSE OF JUDAH

40 Days, day = year, I assign you נֹתֵתִי לְךָ

Set Your Face toward the siege of Jerusalem, arm bared, and prophesy against the city

Behold, נֹתֵתִי עָלֶיךָ I will place cords upon you, so that you cannot turn from one side to other

Till You have completed the days of your siege

וְאַתָּה And You, (4:9-17)

קַח-לְךָ TAKE WHEAT AND BARLEY, ETC AND PUT IN BOWL AND MAKE BREAD

וְנִתְּתָה And put them into a single vessel...

During the Number of Days that You Lie On Your Side...You Shall Eat It

390 Days, you shall eat it

Food Weighed & Water Measured Sign

Bake Barley Cake Prepared on Human Dung Sign

Sign Explained: "thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread unclean"

Never Eaten Tainted Food

Cow's Dung Substituted for Human Dung to Prepare Bread On

Bread Weighed & Water Measured Sign Explained (break the supply of bread in Jerusalem)

(FYI: the verbal phrase for 'I assign to you' in 4:15 is also נֹתֵתִי לְךָ)

Chapter 5:

וְאַתָּה And You, (Son of Man) (5:1-4)

קַח-לְךָ TAKE A SHARP SWORD

When the days of the siege are completed

1/3 burn in the fire in midst of city

1/3 strike with sword *All Around* the city

1/3 scatter to wind.....fire.....house of Israel

Structure of the Oracles of Ezekiel 5:5-17

Thus says the Lord YHWH: (5:5-6) (3rd person "her")

This Jerusalem in the midst of the *nations* I have set her, and *lands* surrounding her
And she has rebelled against my *rules* to do wickedness greater than the *nations* and
my *statutes* greater than the *lands* that surround her

Because **in my *rules* they have rejected and my *statutes* they will not walk in them**

Therefore thus says the Lord YHWH: (5:7) (2nd person "you")

On account of your turbulence greater than the nations that surround you
in my *statutes* you have not walked and my *rules* you have not done
and even *rules* of the nations that surround you, you did not do

Therefore thus says the Lord YHWH: (5:8-10)

Behold, I, even I, am against you

I will do in your midst *judgments* [same Hebrew word as *rules* above] for the eyes of the nations
and I will do in you that which I have not done, and that which the like I will never do again
on account of your **abominations**

Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers
and I will do on you *judgments* and I will scatter all your remnant **to all wind**

Therefore, as I live, a declaration of the Lord YHWH: (5:11-17)

if not on account of my sanctuary you defiled with all your detestable things and with all your
abominations then even I will withdraw and my eyes (will have) no pity and even I will not spare

Explanation of the 1/3, 1/3, and 1/3 – pestilence, famine, sword, scatter **to all wind**, sword

Thus shall my anger spent itself / Vent my fury upon them and satisfy myself

And they shall know that I am YHWH

Make you a desolation and reproach among the nations that surround you for the eyes of all
who pass by

...when I do on you *judgments* in anger and in rage/fury...

I am YHWH; I have spoken

arrows, famine, (I will break your supply of bread), famine, wild beasts, pestilence, blood, sword

I am YHWH; I have spoken

The Alternating Structure of Ezekiel 6:

And the word of YHWH came to me:

(son of man) Set your face toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them.

And say to the mountains of Israel, 'Hear the word of the Lord YHWH!'

Thus says the Lord YHWH to the mountains and the hills, ravines and valleys:

Behold, I, will bring a sword on you and I will destroy your high places, your altars will be desolate, and your incense altars will be broken, and I will cast down your slain before your idols, and I will put (ntn verb) corpses of the sons of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones surrounding your altars. In all your dwelling-places, the cities will be waste and the high places will be desolate in order that your altars may be waste, and be ruined and your idols be broken and destroyed and your incense altars be cut off, and your works be wiped out. And the slain fall in your midst **and you shall know that I am YHWH**. And I will leave some of you alive, those who escape the sword, among the *nations* you will be scattered on the *lands*. And those who escape will remember among the nations where they be held captive there that I have been broken over their whoring heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go whoring after their idols and they will feel loathing in their own sight (in front of them) for the evils that they have done, for all their abominations. **And they shall know that I am YHWH**. I have not said in vain that I would do to them this evil.

(Thus says the Lord YHWH:)

Smite with your palm and and stamp with your foot and say, Ah (Alas) because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel, with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence they shall fall. Thus I will spend my fury upon them. **And you shall know that I am YHWH** when their slain lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill and mountaintop, under every green tree and leafy oak, wherever they offered pleasing aroma to their idols. And I will stretch out my hand against them and make the land desolate and waste, from the wilderness toward Diblah, in all their dwelling-places. **Then they shall know that I am YHWH**.

The best way to understand the structure of this chapter would be to say it follows an alternating A, B, A', B' pattern. The phrase about knowing that He is YHWH follows this pattern: A. You shall know that I am YHWH, B. they shall know that I am YHWH, A' You shall know that I am YHWH, B' They shall know that I am YHWH. Greenberg's commentary sees it this way noting that there is the main oracle (A) followed by an "afterwave" (B), second oracle (A') followed by an "afterwave" (B'). The introductory phrases "Thus says the Lord YHWH" for both A and A' also favor understanding the structure this way.¹

1 Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel: 1-20*, *Anchor Bible* commentary, p.137.

The Alternating Structure of Ezekiel 7

The word of YHWH came to me:

And You (son of man)

Thus says the Lord YHWH: **(7:2-4)**

An End/The End is Come Upon the 4 Corners of the Land/Upon You

I will judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations.

And my eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but I will punish you for your ways,
while your abominations are in your midst.

Then you will know that I am YHWH.

Thus says the Lord YHWH: **(7:5-9)**

Behold, It comes/An End Has Come/The End Has Come/It Comes/Your Doom Has Come to You...

Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you and spend my anger against you, and judge you
according to your ways and punish you for all your abominations.

And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity, I will punish you according to your ways,
while your abominations are in your midst.

Then you will know that I am YHWH, who strikes

Behold, The Day/Behold, It Comes/Your Doom Has Come... **(7:10-27)**

A. Futility of Commercial Transactions (v.12b-13)

B. Announcement and Arrival of War and Devastation (v.14-16)

C. Universal Ineffectiveness, Terror, Mourning (v.17-18)

A' Futility of Gold and Silver (v.19-20)

B' Dispossession, Looting, Desecration (v.21-24)

C' Ineffectiveness, Terror, Mourning by All Classes (v.25-26)²

According to their way I will do to them, and according to their *judgments* I will judge them. (v.27)

Then they will know that I am YHWH (v.27)

² ABC and A'B'C' with minor variations quoting from Duguid's commentary, *Ezekiel, NIVAC*, p.120. A similar structure was noted by Greenberg, p.158.