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Ezekiel 12.

(2014)

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Ezekiel 12.

(A brief overview of the main topics).

Topics.

- Eyes to see but see not and ears to hear, but hear not.
- The LORD tells Ezekiel to pack his bags and go into exile.
- Zedekiah king of Judah will be blinded.
- Some will survive the destruction of Jerusalem.
- There will be a great famine in Jerusalem.
- There will be no-more lying visions in the city of Jerusalem.
- None of the LORD'S words will be delayed.

Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel: Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem.

After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chapter 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem.

NOTE: Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

Eyes to See but See Not and Ears to Hear, but Hear Not.

Ezekiel 12:1-2 ----- ¹The word of the LORD came to me (Ezekiel): ²"Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, but see not, who have ears to hear, but hear not, for they are a rebellious house.

At this time the people of Israel set their hearts diamond hard against the word of the LORD that Ezekiel was bringing to them. Rebellion (defiance of authority) spiritually blinded the people of Israel to Ezekiel's call to repentance and his warning of impending doom and in their stubbornness and spiritual blindness they shut their mind to hearing the words of God.

The LORD tells Ezekiel to Pack His Bags and Go into Exile.

Ezekiel 12:3-6 ----- ³As for you, son of man, prepare for yourself an exile's baggage, and go into exile by day in their sight. You shall go like an exile from your place to another place in their sight. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house. ⁴You shall bring out your

baggage by day in their sight, as baggage for exile, and you shall go out yourself at evening in their sight, as those do who must go into exile. ⁵In their sight dig through the wall, and bring your baggage out through it. ⁶In their sight you shall lift the baggage upon your shoulder and carry it out at dusk. You shall cover your face that you may not see the land, for I have made you a sign for the house of Israel."

Throughout the book of Ezekiel the LORD often uses dramatic behaviour and actions in Ezekiel's life as signs to: -

- Get the attention of Israel.
- Depict the condition of the entire nation of Israel.
- Picture future events that are about to come upon Israel.

In this chapter the LORD is using Ezekiel's life to get the attention of Israel and to picture future events about to come upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The LORD tells Ezekiel to pack his bags during the day and in the evening in the sight of all the people then dig a hole through the wall of Jerusalem and with his baggage carried on his shoulder and his face covered to go out through the hole. This is a symbol of the people of Jerusalem being taken captive to Babylon. About four years later King Nebuchadnezzar with his fierce armies broke through the walls of the city and took the people captive to Babylon.

Lift his baggage upon his shoulder and go out: is a symbol of Zedekiah king of Judah son's being killed before his eyes by the soldiers of Babylon it is a symbol of the burden the king will be carrying as he is taken into captivity (v12).

His face covered: is a symbol of Zedekiah king of Judah being blinded by the soldiers of Babylon (v12). This is exactly what happened to him when he was taken into Babylonian captivity.

NOTICE: the LORD says, "Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house." It is possible the LORD with this statement is encouraging Ezekiel and trying to give him hope since God having eternal foreknowledge would already know the outcome.

Ezekiel does what the LORD told Him.

Ezekiel 12:7-10 ----- ⁷And I did as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own hands. I brought out my baggage at dusk, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight. ⁸In the morning the word of the LORD came to me: ⁹"Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?' ¹⁰Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.'

Ezekiel acts out the LORD'S instruction which of course arouses the people's curiosity and so they ask him what is he doing? Which was the purpose of the whole exercise, he tells them that the things he is doing will affect the prince in Jerusalem and all the inhabitants of it. When these events took place the prince in Jerusalem; was Zedekiah the king of Judah.

Zedekiah King of Judah will be Blinded.

Ezekiel 12:11-13 ----- ¹¹Say, 'I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.' ¹²And the prince (Zedekiah) who is among them shall lift his baggage upon his shoulder at dusk, and shall go out. They shall dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He shall cover his face, that he may not see the land with his eyes. ¹³And I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare. And I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, and he shall die there.

The fierce armies of Babylon broke through the walls of Jerusalem captured Zedekiah king of Judah and his son's, they slaughtered Zedekiah's son before his

eyes and then blinded Zedekiah and took him in chains with the other inhabitants to the city to Babylon.

Zedekiah: means, Jehovah is righteous, Zedekiah was the son of Josiah he reigned eleven years and was the last king of Judah, because of the wickedness of Judah. God finally brought on the predicted Babylonian captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem, took Jehoiachin Judah's king, captive to Babylon and made Mattaniah, whose name he changed to Zedekiah, king in his place.

Nebuchadnezzar having taken away the men of influence from Judah, felt the remaining Jews would be easily subdued, but foolishly Zedekiah, rebelled against the king of Babylon, and as a result, he was taken by Nebuchadnezzar and bound. Zedekiah's sons were killed before his eyes and his own eyes put out. He was then taken to Babylon where he died.

Some will survive the Destruction of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 12:14-16 ----- ¹⁴And I will scatter toward every wind all who are around him (Zedekiah), his helpers and all his troops, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. ¹⁵And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the countries. ¹⁶But I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the LORD."

When Babylon attacked Jerusalem many fled into the hills and surrounding nations to escape the terror and slaughter of Babylon's armies. When they were talking with the people of those nations they would have been telling them that everything this great prophet of God named Ezekiel prophesied would come to pass did come to pass because of all the wickedness in Judah.

There will be a Great Famine in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 12:17-20 ----- ¹⁷And the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸"Son of man, eat your bread with quaking, and drink water with trembling and with anxiety. ¹⁹And say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink water in dismay. In this way her land will be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who dwell in it. ²⁰And the inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

Babylon's armies surrounded the walls of Jerusalem for nearly two years so that no-one could go out or come in to get food, the famine within the city walls became so great parents were eating their own babies for food to survive.

The land will become desolation: refers to the seventy year Babylonian captivity, during which time there was no Jews to till the ground and farm the land of Judah so their farms and land became a waste and a place for wild animals and weeds.

There will be No-More Lying Visions in the City of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 12:21-25 ----- ²¹And the word of the LORD came to me: ²²"Son of man, what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, 'The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing'? ²³Tell them therefore, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.' But say to them, 'The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision. ²⁴For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. ²⁵For I am the LORD; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the Lord GOD."

Jerusalem is full of false prophets speaking lying visions that obviously don't come to pass, there is so much of this kind of thing going on that the people have actually made a proverb regarding it. God will put an end to the proverb because every detail Ezekiel has seen in his vision prophesied will come to pass.

The vision will no longer be delayed: does not mean it is going to happen tomorrow, but in their lifetime (v25).

NOTICE: the LORD says there will no longer be flattering words or visions in the house of Israel, these false prophets were telling the people what they wanted to hear, so of course they were more popular than Ezekiel, who was proclaiming a message of repentance and impending doom.

None of the LORD'S Words Will Be Delayed.

Ezekiel 12:26-28 ----- ²⁶And the word of the LORD came to me: ²⁷"Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'
²⁸Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord GOD."

The inhabitants of Jerusalem believe that the words Ezekiel is speaking will not happen in their lifetime, but they all came to pass about four years later.

End.