

Top-Down Sin

Exploring Ezekiel, Amir Tsarfati

Chapter 4

Capture the Scene (What do I see?)

Using your Bible, answer the following questions.

1. How did God describe the people of Judah in Ezekiel 12:1?
2. Who would try to escape the Babylonian invaders, according to verse 12? (You'll find the identity of this person on page 74 of *Exploring Ezekiel*.)
3. What does verse 13 say would happen when this person attempted to escape?
4. In verses 14 and 15, what did God say He would do to "all who are around" the prince and "all his troops"?
5. Read Ezekiel 12:16. Would God have everyone taken captive? For what reason would God do this?
6. In verse 24, what did God say would stop?
7. What did God promise in verses 25 and 28?
8. Who was Ezekiel to prophesy against, according to Ezekiel 13:1?
9. What did God say the deceptive prophets were guilty of doing (verses 6, 10, and 22)?
10. In Ezekiel 14:3, what did God say the elders of Israel had been doing?

11. In verse 5, what did God say had "estranged" the people from Him?
12. In verse 6, what plea did God give?
13. In verse 8, what did God say He would do to those who didn't comply?
14. Give a brief summary of the judgments God said He would send upon the unfaithful in Ezekiel 14:12-21.
15. What word of hope did God give in verse 22?

ANALYZE THE MESSAGE (What does it say and mean?)

Using both your Bible and your copy of *Exploring Ezekiel*, answer the following questions.

1. The situation in Jerusalem was perilous. The Babylonian army posed a threat. There were two kinds of prophets: Those who proclaimed judgment, and those who said everything would be okay.
 - a. For what reasons is it likely the people preferred to listen to the deceiving prophets?
 - b. What evidences do you think the people should have noticed that indicated they would not be spared from judgment?
2. What are some reasons that might explain why the foolish prophets would have been willing to lie to the people? (You'll find one answer on page 78 of *Exploring Ezekiel*.)
3. In Ezekiel 13:9, what three things did God say would *not* happen to the wicked prophets in Israel? Why do you think God imposed especially severe judgment on false prophets?

4. The elders of Israel were responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people. But what had they set up in their hearts, according to Ezekiel 14:3?

What was the result of the condition of their hearts (verses 4-5)?

5. What would the righteous prayers of Noah, Daniel, and Job not have been able to do (see page 83)? What does this communicate to us about the spiritual state of the people of Israel?
6. Why should we find assurance in the fact God promises to follow through when He warns the wicked that judgment is imminent?

COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

(How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?)

1. In 2 Kings 25, we read the fulfillment of the prophecies given in Ezekiel 12:1-14. Read 2 Kings 25:1-12, and note below what happened:
 - a. Verse 1—
 - b. Verse 3—
 - c. Verse 4—
 - d. Verse 5—
 - e. Verse 6—
 - f. Verse 7—
 - g. Verses 8-10—
 - h. Verse 11—
 - i. Verse 12—

2. In the following passages, what does the Bible tell us about false prophets and teachers?
 - a. Jeremiah 23:16—
 - b. Matthew 7:15—
 - c. 2 Peter 2:1, 3—
 - d. Jude 12-13—
 - e. Jude 16—

EXECUTE (How does this affect my life?)

1. What does Acts 17:11 say that the believers in Berea did to safeguard themselves from false teaching?
2. For what reason was Scripture given to us, according to Psalm 119:105?
3. Read John 14:21. In what way do we show our love for God?
4. First Peter 2:1-2 says, "Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow." Do you think it is possible for a Christian to grow spiritually at the same time he or she clings to sinful attitudes and behaviors?

Why or why not?