

## Ezekiel Part 12 (Ezekiel 12)

1. Sinfulness blinded the people of Jerusalem and they consistently refused to listen to Ezekiel's warnings. (Ezekiel 12:1-2)
2. Even Jeremiah's message was ignored and at one point clearly rejected by Jehoiakim and the priests. (Jeremiah 20:1-6; 36:1-32)
3. They chose to remain rebellious and hardhearted as God had predicted. Sin blinds the heart and mind.
4. Ezekiel was given another role in God's series of instructive dramas. (Ezekiel 12:3-7)
5. God told him to prepare baggage like one about to go into exile (vv. 3-4).
6. The "night" of the exile would be a time of spiritual darkness for the nation. While the people watched his drama, Ezekiel dug through a wall (v. 5), the wall of his house.
7. The prophet's response to the people when they asked, "What are you doing?" was to explain that his actions were a "sign" of the soon-coming captivity and exile. (Ezekiel 12:8-16)
8. This drama was about the "prince" and the whole house of Israel (vv. 10-11).
9. Placing the bags on his shoulder and covering his face was Ezekiel's symbolic prophecy of the blinding of Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar and his exile in Babylon (v. 12).
10. Zedekiah was called "the prince." Ezekiel carefully avoided the Hebrew word *melek*, which meant "king," because he considered Jehoiachin the legitimate king, who was in exile.
11. Zedekiah had been appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, not God or the people (2 Kgs 25:17-20).
12. The "net" (v. 13) referred to a snare used to hunt birds. Zedekiah was taken captive and transported to Babylon but did not see the land because he was blinded. (2 Kings 25:7; Jeremiah 39:4; 52:7)
13. Some fled to other countries (v. 15). Only a small group of survivors remained in Jerusalem.
14. Others were dispersed among foreign nations as witnesses that the nation was in exile because of their iniquity and not because of God's lack of care or inability to defend them. (v. 16)
15. Ezekiel performed a second dramatic action. He trembled while eating as a sign of fear and anxiety over the exile. (Ezekiel 12:17-20)
16. The people would be forced to eat meager rations in fear not knowing if there would be another meal.

17. The result would be that they would know Yahweh was the one true God. Unfortunately - they learned this by receiving His judgment (v. 20).
18. Those under sin's power often mistakenly conclude that though sin destroys others, they will not be affected.
19. There are two parts to this message, each introduced by "the word of the Lord came to me." In each part God responds to a saying of the people.
20. The contempt of the people for Ezekiel's ministry and probably Jeremiah's may be seen in the popular proverb in verse 22. (Ezekiel 12:21-25)
21. The obvious meaning of this proverb was that the people did not take seriously the messages of God's prophets.
22. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were considered prophets of doom, so the people rejected their messages and held to a false hope of restoration.
23. The divine response was to give Ezekiel a counter-proverb, literally, "The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision" (v. 23).
24. The phrase "every vision" referred to those, like Ezekiel's and Jeremiah's, that legitimately warned of imminent judgment and exile.
25. False visions and "flattering divinations" would cease (v. 24).
26. Divination is the attempt to communicate with the supernatural by observing natural phenomena, manipulating certain objects, or consulting mediums.
27. Here "those who hear the new saying are to see themselves not only under the judgment of having wrongly judged the prophet's authenticity; they must also take seriously what he had said, which means seeing themselves under the judgment announced in vv. 19-20."
28. Another saying was that even if the vision were true, it was for some distant future time. (Ezekiel 12:26-28)
29. The people conceded that Ezekiel's message might be true, but it was irrelevant to their situation.
30. These verses demonstrate that there are many ways to despise God's word, whether by outright denial or by diverting its message to other times and applications.
31. Again - God's response was simple and direct. As someone has said, God does not necessarily pay at the end of every week; nevertheless, He pays.