

## EZEKIEL 14:1-19:14 | PROGRESSION OF JUDGMENT (PART 1)

## EZEKIEL 14:1-11 | ELDERS

- Verses 1-3 – Shameful inquiry
  - There were **certain elders of Israel** that came seeking Ezekiel’s prophetic word. God’s reaction was blunt: **should I be inquired of at all by them?** What gall, the Lord believed, to approach the Lord after setting up **idols in their heart**.
  - The men should have heeded the words of King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:2: **Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.**
- Verses 4-5 - God’s Response to the Inquirers
  - God says to these who come that He will respond **according to the multitude of the inquirers idols**. In other words, *the greater the idolatry, the greater the wrath in the answer.*
- Verses 6-11 - A General Word to Any Who Would Do the Same
  - Previously the Lord spoke to the elders who dared approach God for insight. Now He speaks through Ezekiel to **the house of Israel** (v. 6) in a more general sense.
  - His first word is to **Repent** (v. 6), forsaking idols and abominations. The one who did not do that yet had the gall to inquire of the Lord after rejecting Him would be made **a sign and a proverb** (v. 8) and God would **cut him off from the midst of my people** (v. 8).
  - His second word is a “back door” confirmation of what He has said. What if an Israelite goes to a prophet who gives a word other than what has already been spoken? The Lord says that He **will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel**. All prophets have fair warning *not to trust any prophecy that contradicts this particular prophecy*, because it may be deception, even from the Lord Himself (as a test).
  - The only remedy is **That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me** (v. 11). If they return, then **they may be my people, and I may be their God** (v. 11).

## EZEKIEL 14:12-15:8 | THE LAND AND THE CITY (JUDGMENTS)

## EZEKIEL 14:12-23 | LITERAL JUDGMENTS

- Verses 12-14 - Judgment: Famine
  - These judgments are much more generally applied than most of the judgments we have seen in Ezekiel.
    - Heretofore the judgments have been specific to that generation and the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.
    - These judgments are applied to **the land** (v. 13). Since land (Hebrew: *eretz*) itself cannot sin, we have the Biblical principle to understand land, in some cases, to be inclusive of the people of the land and not just the real estate. This sheds light on how the *land* becomes *married land* in Isaiah 62:4.
  - The punishment for **trespassing grievously** (v. 11) is that God **will send famine upon it**.
  - God then introduces **three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job**.
    - The three are presented as symbols of righteousness. If they were living in the land at the time, God would not spare the land on their behalf, but only spare **their own souls by their righteousness** (v. 14).

- All three, in a sense, were successful at saving others. Noah saved his family, Job interceded successfully for his friends, and Daniel saved his fellow wise men. Thus this is an ominous warning from the Lord.
- Verses 15-16 - Judgment: Beasts
  - Leviticus 26:22 threatened **wild beasts** which would leave the land **desolate**. Through Ezekiel the Lord reaffirms this threat.
  - Once again, even if **Noah, Daniel, and Job** (v. 14) were living in the land, **they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters** but only themselves (v. 16).
- Verses 17-18 - Judgment: Sword
  - Should the Lord **bring a sword upon the land** (v. 17), even if the same three men lived in it, **they only shall be delivered themselves** (v. 18).
- Verses 19-20 - Judgment: Pestilence
  - As with the previous judgments, even **Noah, Daniel, and Job were in** the land, the Lord would not spare the land its judgment.
- Verses 21-23 - Summary: The Four Sore Judgments
  - The Lord promises to send these **four sore judgments upon Jerusalem**. These “national judgments” are given to the land because of its national sins. Yet the promise is that **therein** (in the land) **shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth**, and the nation would **see their way and their doings and be comforted** (v. 22).
  - I do not know of a remnant that remained in Jerusalem at the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. This does not appear to be prophetic of that destruction. However, in the last days there will be these judgments, and there will be the 144,000 (and others?). Certainly the two witnesses are within the city, and the location of the 144,000 is not revealed in the book of Revelation, until we see them **on the mount Sion** in Revelation 14:1, which is certainly in the city.
  - It seems to me that the best analysis of this prophecy is to apply it to the last days, not Ezekiel’s day.

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#### EZEKIEL 15:1-8 | SYMBOLIC JUDGMENTS

- Verses 1-5 - The symbol
  - The **word of the Lord** begins with a symbol, that of the **vine tree** (any kind of vine) or a **branch** (any kind of branch) found **among the trees**?
    - The comparison is a vine to a tree and a branch to a tree.
    - In both comparisons, of course, a tree is useful, but a vine or a branch is not.
    - While one can use the wood of a tree **to do any work** or to make a **pin...to hang any vessel** (v. 2), a vine or a branch is only useful to **cast into the fire for fuel**.
  - If the vine or branch **when it was whole** was **meet for no work** (v. 5), even more so when it is nothing but ashes.
- Verses 6-8 - The significance
  - The Lord promises to make Israel **fire for fuel** (v. 6) when He rises against them. The nation shall go from fire to fire and the land will become desolate.
  - In chapter 15, unlike 14, the reference appears to be the current situation, not eschatological (at which time the land is not made desolate, but made *Beulah*).

- Verses 1-5 - The ignominious birth of Jerusalem
  - The Lord wanted the people of Jerusalem to remember how far she had come.
  - The cities birth is said to have been **of the land of Canaan** with an Amorite father and a Hittite mother. Were we to know the origins of the city more specifically, no doubt this would be true.
  - We are introduced to the city in the Scripture when it is known as a Jebusite city (Jebusites being related to Amorites and Hittites). In her earliest days, it appears that Jerusalem was a scorn to others. We recall that the Israelites failed to see the city as worthy of conquering in the earliest day.