

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious**

#### **Part IX: The Sign Of Ezekiel's Baggage: The Futility Of Escaping God's Judgment (Ezekiel 12:1-16)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. People who are very rebellious toward God generally disrespect Him, believing they can avoid or escape having to be accountable to Him in some way or to some degree, what is an utterly foolish, futile idea.
- B. To clarify the great need for sinners to repent and confess their sin to avoid God's certain judgment, God had Ezekiel act out the sign of his baggage in Ezekiel 12:1-16. We view this event for insight and application:

##### **II. The Sign Of Ezekiel's Baggage: The Futility Of Escaping God's Judgment, Ezekiel 12:1-16.**

- A. Ezekiel's sign was prophetically acted out in full view of his fellow Hebrew exiles in Babylon, Ezek. 12:1-16:
  - 1. When God prepared to direct Ezekiel to act out an instructional sign, He prefaced the directive by asserting that Ezekiel dwelt among a rebellious people who had eyes to see but did not spiritually perceive and ears to hear but did not spiritually understand because of their rebelliousness toward the Lord, Ezekiel 12:1.
  - 2. Accordingly, God told Ezekiel essentially "to pack a rucksack with bare necessities" typical of what an exile would pack to take to a foreign country, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Ezekiel 12:1-7.
  - 3. He was to leave his house with this baggage during the day in full view of fellow Hebrews that they might see he was acting like an exile, intending to cause them to wonder what he was trying to teach, Ez. 12:1-3.
  - 4. Ezekiel was to repeat this effort at dusk, "acting as if he were escaping by crawling through a hole in the wall" in avoiding detection by his enemies, Ibid.; Ezekiel 12:4-5.
  - 5. While making this exodus at dusk, Ezekiel was to cover his face so he might not see the land, Ez. 12:6a,b. This was designed to get his Hebrew onlookers to ask what Ezekiel was trying to teach! (Ezek. 12:6c)
  - 6. Ezekiel did as the Lord commanded, bringing forth his baggage by day and then doing so again at night, digging through his wall to carry his baggage out through it, his face covered so as not to see the land, v. 7.
  - 7. The next morning, the Lord spoke to Ezekiel, noting that his spiritually rebellious Hebrew countrymen had asked him what he was doing, what he was seeking to teach through his sign, Ezekiel 12:8-9.
  - 8. Accordingly, in hope that his Hebrew onlookers would hearken to him, God had Ezekiel explain to his audience that he was a sign for them, that what he had acted out before them would occur to the prince in Jerusalem, king Zedekiah, and all the house of Israel who were still in Jerusalem. Ezekiel was thus a sign to his onlookers about what would be done unto their nation back in the land of Judah, Ezekiel 12:10-11.
  - 9. The prince of Jerusalem, king Zedekiah (who was not the rightful king like Jeconiah was, but his uncle, and hence just a prince in God's view), would lift his rucksack with bare necessities on his shoulder at dusk and go out of the city, obviously seeking to go undetected from his Babylonian enemies, Ezekiel 12:12a.
  - 10. His helpers would dig through the wall to bring Zedekiah out through it, and Zedekiah would cover his face to disguise himself so that he would not be able to see the countryside with his eyes, Ezekiel 12:12b.
  - 11. Nevertheless, God would figuratively spread His net over Zedekiah and capture him, bringing him to Babylon though he would not see the city, and there he would die, Ezekiel 12:13. Zedekiah's rebellious effort against God to try to escape His discipline at the hand of the Babylonians by covering his face to disguise himself at dusk as he tried to escape the city would be augmented in God's judgment: God would judge Zedekiah not to be able to see even Babylon when he ended up there as a prisoner in punishment for trying to escape God's judgment by covering his face so as not to see the land in his escape!
  - 12. All of the king's supporters would be scattered from him, and God would draw out a sword to pursue them and send them famine and disease to slay many of them, Ez. 12:14. They with Zedekiah would learn that God was the Sovereign Lord, that they could not escape His judgment via the Babylonians, Ezekiel. 12:15.
  - 13. Nevertheless, a few of them would escape alive to tell of their idolatrous sins among the nations where they would go, and they would realize that God was the Sovereign Lord, Ezekiel 12:16.
- B. Ezekiel's prophetic sign was fulfilled when Zedekiah and his men tried to escape Jerusalem: the Babylonians captured him near Jericho, his supporters scattered, and the Babylonians put out Zedekiah's eyes so that he never saw Babylon when he was taken and imprisoned there only eventually to die there, Jeremiah 52:1-11.

**Lesson: Ezekiel gave the sign of the baggage to teach that God's judgment was unavoidable, that men must repent.**

**Application: May we revere the Lord so as to repent of our sin, for otherwise, God's punishment is unavoidable!**