
EZEKIEL 12: 1 the LORD's word also came to me, saying,

The prophet proceeds, by a variety of types and parables, to convince those of the captivity that their brethren who were left behind to sustain the miseries of a siege and the insults of a conqueror, would be in a much worse condition than they who were already settled in a foreign land. In the beginning of this chapter he foretells the approaching captivity of Judah by action instead of words, Eze 12:1-7. He predicts particularly the flight, capture, captivity, and sufferings of Zedekiah and his followers, Eze 12:8-16, compared with Jer 52:11. He is to eat his food with trembling and signs of terror, as an emblem of the consternation of the Jews when surrounded by their enemies, Eze 12:17-20; and then he answers the objections and bywords of scoffers and infidels, who either disbelieved his threatening or supposed the accomplishment of them very distant, Eze 12:21-28. Josephus (Antiq. 11:10) tells us that Zedekiah thought the prophecy of Ezekiel in the thirteenth verse inconsistent with that of Jeremiah, (Jer 34:3), and resolved to believe neither. Both, however, were literally fulfilled; and the event convinced him that they were not irreconcilable. Thus, blinded by infidelity, sinners rush on to that destruction against which they are sufficiently warned.

EZEKIEL 12: 2 Son of man, you dwell in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see, and don't see, who have ears to hear, and don't hear; for they are a rebellious house.

Verse 2

Which have eyes to see, and see not - It is not want of grace that brings them to destruction. They have eyes to see, but they will not use them. No man is lost because he had not sufficient grace to save him, but because he abused that grace.

EZEKIEL 12: 3 Therefore, you son of man, prepare your stuff for moving, and move by day in their sight; and you shall move from your place to another place in their sight: it may be they will consider, though they are a rebellious house.

Verse 3

Prepare thee stuff for removing - Get carriages to transport thy goods to another place; signifying by this the captivity that was at hand.

EZEKIEL 12: 4 You shall bring out your stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for moving; and you shall go out yourself at even in their sight, as when men go out into exile.

EZEKIEL 12: 5 Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry your stuff out that way.

Verse 5

Dig thou through the wall - This refers to the manner in which Zedekiah and his family would escape from the city. They escaped by night through a breach in the wall. See Jer 39:2-4; and 2Kgs 25:4.

EZEKIEL 12: 6 In their sight you shall bear it on your shoulder, and carry it out in the dark; you shall cover your face, so that you don't see the land: for I have set you for a sign to the house of Israel.

Verse 6

Thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground - Referring to the blinding of Zedekiah: even the covering of the face might be intended to signify that in this way Zedekiah should be carried to Babylon on men's shoulders in some sort of palanquin, with a cloth tied over his eyes, because of the recent wounds made by extracting them. All the prophecies from this to the twentieth chapter are supposed to have been delivered in the sixth year of Zedekiah, five years before the taking of Jerusalem. How accurate the prediction! and how exactly fulfilled!

EZEKIEL 12: 7 I did so as I was commanded: I brought out my stuff by day, as stuff for removing, and in the even I dug through the wall with my hand; I brought it out in the dark, and bore it on my shoulder in their sight.

EZEKIEL 12: 8 In the morning, the LORD's word came to me, saying,

EZEKIEL 12: 9 Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, What are you doing?

EZEKIEL 12: 10 Say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: This burden concerns the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel among whom they are.

Verse 10

This burden - This prediction concerning the prince. By this I point out the capture, misery, and ruin of Zedekiah.

EZEKIEL 12: 11 Say, I am your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall go into exile, into captivity.

EZEKIEL 12: 12 The prince who is among them shall bear on his shoulder in the dark, and shall go out: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, because he shall not see the land with his eyes.

EZEKIEL 12: 13 My net also will I spread on him, and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

Verse 13

I will bring - him to Babylon - yet shall he not see it - Because Nebuchadnezzar caused him to have his eyes put out at Riblah. To Babylon he was carried in his blind state, and there he died. In saying, My net also will I spread upon him, there is probably a reference to an ancient manner of fighting. One, who was called the retiarius, had a small casting net, which if he could throw over his antagonist's head, he then dispatched him with his sword; if he missed his throw, he was obliged to run in order to get his net once more adjusted for another throw. In the mean time the other pursued him with all his speed to prevent this, and to dispatch him; hence he was called secutor: the first the netman, the second the pursuer.

EZEKIEL 12: 14 I will scatter toward every wind all who are around him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

EZEKIEL 12: 15 They shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall disperse them among the nations, and scatter them through the countries.

EZEKIEL 12: 16 But I will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the nations where they come; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

EZEKIEL 12: 17 Moreover the LORD's word came to me, saying,

EZEKIEL 12: 18 Son of man, eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and with fearfulness;

Verse 18

Eat thy bread with quaking - Assume the manner of a person who is every moment afraid of his life, who has nothing but a morsel of bread to eat, and a little water to drink. Thus signifying the siege, and the straits to which they should be reduced. See this explained, Eze 12:19 (note).

EZEKIEL 12: 19 and tell the people of the land, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with fearfulness, and drink their water in dismay, that her land may be desolate, and all that is therein, because of the violence of all those who dwell therein.

EZEKIEL 12: 20 The cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be a desolation; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

EZEKIEL 12: 21 the LORD's word came to me, saying,

EZEKIEL 12: 22 Son of man, what is this proverb that you have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision fails?

Verse 22

The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? - These are the words of the infidels and scoffers, who, because vengeance was not speedily executed on an evil work, set their heart to do iniquity.

"These predictions either will not come in our days, or will wholly fail; why then should we disquiet ourselves about them?" Strange, that the very means used by the most gracious God to bring sinners to repentance, should be made by them the very instruments of their own destruction! See 2Pet 3:4.

EZEKIEL 12: 23 Tell them therefore, Thus says the Lord GOD: I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but tell them, The days are at hand, and the fulfilment of every vision.

Verse 23

The days are at hand - Far from failing or being prolonged, time is posting on, and the destruction threatened is at the door.

EZEKIEL 12: 24 For there shall be no more any false vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.

EZEKIEL 12: 25 For I am the LORD; I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall be performed; it shall be no more deferred: for in your days, rebellious house, will I speak the word, and will perform it, says the Lord GOD.

EZEKIEL 12: 26 Again the LORD's word came to me, saying,

Verse 26

In your days - will I say the word, and will perform it - Even these mockers shall live to see and feel this desolation. This is more particularly intimated in the following verses.

EZEKIEL 12: 27 Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he sees is for many day to come, and he prophesies of times that are far off.

EZEKIEL 12: 28 Therefore tell them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of my words shall be deferred any more, but the word which I shall speak shall be performed, says the Lord GOD.

Verse 28

There shall none of my words be prolonged any more - He had waited to be gracious; they abused his mercy; and at last the protracted wrath rushed upon them with irresistible force.