

Dr. Leslie Allen, Ezekiel, Lecture 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem, Message about Prophecy, Ezekiel 12:1-14:11

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This is Dr. Leslie Allen and his teaching on the book of Ezekiel. This is session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem, Message about Prophecy, Pre-fall and Post-fall. Ezekiel 12:1-14:11.

We have come now in our lectures to chapter 12 and I remind you that we are in the second part of the book of Ezekiel and that second part began in chapter 8 with a report of visions begun with the historical dating.

And that, of course, was the same pattern that we found at the beginning of the book. And the parallel continues because in the first part of the book, we went on to symbolic actions, and so we are going to do so now. The parallelism continues this parallel structuring.

In 12:1-20, we have symbolic actions that Ezekiel is told to do just as he was in the first part of the book. There are two symbolic actions: the first is in verses 1-16, and the second is in verses 17-20. Each one is prefaced with a notice about receiving a message, which separates the two parts.

Verse 1, the word of the Lord came to me. Verse 17, the word of the Lord came to me. And so, the two symbolic actions are differentiated in that way with their commentary.

Like the earlier symbolic actions, they help predict the future. And there are other ways. We said actions speak louder than words.

And so here too we find this show and tell attitude that there is first a symbolic action and then the explanation of it. And so, they help to predict disaster for these exiles of 597 and they destroy the false hopes that these prisoners of war had. Those prisoners of war kept their spirits up.

They encouraged themselves it won't last long. The tides going to turn before very long and we'll be going back once again into the land. And as we've said before, Ezekiel has to keep on crying no, no, no in a variety of ways.

One of those ways is through symbolic actions. Jeremiah, you may remember, wrote a letter to those 597 exiles in chapter 29 of his book and told them you expect to

come back soon, but it's not going to happen. He gave the round figure of 70 years, and that round figure was pretty spot on.

It was 538 before the first party of exiles started coming back to Judah. And so, Ezekiel has a very similar message. It isn't going to happen soon, but he also says that it will eventually happen, just as Jeremiah did.

1 to 16, the account of the first symbolic action falls into the three typical subsections. God's directions to Ezekiel to perform it in 2 to 6, Ezekiel's performance in verse 7, and the interpretation to pass on to the prisoners of war on the next day in verses 8 to 16. And so, the whole communication spreads over two days in this case.

Verses 2 and 3 are an introduction to the symbolism. Mortal, you are living in the midst of a rebellious house. Oh, we've had that often before, haven't we? And here it is again, this characteristic description, the rebellious community of these exiles.

And here we're told they have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house. And this description is one that we've seen before. If we know our prophets, we've read it before.

Isaiah, in his call to become a prophet, was told something very similar. In verse 9 of Isaiah 6, God said, go and say to this people, keep listening but do not comprehend, keep looking but do not understand. And Isaiah is told, make the mind of these people dull and stop their ears and shut their eyes so that they may not look with their eyes and listen with their ears.

In that case, God through Isaiah was going to expose their antipathy to God by their very rejection of Isaiah's message, which would put even more blame on the exiles and their even more liability to punishment from God. But more directly, Ezekiel perhaps knew of Isaiah 6, and I don't know why he shouldn't, but more directly, this is a reminiscence of a verse in Jeremiah, which Ezekiel may well have heard Jeremiah saying back in pre-exilic days. Jeremiah 5 and verse 21, Jeremiah is told to say, hear this, oh foolish and senseless people who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear.

And this is what's being picked up and what's being enlarged, in fact, here in this description, with this qualification that very much belongs to Ezekiel, they are a rebellious house. And you're moving on to, therefore, in verse 3, and there's a little reminiscence, a little side glance at the format of an oracle of judgment, which begins with accusation, and the accusation comes in the rebellious house, and then it moves on to judgment, the punishment that's to come. And very often, there's a telltale sign of the linking between the two, the word, therefore, the logical progression from accusation to punishment.

And this is what we've got even with the symbolic action. So, the symbolic action is going to indicate punishment after the accusation. They are a rebellious house; they conduct this symbolic action.

And it's quite a complicated one. Ezekiel is to pretend he's back in Jerusalem, and he's to pretend that he's been told he's got to prepare for exile to go to Babylon. And this of course, the purpose of this symbolic action is to forecast 587 and that general deportation of the people then.

But it must have filled Ezekiel with a sense of déjà vu, because this was the very sort of thing he'd done in 597 a few years before. Five years, but before, he'd known that long trek on the road to exile and the preparations. What was he going to take with him? What should he take? Sorting through his belongings.

Not much, enough to put in a sack, not too heavy to carry on my back. And so, he's to reenact this, but now with 587 in mind and the exile following 587. And so, prepare for yourself in exile's baggage and go into exile by day in their sight.

People would be looking on; essentially, there's to be an audience. And these, of course, are the 597 exiles away in Babylonia. You should go like an exile from your place to another place in their sight.

Perhaps, this is a wistful thought on God's part, it's said with a sigh, perhaps they will understand though they are a rebellious house. The truth is told them, whether it's going to sink in, we don't know. And God fears not, but it might, it might.

We'll see how it goes. And so, what seems to be happening, it's quite complicated that the first part of the symbolic action happens within Ezekiel's home as an exile away in Babylon. And he's to sort through his things, he's to have his exile sack, he's to sort through what sort of things would I take into exile.

And he's thinking about what he took last time, and perhaps it's the same things he's putting back into the sack again. Perhaps it's the same sack that he carried on that long journey to Babylon. And he sorts it out.

He was to put that bag outside the door and leave it there. And the people would say, what's he doing? What's this sack? Oh, he's gone indoors again, let's have a look. And they poked in the sack, what is this? What's this? Oh, he's got his choice possessions.

Yeah, what's he doing there? They could get stolen, and he hopes they don't get stolen. And so, he's got the attention; what's the sack doing outside Ezekiel's house in exile? He's also going to dig through the wall.

Another part of the exile is to dig through the wall. And what on earth does this mean? This is going to be explained. It's another part of the symbolic action.

This makes a hole in the wall. In Babylonia, houses were made of adobe brick, and you could damage them and make openings in them quite easily. But this is another part of the symbolic action, this hole in the wall that he's got to make.

And what on earth does it mean? Well, we shall find out eventually. But he's made a hole enough to carry out his sack through it and leave it outside. But then, after that, at twilight in the evening, he's to go out and pick up his sack with his sack on his back and set off away from where his audience is.

And as he goes, he's got to cover his face, and he can't bear to look one last lingering look at his home with all his memories. So, it is very much a sort of an exilic reaction of somebody who's going to exile. You can't bear to look.

I remember when I've left home and gone off in a taxi, I won't look round at the old house. It's gone. It's gone.

I've got to look forward. I've got to look forward. And so, close your eyes.

Don't look at the old house. And in verse six, he's told you're assigned to the house of Israel. This is something that's relevant for the future exile in 587.

And so that was what he did. That was what he did. And he digs through the hole and carries off his sack that he's prepared.

And then comes the interpretation. The next morning, he crept back home and went to bed. And in the morning, the word of the Lord came to me in verse eight.

And this is the interpretation. And there's one key element that's given in the interpretation. And we haven't heard anything about this before.

The people in Jerusalem are going to be exiled, including the king. It was to be so, so radical, this exile. Even the king would be exiled.

And this is the promise for the future. This is Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel in it.

So even the king, Zedekiah, is going to be deported. And this is a sign. Verse 11.

Say, I am assigned for you as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity. And so, it's the people still back in Jerusalem who are going to be exiled, actually in 597.

And he's coming back to the prince again, including him. He's going to be carrying his sack, and off he's going to go. And then we've got a moot point in the middle of verse 11.

The New RSV says he shall dig through the wall and carry it through. He shall cover his face so that he may not see the land with his eyes. Now it's that word he.

And there's a bit of uncertainty because in the margin of the New RSV at the bottom, it says that two of the ancient versions, there are good witnesses to that. But the Hebrew text actually says they, they. Not a reference to Zedekiah, but a reference to the exiles generally.

And that Hebrew reading is kept in the NIV, and, I think, with good justification. Now, we've moved on to speak generally of the exiles. No, it's not speaking of the exile.

This is the thing. What's this digging through the wall? This digging through the wall. It must refer to the Babylonian army who were besieging Jerusalem.

And they managed to bash down that wall surrounding Jerusalem and to get through. And so, it's that final blow in the siege of Jerusalem where Jerusalem has to fall. And so, it's the work of these Babylonian soldiers who've been besieging Jerusalem for, what, say 18 months.

But now at last they can bash through that wall and get through. And get the gates open and get all their army in. And so that seems to be what's happening there.

And then in verse 13, I will spread my net over the king and he should be caught in my snare. Well, actually, Jeremiah, according to 2 Kings, Jeremiah, as the Babylonians were coming through on the north side of the city, he crept out with his entourage through a gate in the south side of the city and made his way to the Jordan, trying to get over to the Jordan to safety. But he was spotted or else a spy told the Babylonian troops and the army came after him and caught him and caught him in their snare as if they were hunters.

Well, that's what King says. And that's the human situation. But here it's God doing it.

I will spread my net over him. He should be caught in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon. I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers, and all his troops.

And I will unsheath the sword behind them because God is the agent. God is the real agent behind these Babylonian troops.

And this is his work, really. And so that's the emphasis there. And then they shall know that I am the Lord.

They'll realize, at last, wake up. At last, their eyes will see, and their ears will hear. And probably, it's only that rude awakening taking place when it actually happens.

Then they will know. But 17, I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence. Remember that trio that we've had before? Here it comes again, associated with 587.

These material agents of God--sword, famine, and pestilence. So that they may tell of all their abominations among the nations where they go, then they shall know that I am the Lord.

And the exiles will come and they will realize it's been justified. They will realize it's the punishment from God. And they will speak of all the accusations that they deserve.

And those abominations, religious sins, moral sins, social sins. That brought them to this sad state. Then in verse 17, we come to the second symbolic action.

It's associated with the siege of Jerusalem, just as the first one was. That was the end of the siege.

But here, this seems to be during the siege. People are besieged, and they've got enough to eat. And they're sitting down for their next meal.

But they're seized with fear. And they know in their hearts that the end is going to come. Eventually, those Babylonian troops outside the walls will break through.

And so, they're worried even as they eat their meal. And Ezekiel is to invite people into his home. And he's to be sitting at his table.

And he's to be eating his food. But his hand is going to be trembling like that. And he's going to pick up his drink.

And he's going to spill it. And it can't reach his mouth. And he's going to be so scared.

This is a picture of the anxiety that's going to grip the people in Jerusalem, knowing what their fate is going to be sooner or later. They're for the chop.

And they will be caught. And Jerusalem will fall. And they will go into exile.

And so, this is a very vivid way. This sort of physical way of representing this psychological fear. That must be gripping the exiles as they.

The next batch of exiles as they await their destruction and deportation. In verse 20. Well, if you look at verse 16.

We had that recognition formula at the end. They shall know. Those are the coming exiles.

They shall know that I am the Lord. But in verse 21. No, in verse 20 at the end.

And you shall know that I am the Lord. And at this point. This is speaking of the 597 prisoners of war who were grouped around Ezekiel and seeing this second symbolic action. That is when this happens.

When people came, they said how scared we were as we were anticipating the fall of Jerusalem and exile. I said, oh yes.

Ezekiel told us about that. And then they realize. And the experience that they're told.

I will actually convince them at long last. That Ezekiel had been right. And they'd been wrong in their false hopes.

Of going back to the promised land pretty soon. When we were going through the first part of the book. We found that visions and symbolic actions.

Were followed by messages. And so it is in the second half of the book. And we come in verse 21.

To the first of these. A series of messages that we should be reading. Throughout this second part.

And in fact. Up to chapter 19. A lot of messages.

As the third element of this, this is a major division of the book. And so here we are in verse 21.

And it's got its own introductory formula of the reception of the message. The word of the Lord came to me.

And it says. Mortal, what is this proverb of yours about the land of Israel?

Which says the days are prolonged. And every vision comes to nothing. I've said before.

There's an ambiguity. When you have second person pronouns. And really you need to check up with the Hebrew text.

Or somebody who knows it. That word is yours. What is this proverb of yours?

It's not addressed to Ezekiel. It's not singular. It's plural.

And so, it's speaking about the prisoners of war. And their general reaction. It's speaking to the general community of exiles.

And what they were saying. It was casting doubt upon Ezekiel's prophesying.

And so here is God sort of backing up. His prophet, in fact, at this point. And they're saying.

Well, you keep on telling us. About this coming destruction of Jerusalem. And this exile of another batch from Judah.

But it hasn't happened yet. Has it? And we don't think it's going to happen. We don't.

Because days are going by, and it hasn't happened yet. So, when's it going to happen Ezekiel? I don't think it will.

Don't think it will. And so, Ezekiel has just told them. It's just told in God's name to contradict them.

And say that's not true. That's not true. Tell them, therefore.

Thus says the Lord God. There's that messenger formula. He's speaking as God's messenger.

I will put an end to this proverb. And they shall use it no more as a proverb in Israel. But say to them the days are near.

And the fulfillment of every vision. There shall no longer be any false vision. Or flattering divination within the house of Israel.

Now, that mention of other visions and prophecies. This is looking forward, in fact, to chapter 13 because we're going to have a series of messages that are all about prophecy.

And in fact this is about prophecy. Our 1221 following is about prophecy. And this is the first message about prophecy.

But the later ones are going to be concerned with false prophets. And there was always the embarrassment that classical prophets had. That alongside them were other prophets who had quite a different message. And Ezekiel had to face that as Jeremiah did.

And Isaiah did. But the days are near. And the fulfillment of every vision.

And so, there's this strong language 25. I, the Lord, will speak the word that I speak. And it shall be fulfilled.

It will no longer be delayed. In your days' rebellious house. I will speak the word and fulfill it says the Lord.

So, in God's name a contradiction. It's going to happen. And then they changed their tune a bit.

Just a bit. He said well, you've got a point, Ezekiel. That is your accusation, and we suspect that you're right.

And there's a lot wrong with Jerusalem and with Judah. And we and they deserve do deserve punishment. But we don't think it's going to happen for quite a while.

God's going to take his time over it. And perhaps he'll give us another chance and so on. So we don't accept that it's going to happen anytime soon.

And so, this is the next criticism that comes from the people. The word of the Lord came to me. And the criticism of the people is radiated through God's message.

We're not told that Ezekiel hears the exile saying this. But God tells him what the exiles are saying. This is part of that radical theocentricity that it's all God centered.

God reveals what they're saying here. The house of Israel is saying that the vision that he sees is for many years ahead. He prophesies for distant times.

We can forget about it now like somebody who's a heavy smoker. And he's told, oh, you'll die of cancer.

I'll be many years time yet. I've got many years yet to live. And I'll keep on smoking my cigarettes.

And there's this delay putting things off. And so, there's just a reaffirmation. None of my words will be delayed any longer.

But the word that I speak will be fulfilled, says the Lord God. And they all had to wait until 587.

But eventually it did come true. And so, Ezekiel had to deal with opposition from the public. As he gave this messages from the exiles in general.

But he had also to face opposition from other prophets. And that letter that Jeremiah sent. And the narrative that goes with it.

It implies that there were other prophets who were saying that the exile wouldn't last long and that we'd soon be going home.

And Jeremiah has to nip that in the bud. And, say, 70 long years. Three generations.

A long time yet. Anyway, Ezekiel met these prophets. Prophets of Israel.

Prophets of Israel. 13 and verse 2. Mortal prophesy against the prophets of Israel. They're accepted as genuine prophets by the exilic community.

And they're prophesying. Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination. Hear the word of the Lord.

Thus says the Lord God. Well, no. That thus says the Lord God is, in fact, the beginning of this message to Ezekiel.

But "hear the word of the Lord" is the very thing that the false prophets were saying. And that was one of the formulas that Ezekiel would use.

And the genuine prophets would use. And so, there's this ambiguity. And so, it's pretty obvious.

They speak with great sincerity. And with great conviction. And they believe what they're saying.

But God's indictment is. And the reality is. They prophesy out of their own imagination.

They don't realize it. But they're making this up in fact. And putting it forth as the truth.

Believing it is the truth. But it isn't really. You're the one who gives the truth.

And so, in verse 3. Thus says the Lord God. Here's a message for them. Alas for the senseless prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing.

So there again. It's all in their minds. And nothing more than that.

It's not genuine prophesying at all. And it says in verse 4. Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins. And this is a little metaphor.

That's used here just in passing. But it's a contrast of the reality of the situation. And somebody trying to make the best of a bad job.

They're ruins. And the jackals come nosing around. Is there any food here? Is there any food there? No, the people have gone.

And the food has gone. And so they're disappointed—disappointed hopes.

And so, it's saying that they're going to have disappointed hopes. These prophets like jackals among ruins. And trying to find a bit of food there.

Among the devastation. But there's nothing there, really. And then speaking to those prophets directly in verse 5. If you've not gone up into the breaches. Or repaired a wall for the house of Israel. So, it might stand in battle on the day of the Lord.

And this is a metaphor. That occurs two other times in the Old Testament. And here it applies.

It's a metaphor referring to intercession. Remember, we said last time. One of the tasks of the prophets was to intercede for the people of God.

They hear this terrible talk of punishment. Give them another chance, God. Oh no.

Please spare them a bit longer. And intercession played a part in the work of the classical prophets. But it didn't hear.

There was no intercession to avert the doom that was coming. They had no message of doom. They only had a message of peace.

They were optimistic prophets. And they said the obligation is on God. And God's going to bring peace.

And he's going to show us his love in their theology. The obligation rested upon God. There's never any mention of obligation resting on the people of God.

And whereas for the prophets generally there was this double obligation, and that was what the covenant tradition stood for. The prophets knew nothing about this human obligation.

And so that brand of them is wrong from the start. And here is this word of intercession. Going up into the breaches.

Repairing a wall for the people of God. And there are two passages. One is in Psalm 106 and verse 23.

And it's talking about Moses. Moses, after the tragedy of worshipping the golden calf, Remember? And God said, I'm going to destroy them.

I'm going to destroy them. I'm going to make a new people out of you, as a new Abraham.

And God... Moses intercedes. And the way it's described in Psalm 106 and verse 23 is like this. Therefore, he said he would destroy them.

Had not Moses his chosen one stood in the breach before him. This intermediator. This mediator between God and the people.

To turn away his wrath from destroying them. And so that was the message there. And in 34 and verse... No, that's going to be another reference.

Okay. We'll leave it there. And so there isn't this intercession between God and the people of God.

Saying please let them off. Instead, they envisioned falsehood in lying divination. They say says the Lord.

Which is often the formula at the end of prophetic messages. Says the Lord when the Lord has not sent them. And yet they wait for the fulfillment of their word.

It's all in their heads and they don't know it. They don't know it. They think it's right.

But they've got to be criticized and have it shown they're wrong. And so there it is. In verse 8 there's going to be punishment for these prophets.

My hand will be against them. Verse 9. They shall not be in the council of my people nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel.

Nor shall they enter the land of Israel. They're never going to go back. And in fact, they're going to be excommunicated from the people of God.

And they won't live to go back, in fact. It's strange, isn't it? It's suddenly we've got a mention of these. Of return to the land.

We never do. In the pre-587 messages. It's just not complicated.

It's just not contemplated. And there's just mention of the end. And this is the end.

You leave the land. You go to exile. Period.

That's that. And so there seems to be an indication here about not entering the land of Israel.

That only comes into Ezekiel's messages after 587. And so, one has the impression that this particular message in 13 in the first part of chapter 13.

It belongs to the later messages. After the fall of Jerusalem. And in fact.

This whole section of prophecy. Wrong prophecy. It's thematic.

And so, you have pre-587 messages. And post-587 messages mixed in here. And there are these clues.

Another clue. Is that all the way through? Reading through.

There's a mention of my people. My people. And this again.

It is only something that Ezekiel says after 587. But all the way through. It's my people.

The prophets are the enemies of my real people. They're misleading them. And so my people in verse 9. My people in verse 10.

On you go. And then in the next oracle. My people in verse 18.

My people in verse 19. Twice there. My people in verse 21.

My people in verse 23. And so, this is an indication too. That of God's loving concern.

He is going to bring these people back to the land, and these false prophets will be excluded. This is post-587.

And these false prophets are abounding. Saying peace when there's no peace in verse 10. There's Shalom.

What we call Shalom prophets. The word for peace is Shalom. And Jeremiah had to encounter those, too.

Shalom prophets. Optimistic prophets. Who spoke always of obligation on God's side.

And never of obligation on the part of the people of God. In this case, these prophets. But then you have another metaphor.

Quite a developed metaphor. In verse 10 onwards. About a wall.

And this is a stone wall in the metaphor. And it's been roughly built.

With no mortar. And it looks fine because of some white plaster.

Thick white plaster has been put all over it. And you think there's a good solid wall. But then the storms come.

And the winds come. And down falls the wall. And there we are.

It's exposed for what it is. And that's the attitude of these false prophets. And they talk of peace.

And they're talking about a wall that isn't solid. A wall that's quite capable of being destroyed very easily. And they smear the whitewash on it, just smearing the whitewash. This white plaster. But it's not really solid.

And I'm going to break down that wall. And those false prophets will perish like the wall in verse 14.

And then you shall know that I am the Lord. And so the wall is no longer there, nor are those who smeared it. In verse 15.

The prophets of Israel. Who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for it. And there was no peace for it.

Well, that was against male prophets. That first article in 13. And but the second article is against female prophets.

And so, there's a distinction of gender here. And in verse 17. There are these women who are prophesying.

But they don't prophesy in public. They use their prophesying in private. And they have clients come to their homes.

And they charge a fee. They charge a big fee. And really, they're not ordinary prophets.

They are sort of psychic. And they cast spells. And do all sorts of weird and wonderful things.

And but they again, the daughters of your people in verse 17. They are prophesy out of their own imagination. And one thing they did in verse 18.

Linked with their spells that they were casting for their clients. They sew bands on all wrists. And make veils for the heads of persons of every height.

Different size of veils to fit the head. And we're not told how this worked. But this is one.

This was part of their spells that they would cast. And they're called hunters because they would if you went to these women.

And said you didn't like somebody. Well, for a fee, these women would curse the people you didn't like. And so, they were like hunters.

Hunting for human lives. Will you hunt down lives among my people? And maintain your own lives.

And there it was. They were doing it for money. And doing it for food.

Verse 19. You profane me among my people. They were speaking in God's name.

Like the other prophets, you profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley.

And for pieces of bread, putting to death persons who should not die. And they were keeping alive persons who should not live.

By your lies to my people who listen to lies. So, there were these magic spells. And there were blessings.

And there were curses. But they were all wrong. And they didn't relate to the lives of the people at all.

And they could be very effective. And people would die. But they were the wrong people dying.

And people would be blessed. And they should have been cursed. That was the way that their lives pointed.

And so, they too. They, too, are going to be dealt with by God. Verse 23.

I will save my people from your hand. Verses 11. 1 to 11 of chapter 14 is the closing section.

Once again, it's like chapter 8. Elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. These are some of the 597 exiles who have a position of responsibility in that labor camp. They want God to give them a favorable prophecy.

But there's a flaw. There's a flaw because they're two-minded people.

And they hedge their bets. And God knows it. They also practice the worship of Babylonian gods.

And so, they're good, Yahweh. So, they worship Yahweh. They pray to Yahweh.

And they listen to Ezekiel. On the other hand, they hedge their bets. And they have this two-mindedness in their hearts.

And so, although they come as people who are honoring God. They're trying to serve two masters. And that isn't going to work as we know.

And so, God can see into their hearts. And he is denouncing them. These men have taken their idols into their hearts.

Yet they come to the prophet wanting a favorable message from God. Well, that's not going to happen. And there's this call for repentance, in fact.

Verse 6. Thus says the Lord of God. Repent and turn away from your idols. Turn away your faces from your abominations.

Be single-minded in your faith and worship only me. This is the message there. And God has no word otherwise.

But then, in verse 9. We have a prophecy from a prophet. There's envisioning a situation where these men go to a prophet. And he says well, they are Yahweh's.

I think I can ask God to give a message for them. And the prophet doesn't take into account the people. They have two sides to their religious life.

And so, there's blame put on those prophets in verse 9. And so, there's this repudiation of the prophet acting improperly. And also, worshippers who come to Ezekiel. And there's this other side to their lives that Ezekiel doesn't know about.

But God certainly does. If you notice at the end of verse 11. Then they shall be my people.

If the house of Israel is spared such prophets as these. And such two-minded people as these. Then the house of Israel may no longer go astray from me.

Nor defile themselves any more with their transgressions. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And so, this, too, seems to be post-587 because of that covenant promise. It's one, for instance, that we've got in Ezekiel 37 and verse 23.

Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God. This is definitely in a post 587 message. And so, we've moved on.

And we're in the context of the more general group of exiles after 587. And we've got this thematic link. A group of collection of messages about prophets and prophecy.

But some of them are pre-587. And some of them are post-587. And so overall, there's this question of prophecy.

And the need to discern. And the people need to discern between good and true prophets. And so much space is given to putting together this issue of prophecy.

And the claims are being made. And some are right, and some are wrong. But there must be that discernment.

Ezekiel has to be a part as a true prophet. And criticizing these false prophets. Next time our section will be 14:12 down to the end of chapter 16.

This is Dr. Leslie Allen and his teaching on the book of Ezekiel. This is session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem, Message about Prophecy, Pre-fall and Post-fall. Ezekiel 12:1-14:11.