

Dr. Leslie Allen, Daniel, Session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem (Ezek 12:1-14:11) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Allen, Ezekiel, Session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem (Ezek 12:1-14:11), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Leslie Allen's lecture focuses on Ezekiel 12:1-14:11, examining symbolic actions and messages related to the exile from Jerusalem, both before and after the city's fall. **The lecture analyzes Ezekiel's reenactments** intended to demonstrate the coming exile, including packing for a journey and breaking through a wall, which represent the Babylonian army breaching Jerusalem's walls. **Allen highlights the contrast between Ezekiel's prophecies** and the false hopes of the exiles, as well as the opposition from other prophets. **The messages within Ezekiel** challenge the exiles' doubts and address the issue of false prophecy, distinguishing between genuine and insincere prophets, both male and female, who mislead the people for personal gain. **Ultimately, the lecture underscores the importance of discerning true prophecy** amidst conflicting claims, emphasizing God's concern for his people and his promise of restoration after the exile.

2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Allen, Ezekiel, Session 6 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Ezekiel).



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3. Briefing Document: Allen, Ezekiel, Session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem (Ezek 12:1-14:11)

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Leslie Allen's lecture on Ezekiel 12:1-14:11, focusing on signs of exile, messages about prophecy, and the pre- and post-fall of Jerusalem contexts:

Briefing Document: Ezekiel 12:1-14:11

Main Themes:

- **Symbolic Actions and Prophecy:** Ezekiel uses symbolic actions, mirroring the structure of the first part of the book, to predict the future, specifically the disaster awaiting the exiles and to counter their false hopes of a quick return to Jerusalem. These actions are followed by interpretations, emphasizing the "show and tell" aspect.
- **The Impending Exile and Fall of Jerusalem (587 BC):** The lecture focuses on how Ezekiel's prophecies and symbolic acts pointed toward the destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent exile of its inhabitants, including King Zedekiah. The lecture highlights the psychological impact of this impending doom on the people of Jerusalem.
- **False Prophecy vs. True Prophecy:** A significant portion of the lecture addresses the conflict between Ezekiel's message and that of other, more optimistic prophets. Allen emphasizes how Ezekiel challenges those who prophesy "out of their own imagination" (Ezekiel 13:2) rather than receiving divine messages. This includes both male and female prophets, the latter being portrayed as engaging in private, and often financially motivated, practices of spell-casting and cursing.
- **The Rebellious House of Israel:** The exiles are repeatedly described as a "rebellious house," echoing similar descriptions in Isaiah and Jeremiah. This rebellion is characterized by their inability to see or hear God's message, leading to their judgment.
- **Discernment and the Role of the Prophet:** The lecture underscores the importance of discernment in distinguishing between true and false prophets. Ezekiel, as a true prophet, criticizes the false prophets and calls for repentance.

- **Pre- and Post-Fall Contexts:** Allen emphasizes the importance of discerning whether specific messages within Ezekiel are delivered before or after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC. Clues such as references to "my people" and the possibility of return to the land, tend to point towards a post-587 setting.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Parallel Structure:** The book of Ezekiel mirrors its first and second halves using visions and symbolic actions.
- "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."
- **Symbolic Actions and their Significance:**
Packing for Exile: Ezekiel's act of packing exile baggage and digging through a wall foreshadows the exile of the people of Jerusalem, including King Zedekiah, and the breaching of the city walls by the Babylonian army.
- "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... the purpose of this symbolic action is to forecast 587 and that general deportation of the people then."
- **Trembling While Eating:** This symbolizes the anxiety and fear that will grip the people of Jerusalem during the siege.
- "Ezekiel is to invite people into his home... And he's to be eating his food. But his hand is going to be trembling like that... This is a picture of the anxiety that's going to grip the people in Jerusalem."
- **The 597 Exiles and False Hope:** The exiles of 597 held onto the hope of a swift return, which Ezekiel vehemently opposed. He tried to convince them of their false hopes.
- **Opposition to Ezekiel's Prophecy:** The exiles doubted Ezekiel's prophecies, believing the destruction was far off or wouldn't happen at all. God then affirms Ezekiel by saying that his words would come to pass without delay.
- "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 will put an end to this proverb... the days are near."
- **Critique of False Prophets:** They prophesy "out of their own imagination" and lack genuine divine inspiration. They are compared to jackals among ruins.

- "Mortal prophesy against the prophets of Israel. They're accepted as genuine prophets by the exilic community... Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination. Hear the word of the Lord."
- They offer a message of "peace when there is no peace" (Shalom prophets). They neglect the obligations of the people of God, focusing solely on God's obligation to them.
- "These false prophets are abounding. Saying peace when there's no peace in verse 10. There's Shalom."
- Female prophets are criticized for practicing divination for profit, using spells, curses, and charms.
- "There are these women who are prophesying...They use their prophesying in private... And they charge a fee... They sew bands on all wrists. And make veils for the heads of persons of every height."
- **Idolatry and Two-Mindedness:** Even among the exiles, some elders practiced idolatry alongside their worship of Yahweh, demonstrating a lack of single-minded devotion.
- "Elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me... These men have taken their idols into their hearts. Yet they come to the prophet wanting a favorable message from God."
- **Post-587 Themes:** The lecture identifies themes like the promise of return to the land, God's specific concern for "my people," and covenant renewal as indicators of messages delivered after the fall of Jerusalem.

Quotes:

- "Mortal, you are living in the midst of a rebellious house... they have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house."
- "I, the Lord, will speak the word that I speak. And it shall be fulfilled. It will no longer be delayed."
- "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."
- "I will save my people from your hand."

Implications:

- This section of Ezekiel serves as a powerful warning against false hope and the dangers of ignoring God's message.
- It highlights the importance of discernment and the need to test the claims of prophets.
- It emphasizes God's sovereignty and his commitment to fulfilling his word, even in the face of opposition and disbelief.
- The interweaving of pre-and post-fall messages underscores the continued relevance of Ezekiel's message to the exiles, both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem.

4. Study Guide: Allen, Ezekiel, Session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem (Ezek 12:1-14:11)

Ezekiel: Signs, Exile, and Prophecy (Ezekiel 12-14)

Study Guide

I. Overview of Ezekiel 12:1-14:11

This section of Ezekiel focuses on God's messages to the exiles in Babylon before and after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE. It includes symbolic actions performed by Ezekiel to demonstrate the impending exile, messages addressing the exiles' false hopes and disbelief, and condemnations of false prophets leading the people astray. The key themes are the inevitability of judgment, the importance of heeding God's true prophets, and the eventual restoration of a purified Israel.

II. Key Sections and Themes

- **Ezekiel 12:1-16: Symbolic Action 1 (The Exile's Baggage):** Ezekiel acts out the preparations for exile, demonstrating the coming deportation from Jerusalem, including King Zedekiah. This is a sign to the exiles of 597 about the fate of those still in Jerusalem.
- **Ezekiel 12:17-20: Symbolic Action 2 (Trembling While Eating):** Ezekiel demonstrates the anxiety and fear that will grip the people of Jerusalem during the siege, anticipating their eventual capture and exile.
- **Ezekiel 12:21-28: The Proverb and Delayed Visions:** God addresses the exiles' proverb that "the days are prolonged, and every vision comes to nothing," affirming that judgment is imminent and that Ezekiel's prophecies will come to pass without delay.
- **Ezekiel 13:1-16: Condemnation of False Male Prophets:** Ezekiel denounces the false prophets who prophesy out of their own imagination, offering false assurances of peace and failing to intercede for the people.
- **Ezekiel 13:17-23: Condemnation of False Female Prophets:** Ezekiel condemns the female prophets who practice magic and cast spells for personal gain, misleading the people and perverting justice.
- **Ezekiel 14:1-11: The Elders' Hypocrisy and the Prophet's Accountability:** God confronts the elders who come to Ezekiel seeking guidance while harboring idols in their hearts. The passage highlights the importance of single-minded devotion

to God and condemns prophets who offer favorable messages to those with divided loyalties.

III. Detailed Breakdown of Key Concepts

- **Symbolic Actions:** Understand the significance of Ezekiel's performance of symbolic acts and their intended message to the exiles. Note how these actions communicated God's message more vividly than words alone.
- **Rebellious House:** Recognize the repeated description of the exiles and the people of Jerusalem as a "rebellious house," emphasizing their stubborn refusal to heed God's warnings.
- **False Prophecy:** Differentiate between true and false prophecy, understanding that false prophets prophesied out of their own imagination and offered messages of peace when there was no peace.
- **The Fall of Jerusalem (587 BCE):** Understand the historical context of the fall of Jerusalem and its significance as a pivotal event in Ezekiel's ministry.
- **Pre- and Post-Fall Messages:** Distinguish between the messages delivered before and after the fall of Jerusalem, noting the shift in focus from impending judgment to eventual restoration and the identification of "my people" in post-fall messages.
- **The Covenant:** Understand the covenant tradition and the dual obligations of God and the people of God.
- **Idolatry:** Recognize the pervasive problem of idolatry among the exiles and its impact on their relationship with God.
- **Restoration:** Understand the concept of restoration, where God promises to return the people to the land.
- **Shalom Prophets:** Understand that "Shalom" means "peace" and that shalom prophets spoke of obligations only on God's side and not on the part of the people of God.

IV. Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What two symbolic actions did Ezekiel perform in chapter 12 and what did each represent?
2. How does Ezekiel characterize the exiles and people of Jerusalem and why?

3. What proverb were the exiles using, and how did God respond to it through Ezekiel?
4. According to Ezekiel, what are some characteristics of false prophets?
5. What is significant about the phrase "my people" in the later chapters of Ezekiel?
6. What is Ezekiel told to do in chapter 13 in response to the prophets of Israel and what is God's indictment of them?
7. What is a key message given by Ezekiel in chapter 14, and what are the people asked to do?
8. What is the importance of 587 BCE as it relates to the messages in Ezekiel?
9. How is God's role emphasized in the siege of Jerusalem?
10. How did the female prophets practice their trade and what does Ezekiel say of it?

V. Quiz: Answer Key

1. Ezekiel performed two symbolic actions: carrying exile baggage to represent the impending deportation from Jerusalem, including King Zedekiah, and trembling while eating to depict the anxiety and fear that would grip the people during the siege of Jerusalem.
2. Ezekiel repeatedly characterizes the exiles as a "rebellious house" because they stubbornly refused to heed God's warnings and continued in their sinful ways, despite the clear consequences.
3. The exiles were using the proverb that "the days are prolonged, and every vision comes to nothing." God responded by declaring that the days were near, and every vision would be fulfilled without delay, emphasizing the imminent nature of His judgment.
4. False prophets prophesied out of their own imagination, offering false assurances of peace when there is no peace, they do not intercede for the people, and they prioritize personal gain over truth.
5. The phrase "my people" in the later chapters of Ezekiel indicates God's loving concern and signals a shift towards messages of eventual restoration and the promise to bring the people back to the land after 587 BCE.

6. Ezekiel is told to prophesy against the prophets of Israel, and God indicts them for prophesying out of their own imagination, following their own spirit, and seeing nothing true from God.
7. A key message in chapter 14 is a call for repentance from idolatry and single-minded devotion to God. The people are asked to turn away from their idols and abominations to be accepted by God.
8. 587 BCE, the year Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, is crucial because it marks a turning point in Ezekiel's ministry. Messages before this date focus on impending judgment, while messages after this date shift to eventual restoration and hope.
9. God's role is emphasized in the siege of Jerusalem as the ultimate agent behind the Babylonian troops. It's presented as God's work, using the Babylonians as instruments of His judgment.
10. The female prophets practiced their trade in private, casting spells and curses for clients in exchange for money. Ezekiel condemns them for misleading the people and perverting justice through their deceptive practices.

VI. Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of symbolic actions in the book of Ezekiel, focusing on the two examples in Ezekiel 12. How do these actions enhance the prophetic message, and what do they reveal about God's communication style?
2. Analyze the role of false prophets in Ezekiel 13, comparing and contrasting the condemnation of male and female prophets. What specific practices are condemned, and what do these condemnations reveal about the social and religious context of the exiles?
3. Explore the theme of idolatry in Ezekiel 14, examining how it affects the exiles' relationship with God and their ability to receive true prophecy. What does this passage reveal about the nature of true worship and the consequences of divided loyalties?
4. Compare and contrast the messages of judgment and hope in Ezekiel 12-14, considering how the fall of Jerusalem (587 BCE) serves as a turning point in Ezekiel's prophetic ministry. How do these messages reflect the changing circumstances of the exiles and their relationship with God?

5. Trace the evolution of Ezekiel's messages from pre-587 to post-587, highlighting the key themes and shifts in focus. How does Ezekiel balance the themes of judgment and restoration, and what does this balance reveal about God's character and purposes for Israel?

VII. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Exile:** The forced removal of the Jewish people from their homeland in Judah to Babylon, occurring in several stages, most notably in 597 BCE and 587 BCE.
- **Symbolic Action:** A prophetic act performed by Ezekiel to visually represent God's message and impending events, often involving the use of props or specific behaviors.
- **Rebellious House:** A term used by Ezekiel to describe the exiles and the people of Jerusalem, emphasizing their stubborn disobedience and rejection of God's commands.
- **False Prophet:** An individual who claims to speak for God but whose message is not divinely inspired, often offering false assurances of peace or personal gain.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, a pervasive problem among the exiles that hindered their relationship with God and their ability to receive true prophecy.
- **Restoration:** The promise of God to eventually return the exiles to their homeland, rebuild Jerusalem, and establish a purified Israel.
- **Shalom:** Hebrew word for "peace"; the prophets who gave messages of peace when there was no peace were called shalom prophets.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or relationship between God and His people, characterized by mutual obligations and promises.
- **Theocentricity:** Having God as the central focus of interest or concern.
- **The Fall of Jerusalem (587 BCE):** The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the Babylonian army in 587 BCE, a pivotal event that marked the end of Judah's independence and the beginning of a new phase in Ezekiel's ministry.

5. FAQs on Allen, Ezekiel, Session 6, Signs about Exile from Jerusalem (Ezek 12:1-14:11), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Ezekiel FAQ

1. What is the significance of Ezekiel performing symbolic actions, such as packing exile baggage and digging through a wall?

Ezekiel's symbolic actions served as powerful visual prophecies for the exiles. Packing exile baggage and digging through a wall were meant to illustrate the impending destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BCE and the exile of its inhabitants, including King Zedekiah. These actions aimed to shatter the exiles' false hopes of a swift return and prepare them for the reality of a prolonged exile.

2. How did Ezekiel's message to the exiles compare to Jeremiah's message, and what was the overall message regarding their return to Judah?

Both Ezekiel and Jeremiah conveyed a similar message: the exile would not be short-lived. Jeremiah wrote a letter to the exiles predicting a 70-year exile. Ezekiel, through his symbolic actions and prophecies, reinforced this idea, emphasizing that the destruction of Jerusalem was imminent and that the exiles should not expect a quick return. However, both prophets also implied that a return would eventually happen.

3. What was the central accusation made against the exiles, and how did this relate to the coming punishment?

The exiles are repeatedly described as a "rebellious house," meaning they were disobedient and resistant to God's will. This accusation formed the basis for the judgment and punishment that Ezekiel prophesied. The symbolic actions and messages were designed to demonstrate the consequences of their rebellion and to emphasize the inevitability of God's judgment.

4. What is the meaning of Ezekiel's prophecy about the king being caught in a "net" or "snare," and how does it relate to historical events?

The prophecy of the king being caught in a "net" or "snare" refers to King Zedekiah's capture by the Babylonian army as he attempted to flee Jerusalem. According to 2 Kings, Zedekiah and his entourage tried to escape through a gate on the south side of the city, but they were pursued and captured. Ezekiel's prophecy emphasizes that God was the ultimate agent behind Zedekiah's capture and exile.

5. What were the exiles saying about Ezekiel's prophecies, and how did God respond to their doubts?

The exiles doubted the immediacy and certainty of Ezekiel's prophecies, claiming that the "days are prolonged, and every vision comes to nothing." In other words, they believed the prophecies were not going to come true anytime soon. God, speaking through Ezekiel, directly refuted this proverb, asserting that the days were near and that the fulfillment of every vision was imminent.

6. What is the difference between the prophets of Israel and false prophets?

The false prophets were those who prophesied "out of their own imagination" rather than receiving true messages from God. They offered optimistic messages of peace and disregarded the people's obligation to God, focusing instead on God's obligation to them. True prophets like Ezekiel, on the other hand, delivered messages of both judgment and hope, emphasizing the importance of covenant and intercession.

7. How did Ezekiel address the issue of false female prophets, and what practices were they engaged in?

Ezekiel condemned female prophets who practiced their prophesying in private for a fee, engaging in spell-casting and other occult practices. They would sew bands on wrists and make veils to cast spells for their clients. These women were accused of profaning God, hunting for human lives, and perverting justice for monetary gain.

8. What is the criticism of the elders of Israel who came to Ezekiel, and what did God want them to do?

The elders of Israel were criticized for being "two-minded" and harboring idols in their hearts while simultaneously seeking favorable messages from God. This reflects their divided loyalty and lack of genuine repentance. God called on them to repent, turn away from their idols, and be single-minded in their faith and worship.