

Ezekiel 14 – Idolatry Exposed

Introduction

- Ezekiel 14:1-11 is referred to by scholars as the ‘fourth message on the certainty of judgment’.
- According to Walvoord, in the entire book of Ezekiel, Israel’s idolatry was seen as the major cause of God’s judgment on His people.
- This chapter highlights the desired information of the idolatrous ‘elders’ and the needed information of God provided by His prophet Ezekiel.

The Elders Approach and Ask (vv. 1-11)

- In this section Ezekiel is still confined to his residence and the Elders come to him to try and receive a message from God about Jerusalem.
- God knows that these elders have established idols in their hearts.
- The idolatry in Jerusalem was obvious and explicit; but in exile the idolatry was more subtle and internal.
- God reveals this to Ezekiel and asks “should I let them inquire of Me at all?”
- Since the elders had not acknowledged God’s sovereignty, He was not obligated to answer them.
- Walvoord notes, “Instead of giving these elders the information they *desired*, God instructed Ezekiel to give them the information they *needed* – **God’s attitude toward their idolatry.**”
- God desired to recapture the hearts of His people through repentance!
- A constant theme in the Old and New Testament is God’s judgment toward idolatry – especially the idolatry in our hearts.
- In the end – the prophecy informs us that God will restore Israel to a place of fellowship with Him (see Ezekiel 11:20, 36:28, 37:23, 27; Hosea 2:23).

Four Hypothetical Cases (vv. 12-20)

- The scenario, a country sins against God by being unfaithful, what might God do:
 - Cutt off its food supply and send famine (v. 13)
 - Send wild beasts through that country (v. 15)
 - Bring a sword (v. 17)
 - And/or, send a plague (v. 19)
- God has and had the power to do all of these forms of judgment (and more) – see Revelation 6:8.
- In the hypothetical, Ezekiel interjects – three righteous men: Noah, Daniel, and Job; the result – God would do the same thing, because they would only save themselves and not the people overall.

Dreadful Punishments (vv. 21-23)

- The four dreadful punishments of sword, famine, wild beast and plague would be worse for Jerusalem because the people would not have these three giants of the faith (Noah, Daniel, and Job) interceding for her.
- Even amid the judgment and destruction of Jerusalem, there would consolation of some of the exiled captives that would survive (some scholars think this is referring to the remnant).

Conclusion

- It is important to note that the word ‘conduct’ is used 35 times in Ezekiel and the word ‘action’ is used 8 times referring to sinful deeds of Israel.
- The evil conduct and actions of the evil captives brought from Jerusalem would be exposed to the full judgment of a just God.
- Ralph Alexander notes “As the exiles would watch this remnant, the wickedness of this group would be obvious. Then the exiles would be comforted that God was right in His execution of judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah (see Ezekiel 12:16; 6:9-10). God’s justice would be vindicated.”