

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Synopsis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall theme of judgment runs through chapters 12 to 24. Two parallel passages, beginning in 12:1-20 and ending in 24:15-27, share similar structure and content. Both describe prophetic sign-acts in which Ezekiel is commanded to perform a symbolic forewarning of things to come. Both record a question from the audience requesting an explanation for the sign-act; both identify the prophet himself as a “sign” for the people. These two passages serve as bookends for the whole. Between these frames, Ezekiel seems to have collected miscellaneous oracles and parables, one following upon the other, with no discernible sense of order or development. • We will divide this long section into three parts to be examined over three sessions: 12-15, 16-19, 20-23. This year’s BSP will be concluded with chapter 24 during our final session 10. 	<p>CCSS p 97</p> <p>CCSS p 97</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>Another Oracle about the Coming Exile</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “... who have eyes to see, but see not; who have ears to hear, but hear not; for they are a rebellious house.” - Using the language of idolatry to describe Israel. After years of worshipping idols, the people’s inability to see and hear resembles the senselessness of the very idols that they worship. • “... prepare for yourself an exile’s baggage, and ... go like an exile from your place to another place, ... dig through the wall ...” All these dramatize the experience of going into exile. • “And the prince ... shall go forth ... in the dark; ... cover his face, that he may see the land with his eyes” - this is the prophecy about Zedekiah who fled by night and had his eyes put out after being captured. • “But I will let a few of them escape ... that they may confess all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the Lord.” - What is the interpretation of “a few of them” in the New Testament? • “... eat your bread with quaking, and drink water with trembling and 	<p>12:1-20</p> <p>12:2 CCSS, Ps 115:5-6 Rm 8:29</p> <p>12:3-6 CCSS</p> <p>12:12 , 2 Kg 25:4-7</p> <p>12:16 SN1 14:22</p> <p>12:17-20, Lv 26:43</p>

	<p>with fearfulness ... the inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation.” - foretelling famine and desolation of their cities; the consequences of betraying the Covenant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “... what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, ‘The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing?’” - It seems to the people that these prophecies foretell an impending doom but nothing ever happens, and so they ignore the word. How should one interpret these visions? 	<p>12:21-28 CCSS, Lk 18:7-8, 2P 3:8-10, Is 55:10-11</p>
<p>C</p>	<p><u>Oracles Against False Prophets and Fortune Tellers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prophet sent by God speaks and acts under the inspiration of the Spirit. Those who “follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing” are false prophets. They will face misfortune as “they have spoken falsehood and divined a lie”; claiming these words are “Says the Lord”. God’s hand “will be against the prophets who see delusive visions and who give lying divinations; 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”. This is the equivalent to being banished from God’s kingdom and eternal happiness. What is the reason for the severity of the punishment? Like Ezekiel, a prophet’s priority is to transmit God’s words as well as guarding and building God’s people. The false prophets, instead, speak their own mind, misleading and bringing destruction to the Israelites. Some women who spread false prophesies through fortune telling and magical amulets are also accused by Ezekiel. They invoke demonic powers, “putting to death persons who should not die and keeping alive persons who should not live”. Their actions “profaned me”. God “will deliver [His] people out of [their] hands , and they shall be no more in [their] hands as prey”. 	<p>13:1-23</p> <p>13:1-7 CCSS Jer 14:14, Rev 13:5</p> <p>13:8-16 CCSS</p> <p>Jer 6:14</p> <p>13:17-23 CCSS Ep 6:12</p>
<p>D</p>	<p><u>Oracles Against Elders Against Idolatry</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God warns Ezekiel about certain elders who are with him in Babylon that “these men have taken their idols into their hearts and set a stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces”. They must repent and turn away from idolatry; otherwise, God will “stretch out [His] hand against him, and will destroy him from the midst of [His] people Israel”. 	<p>14:1-23</p> <p>14:1-8 CCSS</p> <p>Dt 30:19</p>

	<p>Idolatry “consists in divinizing what is not God. Man commits idolatry whenever he honors and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons (for example, satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money etc.”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “And if the prophet be deceived and speak a word, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him” - God doesn’t take away the false prophet’s free will so that he will be deceived by his own sins, as if God has deceived the prophet. • Israel, steeped in sins; thus, God unleashes four sore acts of judgement - sword, famine, evil beasts, and pestilence - on the people. “Yet, there should be left in it any survivors to lead their ways and their doings, you will be consoled” - the recurring teachings about the “remnant”. 	<p>CCC 2113 Mt 6:24, Rm 1:25</p> <p>14:9 CCSS Sg 1:13</p> <p>14:12-23 CCSS, Dt 32:23-25, Rev 6:8</p> <p>SN1</p>
<p>E</p>	<p><u>The Parable of the Vinestock that Fails to Bear Fruit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parable of the vinestock serves as an image of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. If it fails to bear fruit, “it is given to the fire for fuel. When the fire has consumed both ends of it and the middle is charred” - there are two plausible explanations: burning of both the northern and southern kingdoms, with Jerusalem itself the charred "middle". Or it may refer to the two exiles (603 and 597 BC), with the third and most devastating exile yet to come (70 AD). • Teachings about the vine in OT and NT: Gen 49:11-12,22 (the blessing that Jacob prays over his sons, Judah and Joseph, that they may flourish like a vine); Ps 80:8 (Israel is the vine of God); Is 5:7 (lamentation for the beloved vineyard of the Lord fallen into grave disrepair); Jer 2:21, 12:10, Hos 10:1-2 (lamentation for the corruption of the vine); Jn 15:1.6 (Jesus is the true vine, we are the branches, we can only bear fruit if we abide in him; Gentiles or Jews will be united in one body) 	<p>15:1-8 CCSS, 19:10</p> <p>CCSS 116-7</p> <p>Gal 3:27-29</p>

SPECIAL NOTES

1. Teachings about “a remnant of them” or “survivors” in OT and NT:
 - Ezk 12:16 - “But I will let a few of them escape from the sword from famine and pestilence, that they may confess all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the Lord”.
 - Isaiah writes, “For though your people Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return (Rm 9:27, Is10:22).
 - Paul reveals, “... this mystery, ... until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved” (Rm 11:25-26). In other words, Israel will be saved by these “survivors”. How should we interpret this highly improbable scenario?
 - When Paul says “all Israel will be saved”, he recalls God’s promise when He gives the blessing to Ephraim through Jacob. God promises that “his seed is the fullness of the nations” or “his offspring will become a multitude of nations” (Gen 48:19).
 - The descendants of Ephraim belong to one of the ten tribes of northern Israel (ref. 1Kg 11:9ff); he represents northern Israel. After the fall of the northern kingdom to the Assyrian Empire, its tribe began to mingle with the Gentiles through marriage; thus eventually, they have become Gentiles.
 - Jesus Christ who is from the tribe of Judah of the southern kingdom is the Son of God. He became human to establish a covenant with humanity; He established the Church, thus, the Church has become “survivors” of Israel (OT).
 - The moment when the perfect number of Gentiles (including the tribe of northern Israel who were converted) accept the Gospel and join the Church is the moment of what Paul refers to as “all Israel will be saved”. In other words, this is the moment when all twelve tribes of Israel will be saved; however, not every single Israelite.
 - Thus, the promise of the blessing of Ephraim through Jacob that “his seed is the fullness of the nations” will be fulfilled.

Source: Pitre, B., Barber, M., Kincaid, J., *Paul A New Covenant Jew – Rethinking Pauline Theology*, 58-60, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2019.