

Packed for Exile: The Fate of the Davidic Line

Ezekiel 12:1–16

Veritas Adult Community

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Introduction

Elements in Sign-Actions

1. A command to stage a performance (vv. 3–6)
2. A report of its execution (v. 7)
3. An interpretation of the performance (vv. 8–14).

2 Kings 25:1–7: The important historical text

A. The Accusation (vv. 1–2)

^{12:1}The following message of YHWH came to me: ²Human, you are living in the midst of a rebellious household—people who have eyes to see, but do not see; who have ears to hear, but do not hear—because they are a rebellious house.

B. The Dramatic Performance (vv. 3–7)

³Now you, human, pack up an exile's knapsack, and go off into exile in broad daylight in their sight. Go off into exile, away from your residence to another place, in their sight. Perhaps they will see, even though they are a rebellious house. ⁴Carry your knapsack out, pretending it to be a knapsack packed for exile, in broad daylight in their sight. But you are to go out in the evening in their sight, like someone going off into exile. ⁵In their sight dig a hole in the wall and take [the knap-sack] out through it. ⁶In their sight you shall Carry [it] over your shoulder; at twilight you shall bring [it] out. You shall cover your face so that you cannot see the ground, for I have made you an object lesson to the house of Israel.

⁷So I did exactly as I had been commanded. In broad daylight I took out my knapsack, pretending it to be a knapsack packed for exile. In the evening I dug a hole through the wall with my hands. At twilight I took [it] out. I carried [it] on my shoulder in their sight.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

C. The Interpretation (vv. 8–14)

⁸The following message of YHWH came to me in the morning:

⁹Human, See, the house of Israel, the rebellious house, have asked you, "What are you doing?"

¹⁰Tell them, "This is what the Lord YHWH has declared, "The prince is this burden in Jerusalem, along with the entire house of Israel that is in it."¹¹ ¹¹ Announce, "I am your sign. Just as I have done, so it will be done to them." Into exile, into captivity they will go. ¹²As for the prince who is in their midst, on his shoulder he will carry it; at twilight he will take it out. They will burrow through the wall to bring [him] out through it. He will cover his face because it is with his eye that he will not see the land. ¹³I will spread my net over him and he will be caught in my snare. Then I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans. Now he will not see it, and there he will die. ¹⁴All those around him, his forces and all his troops, I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe my sword after them.

1. The Audience's Request for an Interpretation (vv. 8–9).
2. The Prophet's Response (vv. 10–13)
 - a. Ezekiel's Attitude to Zedekiah
 - b. The Lord's Actions against Zedekiah
 - (1) First, YHWH will capture Zedekiah like a hunter captures prey.
 - (2) YHWH will bring the prince to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans.
 - (3) YHWH will scatter and annihilate all who surround the king (v. 14).

D. The Goal of the Judgment (vv. 15–16)

¹⁵And they will know that I am YHWH when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the lands. ¹⁶But I will spare a few of them from the sword, from famine, and from plague, so that they may describe all of their abominations among the nations to which they have come. And they will know that I am YHWH.

Application

1. The danger of spiritual atrophy is greatest for those with the richest spiritual tradition.
2. Regardless how we treat other writings, in the study of the word of God the primacy of authorial intent must take precedence over all hermeneutical principles.

Locution: These are the words that speakers use to make a point.

Illocution: This refers to the point speakers are trying to make.

Perlocution: This is the point the people get from what the speaker says.

3. In spite of all appearance to the contrary, the Lord remains sovereign over history.