Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 357 – The Elders Come Through Cause For God's Actions (Ezekiel 14:1-23)

1. What was God's perspective of the elders of Israel coming to hear from Ezekiel?

He looked at it as a question as to why they would come to hear His words from His prophet when they had their own gods in their hearts: *"(1) Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. (2) And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (3) Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them"* (**Ezekiel 14:1-3**)?

- They were NOT coming to really learn from Ezekiel (**Ezekiel 33:30-33**).
- Their hearts after idols (**Ezekiel 6:9**; **20:16**).
- The Levities were greatly to blame for the stumblingblock of iniquity set before Israel (**Ezekiel 44:10-12**).
- Why inquire of God with all of that going on (**Deuteronomy 5:28-29**, **Psalms 78:36-37**, **Isaiah 29:13**, **Jeremiah 7:8-11**, and **Matthew 15:7-9**)????

2. Did God want Ezekiel to tell the elders of Israel that they were okay in their current spiritual state?

No: *"(4) Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; (5) That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols. (6) Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations"* (**Ezekiel 14:4-6**).

- The Lord was going to answer them as if they brought their idols with them when they came before Him (**Ezekiel 20:8**; **23:30**).
- Their hearts were divided (**Hosea 10:1-2**) which is unacceptable (**Deuteronomy 6:5** and **II Corinthians 6:14-18**).
- So the Lord, as the context will bear out (**vs. 7-11**), will see that their hearts are taken away (cf. **II Thessalonians 2:7-12**).
- They were estranged from the Lord through their idols (**Jeremiah 2:11-13**; **19:1-5**).
- Repentance is a turn from all sin in a person(s) life (**Ezekiel 18:30**, **John 8:1-11**, **Acts 26:18-20**, and **James 4:6-10**).

3. What was the Lord going to do to put Israel in a place not to go astray from Him that He may be their God?

He was going to set His face against those whom set up their idols in their hearts, including causing the prophets to be deceived, and ultimately making them bear the burdens of their sins: *"(7) For every one of the house of Israel, or*

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of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself: (8) And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. (9) And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. (10) And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him; (11) That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD" (**Ezekiel 14:7-11**).

- They separated themselves from God (**Isaiah 59:1-2** and **Jeremiah 5:25**), but wanted to enquire of Him through the prophets (**Isaiah 58:2**).
- God set His face against them (**Amos 9:4** and **Jeremiah 21:10**).
- *"The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth"* (**Psalms 34:16**).
- The Lord deceiving through the prophet (**I Kings 22:1-40**).
- So why would the Lord destroy a prophet in whom He has aided in being deceived? Because that prophet would have wanted to be deceptive (**I Corinthians 14:32**).
- The punishment on the false prophet would fall to those whom followed him too (**Matthew 15:1-14** and **II Peter 2:1-22**).
- God's disciplinary measures were to bring about restoration (**Hebrews 12:5-17** and **Revelation 3:19**).

4. Would it benefit anyone to be a decedent of Noah, Daniel, or Job when the Lord punished Israel for their sins?

No, the faithfulness of those men only benefited them: *"(12) The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, (13) Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it: (14) Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD. (15) If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts: (16) Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate. (17) Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it: (18) Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves. (19) Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: (20) Though Noah, Daniel, and Job,*

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were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness" (**Ezekiel 14:12-20**).

- There was a heavy price to pay in the land for sin (**Isaiah 3:1-8**).
- The faithfulness of present or past men cannot save a people from their own transgressions. The Scriptures constantly establish that each person is rewarded or punished based upon their own deeds (**Job 4:8**, **Job 34:11**, **Proverbs 1:31**, **Proverbs 12:14**, **Proverbs 14:14**, **Proverbs 22:8**, **Proverbs 24:12**, **Isaiah 3:10-11**, **Jeremiah 2:19**, **Jeremiah 4:16-18**, **Jeremiah 32:19**, **Ezekiel 22:31**, **Hosea 7:2**, **Hosea 8:7**, **John 5:28-29**, **II Corinthians 5:10**, and **Galatians 6:7-8**).
- Israel long had a problem understanding that their forefathers could not save them (**Matthew 3:7-10** and **John 8:12-59**).

5. What were the four sore judgments that was to come upon Jerusalem?

"For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast" (**Ezekiel 14:21**)?

- **Ezekiel 5:12**; **17**

6. What comfort was going to come forth?

The visible remnant: *"(22) Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. (23) And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD"* (**Ezekiel 14:22-23**).

- Always that remnant that kept hope alive (**II Kings 19:30-31**, **Isaiah 1:1-9**, **Isaiah 10:20-22**, **Isaiah 11:16**, **Isaiah 37:31**, **Ezekiel 6:8**, **Zephaniah 3:13**, and **Romans 11:1-5**).
- The hope was in the future and they would understand that God's punishments, etc. were not in vain (**Jeremiah 31:17-21** and **Daniel 9:1-14**).

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