

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

A small phrase caught my eye as I read about your judgment on the women who lied to the people: “Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him...” (Ezek 13:22). I praise you today as the God who is angry when the wicked discourage me. What a beautiful testament to your love for me! I exalt and magnify your name! Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

It’s clear from today’s reading that the exiles in Babylon had not grasped the seriousness of Ezekiel’s warnings. They still hoped for an early return to Judah, and they viewed the continued preservation of Jerusalem as a sign of hope. In response, you sent Ezekiel to refute their claims of peace and prosperity. First, you dealt with the belief that Ezekiel was speaking of events that were in the distant future (Ezek 12:22, 27). Your reply—“It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the Lord GOD” (Ezek 12:25). This teaches me not to presume on your patience and forbearance, for your kindness is meant to lead me to repentance (Rom 2:4)! Second, you dealt with the fact that Ezekiel was predicting disaster while the other prophets were saying “Peace!” (Ezek 13:10). The people had built a flimsy wall of wickedness, and instead of condemning the wall, the false prophets covered it with whitewash! Your reply—“I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you shall perish in the midst of it, and you shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek 13:14). This teaches me that when I cover my sin rather than confessing it, I am setting the stage for my own destruction. Third, you dealt with the false piety of the elders who insisted they were listening to your words. They would come and sit before Ezekiel and ask him to inquire of you on their behalf (Ezek 14:1). Your reply—“Repent and turn away from your idols...For anyone who separates himself from me, taking idols into his heart...and yet comes to a prophet to consult me...I will set my face against that man; I will make him a sign and a byword and cut him off from the midst of my people” (Ezek 14:7–8). This teaches me not to harbor sin in my heart and then come to you and act like all is well. If I do, I’ll get your attention, but it won’t be the kind of attention I want! Last, you dealt with the belief that your wrath would not fall on Jerusalem as long as there were a few righteous people left (Ezek 14:13–14). Your reply—“Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord GOD” (Ezek 14:14). This teaches me that I can’t rely on the righteousness of others. I must have a righteousness that is my own.

Reflection

It’s easy to condemn the exiles for their rebellion and idolatry, but if I pursue wealth, fame, or pleasure with the love and commitment that should be reserved for you, then I too have taken idols into my heart and set the stumbling block of my own iniquity before my face (Ezek 14:3).

Request

Father, may I never be so arrogant as to think that I’m immune to the temptations that ensnared your chosen people. Help me remember that these things were written for my instruction (1 Cor 10:11–12).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for your mercy! Even as you prepared to send sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence upon your people, you promised that a remnant would be spared (Ezek 14:21–23). Great is the LORD!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[O for a Closer Walk with God](#)” – William Cowper.

Meditation Verse: Ezekiel 12:15.