

SERMON:

Ezekiel 12-14

How Did We Get Here?

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Ezekiel calls us to remember we are exiles and as exiles to remember that God is near and is infinitely concerned for His own glory.

Therefore Ezekiel calls us to refuse the temptation to place our hope in an imagined past or an alluring present but instead to repent and to wait for God's future salvation.

Outline:

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|-------------|--|----------------------|
| I. | God is Present in Exile | Ezekiel 1-3 |
| II. | God is Present to Judge in Judah | Ezekiel 4-24 |
| III. | God is Present to Judge the Nations | Ezekiel 25-32 |
| IV. | God is Present to Save His People | Ezekiel 33-48 |

Outline:

- I. God is Present in Exile
- II. God is Present to Judge in Judah
 - A. God's Message: I am present Ezekiel 4-5
 - B. God hates idolatry Ezekiel 6-7
 - C. God will not dwell with idolaters Ezekiel 8-11
 - D. How did we get here? Ezekiel 12-14

Proposition: God's people don't accidentally stumble into idolatry. God's people become marked by idolatry when they ignore God's Word and replace it with their own words.

- A. How did we get here?
- B. What has this caused?
- C. Where is this going?
- D. What about us?

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

God's Word or Our Words

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

1. They devalued God's Word

EZEKIEL 12:21-25

²¹ And the word of the LORD came to me:²² "Son of man, what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, "The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing"? ²³ Tell them therefore, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.' But say to them, 'The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision.'²⁴ For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.²⁵ For I am the LORD; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. 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."

EZEKIEL 12:26-28

²⁶ And the word of the LORD came to me:²⁷ "Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'²⁸ Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord GOD."

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- 1. They devalued God's Word**
- 2. They invented their own words**

EZEKIEL 13:1-7

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, and say to those who prophesy from their own hearts: 'Hear the word of the LORD!'" ³ Thus says the Lord GOD, Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ⁴ Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. ⁵ You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the LORD. ⁶ They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'Declares the LORD,' when the LORD has not sent them, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word. ⁷ Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, 'Declares the LORD,' although I have not spoken?"

EZEKIEL 13:17-19

*¹⁷ "And you, son of man, **set your face against the daughters of your people,** who prophesy out of their own minds. Prophecy against them¹⁸ and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew magic bands upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for souls! Will you hunt down souls belonging to my people and keep your own souls alive?¹⁹ **You have profaned me among my people** for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live, **by your lying to my people, who listen to lies.***

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- 1. They devalued God's Word**
- 2. They invented their own words**
- 3. They approached God hypocritically**

EZEKIEL 14:1-5

¹ Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me.²
And the word of the LORD came to me: ³ "Son of man, these men have
taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their
iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by
them? ⁴ Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord
GOD: Any one of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart
and sets the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet
comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him as he comes with
the multitude of his idols,⁵ that I may lay hold of the hearts of the
house of Israel, who are all estranged from me through their idols.

EZEKIEL 14:6-8

⁶ *"Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.⁷ For any one of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel, who separates himself from me, taking his idols into his heart and putting the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to a prophet to consult me through him, I the LORD will answer him myself.⁸ And 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, and you shall know that I am the LORD.*

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- 1. They devalued God's Word**
- 2. They invented their own words**
- 3. They approached God hypocritically**

KIDS' QUESTION:

**HOW DID GOD'S PEOPLE
FALL INTO IDOLATRY?**

They ignored God's Word and
replaced it with their own words.

WHAT HAS THIS CAUSED?

What happens when we ignore God's Word?

WHAT HAS THIS CAUSED?

1. They have been judged guilty by God

EZEKIEL 13:8-12

*⁸ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, **I am against you, declares the Lord GOD.**⁹ My hand will be against the prophets who see false 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. And you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.¹⁰ Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash,¹¹ say to those who smear it with whitewash that it shall fall! There will be a deluge of rain, and you, O great hailstones, will fall, and a stormy wind break out.¹² And when the wall falls, will it not be said to you, 'Where is the coating with which you smeared it?'*

EZEKIEL 13:20-23

²⁰ "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds.²¹ Your veils also I will tear off and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am the LORD.²² Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life,²³ therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the LORD."

EZEKIEL 14:6-8

*⁶ "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.⁷ For any one of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel, who separates himself from me, taking his idols into his heart and putting the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to a prophet to consult me through him, I the LORD will answer him myself.⁸ **And 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, and you shall know that I am the LORD.***

WHAT HAS THIS CAUSED?

- 1. They have been judged guilty by God**
- 2. They will be destroyed by God**

EZEKIEL 12:8-16

⁸ In the morning the word of the LORD came to me:⁹ "Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'¹⁰ Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.'¹¹ Say, 'I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.¹² And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage upon his shoulder at dusk, and shall go out. They shall dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He shall cover his face, that he may not see the land with his eyes.¹³ And I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare. And I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, and he shall die there.¹⁴ And I will scatter toward every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops, and I will unsheathe the sword after them.¹⁵ And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the countries.

WHAT HAS THIS CAUSED?

- 1. They have been judged guilty by God**
- 2. They will be destroyed by God**
- 3. Not even the most righteous man can save them**

EZEKIEL 14:12-16

¹² And the word of the LORD came to me:¹³ "Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast,¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ "If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land, and they ravage it, and it be made desolate, so that no one may pass through because of the beasts,¹⁶ even if these three men were in it, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they would deliver neither sons nor daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the land would be desolate.

EZEKIEL 14:17-20

¹⁷ "Or if I bring a sword upon that land and say, Let a sword pass through the land, and I cut off from it man and beast,¹⁸ though these three men were in it, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they would deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they alone would be delivered.

¹⁹ "Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out my wrath upon it with blood, to cut off from it man and beast,²⁰ even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they would deliver neither son nor daughter. They would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness.

WHAT HAS THIS CAUSED?

- 1. They have been judged guilty by God**
- 2. They will be destroyed by God**
- 3. Not even the most righteous man can save them**

KIDS' QUESTION:

WHO CAN SAVE GOD'S PEOPLE?

There is no man righteous
enough to save God's people.

WHERE IS THIS GOING?

Where is hope when the situation is hopeless?

WHERE IS THIS GOING?

1. There is no hope of salvation in men

EZEKIEL 14:12-14

¹² And the word of the LORD came to me:¹³ "Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast,¹⁴ 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.

WHERE IS THIS GOING?

- 1. There is no hope of salvation in men**
- 2. But there is a glimmer of hope in this passage of judgment**

EZEKIEL 12:11-16

*They shall go into exile, into captivity.¹² And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage upon his shoulder at dusk, and shall go out. They shall dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He shall cover his face, that he may not see the land with his eyes.¹³ And I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare. And I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, and he shall die there.¹⁴ And I will scatter toward every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops, and I will unsheathe the sword after them.¹⁵ And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the countries.¹⁶ **But I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence,** that they may declare all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the LORD."*

WHERE IS THIS GOING?

- 1. There is no hope of salvation in men**
- 2. But there is a glimmer of hope in this passage of judgment**
- 3. If neither Noah, Daniel, nor Job could save, we need a better deliverer**

HEBREWS 7:23-28

²³ The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,²⁴ but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶ For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

ACTS 4:11-12

*¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.¹² And **there is salvation in no one else**, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

WHERE IS THIS GOING?

- 1. There is no hope of salvation in men**
- 2. But there is a glimmer of hope in this passage of judgment**
- 3. If neither Noah, Daniel, nor Job could save, we need a better deliverer**

KIDS' QUESTION:

SO, WHO CAN SAVE GOD'S PEOPLE?

Only Jesus can save God's people.

WHAT ABOUT US?

How should we handle God's Word?

WHAT ABOUT US?

- 1. We need to be careful to listen to all of God's Word, not only what we like**

II TIMOTHY 4:1-5

*¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:² **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.³ **For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,**⁴ and **will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.**⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

WHAT ABOUT US?

- 1. We need to be careful to listen to all of God's Word, not only what we like**
- 2. We need to be careful not to add to God's Word after our own spirit**

GALATIANS 5:2-6

*² Look: I, Paul, say to you that **if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.** ³ I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. ⁴ You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*

COLOSSIANS 2:16-23

¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. ²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations---²¹ "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch"²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)---according to human precepts and teachings?²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

WHAT ABOUT US?

- 1. We need to be careful to listen to all of God's Word, not only what we like**
- 2. We need to be careful not to add to God's Word after our own spirit**

Overvaluing our Morality: holding others to our conscience instead of to the Word of God

Overvaluing our Judgment: holding others to our political persuasions instead of the Word of God

WHAT ABOUT US?

- 1. We need to be careful to listen to all of God's Word, not only what we like**
- 2. We need to be careful not to add to God's Word after our own spirit**
- 3. We need to be careful to approach God with sincerity, not treasuring other things**

MARK 7:6-8

⁶ And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." ⁸ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

Why are you here this morning?

WHAT ABOUT US?

- 1. We need to be careful to listen to all of God's Word, not only what we like**
- 2. We need to be careful not to add to God's Word after our own spirit**
- 3. We need to be careful to approach God with sincerity, not treasuring other things**

Proposition: God's people don't accidentally stumble into idolatry. God's people become marked by idolatry when they ignore God's Word and replace it with their own words.

A. How did we get here?

B. What has this caused?

C. Where is this going?

D. What about us?