

Ezekiel 12:1-12

In our first reading, we see the prophet Ezekiel continuing his street theater when the Lord tells him to pack his bags for exile during the day. He is told to dig a hole in the wall and pass through it, covering his face as he does so. This is sometimes called a prophecy-in-action, much like a "show and tell" when you were in school.

From salvation history, we know that Ezekiel's symbolic actions foreshadowed the fall of Jerusalem and the capture of King Zedekiah. When the Babylonians circled the city of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., King Zedekiah (the last ruler of Judah) tried to escape Jerusalem by night.

As the Babylonians broke through the walls of Jerusalem, King Zedekiah tried to slip through the gate through the cover of darkness. The king and his men headed south and east toward the Arabah (the Jordan River valley) and were eventually captured near Jericho.

King Zedekiah was brought before King Nebuchadnezzar II. His sons were executed right before his eyes, his eyes were gouged out, and he was bound in bronze chains to be imprisoned in Babylon until his death. The idea was that the last thing King Zedekiah saw was his sons executed and therefore the line of David wiped out. The message was clear. Whatever hopes you had in the promises of God are shattered.

What are we to make of this strange symbolic action by the prophet Ezekiel and its later fulfillment in salvation history? First, it's interesting that we have this language "*eyes to see but do not see*" and "*ears to hear but do not hear*." This is poetic language indicating that the Israelites were a rebellious house. Jesus later uses this exact same language in the New Testament when teaching. They physically hear Jesus but fail to perceive the kingdom of God in Him. Hence, as in Ezekiel's time, there will be forthcoming consequences. Jerusalem will fall *again* in AD 70 and the consequences will be tragic.

Ezekiel and Jesus used a variety of ways to reach their listeners, to draw them back into communion with God. When there was a positive response, God blessed His people. When they refused in stubbornness, there were *serious* consequences.

For our part, we ask for the grace of the Holy Spirit for open and docile hearts to all that Christ teaches. Additionally, we scatter seed generously and invite others into communion with Christ. Ezekiel was willing to look a bit foolish for God. The great St. Paul reminds us that we are fools for Christ (1 Cor. 4:10). Let's be joyful fools for our Lord!

~St. Thérèse, pray for us!