

Ezekiel 21:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, to them that have sworn oaths: but he will call to remembrance the iniquity, that they may be taken.

Analysis

It shall be unto them as a false divination (וְהָיָה לָהֶם כְּקֶסֶם־שָׁוְא, v'hayah lahem k'qesem-shav)—Jerusalem's inhabitants will dismiss the oracle as שָׁוְא (shav, false, empty, worthless). They had sworn oaths of loyalty to Babylon (2 Kings 24:17), then broke them by allying with Egypt, trusting in false security.

To them that have sworn oaths (לְשֹׁבְעֵי שְׁבָעוֹת לָהֶם, lishvu'ei shevu'ot lahem)—Zedekiah's treaty-breaking (Ezekiel 17:13-19). **But he will call to remembrance the iniquity** (וְהוּא מַזְכִּיר אֲוֹן, v'hu mazkir avon)—God causes Nebuchadnezzar to 'remember' Judah's rebellion, providing justification for the siege. The word אֲוֹן (avon, iniquity) indicates twisted, crooked guilt. Self-deception blinds those under judgment—they cannot believe God's clear warnings.

Historical Context

Zedekiah, Judah's last king, rebelled against Babylon around 589 BC despite Jeremiah's warnings (Jeremiah 27-28). False prophets assured him of deliverance. The 'sworn oaths' refer to vassal treaties sealed before gods—breaking them invited divine vengeance according to ancient Near Eastern treaty curses.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does self-deception prevent people from recognizing true prophetic warnings versus false prophecies?
2. In what ways do we dismiss God's clear word because it conflicts with our plans or alliances?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה H1961	לָהֶם H0	כְּקִסּוֹם H7080	וְהָיָה H7723	בְּעֵינֵיהֶם H5869
		divination	And it shall be unto them as a false	in their sight
שְׁבָעוּ H7650	שְׁבָעוּ H7621	וְהָיָה H0	וְהָיָה H1931	מִזְכֹּר H2142
to them that have sworn	oaths		but he will call to remembrance	
עוֹן H5771	לְהִתְקַשׁ H8610			
the iniquity	that they may be taken			

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 5:15 (Sin): Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

Ezekiel 29:16 (Sin): And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 21:24 (Sin): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, I say, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand.

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