

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 (וְהִיא לֹכֶם קְקַסְמַשָׁא) v'hayah lahem k'qesem-shav)—Jerusalem's inhabitants will dismiss the oracle as שָׁבָע (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 (לְשָׁבָעֵי שָׁבָעוֹת לָהֶם) lishvu'ei shevu'ot lahem)—Zedekiah's treaty-breaking (Ezekiel 17:13-19). **But he will call to remembrance the iniquity** (וְהִיא מִזְכֵּר עֲוֹן) v'hu mazkir avon)—God causes Nebuchadnezzar to 'remember' Judah's rebellion, providing justification for the siege. The word עֲוֹן (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

בְּעֵד יְנִיחַת מִלְּאָמָר לְבָם וּבְבָנָיו שְׁזִיא

H1961

H0

דְּבָרִים

divination

וְנַעֲשֶׂה אֲלֵיכֶם כְּלִזְבּוֹנִים וְאַתֶּן לְבָם

And it shall be unto them as a false

H7723

בְּעֵד יְנִיחַת מִלְּאָמָר

in their sight

H5869

שְׁבָעַת

to them that have sworn

H7650

וְזַבְעַת

oaths

H7621

וְאַתָּה לְבָם

H1931

מִזְכָּר יְרַא

but he will call to remembrance

H2142

לְהַתְּפִשֵּׂה:

the iniquity that they may be taken

H5771

H8610

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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