

Jeremiah and Ezekiel

The Book of Ezekiel – Part 2

Interpreting the Text:

1. For Ezekiel, the salvation of Israel is not to save the people for their own sake, but so that God will glorify God's name. What is Ezekiel's motivation for saying this? Why do you think Ezekiel considers the people to be so irredeemable (or does he)?
2. What do you think about the idea of transgenerational punishment? Does it seem fair to you? Do you think that God is acting in this way, or is this how the Israelites are making sense of their exile? How do Ezekiel's words support your idea?
3. In the ancient world, the heart was the organ of thought, rather than the organ of feeling. Does that change the way you read parts of Ezekiel, or any other part of the Hebrew Bible, that talk about the heart?

Applying the Text:

1. Ezekiel seems to be primarily concerned with accountability. How do you use stories in your own life to explain a particular situation and find steps forward toward restoration? Do these kinds of stories help identify who is accountable?
2. How does the image of a "new and flexible heart" relevant today? How does Ezekiel's message of removing old and inflexible ways of thinking speak to readers across time? What is God's role in creating our new hearts?