

Deuteronomy 31:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

Analysis

And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought—God's reiteration emphasizes certainty and just cause. The Hebrew *anochi haster astir* (אֲנֹכִי הַסְתִּיר אֶסְתִּיר) uses emphatic construction: 'I will surely hide' or 'I will utterly hide.' **In that they are turned unto other gods**—the specific sin meriting face-hiding: idolatry, abandoning Yahweh for false gods. The consequence matched the crime—they turned from God, so God turned from them.

This verse clarifies that divine abandonment isn't arbitrary or harsh but proportional justice. Israel's choice to turn away from God resulted in God's withdrawal from them. The pattern appears throughout Scripture: persistent rejection of God ultimately results in God honoring that rejection (Romans 1:24, 26, 28: 'God gave them over'). Yet even here, the judgment served remedial purpose—suffering in God's absence was meant to drive Israel back to Him, the pattern throughout Judges and Kings.

Historical Context

Spoken circa 1406 BC, fulfilled repeatedly in Israel's history. The most complete 'face-hiding' occurred in the Babylonian exile (586-516 BC), when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, the sacrificial system ceased, and the nation was removed from the Promised Land. Yet even in exile, prophets like Ezekiel and Daniel ministered, showing God's presence wasn't entirely absent. The exile

Related Passages

Study Questions

Interlinear Text

