

Exodus 33:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

Analysis

Ye are a stiffnecked people—God repeats the diagnosis, emphasizing Israel's chronic rebellion. The warning 'I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee' shows that God's presence among sinful people is like fire among dry stubble. The command to remove ornaments becomes a test: will they humble themselves? This stripping prefigures the deeper work needed—circumcision of heart (Deuteronomy 10:16), which only God can perform (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Historical Context

This incident occurs during the forty days while Moses received the second set of tablets. The removal of ornaments created a visible, corporate sign of repentance that distinguished Israel's camp from surrounding nations.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. In what ways does your heart still exhibit 'stiff-necked' resistance to God's will?
2. How does this passage point forward to the need for heart transformation that only the Holy Spirit can accomplish?

Interlinear Text

רֹאשׁוֹת	אֶת	הָיָה	יְהוָה	אֶל	מִשְׁנֶה	רֹאשׁוֹת	אֶל	אֶת	רֹאשׁוֹת	בְּנֵי
Say	For the LORD			H413	unto Moses		Say	H413	unto the children	
H559	H3068				H4872		H559		H1121	
וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	עִם	אַתָּה	מִשְׁנֶה	לְשָׁה	עַד	לְגַע	אַתָּה	לְגַע	וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	
of Israel	people	Ye are a stiffnecked		H7186	H6203		moment	of thee in a		
H3478	H859	H5971					H7281	H259		
וְיִגְבַּבְתִּי	בְּקִרְבָּךְ	וְכָלִיתִי	בְּךָ	וְעַטְתִּי	הַזָּהָר	וְזַהֲרַתִּי	זָהָרְךָ	וְזַהֲרַתִּי	זָהָרְךָ	
I will come up	into the midst	and consume		H3615	H6258		thee therefore now put off			
H5927	H7130						H3381			
עֲדִיבָה	מִעְלָה	יְבָרֶכֶת	מִתְהַלְלָה	וְאַדְעַת	הַזָּהָר	אַעֲשָׂה	לְךָ			
thy ornaments	H5921			H3045		H4100	what to do	H0		
H5716							H6213			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 139:23 (Parallel theme): Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

Numbers 16:21 (Parallel theme): Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

Isaiah 22:12 (References Lord): And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

Psalms 73:19 (Parallel theme): How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

Job 34:20 (Parallel theme): In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.

Genesis 22:12 (Parallel theme): And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

Deuteronomy 8:2 (References Lord): And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Lamentations 4:6 (Parallel theme): For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.