

Ezekiel 11:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Analysis

The new heart enables covenant obedience: "That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." The purpose clause "that they may walk" reveals that heart transformation produces behavioral transformation. The Reformed *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) appears: regeneration precedes sanctification; the new heart enables obedience rather than obedience earning the new heart. The covenant formula "they shall be my people, and I will be their God" emphasizes restored relationship as both the goal and context of obedience. Works follow faith; they don't produce it.

Historical Context

Ezekiel prophesied this transformation (592 BC) before the exile's darkest hour, offering hope of eventual restoration. The post-exilic community demonstrated renewed commitment to Torah, as seen in Ezra and Nehemiah. However, external conformity without internal transformation led to the legalism Jesus confronted in Pharisaism. The ultimate fulfillment came through Christ's atoning death establishing the New Covenant and the Spirit's outpouring enabling genuine obedience from transformed hearts. The early church experienced what Ezekiel prophesied—Gentiles and Jews united in covenant relationship through regenerating grace.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the sequence—new heart, then obedience—challenge legalistic approaches to Christian living?
2. What is the relationship between being God's people and walking in His statutes?

Interlinear Text

וְעַשׂוּ וְשָׁמְרוּ מִשְׁפָּטֵי י' וְאֶת יַיִל כּוֹ בְּחֻקֵּי י' לִמֵּעַן
H4616 in my statutes H1980 H853 mine ordinances H4941 and keep H8104 and do H6213
H2708

לָהֶם אֱהִי ה' וְאֶנִּי לָעָם לֵאמֹר אֶתְּתֶם לִי וְהָיוּ אֵתָּה
H853 H1961 H0 them and they shall be my people H589 H1961 H0
H5971

לֵאמֹר אֶתְתֶּנִּי:

and I will be their God
H430

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 14:11 (References God): That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

Psalms 105:45 (Parallel theme): That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

Jeremiah 30:22 (References God): And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Jeremiah 31:33 (References God): But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Luke 1:6 (References God): And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

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