

Ezekiel 12:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.

Analysis

God identifies another skeptical saying: 'Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.' Unlike the previous proverb mocking prophecy as failed (v. 22), this one dismisses it as irrelevant—fulfilled only in distant future, not affecting the current generation. This represents sophisticated skepticism: acknowledging prophetic truth but denying its immediate relevance.

The phrase 'many days to come' and 'times that are far off' reveals the people's assumption that judgment, if it comes at all, won't affect them personally. This comfortable distancing allowed continued sin without urgency for repentance. They could mentally assent to prophetic truth while living as if it were practically false—a dangerous self-deception enabling continued rebellion.

From a Reformed perspective, this warns against the practical atheism of acknowledging God theoretically while living as if He doesn't matter. Affirming biblical truth about judgment while assuming it won't personally affect us constitutes functional unbelief. True faith involves personal application, urgency about repentance, and lifestyle shaped by eschatological realities, not mere intellectual assent to distant truths.

Historical Context

This skeptical attitude reflects human tendency to minimize uncomfortable truths by temporal distancing. The exiles could grant that Jerusalem might eventually fall while assuming they'd return home first. This comfortable dismissal proved catastrophic when Jerusalem fell within five years and they remained in exile. Their sophisticated skepticism was as destructive as blatant mockery.

Similar patterns appear throughout church history—affirming Christ's return while living as if it's irrelevant, acknowledging judgment while pursuing sin comfortably, assenting to biblical truth while making decisions as if it's practically false. The disconnect between professed belief and lived reality reveals heart condition more than verbal confession does.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does temporal distancing of prophetic truth ('far off') enable continued sin despite professed belief?
2. What is the danger of affirming biblical truth intellectually while living as if it's practically irrelevant?
3. In what ways might you be guilty of this sophisticated skepticism regarding biblical warnings?

Interlinear Text

בָּן	אָדָם	הַבָּנָה	בֵּית	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אָמֵר	יְמִינָה	הַחִזְקָה
Son	of man	H2009	behold they of the house	of Israel	say	The vision	
H1121	H120		H1004	H3478	H559		H2377
אֲשֶׁר	הִיא	חִזְקָה	לִימִינָה	רְבָבָה	וְלִעְתָּה	וְרֹחֵק	
H834	H1931	that he seeth	days	is for many	of the times	that are far	
		H2372	H3117	H7227	H6256		H7350
וְאֵת	הַזָּמָן						
H1931	to come and he prophesieth	H5012					

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 10:14 (Parallel theme): Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

2 Peter 3:4 (Parallel theme): And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Ezekiel 12:22 (References Israel): Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?