

Ezekiel 14:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

Analysis

God addresses Land sins against me in this verse. Corporate guilt brings corporate judgment, demonstrating that God sees hearts and motives, not just external religious practices. The scenario reveals the futility of seeking God while maintaining idolatry—true inquiry requires undivided allegiance. Attempting to consult God while harboring idols represents the divided heart God rejects.

The passage illustrates that religious externals without heart reality constitute hypocrisy God abhors. Mere consultation of prophets, attendance at worship, or performance of rituals means nothing if the heart remains idolatrous. God demands total allegiance, not partial commitment combined with idolatrous hedging. The call is to genuine repentance involving both turning from sin and turning to God.

From a Reformed perspective, this passage teaches the doctrine of regeneration's necessity. External religion without heart transformation cannot save. Only the Spirit's work creating new hearts produces genuine faith and repentance. Attempts to maintain both God and idols reveal unregenerate hearts needing divine recreation, not mere moral reformation.

Historical Context

The elders coming to Ezekiel (v. 1) represented Jerusalem's leadership or fellow exiles seeking prophetic guidance. However, God revealed their secret idolatry—they maintained household gods or idolatrous practices while outwardly seeking Yahweh. This duplicity characterized pre-exilic Israel and necessitated judgment. Corporate guilt brings corporate judgment within this context of widespread syncretism where people attempted to hedge spiritual bets by worshiping both Yahweh and other deities. Archaeological discoveries of household figurines and foreign cult objects in Israelite homes confirm this pattern. The practice violated the Shema's demand for exclusive love and loyalty to Yahweh (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does this passage expose the futility of religious practices divorced from heart reality?
2. What modern idols do people attempt to maintain while still seeking God's blessing?
3. In what ways does Land sins against me illustrate the necessity of genuine conversion versus mere external religion?

Interlinear Text

בֶּן	אָדָם	אֶרֶץ	כִּי	תִחַטֵּא	לִי	לְמַעַל
Son	man	when the land	H3588	sinneth	H0	against me by trespassing
H1121	H120	H776		H2398		H4603
עַל	וְנִטֵּי יָדַי	עַל יְהוָה	וְשָׁב רִגְלִי	לְהַכֹּת	עַל יְהוָה	לְהַכֹּת
grievously	then will I stretch out	mine hand	H5921	upon it and will break	H0	
H4604	H5186	H3027		H7665		
מַטֵּה	לֶחֶם	וְהִשְׁלַחְתִּי	רָעָב	בָּהּ	וְהִכְרַתִּי	
the staff	of the bread	thereof and will send	H0	famine	upon it and will cut off	
H4294	H3899	H7971		H7458	H3772	
וּבְהֵמָה	אָדָם	וּבְהֵמָה				
H4480	man	and beast				
	H120	H929				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 4:16 (Parallel theme): Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment:

Leviticus 26:26 (Parallel theme): And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

Isaiah 24:20 (Sin): The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

Isaiah 3:1 (Parallel theme): For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

Jeremiah 32:43 (Parallel theme): And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

Ezekiel 15:8 (Parallel theme): And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 5:16 (Parallel theme): When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread:

Ezekiel 14:21 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

Ezekiel 14:19 (Parallel theme): Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:

Ezekiel 14:17 (Parallel theme): Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it: