

Ezekiel 14:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:

Analysis

God addresses Evil beasts through land in this verse. Wild animals as 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. Wild animals as 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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 Evil beasts through land illustrate the necessity of genuine conversion versus mere external religion?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	הַתְּהָ:	בָּעַ הַ	עוֹבֵר	בְּאֶרֶץ
If	beasts	I cause noisome	that no man may pass through	the land
H3863	H2416	H7451	H5674	H776
וְשָׂבַל תִּהְיֶה	וְהִיֵּת הַ	שְׁמֵמָה	מִבֵּל י	
and they spoil	H1961	it so that it be desolate	H1097	
H7921		H8077		
עוֹבֵר	הַתְּהָ:	מִפְּנֵי		
that no man may pass through	beasts	because		
H5674	H2416	H6440		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 5:17 (Parallel theme): So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

Leviticus 26:22 (Parallel theme): I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.

Jeremiah 15:3 (Parallel theme): And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.