

Ezekiel 14:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

Analysis

"Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols." God refuses to answer prayers when idols occupy the heart. The phrase "idols in his heart" reveals that idolatry is internal before external. Coming to prophets while cherishing idols is hypocrisy God will not bless. Instead of desired answers, idolaters receive judicial responses confirming their idolatrous choices. This warns that unrepentant sin blocks prayer. God demands exclusive devotion, not divided loyalty.

Historical Context

The elders consulting Ezekiel (590 BC) maintained external religiosity while harboring internal idolatry. They wanted prophetic guidance while refusing to abandon false gods. God exposed their hypocrisy and warned He would answer according to their idols—confirming their deluded choices. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: God hardens those who persistently reject truth (Romans

1:24-28). The principle guards against presuming on God's favor while maintaining pet sins. True prayer requires genuine repentance.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What idols occupy your heart while you maintain external religiosity?
2. How does God's threat to answer according to idols warn against praying while cherishing sin?

Interlinear Text

לְכָךְ |

H3651

Therefore speak

H1696

and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

Isaiah 3:11 (Parallel theme): Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org