

Ezekiel 14:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

Analysis

God addresses Stranger that separates in this verse. Even foreigners accountable, 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. Even foreigners accountable 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

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 Stranger that separates illustrate the necessity of genuine conversion versus mere external religion?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	מִבֵּית	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּמִגְּגֶר
H3588	For every one	For every one	of the house	in Israel	or of the stranger
	H376	H376	H1004	H3478	H1616
אֲשֶׁר	וְרֹא	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	רֹא	מִאֶחָד	וְאֶחָד
H834	that sojourneth	in Israel	which separateth	himself from me	
	H1481	H3478	H5144	H310	
וְעַל	גָּלוֹלִי	לְבָבִי	וּמְכַשֵּׁב	וְעַזְנָבִי	וְעַזְנָבִי
and setteth up	his idols	in his heart	the stumblingblock	of his iniquity	
H5927	H1544	H413	H3820	H4383	H5771
וְעַל	אֶל	בְּנֵי	אֶל	הַנְּבִיא	לְדִבֶּשׁ
and putteth	before	his face	and cometh	to a prophet	to enquire
H7760	H5227	H6440	H935	H5030	H1875
בְּנֵי	אֶת	הָיָה	אֶת	תְּעַנֵּה	לְבָבִי
H0	H589	of him concerning me I the LORD	will answer	H0	H0
		H3068		H6030	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 12:48 (References Lord): And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

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