

Ezekiel 14:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Analysis

God addresses Set my face against in this verse. Divine opposition to unrepentant, 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. Divine opposition to unrepentant 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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 Set my face against illustrate the necessity of genuine conversion versus mere external religion?

Interlinear Text

וְנִתְתָּה	בָּא	וְשָׁבַת	בָּהּ	וְהִשְׁמַתְתָּ	לֹא	וְתַ
And I will set	my face	against that man	H1931	and will make	him a sign	
H5414	H6440	H376		H8074		H226
וְלֹמֶשׁ	וְהַכְרֵת	מִתְוָג	עַמְּךָ	וְיָדַעַת		
and a proverb	and I will cut him off	from the midst	of my people	and ye shall know		
H4912	H3772	H8432	H5971			H3045
אֶתְּנָהָרָה						
that I am the LORD						
H3588	H589	H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 15:7 (References Lord): And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them.

Jeremiah 44:11 (References Lord): Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah.

Ezekiel 5:15 (References Lord): So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken it.

Isaiah 65:15 (References Lord): And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

Deuteronomy 28:37 (References Lord): And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

Ezekiel 6:7 (References Lord): And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Leviticus 17:10 (Parallel theme): And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

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