

Ezekiel 17:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

Analysis

'He hath despised mine oath, and hath broken my covenant.' What appeared merely political was actually oath to God. When Zedekiah swore before Yahweh as witness, he bound himself to God, not just Nebuchadnezzar. 'I will even bring it upon his head'—covenant curse language. God takes personal responsibility: 'I will...' His reputation is at stake.

Historical Context

Ancient treaties invoked deities as witnesses and enforcers. The Babylon-Judah treaty explicitly named Yahweh. Breaking this oath defied God Himself. This explains judgment's intensity—not merely political but covenant curses. Deuteronomic covenant (Deuteronomy 28-30) specified curses for disobedience: conquest, exile, royal humiliation.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that commitments before others are ultimately to God change our view?
2. What areas have we compartmentalized as 'secular' when God views them as sacred?

Interlinear Text

לְאָמֵן אָמַن יְהוָה כִּי רֹאשׁ אָמֵן |
H3651 H3541 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD As I live H589 H518 H3808

אֲלֹתִי אֲשֶׁר בְּזִה וּבְרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר אֶלְתִּי |
surely mine oath that he hath despised and my covenant H834
H423 H834 H959 H1285

בְּרָאשׁוֹ וַיַּנִּתֵּן יְהֹוָה כִּי רֹאשׁ
that he hath broken even it will I recompense upon his own head
H6331 H5414 H7218

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 5:9 (References Lord): Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Jeremiah 5:2 (References Lord): And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.

Deuteronomy 5:11 (References God): Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.