

Ezekiel 2:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

Analysis

God identifies Ezekiel's audience as 'a rebellious nation' (goy mored, גוי מרד), using 'goy'—typically reserved for Gentile nations—to indicate Israel has forfeited covenant distinctiveness through rebellion. The phrase 'they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day' emphasizes persistent, multigenerational disobedience continuing into Ezekiel's present. The Hebrew 'pasha' (פָּשָׁא, 'transgressed') denotes willful rebellion and covenant violation, not mere mistakes. This comprehensive indictment explains why judgment has come and why exile is necessary—Israel's sin isn't recent or superficial but deeply rooted and longstanding. Yet even in pronouncing this harsh diagnosis, God commissions a prophet, revealing His redemptive purpose. Judgment aims at repentance and restoration, not mere punishment. The very act of sending Ezekiel demonstrates grace—God still speaks to His rebellious people.

Historical Context

By 593 BC, Israel's rebellion spanned centuries—from wilderness murmuring through judges' apostasy, divided kingdom's idolatry, and both kingdoms' eventual exile. The northern kingdom (Israel) had fallen to Assyria in 722 BC, and Judah's first deportation to Babylon occurred in 597 BC. Despite repeated warnings from prophets (Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah), the people persisted in covenant

unfaithfulness. Archaeological discoveries confirm widespread syncretism: Asherah poles at Israelite sites, foreign altars, and evidence of child sacrifice in the Hinnom Valley. Ezekiel's audience needed to understand that exile wasn't divine failure or Babylonian superiority but covenant consequence for persistent rebellion.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when confronted with patterns of persistent sin in your own life or spiritual heritage?
2. What does God's continued communication with rebellious people teach about His character and purposes?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵל	בְּנֵי	אָדָם	שׁוּלִי	אֲנִי	אֲוֹתְךָ	אֵל
And he said	H413	thee to the children	of man	I send	H589	H853	H413
H559		H1121	H120	H7971			
בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֶל	גּוֹי	מִרְדּוֹ	אֲשֶׁר		
thee to the children	of Israel	H413	nation	that hath rebelled	H834		
H1121	H3478		H1471	H4775			
מִרְדּוֹ	בִּי	הֵמָּה	וְאֲבוֹתָם				
that hath rebelled	H0	H1992	against me they and their fathers				
H4775			H1				
פָּשְׁעוּ	בִּי	עַד	עַצְמוֹ	הַיּוֹם			
have transgressed	H0	H5704	against me even unto this very	day			
H6586			H6106	H3117			H2088

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 3:25 (Parallel theme): We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

Deuteronomy 9:24 (Parallel theme): Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.