

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, מַגֵּד גּוֹי), 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' (עֲשָׂרָה, '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

אֲלֹאתָהּ	אֵת	שׁוֹלֵחַ	אָדָם	בָּנִי	אַל	וְאָמַר
And he said	H413	thee to the children	of man	I send	H589	H853
H559		H1121	H120	H7971		H413
בָּנִי	אַל	וְשָׁרָא לְ	מְרֹדוֹ	רָשָׁא		
thee to the children	of Israel	H413	nation	that hath rebelled	H834	
H1121	H3478		H1471	H4775		
מְרֹדוֹ	בָּנִי	בָּנִי מְהַ	תְּאַבֹּתֶם			
that hath rebelled	H0	H1992	against me they and their fathers	H1		
H4775						
בָּנִי וּמְ	בָּנִי וּמְ					
שְׁעָוָה	עָד	בָּנִי				
have transgressed	H0	H5704	against me even unto this very	day	H2088	
H6586			H6106	H3117		

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.

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