

Ezekiel 2:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

Analysis

God assures Ezekiel that even if Israel refuses to hear, "they shall know that there hath been a prophet among them." This remarkable statement emphasizes two truths:

1. Prophetic ministry carries inherent authority regardless of reception,
2. Rejected truth becomes testimony against those who refuse it.

The phrase anticipates Romans 1:20—human accountability before God rests on revelation given, not necessarily accepted. When judgment falls, Israel will remember Ezekiel's warnings, confirming both his authenticity and their culpability. The Reformed doctrine of God's sovereignty in salvation appears here: the Word accomplishes God's purpose whether in salvation or judgment (Isaiah 55:11).

Historical Context

Ezekiel ministered from 593-571 BC, spanning Jerusalem's destruction (586 BC). Initially, exiles dismissed his warnings as exaggerated, but when Jerusalem fell exactly as prophesied, they could not deny his prophetic office. The phrase "rebellious house" (repeated 15 times in Ezekiel) characterizes Israel's covenant unfaithfulness despite centuries of prophetic warnings. Post-exilic Jews recognized Ezekiel's canonical authority, preserving his prophecies alongside Moses, Isaiah,

and Jeremiah. The fulfillment of his predictions vindicated his ministry and demonstrated Yahweh's faithfulness to His word.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does this verse encourage faithful witness even when people reject the gospel message?
2. What does it mean that rejected truth becomes testimony against those who refuse it?

Interlinear Text

אִם H1992	וְהִם H518	וְשָׁמְעוּ H8085	וְאִם H518	וְהִם H2308	וְהִם H2308
		And they whether they will hear		or whether they will forbear	
כִּי H3588	בֵּית H1004	מְרִי H4805	וְהִם H1992	וְיָדְעוּ H3045	כִּי H3588
	house	for they are a rebellious		yet shall know	
	נָבִיא H5030	הֵם H1961	בְּתוֹכָם H8432		
	that there hath been a prophet	among			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 33:33 (Prophecy): And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

Ezekiel 3:27 (Parallel theme): But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

John 15:22 (Parallel theme): If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

Acts 13:46 (Parallel theme): Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Ezekiel 2:7 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.

Romans 3:3 (Parallel theme): For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?