

Ezekiel 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel;

Analysis

"For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel." God emphasizes that Ezekiel speaks to fellow Israelites who share language and culture, yet will prove harder-hearted than foreigners (verses 6-7). Covenant privilege brings greater accountability. Familiarity with truth can breed contempt rather than gratitude. Those raised in covenant community often prove more resistant than pagans encountering truth fresh. This pattern continues: nominal Christians often resist gospel more than unbelievers.

Historical Context

Ezekiel ministered to Jewish exiles (593 BC) who shared language, culture, and religious heritage. Despite these advantages, they proved remarkably resistant to prophetic warnings. The principle appears throughout Scripture: Israel often proved harder-hearted than Gentiles (Matthew 11:20-24). Religious familiarity can inoculate against genuine conversion. The exiles' resistance demonstrated that external covenant membership doesn't guarantee internal transformation. Only Spirit-wrought regeneration creates responsive hearts.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does religious familiarity sometimes harden hearts rather than soften them?
2. What dangers exist in assuming covenant privilege guarantees spiritual responsiveness?

Interlinear Text

לֹשׁוֹן יִכְבַּד יְשָׁפֵחַ הַשְׁפֵּחַ הַעֲמָקָה עַמְקָה אֶל לֹא כִּי
H3588 H3808 H413 to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language
H5971 H6012 H8193 H3515 H3956

אַתָּה שֶׁל וְעַמְקָה בְּיַת אֶל שְׁבָאָל:
H859 For thou art not sent H413 but to the house of Israel
H7971 H1004 H3478

Additional Cross-References

Jonah 1:2 (Parallel theme): Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

Isaiah 33:19 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.