

Ezekiel 3:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

Analysis

"Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee." God asserts that foreigners would prove more receptive than covenant Israel. This shocking statement indicts Israel's hard-heartedness despite extraordinary privileges. Greater revelation brings greater responsibility and, when rejected, greater judgment. This principle appears in Jesus' ministry: Gentiles often demonstrated greater faith than Jews (Matthew 8:10). Grace doesn't depend on heritage but sovereign election.

Historical Context

The comparison (593 BC) between Israel and foreigners echoed earlier prophetic themes. Jonah's Ninevites repented at preaching; Israel resisted centuries of prophets. Jesus repeated this: the Queen of Sheba and Ninevites will condemn Israel's generation (Matthew 12:41-42). The early church's Gentile responsiveness versus Jewish resistance fulfilled this pattern. The principle warns against presuming on covenant privilege while neglecting genuine faith. External advantages mean nothing without Spirit-wrought conversion.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does comparing Israel unfavorably with pagans challenge assumptions about religious privilege?
2. What does Gentile receptivity versus Jewish resistance teach about sovereign grace transcending heritage?

Interlinear Text

אֵל לֹא	עַם יִם	רַב יִם	עַמֻּקַּי	שִׁפָּה	וְכַבֵּד י
H3808	H413	people	Not to many	of a strange	speech
		H5971	H7227	H6012	H8193
					and of an hard
					H3515
לִשְׁוֹן	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	וְשָׁמְעוּ	דְּבָרֶיהָ	אֵם
language		H834	H3808	thee to them they would have hearkened	whose words
H3956				H8085	H518
					H1697
לֹא	אֲלֵיהֶם	שְׁלַחַת יְיָ	הִנֵּה		
H3808	H413	Surely had I sent	H1992		
		H7971			
		וְשָׁמְעוּ	אֲלֵיהֶם		
		thee to them they would have hearkened	H413		
		H8085			