

Ezekiel 33:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.

Analysis

This verse articulates God's righteous judgment against persistent sin and rebellion. From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates God's holiness and justice—He cannot overlook sin but must judge it. The passage shows both the necessity of judgment (God's character demands it) and its purpose (to vindicate His holiness, demonstrate sin's seriousness, and turn people from destruction). Understanding divine judgment helps us grasp gospel grace: Christ bore the judgment we deserved, satisfying God's justice while extending mercy to all who trust in Him (Romans 3:25-26). God's judgment isn't arbitrary or cruel but righteous response to covenant violation and moral rebellion.

Historical Context

This passage was delivered during the Babylonian exile (c. 586-571 BCE) after Jerusalem's destruction. The exiled community grappled with theological and practical questions: Why had judgment come? Would restoration occur? How should they live in exile? The historical context of ancient Near Eastern covenant patterns, conquest and exile practices, and prophetic literature provides essential background. Archaeological discoveries from this period illuminate the exile's realities and the return's historical fulfillment. Yet Ezekiel's prophecies extend

beyond immediate historical context to find fuller realization in Christ and the church, with ultimate consummation in the new creation.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen your understanding of God's character, purposes, or ways of working in history?
2. What specific application does this passage call you to make in your current circumstances or spiritual life?
3. How does this Old Testament passage illuminate New Testament teaching about Christ, salvation, or the church?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי בְּשָׁנָה עֶשֶׂר הַשְׁנִית י

H1961 And it came to pass in the twelfth year

H8147

H6240

year

in the tenth

H6224

אֵל בָּא לְגִלּוֹת נָנוּ לְחֵדֶש בְּמִנְשָׁה ה

month in the fifth day of the month of our captivity

H2568

H2320

H1546

H935

H413

בָּעִיר הַכְּתָת הַלְּאָמִר מִירּוֹשָׁלָם יְפָלֵל יָט

that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem unto me saying

H6412

H3389

H559

H5221

H5892

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 1:2 (Parallel theme): In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,

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