

Ezekiel 33:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

Analysis

This verse continues the watchman theme central to Ezekiel's prophetic ministry. God appoints watchmen—whether prophets or pastors—to warn of spiritual danger, yet individuals bear responsibility for their response. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates divine sovereignty working through appointed means while preserving human moral agency and accountability. The watchman metaphor emphasizes both the seriousness of ministry (those who fail to warn bear blood guilt) and individual responsibility (those warned but who ignore face self-inflicted consequences). This passage prepares Israel for restoration by establishing foundational principles: God's people must heed His warnings delivered through His appointed messengers.

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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

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

אֶת	רְקִעֵל	הַשׁוֹפֵר	שָׁמַע	רְקִעֵל	וְנִזְבַּח
H853	the sound	of the trumpet	He heard	H3808	and took not warning
H6963		H7782	H8085	H2094	
וְנִזְבַּח	וְנִזְבַּח	וְנִזְבַּח	וְנִזְבַּח	וְנִזְבַּח	וְנִזְבַּח
his blood	H0	H1961	H1931	and took not warning	his soul shall deliver
H1818				H2094	H5315 H4422

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:7 (Parallel theme): By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

John 8:39 (Parallel theme): They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

Isaiah 51:2 (Parallel theme): Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

2 Kings 6:10 (Parallel theme): And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

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