

Ezekiel 36:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

Analysis

This verse points toward God's gracious purposes of restoration despite Israel's persistent unfaithfulness. The Reformed emphasis on sovereign grace shines through—restoration doesn't depend on Israel's merit or ability but on God's covenant faithfulness and irrevocable purposes (Romans 11:29). This anticipates new covenant promises where God gives a new heart and His Spirit to enable obedience (Ezekiel 36:26-27). The pattern of judgment followed by grace-based restoration prefigures the gospel: humanity deserves condemnation but receives mercy through Christ's atoning work. God's restoration demonstrates His glory by showing grace triumphs over judgment.

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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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

וְאָחַמְ ל	עַל	שֵׁם	קֹדֶשׁ י	אֲשֶׁר	חָלַל הוּא	בֵּית
But I had pity	H5921	name	for mine holy	H834	had profaned	which the house
H2550		H8034	H6944		H2490	H1004
יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּגוֹיִם	אֲשֶׁר	בָּאוּ	שָׁמָּה:		
of Israel	among the heathen	H834	whither they went	H8033		
H3478	H1471		H935			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 48:9 (Parallel theme): For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

Psalms 74:18 (Parallel theme): Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

Ezekiel 20:9 (Parallel theme): But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

