

Ezekiel 47:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

Analysis

The 'miry places and marishes... shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt' presents sobering exception to universal healing. The Hebrew נֶחֱלָם (bitsah, 'miry places') and גְּוָ'יִם (geva'im, 'marshes') are swampy, stagnant areas resisting the river's flow. These represent those who reject God's grace—given healing opportunity yet remaining in corruption. Salt symbolizes judgment, sterility, and preservation of death (Genesis 19:26, Deuteronomy 29:23, Jeremiah 17:6). This verse teaches that God's grace, while freely offered, can be refused. Reformed theology emphasizes sovereign grace while acknowledging human responsibility—God's effectual call saves the elect, yet those who resist remain under judgment. The marshes' preservation provides salt (useful commodity), suggesting even judgment serves divine purposes. Not all are healed because not all submit to the healing waters.

Historical Context

The Dead Sea region's salt deposits were commercially valuable (Ezra 4:14). Lot's wife becoming salt pillar symbolized judgment (Genesis 19:26). Sowing salt on conquered cities ensured perpetual desolation (Judges 9:45). Jeremiah contrasted the righteous (tree by water) with the wicked (shrub in salt land, Jeremiah 17:5-8). Jesus warned about salt losing savor (Matthew 5:13), representing compromised witness. The marshes refusing healing illustrate the hardened heart—Pharaoh repeatedly resisting God's signs (Exodus 7-11), Israel in wilderness refusing to enter promised land (Numbers 14), Jerusalem rejecting Messiah (Matthew 23:37).

Not all exposed to gospel respond—the same sun hardens clay and melts wax. This verse prevents universalism while maintaining God's genuine offer of grace to all.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Are there 'marshy' areas of your life—stagnant, resisting God's transforming flow—that remain unhealed due to your resistance?
2. How do you balance preaching universal gospel offer while recognizing that not all will respond positively?
3. What does salt's preservation of judgment teach about eternal consequences for those who refuse God's healing grace?

Interlinear Text

בְּצִמְאֹתַי	וּבְגִבְעֹתַי	וְלֹא	יִרְפָּא
But the miry places	thereof and the marishes	H3808	thereof shall not be healed
H1207	H1360		H7495
לִמֶּלַח	נִתְּנוּ:		
to salt	they shall be given		
H4417	H5414		

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 29:23 (Parallel theme): And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass

groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

Revelation 22:11 (Parallel theme): He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

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