

Ezekiel 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

Analysis

Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity. God takes an oath by His own life—"as I live" (chai-ani, חַי־אֲנִי)—the strongest possible guarantee. When God swears by Himself (Hebrews 6:13), the promise is absolutely certain. Here, He guarantees comprehensive judgment without mercy. The defiling of "my sanctuary" (mikdash, מִקְדָּשִׁי) particularly provokes divine wrath—they polluted God's dwelling place, the holy of holies where His presence manifested.

"Detestable things" (shikkutzayikh, שִׁקְצָיִךְ) and "abominations" (to'avotayikh, תּוֹעֲבוֹתֶיךָ) refer specifically to idols brought into the temple (Ezekiel 8 details these violations). Placing pagan images in Yahweh's sanctuary was ultimate sacrilege—offering to false gods what belonged to the true God alone. This pollution of sacred space warranted total judgment: "I will diminish thee" (ani egra, אֲנִי אֶגְרָע)—God Himself will reduce, cut down, and destroy the population.

"Neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity" emphasizes relentless, unmitigated judgment. The Hebrew lo-tachoh eini (לֹא־תַחֲסֹחַ עֵינַי) and lo echmol (לֹא־אֶחְמֹל) stress that normal divine compassion will be withheld. This doesn't contradict God's merciful nature but reveals that persistent, unrepentant sin

exhausts patience. Yet even this severity serves redemptive purposes—severe discipline aims to restore covenant faithfulness (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Historical Context

Ezekiel 8 provides detailed account of temple defilement: elders worshiping images (8:10-11), women weeping for Tammuz (Babylonian fertility god, 8:14), and men bowing to the sun in the inner court (8:16). These abominations occurred in the very temple built to house God's glory, representing ultimate covenant betrayal. King Manasseh had earlier placed Asherah poles and altars to foreign gods in the temple (2 Kings 21:4-7), defiling the sanctuary systematically.

Archaeological evidence from this period includes Judean pillar figurines (likely Asherah images) found throughout Jerusalem, including near the temple mount. Seal impressions and pottery with syncretistic imagery confirm widespread idolatry. The people brought pagan worship practices directly into Yahweh's house, polluting what should have been kept holy.

God's oath 'as I live' guaranteed Jerusalem's destruction would occur exactly as prophesied. Within years, Babylonian armies burned the temple to its foundations (2 Kings 25:9), removing the defiled sanctuary completely. The severity shocked the world—could God allow His own house to burn? Ezekiel's prophecy explained: God Himself destroyed what His people had polluted beyond remedy. Only through complete removal could eventual restoration occur (Ezekiel 40-48).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does defiling God's sanctuary illustrate the ultimate rejection of His covenant and presence?

Ezekiel 7:4 (References Lord): And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 7:9 (References Lord): And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth.

2 Chronicles 36:14 (References Lord): Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 16:18 (Parallel theme): And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

Ezekiel 9:10 (Parallel theme): And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.

Ezekiel 8:16 (Temple): And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

Ezekiel 9:5 (Parallel theme): And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

Ezekiel 8:18 (Parallel theme): Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.