

Ezekiel 5:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you;

Analysis

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you; This shocking indictment declares Israel worse than pagan nations—they failed to keep even the basic moral standards surrounding peoples maintained. "Multiplied" (hemonkem, מְחֻמֶּךְ) can mean "increased in tumult/disorder" or "exceeded"—Israel's rebellion surpassed pagan nations in quantity and quality. They received God's perfect law yet lived more lawlessly than Gentiles operating from mere conscience (Romans 2:14-15).

The triple negative emphasizes comprehensive failure:

1. not walked in statutes
2. not kept judgments
3. not even maintained pagan nations' standards.

This final point stings—peoples without revelation maintained better social order and basic morality than covenant Israel. The Hebrew construction intensifies the shock: having superior revelation, Israel produced inferior behavior. Knowledge without obedience compounds guilt rather than excusing it (James 4:17; Luke

12:47-48).

Theologically, this confronts religious presumption. External covenant membership, possession of Scripture, and religious heritage mean nothing without obedient faith. Worse, they increase condemnation when violated. Jesus made this same point: Sodom and Gomorrah's judgment would be more tolerable than unrepentant Jewish cities that witnessed His miracles (Matthew 11:20-24). Greater light brings greater accountability. Only Christ's righteousness credited to believers by faith satisfies God's perfect standard (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Historical Context

Israel's moral decline below pagan standards manifested in multiple ways. Despite having laws protecting workers, widows, orphans, and foreigners (Exodus 22:21-27; Deuteronomy 24:17-22), they oppressed these vulnerable groups (Ezekiel 22:6-12, 29). Child sacrifice, explicitly forbidden (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5), was practiced in the Hinnom Valley (2 Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:31). Ritual prostitution, temple defilement, and syncretism filled Jerusalem despite clear prohibitions.

Meanwhile, pagan nations maintained certain moral and social standards. Ancient Near Eastern law codes (Hammurabi, Hittite laws) protected property, regulated commerce, and punished violence. While imperfect, these societies functioned with basic order and justice. Israel, possessing superior divine law, descended into chaos worse than their pagan neighbors—a shocking indictment.

The prophets repeatedly highlighted this shameful comparison. Jeremiah declared even faithless Israel more righteous than treacherous Judah (Jeremiah 3:11). Ezekiel compared Jerusalem unfavorably to Sodom (Ezekiel 16:48-50). When God's people sink below pagan morality despite superior revelation, their condemnation is righteous and severe. Privilege unused becomes a millstone of guilt.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Israel's failure to meet even pagan standards challenge our confidence in mere religious heritage?
2. What modern parallels exist where Christian societies or churches behave worse than secular counterparts?
3. In what ways does greater biblical knowledge increase our accountability before God?

Interlinear Text

לְכָה	לְכָה	אָמַר	אָמַר	אָמַר	רְאֵה	אָמַר	אָמַר	בַּמְנֻכָּם
H3651	H3541	Therefore thus saith	H559	the Lord	H136	H3068	H3282	Because ye multiplied
מִן	מִן	הַגּוֹן	הַגּוֹן	רַב	רַב	סְבִיבוֹתִיךְ	סְבִיבוֹתִיךְ	בְּחִקּוֹתִי
H4480	more than the nations	H1471	H834	H5439	H2708	H3808	in my statutes	H1995
בָּלְכָת	בָּלְכָת	וְאַתָּה	וְאַתָּה	כִּמְשֻׁפֶּט	כִּמְשֻׁפֶּט	לֹא	לֹא	עֲשִׂיתֶם:
you and have not walked	H1980	H853	according to the judgments	H4941	H3808	neither have done	H6213	
כִּמְשֻׁפֶּט	כִּמְשֻׁפֶּט	מִן	מִן	רַב	רַב	סְבִיבוֹתִיךְ	סְבִיבוֹתִיךְ	תִּשְׁעִירְתֶּם:
according to the judgments	H4941	more than the nations	H1471	H834	H5439	that are round about		
לֹא	לֹא	עֲשִׂיתֶם:						
neither have done	H3808							

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 33:9 (References Lord): So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

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