

Ezekiel 6:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

Analysis

And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars. The Hebrew *peger* (פֶּגֶר, "carcase") emphasizes the degradation—not dignified burial but corpses left exposed, ultimate dishonor in ancient culture. Scattering bones "round about your altars" profanes the worship sites with ritual uncleanness (Numbers 19:16). The very places deemed sacred become mass graves. This judgment reverses the worshipers' intentions—they sought life and blessing through idol worship but received death and defilement. It also demonstrates measure-for-measure justice: they defiled the land with abominations; God defiles their worship sites with their corpses.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern warfare often involved desecrating enemy religious sites. However, this is God judging His own people's worship sites, demonstrating His hatred of idolatry even among covenant members. The scattered bones fulfilled covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28:26; Jeremiah 8:1-2). Archaeological evidence from 586 BC destruction includes mass graves and unburied remains, confirming the prophecy's literal fulfillment. The ritual defilement rendered the sites permanently unusable, ending idolatrous practices by destroying their infrastructure.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does measure-for-measure justice (defiling worship sites with corpses) reveal God's poetic justice?
2. What does the denial of proper burial signify about the ultimate worthlessness of idolatrous worship?
3. How should this warning against false worship shape our approach to contemporary religious practices?

Interlinear Text

וְנָתַתִּי י	אֶת	פְּגָרֵי	בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	לִפְנֵי י
And I will lay	H853	the dead carcasses	of the children	of Israel	before
H5414		H6297	H1121	H3478	H6440
גְּלוּלֵיהֶם	וְזָרַתִּי	אֶת	עַצְמוֹתֵיכֶם	סְבִיב וְ	מִזְבְּחוֹתֵיכֶם:
their idols	and I will scatter	H853	your bones	round about	your altars
H1544	H2219		H6106	H5439	H4196