

Ezekiel 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

Analysis

And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. God commands Ezekiel to enter the secret chamber and witness firsthand the idolatrous practices. This direct observation provides undeniable evidence for prophetic testimony and demonstrates the severity of temple corruption requiring divine judgment.

Go in requires prophetic engagement with uncomfortable reality. Ezekiel must personally witness the abominations, not merely receive secondhand report. This direct exposure ensures authentic prophetic testimony based on divinely revealed truth. The prophet becomes eyewitness to covenant violation at its worst.

Behold the wicked abominations that they do here combines visual observation (behold) with moral condemnation (wicked abominations). God Himself labels these practices as abominations—utterly detestable acts that violate covenant holiness. That they do here emphasizes ongoing present practice in this sacred space, not past history but current reality.

From Reformed perspective, this demonstrates God will fully expose sin before executing judgment. His judgments are not arbitrary but based on clear evidence of covenant violation. The passage also shows that religious spaces and traditional orthodoxy provide no protection when actual practice contradicts professed faith. God judges what people do, not merely what they claim.

Historical Context

The term abominations (Hebrew: toevot) appears throughout Old Testament as technical term for idolatrous practices particularly detestable to Yahweh (Deuteronomy 7:25-26, 18:9-12). These included child sacrifice, cult prostitution, divination, and worship of other deities. Archaeological and biblical evidence confirms such practices infiltrated Judah during this period.

Ezekiel 8:10-12 will describe what he sees: portrayed on walls are images of creeping things, detestable beasts, and idols, with seventy elders burning incense before them. This represents syncretic worship combining Egyptian animal cults with Mesopotamian astral deities. Israel leadership engaged in practices explicitly forbidden by Torah.

The location—in the temple itself—makes the offense more egregious. This is not ordinary people in their homes practicing folk religion; this is official religious leadership conducting pagan worship in God dwelling place. The betrayal is comprehensive and institutional.

For Ezekiel audience, this revelation explained divine judgment severity. The temple, meant to be exclusive house of Yahweh worship, had become pantheon. God righteous response was to withdraw His presence and allow the defiled structure destruction.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does God command to behold teach about facing uncomfortable spiritual realities?

2. How do religious institutions today harbor abominations behind respectable facades?
3. What is the significance of practices being labeled abominations by God Himself?
4. How does location of sin in sacred spaces intensify its offensiveness to God?
5. What does Christ exposure of Pharisaic hypocrisy teach about God hatred of religious pretense (Matthew 23)?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלַי	בְּאֵל	וְרָאָה	אֶת	הַתּוֹעֵב	וְהַרְעָה
And he said	H413	unto me Go in	and behold	H853	abominations	the wicked
H559		H935	H7200		H8441	H7451

אֲשֶׁר	הֵם	עֹשִׂים	כֵּן:
H834	H1992	that they do	H6311
		H6213	

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