

Isaiah 48:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

Analysis

The description 'thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass' depicts stubborn, unyielding resistance to God - a stiff neck that won't bow and a hardened forehead that won't shame. This echoes Exodus 32:9's 'stiffnecked people' and anticipates Romans 2:5's 'hardness and impenitent heart.' The metaphor shows that sin is fundamentally volitional stubbornness requiring supernatural grace to break.

Historical Context

Israel's persistent idolatry despite repeated judgments demonstrated this stubborn resistance. The same stubbornness that refused prophets would later crucify Christ, showing that unregenerate human nature remains unchanged across generations.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. In what areas of life is your 'neck' stiff - resistant to God's clear direction?

2. How does recognizing your natural stubbornness increase appreciation for God's grace in converting you?

Interlinear Text

בְּרִזֵּל יְגִיד אַתָּה קְשַׁה הִתְּבָנֵת
 Because I knew that thou art obstinate sinew is an iron
 H1847 H3588 H7186 H859 H1517 H1270

נְחֹזֶה: וּמְצַחֵּב עַרְפֵּב
 and thy neck and thy brow brass
 H6203 H4696 H5154

Additional Cross-References

Acts 7:51 (Parallel theme): Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

Exodus 32:9 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

Proverbs 29:1 (Parallel theme): He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Romans 2:5 (Parallel theme): But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Jeremiah 5:3 (Parallel theme): O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Jeremiah 19:15 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

Deuteronomy 31:27 (Parallel theme): For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

Exodus 33:5 (Parallel theme): For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

Psalms 78:8 (Parallel theme): And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Psalms 75:5 (Parallel theme): Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

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