

Isaiah 66:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

Analysis

Divine judgment follows: "I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them." The Hebrew *ta'alaleihem* (delusions/mockeries) suggests God giving them over to what they've chosen—judicial hardening. This echoes Romans 1:24, 26, 28 where God gives rebels over to their sinful desires. Their fears will be realized—what they dreaded will come. Why? "Because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not." Four indictments: ignoring God's call, refusing to hear His word, doing evil deliberately, choosing what displeases Him. The pattern shows progressive hardening leading to judicial judgment. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates the terrifying doctrine that God sometimes judicially hardens those who persistently reject His grace (Exodus 7:3, 13, Romans 9:17-18). Continued rejection of truth leads to God confirming people in their chosen delusions (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). The reprobate face the consequences of their chosen rebellion.

Historical Context

Throughout redemptive history, persistent rejection of God's word led to judicial hardening—Pharaoh (Exodus 7-14), Israel in the wilderness (Psalm 95:7-11, Hebrews 3:7-19), Jerusalem before exile (Jeremiah 7:13, 25-27), and before AD 70

destruction (Matthew 23:37-38). The post-exilic community, despite prophetic warnings and temple restoration, largely rejected God's call, leading to spiritual hardening that culminated in rejecting Messiah. This pattern continues—those who persistently resist God's gracious call eventually experience judicial hardening, confirming them in rebellion.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does persistent rejection of God's word lead to judicial hardening?
2. What does it mean that God 'chooses their delusions' as judgment?
3. How should this warning motivate us to respond immediately to God's call rather than delaying?

Interlinear Text

אָבָּא יְאָמֹר וְמִגְוָרֶתֶם בְּתַעַלְלִיכָּה מִבְּחֹרֹתֶךָ אָנָּא יְגַם
H1571 H589 I also will choose their delusions their fears and will bring
H977 H8586 H4035 H935

עָזָן הַנְּאָזֵן לֹא יְעַנֵּן לְפָנֶיךָ קָרְבָּנִי אֵלֶיךָ כִּי אָתִי
H1992 H3282 upon them because when I called H7121 H369 none did answer
H6030

בְּעֵינֵי רְעֵב וְעֵישׂ וְשֵׁם עַזְּלֵב וְלֹא שָׁמַע וְלֹא דָבַר רְתִיבָה
when I spake H3808 they did not hear but they did evil before mine eyes
H1696 H8085 H6213 H7451 H5869

בְּחֹרֹתֶךָ כַּפְּרַתְּנִי וְבַאֲשֶׁר לֹא
H834 H3808 that in which I delighted I also will choose
H2654 H977

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 65:12 (Light): Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.

Proverbs 10:24 (Evil): The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

Proverbs 1:24 (Parallel theme): Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

Jeremiah 7:13 (Parallel theme): And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not;

2 Kings 21:2 (Evil): And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

2 Kings 21:6 (Evil): And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

Psalms 81:12 (Parallel theme): So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.