

Numbers 15:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

Analysis

Sins committed 'presumptuously' (Hebrew 'beyad ramah' - with a high hand) deserve severe judgment: the person 'shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.' Presumptuous sins are deliberate, defiant rebellion against God's known will, unlike sins of ignorance (v.22-29) which have atonement. The phrase 'reproacheth the LORD' shows such sins insult God's character and authority. This person 'despised the word of the LORD' - rejecting divine revelation knowingly. Hebrews 10:26-29 applies this principle: willful, persistent sin after knowing truth brings severe judgment. This doesn't mean believers lose salvation, but that presumptuous rebellion proves lack of genuine conversion.

Historical Context

The immediate context (v.32-36) gives an example: a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath was stoned to death. This wasn't mere negligence but defiant disobedience - everyone knew Sabbath requirements. The death penalty demonstrated that flagrant covenant violation threatened the entire community's relationship with God. In Israel's theocracy, civil penalty enforced religious law. While the church doesn't execute civil punishment, church discipline (Matt 18:15-20, 1 Cor 5:1-13) addresses flagrant, unrepentant sin to protect the congregation and restore the offender.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Are there areas where you're sinning presumptuously - knowing God's will but deliberately disobeying?
2. How does the severity of judgment on presumptuous sin highlight the seriousness of trampling God's grace and despising His Word?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	דָּבָר	יְהוָה	בִּן ה	וְאֵת	מִצְוַת ו
H3588	the word	of the LORD	Because he hath despised	H853	his commandment
	H1697	H3068	H959		H4687
וְהָפַךְ	תִּכְרֹת	תִּכְרֹת	הַנֶּפֶשׁ	וְהָוָה	עֲוֹנוֹ ה
and hath broken	be cut off	be cut off	that soul	H1931	his iniquity
H6565	H3772	H3772	H5315		H5771

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 13:13 (Word): Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.

2 Samuel 12:9 (Word): Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

Ezekiel 18:20 (Sin): The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the

righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Psalms 119:126 (Word): It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.

1 Thessalonians 4:8 (Parallel theme): He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

Leviticus 5:1 (Sin): And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.

Isaiah 53:6 (Sin): All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 30:12 (Word): Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

Psalms 38:4 (Parallel theme): For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

2 Peter 2:21 (Word): For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.