

# Ezekiel 12:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.

## Analysis

God provides interpretation: 'And say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.' The sign-act's meaning is explained—Jerusalem's inhabitants will experience exactly what Ezekiel dramatically portrayed.

The phrase 'eat their bread with carefulness' (be-de'agah, בְּדַאגָּה) and 'drink their water with astonishment' (be-shimmamon, בְּשִׁמְמוֹן, meaning horror/devastation) describe the psychological trauma of siege. The land's desolation is explicitly connected to 'violence of all them that dwell therein'—judgment isn't arbitrary but response to systemic violence and injustice that characterized pre-exilic Judah.

From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates the principle that sin brings natural consequences. God's judgment often involves removing restraining grace and allowing sin's destructive outcomes to fully manifest (Romans 1:24-28). The violence they practiced against others returns upon their own heads (Obadiah 15).

God's justice is both retributive (active punishment) and consequential (reaping what's sown).

## Historical Context

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The 'violence of all them that dwell therein' refers to social injustice that prophets repeatedly condemned. Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all indicted Israel for oppressing the vulnerable, corrupt justice, false worship combined with unethical behavior (Isaiah 1:15-17, Micah 3:9-12, Jeremiah 7:5-7, Ezekiel 22:6-12). Systematic exploitation and violence characterized the society.

The siege's horror fulfilled covenant curses (Leviticus 26:26, Deuteronomy 28:52-57). Lamentations describes mothers eating their children during the famine (Lamentations 4:10). Josephus reports similar horrors during Rome's 70 AD siege. Ezekiel's trembling-while-eating sign precisely foreshadowed these terrible realities, demonstrating genuine prophetic foreknowledge.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding judgment as consequence of sin (not just punishment) affect your view of God's character?
2. What does the connection between social violence and national judgment teach about corporate responsibility?
3. In what ways do modern societies practice systemic violence that may bring similar judgment?

## Interlinear Text

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אָמַר	אֶל	עַם	הָאָרֶץ	כֹּה	אָמַר	אֲדֹנָי	יְהוָה
And say	H413	unto the people	of the land	H3541	And say	the Lord	GOD
H559		H5971	H127		H559	H136	H3069
לֶחֶמָם	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֶרֶץ	אֶל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	הַיֹּשֵׁב	יְהוָה	יְהוָה	יְהוָה
their bread	of Israel	and of the land	of Jerusalem	of all them that dwell			
H3899	H3478	H776	H413	H3427			
וְיָשְׁתּוּ	בְשִׂמְמָה	וּמִימֶיהָ	יֹאכֵלוּ	בְּדִאגָה	וְיָשְׁתּוּ	וְיָשְׁתּוּ	וְיָשְׁתּוּ
and drink	with astonishment	their water	They shall eat	with carefulness	and drink	and drink	and drink
H8354	H8078	H4325	H398	H1674	H8354	H8354	H8354
מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה	אֶרֶץ	תֵּשֵׁב	לִמְעַן	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה
from all that is therein	from all that is therein	and of the land	may be desolate	lest	because of the violence	because of the violence	because of the violence
H4393	H4393	H776	H3456	H4616	H2555	H2555	H2555
כֹּה:	הַיֹּשֵׁב	כָּל	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה	מִמְּלָאָה
H0	of all them that dwell	because of the violence	because of the violence	because of the violence	because of the violence	because of the violence	because of the violence
	H3427	H3605	H2555	H2555	H2555	H2555	H2555

## Additional Cross-References

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**Zechariah 7:14** (Parallel theme): But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

**Ezekiel 6:14** (References Lord): So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

**Micah 7:13** (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings.

**Jeremiah 10:22** (Parallel theme): Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.

**1 Corinthians 10:28** (References Lord): But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

**Ezekiel 7:23** (Parallel theme): Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

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