

Ezekiel 16:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD;)

Analysis

After all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD)—The doubled oy (וי, woe) signals intensified judgment, a prophetic funeral dirge for the living (Isaiah 5:8, Amos 5:18). Ezekiel uses oy sparingly, making this double woe devastating. The parenthetical insertion interrupts the indictment with divine lament—God's sorrow over necessary judgment.

This verse bridges the catalog of sins (vv. 15-22) with the coming judgment description (vv. 24-43). The phrase **after all thy wickedness** (acharei kol-ra'atekh, אחרי כל-רעתך) emphasizes Jerusalem exhausted divine patience. Jesus wept over Jerusalem for identical reasons (Luke 19:41-44)—covenant people rejecting covenant Lord face covenant curses. Judgment isn't arbitrary but the necessary outcome of sustained rebellion after persistent grace.

Historical Context

Ezekiel prophesied this oracle in 593 BC, about six years before Jerusalem's final destruction. The 'woe, woe' anticipates the double devastation: Nebuchadnezzar's siege (588-586 BC) destroying city and temple, followed by exile to Babylon. The phrase reflects the prophet's pastoral heartbreak—warning those who would not hear.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When God interrupts your life with warnings or conviction, do you hear His sorrowful 'woe' or dismiss it as harsh judgment?
2. What persistent sins in your life have exhausted God's patience, requiring stern intervention rather than gentle correction?

Interlinear Text

וְיֹהִי	וְיֹהִי	אָמַר	כִּל	כָּל	כָּל	כָּל	לְךָ	לְךָ	לְךָ
H1961	And it came to pass after	H310	H3605	all thy wickedness	H7451	woe	woe	H188	H188
									H0

מְלֹא	מְלֹא	אַל-	אַל-	הַיְהָ	הַיְהָ	הַיְהָ	הַיְהָ	הַיְהָ	הַיְהָ
unto thee!	unto thee!	saith	the Lord	GOD					
H5002		H136		H3069					

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