

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 (וֹי, 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, אַחֲרַי כָּל־רָעֲתֶךָ) 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

וַיָּהִי י' H1961	אַחֲרָי H310	כָּל H3605	רָעֵתִי H7451	אֵי H188	אֵי H188	לְ H0
And it came to pass after			all thy wickedness	woe	woe	
נָא H5002	אֲדָנִי H136	יְהוָה: H3069				
unto thee! saith	the Lord	GOD				