

# Ezekiel 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh.

## Analysis

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**"Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh."** Ezekiel commanded to "cry and howl" (zaaq veheilel, צעק וְהִלֵּל) expresses appropriate grief over coming judgment. The sword threatens both people and princes—comprehensive judgment sparing no rank. "Smite upon thy thigh" was ancient gesture of grief and horror (Jeremiah 31:19). True prophets grieve judgment's necessity even while faithfully proclaiming it—they don't celebrate others' suffering.

## Historical Context

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When judgment came, both common people and nobility suffered. Princes were executed (2 Kings 25:18-21), and population decimated or exiled. Ezekiel's commanded grief models appropriate prophetic response—combining unflinching truth-telling with genuine compassion. This balance prevents both minimizing judgment (false grace) and celebrating it (lacking love). The prophet must proclaim hard truth while mourning its necessity.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does commanded grief over judgment model balancing truth-telling with compassion?
2. What does judgment affecting both people and princes teach about universal accountability?
3. In what ways should proclaiming judgment today be accompanied by genuine grief over sin's consequences?

## Interlinear Text

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קַיִם הִיא בְּנֵי אָדָם כִּי הִיא בְּנֵי קָרְבָּן  
Cry and howl son of man H3588 H1931 H1961  
H2199 H3213 H1121 H120

עַמְּךָ בְּכָל הַיּוֹם נִשְׁׁיָּא  
for it shall be upon my people H1931 H3605 it shall be upon all the princes H5387  
H5971

אֶת קַיִם כִּי וְאֶל מִגּוֹן יִשְׁׁרָאֵל  
of Israel terrors by reason of the sword H1961 H854  
H3478 H4048 H413 H2719

עַמְּךָ לְכָל סְפָרָה יָרָה  
for it shall be upon my people H3651 smite by reason of therefore upon thy thigh H3409  
H5971 H5606 H413

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 21:6** (Parallel theme): Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.

**Joel 1:13** (Parallel theme): Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

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