

# Ezekiel 22:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver.

## Analysis

**Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross** (ben adam hayu li beit-Yisrael le'sigim, בֶּן־אָדָם הָיוּ לִי בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְסִגִּים). The term sigim (סִגִּים) means "dross" or "slag"—the worthless impurities removed during metal refining. Israel, intended to be refined silver (precious metal for God's use), had become entirely waste material. This inverts the expected metaphor: instead of refining producing pure silver, the entire nation proved to be impurities with no precious metal remaining.

**All they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver.** The list of base metals—nechoshet (נְחֹשֶׁת, brass/bronze), bedil (בְּדִיל, tin), barzel (בָּרֶזֶל, iron), oferel (עוֹפְרֵת, lead)—describes the worthless residue left after smelting. The phrase "dross of silver" (siggei kaseph, סִגֵּי כֶּסֶף) is devastating: they are not even useful metals, only the waste byproduct. Israel's covenant privilege meant nothing without covenant faithfulness.

## Historical Context

Ancient metallurgy involved heating ore in furnaces to separate precious metals from impurities. The dross floated to the surface and was skimmed off as refuse. Ezekiel's audience, familiar with this process, would grasp the severity: they were the discarded waste, not the refined product. This imagery appears elsewhere

(Isaiah 1:22, Jeremiah 6:28-30, Malachi 3:2-3), but Ezekiel's version is most severe —total rejection.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

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

## Study Questions

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1. What 'base metals' have replaced genuine godliness in your spiritual life?
2. How does understanding that covenant privilege without faithfulness makes us 'dross' affect your view of religious identity?

## Interlinear Text

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בֶּן	אָדָם	הָיָה	לִי	בֵּית	יִשְׂרָאֵל	סָג יָם	כָּל מֵ
Son	of man	H1961	H0	the house	of Israel	is to me become dross	H3605
H1121	H120			H1004	H3478	H5509	
נְ חֶשֶׁת	וּבַד יָל	וּבְרֹזָ ל	וְעוֹפֹ רֶת	בֵּת וְ	כּ וֹר		
all they are brass	and tin	and iron	and lead	in the midst	of the furnace		
H5178	H913	H1270	H5777	H8432	H3564		
סָג יָם	כֶּסֶף	הָיָה					
is to me become dross	of silver	H1961					
H5509	H3701						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 1:22** (Parallel theme): Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

**Psalms 119:119** (Parallel theme): Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

**Isaiah 48:10** (Parallel theme): Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

**Proverbs 17:3** (Parallel theme): The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

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