

Ezekiel 24:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.

Analysis

So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died reports the sequence: Ezekiel prophesied, then that evening his wife died suddenly. And I did in the morning as I was commanded recounts his obedience. The next morning, he appeared publicly without mourning. The swiftness (evening death, morning appearance) allowed no time for processing grief privately. His immediate obedience despite crushing personal loss demonstrates prophetic commitment—God's message takes precedence over personal comfort. This isn't cold heartedness but costly obedience. True discipleship sometimes requires sacrificing legitimate goods for kingdom purposes.

Historical Context

Ezekiel functioned among the exiles as God's messenger and sign. His marriage was real, his love genuine, his loss devastating. Yet he subordinated personal grief to prophetic calling. This mirrors Christ's teaching that disciples must love Him more than family (Matthew 10:37; Luke 14:26). Following God may cost us what we treasure most.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What might God require us to surrender for kingdom purposes?
2. How do we balance personal grief with kingdom responsibilities?
3. What does Ezekiel's costly obedience teach about the cost of discipleship?

Interlinear Text

תַּעֲשֶׂה הָ	לֹא	אֵל בֵּל	מֵתִים	דָּם	הָאֵן קוֹ
make	H3808	no mourning	for the dead	Forbear	to cry
H6213		H60	H4191	H1826	H602
תַּשֵּׁ יָם	וְנָעַל יָךְ	עַל יָךְ	חֵב וְשׁ	פָּאֲרָךְ	
upon thee and put on	thy shoes		bind	the tire of thine head	
H7760	H5275	H5921	H2280	H6287	
אֲנִשׁ יָם	וְלֹ חֵם	שִׁפּוֹם	עַל	תַּעֲטֶה	וְלֹ אֵ
not the bread	not thy lips			and cover	upon thy feet
H376	H3899	H8222	H5921	H5844	H7272
				H3808	
					תֹּאכֵל: לֹ אֵ
				and eat	
				H398	H3808

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 9:4 (Parallel theme): They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

2 Samuel 15:30 (Parallel theme): And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot:

and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

Leviticus 10:6 (Parallel theme): And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

Leviticus 21:10 (Parallel theme): And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;