

Ezekiel 24:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips,
nor eat the bread of men.

Analysis

And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men—Ezekiel's strange behavior (not mourning his wife's death, vv. 15-18) becomes a prophetic sign for the exiles. לוֹ' תִּטָּתֵן (lō' ta'tû, 'you shall not cover') refers to the customary mourning practice of covering the lower face. לֶחֶם אֲנָשִׁים (lehem ānāshîm, 'bread of men') was food brought by mourners to comfort the bereaved.

When Jerusalem falls, the exiles' grief will be so overwhelming, so unnatural (losing the temple, God's dwelling), that normal mourning rituals will seem inadequate. Their shock will paralyze traditional expressions of grief. This prophecy came true: when news reached Babylon in 585 BC (33:21), the people were stunned into silence, realizing God's Word through Ezekiel was devastatingly accurate.

Historical Context

Ezekiel's wife died suddenly on the very day God announced Jerusalem's siege would begin (24:1-2, 15-18). This was 588 BC. God commanded Ezekiel not to mourn publicly, making him a living object lesson. Ancient Near Eastern mourning was elaborate: wailing, tearing clothes, covering the head, removing shoes, sitting in ashes.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How did God use Ezekiel's personal tragedy to communicate His message?
2. When have you experienced grief so profound that normal expressions seemed inadequate?
3. What does this passage teach about God's sovereignty even over our deepest losses?

Interlinear Text

עַשׂ יְתִי	כַּאֲשֶׁר	עַשׂ יְתִי	עַל	שְׁפִם	לֹא	תַעֲטֶוּ
And ye shall do	H834	And ye shall do	H5921	your lips	H3808	ye shall not cover
H6213		H6213		H8222		H5844
וְלֶחֶם	אֲנֹשׁ יִמּוֹ	לֹא	תֹאכְלוּ:			
the bread	H376	H3808	nor eat			
H3899			H398			