

# Ezekiel 39:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

## Analysis

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**They shall sever out men of continual employment**—The Hebrew *anshei tamid* (אֲנָשִׁים תָּמִיד) literally means "men of continuity" or "permanent duty," indicating professional burial crews appointed for sustained work. The verb *havdilu* (הַבְדִילוּ, "sever out") means to separate or set apart, the same term used for Levitical consecration, suggesting this cleansing work carries quasi-sacred status.

**Passing through the land with the passengers** indicates systematic surveying of the entire territory. **After the end of seven months shall they search** reveals two phases: initial mass burial (seven months), then careful inspection to find overlooked remains. The Hebrew *chaqar* (חָקַר, "search") implies thorough investigation, used elsewhere for mining precious metals (Job 28:3). This meticulous approach demonstrates that covenant holiness requires exhaustive diligence, not casual approximation.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Israelite purity laws required identifying and removing all sources of defilement. The two-phase process (mass burial followed by careful search) reflects practical wisdom: after initial removal of obvious corpses, detailed inspection could locate scattered remains.

Appointing permanent crews (anshei tamid) parallels Levitical duties of maintaining temple purity. This suggests the land's cleansing holds covenantal significance comparable to sanctuary purification. For exilic readers, this promised comprehensive restoration—not partial recovery but thorough renewal fitting for God's renewed presence. The phrase echoes Joshua's conquest instructions to thoroughly dispossess Canaan, suggesting Gog's defeat accomplishes what incomplete earlier obedience had not.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. Why does God require such exhaustive thoroughness rather than declaring the land ceremonially clean by divine fiat?
2. How does the two-phase purification process (initial cleansing plus careful searching) apply to pursuing holiness in the Christian life?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאַנְשָׁ	תִּמְמָ	יְלֹ	יְבַדֵּ	יְמָ	פָּעַבְרִ
H376	of continual employment	H8548	And they shall sever out	H914	passing through
עַל	הַפּוֹתֶרֶת	יְמָ	אֲתָה	פָּעַבְרִ	יְמָ
of the earth	to bury	H853	passing through	H853	those that remain
H776	H6912	H5674		H3498	H5921
עַל	פָּנָ	בָּאַ	לְטַבֵּה	מִלְאָ	שְׁבַעַת
upon the face	of the earth	H776	to cleanse	H7097	of seven
H6440		H2891	it after the end	H7651	months
					H2320
יְחַקְרֹ					
shall they search					
H2713					

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