

Ezekiel 44:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves.

Analysis

And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves—Priestly purity laws: אֶל־מֵת אָדָם לֹא יָבֹוּ לְטֹמֹאֶה ('el-mēt 'ādām lō' yābō' lēṭom'āh, 'to a dead person he shall not come for defilement'). Contact with corpses caused ritual uncleanness (Numbers 19:11-16).

But for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves—Exceptions for close relatives (Leviticus 21:1-3): אָב ('āb, 'father'), אִמָּה ('ēm, 'mother'), בֶּן (bēn, 'son'), בַּת (bat, 'daughter'), אָח ('āḥ, 'brother'), אֲחֻיָּה ('āḥîṭ, 'sister'). Even in grief, holiness requirements persist, but family obligations are recognized. This balance—maintaining purity while honoring family—demonstrates Torah's pastoral wisdom, fulfilled in Christ who touches death (cleansing lepers, raising the dead) without defilement because He conquers death (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

Historical Context

Priestly purity regulations (Leviticus 21-22) set priests apart for holy service. Corpse contamination was most severe uncleanness, requiring seven-day purification (Numbers 19). High priests couldn't defile themselves even for parents (Leviticus 21:11); regular priests had limited exceptions. Ezekiel's vision maintains

these distinctions, showing that holiness remains essential in millennial worship, though Christ has made ultimate purification.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does corpse defilement teach about sin and death's incompatibility with God's holiness?
2. How does allowing family exceptions demonstrate Torah's balance of holiness and compassion?
3. How does Jesus touching dead bodies without defilement demonstrate His power over death?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵל H413	מֵת at no dead H4191	אָדָם person H120	לֹא H3808	וְיָבֹאוּ And they shall come H935	וְיִטְמְאוּ they may defile H2930	כִּי H3588	אָדָם H518
	לָא ב themselves but for father H1	וּלְאִמָּה or for mother H517	וּלְבֶן or for son H1121	וּלְבַת or for daughter H1323	לְאָח for brother H251		
וְלֵאחָוָת or for sister H269	אֲשֶׁר H834	לֹא H3808	הָיְתָה H1961	לֹא יֵשׁ that hath had no husband H376	וְיִטְמְאוּ they may defile H2930		

