

Ezekiel 7:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Analysis

The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD. This verse concludes Ezekiel's prophecy of comprehensive judgment on Judah. The Hebrew melek (מלך, "king") and nasi (נשיא, "prince") represent the highest levels of leadership, while "people of the land" encompasses the general population—no class or rank will escape the coming devastation.

"Shall mourn" (yitabbal) and "clothed with desolation" (yilbash shemamah) use mourning imagery—the leaders will wear their judgment like a garment. "The hands of the people of the land shall be troubled" (tibbahalnah) describes paralysis and trembling, the inability to act or resist. God's judgment affects every level of society because sin had permeated every level.

"I will do unto them after their way" establishes the principle of measure-for-measure justice—they will experience the consequences of their own choices. "According to their deserts" (kemishpetam) emphasizes deserved judgment. The final clause, "they shall know that I am the LORD" (veyade-u kiy-ani Yahweh),

appears repeatedly in Ezekiel as the purpose of divine action—even judgment serves to reveal God's identity and sovereignty. When mercy and warning fail to produce knowledge of God, judgment becomes the instructor. This is not vindictiveness but the necessary consequence of persistent rebellion against the holy God.

Historical Context

This prophecy dates to approximately 592 BCE, several years before Jerusalem's final destruction in 586 BCE. Ezekiel ministered among the exiles already in Babylon, while false prophets in Jerusalem promised peace and restoration. The political situation was desperate—Judah was caught between Egyptian and Babylonian power struggles, with leadership vacillating between alliances and rebellions.

The "king" at this time was Zedekiah, Babylon's puppet ruler after Jehoiachin's deportation. The "princes" were nobles and officials who consistently gave poor counsel, encouraging trust in Egypt rather than submission to Babylon (or better, repentance before God). Jeremiah's contemporary prophecies confirm the widespread denial of impending judgment despite clear warnings.

When Babylon's armies finally surrounded Jerusalem (588-586 BCE), the scenario described in this verse came to pass with devastating accuracy. 2 Kings 24-25 and Lamentations record the fulfillment: Zedekiah attempted escape but was captured, his sons killed before him, then his eyes put out; the city was destroyed; survivors were exiled. The comprehensive nature of the catastrophe—affecting king, officials, and common people—vindicated Ezekiel's prophecy. This historical fulfillment establishes the reliability of prophetic word and the certainty that God keeps His warnings.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the principle that God judges people 'after their way' reveal both His justice and the natural consequences of sin?
2. What does this passage teach about the limits of human power and security when judgment comes from God?
3. In what ways does God use both blessing and judgment to reveal His identity and character to humanity?
4. How should the certainty of historical fulfillment of this prophecy shape our confidence in other biblical prophecies?
5. What warnings does this passage offer regarding the dangers of false security and ignoring prophetic warnings?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמַם	ה	לֹבֶשׁ	נִשְׁיָא	וְתַאֲבֶל	לְבָטֵח	לְגֹתֶר
The king	shall mourn	and the prince	shall be clothed	with desolation		
H4428	H56	H5387	H3847	H8077		
מִדְרָכֵךְ	בְּ	תַּבְּכֶה	לְבָתָה	פָּאֵץ	עַם	יְהִידִים
and the hands	of the people	of the land	shall be troubled	unto them	after their way	
H3027	H5971	H776	H926	H1870		
אָשָׁפֵט	בְּ	וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ	מִ	אָשָׁפֵט	בְּ	אָשָׁפֵט
I will do	H853	and according to their deserts		will I judge		
H6213		H4941		H8199		
יְהִיָּה	כִּי	אָנֹכִי	כִּי	אָנֹכִי	כִּי	יְהִיָּה
that I am the LORD						
H3045	H3588	H589	H3068			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 18:30 (Judgment): Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

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