

# Psalms 102:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping,

## Analysis

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Eating ashes like bread and drinking tears suggests that sorrow has become the psalmist's daily sustenance. Ashes (epher) symbolize mourning and repentance throughout Scripture (Job 42:6, Jonah 3:6). This extreme imagery expresses how suffering permeates every aspect of life. Yet even in such depths, the psalmist continues addressing God, demonstrating that lament is a form of faith. Christ, the Man of Sorrows (Isa 53:3), sanctified suffering by enduring it perfectly, offering hope to all who suffer.

## Historical Context

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Sitting in ashes was a common mourning practice in the ancient Near East, symbolizing grief, repentance, and humility before God. The imagery of ashes as food emphasizes that mourning has become constant, not occasional.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do you distinguish between healthy grief and unhealthy despair in seasons of prolonged suffering?
2. What spiritual nourishment do you need when sorrow threatens to become your only 'food'?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	אֶפְרָ	כֹּל חֵם	אָכַל לִלְתִּי	וְשָׁקַלְתִּי	בְּדִכּוֹתִי	וְנִמְסַכְתִּי:
H3588	ashes	like bread	For I have eaten	my drink	with weeping	and mingled
	H665	H3899	H398	H8249	H1065	H4537

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 42:3** (Parallel theme): My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?

**Psalms 80:5** (Parallel theme): Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.