

## Ezekiel Part 31 (Ezekiel 24:15-27)

1. The last word of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem was without a doubt the most painful for Ezekiel.
2. So, how we are to understand the love of God as it related to the prophet and especially to Ezekiel's wife.
3. Any real attempt to answer this question involves a struggle with the meaning, purpose, and existence of suffering in the world.
4. Suffering is a reality in the life of men and women of faith. God does not promise to remove suffering from human experience, but he does promise to sustain the faithful in the midst of suffering.
5. God informed Ezekiel of the imminent death of his wife and used the occasion to prepare his people for judgment.
6. **24:15-17** God revealed to the prophet that his wife would die suddenly and unexpectedly (v. 15).
7. The closeness of their relationship was heightened by the reference to her as the "delight" of his eyes (v. 16). She would be taken with "one blow."
8. This usually described sudden death in battle or from plague or disease. Here it probably meant that she contracted some disease that was sudden and fatal.
9. God told Ezekiel that when his wife died, he was to forego all visible signs of mourning.
10. It usually included tearing one's clothing, removing one's shoes and turban, and shaving the head and putting dust and ashes on the head.
11. **24:18-24** In the morning Ezekiel gave this unusual message to the people, and the same day in the evening his wife died.
12. The following morning Ezekiel did as God had requested (v. 18).
13. The circumstances may mean that Ezekiel's wife already was ill at the time God revealed the impending death of his mate.
14. Ezekiel's unorthodox conduct in light of his grief inevitably drew questions. (v. 19)
15. The question is ironic. With it, the people unknowingly spoke of their own deaths.

16. The fall of Jerusalem resulted in the desecration and destruction of the temple. Jerusalem suddenly “died,” as had Ezekiel’s wife, and with it the temple and worship.
17. The temple was characterized as the “delight” of their eyes (vv. 20–21), the same words used to describe the prophet’s wife in v. 16.
18. Besides the loss of the temple, they lost another “delight,” namely, their sons and daughters. (v. 21)
19. Like Ezekiel, those in Jerusalem would be unable to mourn because they would immediately be taken away as captives to Babylon.
20. Therefore the people would, like the prophet, be forced to “groan quietly” (v. 17).
21. When this happened, it was to be a confirmation of the truth of God’s word and the integrity of Ezekiel (v. 24).
22. **24:25–27** All former restrictions on Ezekiel (3:25–27) would be removed with the fall of Jerusalem (vv. 26–27).
23. From that point, when the prophet’s message changed from primarily judgment to restoration and hope, he would be free to move among the people and to relate his messages.
24. This was a significant word placed after the messages of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem because it anticipated the messages of hope and restoration that begin in chap. 33.
25. This prophecy of a fugitive from fallen Jerusalem and the end of Ezekiel’s silence is fulfilled in 33:21–22 in anticipation of the additional messages of restoration in 33:30–39:29.
26. God is not the author of personal tragedy, but he does often use such experiences as unique opportunities and special windows through which people will come to “know” that he is the Lord.
27. Such a knowledge of God tells of His grace, mercy, love, and blessing but also His wrath, resolve, and determination to deal with sin that brought death into the world.