The Grieving of Ezekiel

Some features to help you determine if you want to *TRY ON* the grief because the circumstances are similar to your own:

- Sudden death of family member
- Fast sickness
- Expectations for grief responses
- Observation of others
- Removal from home
- Quick funeral

Some feelings to help you determine if you want to *TRY ON* the grief because the emotions are similar to your own:

- Shock
- Finality
- Pressure
- Internal sadness
- Loss

A summary about what happened.

Ezekiel had been removed from his home, forced to live in a strange land. While his home was being attacked, he spoke to a group in the morning about it and his wife died suddenly that evening from a plague. The next day the group came to see if Ezekiel would mourn loudly. Instead Ezekiel stayed silent. He did not cry but lamented silently. He did not wear funeral clothes but dressed like he usually did. He did not hide his face or eat the funeral food. The group questioned his decision to respond to his wife's death in this way. Ezekiel shared openly with them why he did this, and the same day his home was destroyed.

Some of the actions of Ezekiel that you can TRY ON to see if any fit you well:

- **Remain silent** - Sometimes people do not cry even when someone close and well loved has died. This doesn't mean that a person does not care. There may be times when you don't want to talk or have language for what's happening. Allowing silence can be a way of honoring the fact that some things feel too big to be contained by words. Silence and internal grief can be loving ways to express sadness. Do not force someone else or yourself to show emotion, especially when a sudden shock has happened.

- **Dress normally** - When huge parts of life have shifted from a death, it can be nice to have some parts remain the same. Following a routine can be helpful. Try dressing normally or eating what you would typically eat.

Some of the phrases of Ezekiel that you can TRY ON to see if any feel right for you:

- [Silence]
- You can join me in what I'm doing.
- The desire of my eyes is gone.

Some ideas you can *TRY ON* with a child:

- **Sit in silence** - It can be awkward to express sadness, especially when words do not come easily. Being present without talking can allow you and your child to process sadness in other ways. Silence can also allow your bodies to calm down after a shock.
- **Discuss routines** - Talk with your child about what usually happens in a week and what your child would like to keep the same. This can be a good time to discuss what changes are already happening and how your child feels about those changes.
- **Join a group** - You and your child most likely are not the only ones experiencing loss. Consider if there is a group with whom you can share how you are responding to the shock.
- **Ground the grief** - Since your brain or body can struggle to process changes, engaging in physically soothing activities can help. Suggest activities like taking a warm bath, swinging in a hammock, baking, or doing other activities with a heavy sensory component.

A summary of what happens next:

Ezekiel does not get his wife back, and his city stays destroyed for the rest of his life. He is called "son of man", which, along with "daughter of woman", was a phrase of sadness. It signified that to be born as a human means suffering and loss. This phrase is one that centuries later Jesus would apply to himself as well because of the loss he too would experience.

Where to find the Grieving of Ezekiel:

Ezekiel 24