

Ezekiel 16:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

Analysis

This verse presents Clothed thee with embroidered work in Ezekiel's extended allegory of Jerusalem as God's bride. God's lavish provision and adornment, illustrating God's grace in choosing, rescuing, and elevating Israel from nothing to covenant partnership. The imagery depicts the foundational gospel pattern—God's initiative in salvation, not human merit or initiative. Israel contributed nothing to her election; God chose, rescued, cleansed, and covenanted with her purely from grace.

The allegory's power lies in contrasting God's gracious actions with Israel's subsequent unfaithfulness (developed later in the chapter). This establishes that Israel's judgment isn't arbitrary but betrayal of extraordinary grace. God lavished love on her, making her betrayal through idolatry (spiritual adultery) particularly heinous. The metaphor of marriage communicates covenant intimacy and the personal nature of sin against God.

From a Reformed perspective, this passage illustrates the doctrines of election and sovereign grace. God chose Israel not because of her attractiveness or merit but purely from divine love (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). Similarly, believers' salvation originates entirely in God's gracious choice and initiative (Ephesians 1:4-5, 2:1-5), not human worthiness or decision. This humbles pride and grounds assurance in God's character rather than our performance.

Historical Context

The chapter 16 allegory addresses Jerusalem's history from Canaanite origins (v. 3 —'thy father was an Amorite, thy mother a Hittite') through David's conquest, Solomon's glory, and eventual spiritual prostitution through idolatry and alliances with pagan nations. God's lavish provision and adornment within this historical retrospective explaining how a nation so blessed fell so far. The imagery would resonate with Ezekiel's audience, conveying both the magnitude of God's grace and the enormity of Jerusalem's ingratitude. Archaeological evidence confirms Jerusalem's Canaanite origins (the Jebusites) before David's conquest, supporting the allegory's historical foundation.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Clothed thee with embroidered work illustrate God's initiative in salvation versus human contribution?
2. What does this allegory teach about the seriousness of spiritual unfaithfulness after experiencing God's grace?
3. In what ways does understanding salvation's origin in divine grace shape Christian humility and assurance?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶלְבִּישׁ הָ	רִקְמָה הָ	וְאֶנְעַל הָ	תְּחֹשׁ
I clothed	thee also with broidered work	and shod	thee with badgers' skin
H3847	H7553	H5274	H8476
וְאֶחָבַשׁ הָ	בִּשְׁ שָׁ	וְאָכַסְתִּי הָ	חֲשִׁי:
and I girded	thee about with fine linen	and I covered	thee with silk
H2280	H8336	H3680	H4897

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 16:13 (Parallel theme): Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

Ezekiel 16:18 (Parallel theme): And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.

Isaiah 61:10 (Parallel theme): I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

Exodus 26:36 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework.

Revelation 19:8 (Parallel theme): And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Luke 15:22 (Parallel theme): But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

Ezekiel 27:16 (Parallel theme): Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and broidered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate.

