

Ezekiel 16:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. Continuing the allegory of God transforming Jerusalem, this verse details the lavish provision and status God bestowed through covenant relationship. Every material blessing represents God grace elevating Israel from nothing to royal magnificence.

Decked with gold and silver describes adornment with precious metals, symbols of wealth and status. Thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work indicates the finest clothing available in ancient world. Fine linen was expensive import; broidered work required skilled craftsmanship. This represents the glory and beauty God placed upon Israel through covenant.

Thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil lists luxury foods contrasting sharply with slavery diet in Egypt or wilderness manna. These are delicacies enjoyed by aristocracy. Thou wast exceeding beautiful acknowledges the transformation—from abandoned infant to stunning beauty. Thou didst prosper into a kingdom indicates political elevation. Israel became not just a people but a nation with king, land, and influence.

From Reformed perspective, this demonstrates salvation as comprehensive transformation. God finds us in our sin (nothing), cleanses us, clothes us in Christ righteousness (beautiful garments), feeds us spiritual nourishment (rich food), and makes us royal priesthood (kingdom). All is gift, none is deserved.

Historical Context

This allegory references historical reality. God did elevate Israel from Egyptian slavery to nationhood under Moses, then to kingdom under David and Solomon. During Solomon reign particularly, Israel enjoyed unprecedented prosperity, international recognition, and material abundance (1 Kings 4:20-21, 10:23-25).

The specific luxury items mentioned—fine linen from Egypt, silk from the east, gold and silver, fine flour, honey, and oil—were trade goods available in ancient Near East. Solomon trade networks provided access to these luxury imports. The temple itself was adorned with gold and precious materials (1 Kings 6).

Archaeological evidence from Israelite monarchy period confirms relative prosperity and international trade. Excavations show Hebrew developed luxury goods industry, agricultural surplus, and participation in Mediterranean trade networks. Israel did indeed prosper into a kingdom recognized among nations.

However, the tragedy follows in subsequent verses: Israel used God gifts for idolatry and spiritual prostitution. The magnificent provision makes subsequent unfaithfulness more reprehensible and judgment more justified. Privilege brings responsibility; greater gifts entail greater accountability.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does God lavish provision teach about grace as utterly undeserved favor?
2. How should material blessings lead to gratitude rather than pride or idolatry?
3. In what ways do people misuse God gifts for purposes contrary to His glory?
4. What is the relationship between covenant blessing and covenant responsibility?
5. How does Christ provide spiritual riches that earthly prosperity can only faintly picture?

Interlinear Text

וְתַעֲלֵךְ	שָׁשִׁי	וּמְלָבָשָׁן	יְפֵבָשָׁה	וְתַעֲלֵךְ
Thus wast thou decked	with gold	and silver	and thy raiment	was of fine linen
H5710	H2091	H3701	H4403	H8336
וְתַעֲלֵךְ	שָׁשִׁי	וּמְלָבָשָׁן	יְפֵבָשָׁה	וְתַעֲלֵךְ
and silk	and broidered work	fine flour	and honey	and oil
H4897	H7553	H5560	H1706	H8081
אָכַלְתָּי	שָׁשִׁי	וְתַעֲלֵךְ	שָׁשִׁי	אָכַלְתָּי
thou didst eat	and honey	and oil	and thy raiment	thou didst eat
H398				
וְתַעֲלֵךְ	שָׁשִׁי	וְתַעֲלֵךְ	שָׁשִׁי	וְתַעֲלֵךְ
beautiful	and thou wast exceeding	and thou wast exceeding	and thou didst prosper	and thou didst prosper
H3302	H3966	H3966	H6743	
לְמַלְכָה:				
into a kingdom				
H4410				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 50:2 (Parallel theme): Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

1 Kings 4:21 (Kingdom): And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

Psalms 48:2 (Kingdom): Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

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