

Ezekiel 16:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

Analysis

Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh—The phrase gedolei vasar (גְּדֹלֵי בָשָׂר, great of flesh) likely refers to Egyptian military power and cultural influence, though some interpret it as vulgar sexual imagery emphasizing Jerusalem's lustful pursuit. Historically, Judah repeatedly sought Egyptian alliances against Assyria and Babylon (Isaiah 30:1-3, 31:1-3, Jeremiah 37:5-7), trusting horses and chariots rather than YHWH.

To provoke me to anger (lehakh'iseni, לְהַכְעִיטֵנִי)—the causative form emphasizes intentional provocation. Jerusalem's political alliances were theological adultery; trusting Egypt meant distrusting God. Isaiah condemned this exact sin: 'Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help' (Isaiah 31:1). Spiritual adultery always involves transferring ultimate trust from God to created things—whether nations, wealth, or human relationships.

Historical Context

During Hezekiah's reign, Judah sought Egyptian help against Assyria (2 Kings 18:21). Later, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah looked to Egypt against Babylon (Jeremiah 37:5-11). Egypt's 'great flesh' refers to its reputation as a military superpower, yet God called it a 'bruised reed' (2 Kings 18:21) that would pierce the hand of those trusting it.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What 'Egypt's' do you turn to in crisis instead of trusting God—wealth, human relationships, political power, insurance policies?
2. How can legitimate secondary means of provision (work, medicine, planning) become idolatrous if they replace trust in God's sovereignty?

Interlinear Text

וַתִּזְנֶה י'	אֶל	בְּנֵי	מִצְרַיִם		
Thou hast also committed fornication	H413	with the Egyptians	H4714		
H2181		H1121			
שָׁכַב יְהוָה	גָּדֹל י'	בָּשָׂר ר	וַתִּרְבֵּה י'	אֶת	תִּזְנוֹתֶיךָ
thy neighbours	great	of flesh	and hast increased	H853	thy whoredoms
H7934	H1432	H1320	H7235		H8457
לְהַכְעִיסַנִּי:					
to provoke me to anger					
H3707					