

# Ezekiel 16:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

## Analysis

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**And the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.** The Hebrew hephek (הֶפֶךְ, "contrary") means perversion or reversal—Jerusalem's behavior **inverted normal patterns of sin**. The phrase "none followeth thee" means no one pursued her; she pursued them. "Thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee" underscores the economic inversion: she paid instead of being paid.

This repetition emphasizes the shocking uniqueness of Jerusalem's sin. **Her idolatry surpassed ordinary unfaithfulness** in its aggressive pursuit of lovers and willingness to pay for rejection. The theological point cuts deep: when God's people abandon Him, they sink below common sinners in degradation. Those who possess divine revelation but spurn it become more corrupt than pagans who never knew truth (Romans 2:17-24, Luke 12:47-48).

Paul makes this principle explicit: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise" (1 Corinthians 3:18). Jerusalem's "wisdom" in political alliances proved ultimate folly. The church faces identical temptation—using worldly methods to achieve spiritual goals, seeking culture's approval through doctrinal compromise, or marketing Christ to make

Him palatable. Such inverted strategies reveal deeper unfaithfulness than honest paganism.

## Historical Context

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This verse concludes the prostitution allegory (vv. 23-34) before announcing judgment (vv. 35-43). Ezekiel's original audience—exiles in Babylon—needed this stark assessment to understand why God permitted catastrophic defeat. They viewed themselves as unfortunate victims of geopolitics; God exposed them as uniquely depraved covenant-breakers.

The "contrary" nature of their sin explains why judgment was so severe. Nations without revelation face judgment for violating natural law (Romans 1:18-32), but Israel possessed Scripture, prophets, temple, priesthood, and Davidic covenant. Greater privilege brings greater accountability (Amos 3:2). Jerusalem's aggressive pursuit of idolatry despite incomparable advantages made her sin unprecedented. The exiles needed this diagnosis to pursue genuine repentance rather than self-pity.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does privilege in knowing Scripture increase rather than decrease your accountability before God?
2. In what ways might you be 'contrary'—inverting spiritual priorities or using divine gifts for worldly approval?

## Interlinear Text

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וְתַהֲרֵךְ  
unto thee therefore thou art  
H1961

בְּגַם  
And the contrary  
H2016

מִן  
H4480

בְּגַם שְׁוָנִים  
is in thee from other women  
H802

בְּמַזְנוֹת יְהָנֵם  
in thy whoredoms  
H8457

אַךְ אַנְתָּם אַנְתָּם  
whereas none followeth  
H310

לֹא  
H3808

זָהָר הַ  
thee to commit whoredoms  
H2181

בְּגַם  
and in that thou givest  
H5414

נְתָנָה  
H5414

לֹא  
H868

אַךְ אַנְתָּם | אַנְתָּם |  
a reward a reward  
H868

לֹא  
H3808

בְּגַם  
and in that thou givest  
H5414

לֹא  
H0

וְתַהֲרֵךְ  
unto thee therefore thou art  
H1961

לֹא  
H0

בְּגַם  
And the contrary  
H2016

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