

# Ezekiel 16:41

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.

## Analysis

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**And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.** "Burn thine houses with fire" describes the total destruction of Jerusalem—residential areas, palaces, and the temple itself (2 Kings 25:9, Jeremiah 52:13). Fire symbolizes complete purging and irreversible judgment. The phrase "**execute judgments upon thee**" (asah shefatim, מְעַשֵּׂת שְׁفָטִים) means carrying out legal verdicts—Babylon functioned as God's agent of justice.

**"In the sight of many women"** refers to surrounding nations witnessing Jerusalem's punishment—the public humiliation completing her shame. In ancient Near Eastern culture, conquered cities were personified as women; neighboring nations would observe Jerusalem's fate as warning. "I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot" promises the end of idolatry—judgment would purge the seductive sin. **"Thou also shalt give no hire any more"** means the end of tribute payments and political prostitution—exile would eliminate Jerusalem's capacity for foreign alliances.

This verse reveals judgment's redemptive purpose: **to end the sin destroying Israel**. The exile achieved what prophetic warnings couldn't—permanent cure of idolatry. Post-exilic Judaism never returned to pagan worship. Suffering

accomplished what preaching alone couldn't. Hebrews 12:5-11 teaches that divine discipline, though painful, produces righteousness in those trained by it.

## Historical Context

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In 586 BC, Nebuzaradan burned Jerusalem's temple, palace, and houses (2 Kings 25:8-9). The city remained desolate for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12, Daniel 9:2), eliminating both idolatrous infrastructure and political autonomy. Surrounding nations—Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Egypt—witnessed Judah's catastrophic fall (Ezekiel 25-32, Obadiah).

The exile transformed Judaism. Cut off from temple worship, Jews developed synagogue study of Torah. Separation from idolatrous neighbors purged syncretism. Prophetic literature was compiled, establishing Scripture's authority. When the remnant returned (538 BC onward), they rebuilt the temple but never restored monarchy or resumed idolatry. The Second Temple period, despite challenges, maintained monotheistic worship until Messiah's arrival. Judgment successfully achieved its purgative purpose—idolatry ceased.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How has God used severe discipline in your life to purge persistent sin that resisted gentler correction?
2. What 'houses' or structures in your life might need burning to eliminate entrenched idolatrous patterns?

## Interlinear Text

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וְשָׁרֶף וְ	בְּתֵיכֶם	בְּאֹשֶׁר	וְעָשָׂו	בְּנֵיכֶם	שְׁפָט
And they shall burn	thine houses	with fire	and execute	HO	judgments
H8313	H1004	H784	H6213		H8201
לְעֵינֶךָ וְ	רְבָבָה וְתָנָשָׁיִם	וְהַשְׁבִּתִיר			
upon thee in the sight	women of many	and I will cause thee to cease			
H5869	H802	H7227	H7673		
מִזְבֵּחַ הַ	לֹא אַתְּנַגֵּמֵן	תַּתְּנִינִי			עִזָּה:
from playing the harlot	no hire	and thou also shalt give			
H2181	H1571	H3808	H5414		H5750

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 23:48** (Parallel theme): Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.

**Jeremiah 39:8** (Parallel theme): And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

**Jeremiah 52:13** (Parallel theme): And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire:

**Ezekiel 23:27** (Parallel theme): Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.

**2 Kings 25:9** (Parallel theme): And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

**Deuteronomy 13:16** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again.

**Ezekiel 5:8** (Judgment): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

**Ezekiel 23:10** (Judgment): These discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword: and she became famous among women; for they had executed judgment upon her.

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