

Ezekiel 16:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.

Analysis

Every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee—the Hebrew mashal (מַשָּׁל) means both proverb and taunt-song. Jerusalem, once exalted as God's city, will become a byword of shame among nations. **As is the mother, so is her daughter** establishes the principle of inherited corruption and spiritual genealogy.

This proverbial saying would cut deeply in an honor-shame culture where family reputation was paramount. The proverb implies that Jerusalem's wickedness isn't aberrational but consistent with her pagan origins (v. 3—'thy father was an Amorite, thy mother a Hittite'). Despite God's adoption and covenant grace, Jerusalem reverted to her Canaanite roots, validating the adage that she was truly her mother's daughter in idolatrous practice.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern culture placed enormous weight on genealogy and inherited character traits. Proverbs functioned as oral tradition preserving communal wisdom and also as public mockery. For Jerusalem to become the subject of such a proverb represented ultimate social degradation—from God's chosen city to object lesson in apostasy.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What 'proverbs' or patterns from your spiritual heritage do you need to break through grace?
2. How does the reality of spiritual inheritance challenge us to live worthy of our adoption as God's children?

Interlinear Text

כל הָנָה

H2009

כָל

H3605

וַיַּחֲשֵׁל

H4911

עַל יְגַנּוּ

H5921

Behold every one that useth proverbs

H4911

וַיַּחֲשֵׁל

Behold every one that useth proverbs

H4911

לְאַמְתָּר

H559

כַּאֲמָת הָ

H517

against thee saying

As is the mother

בָּתָתָה:

so is her daughter

H1323

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 24:13 (Parallel theme): As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.