

Ezekiel 22:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

Analysis

In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood—shochad laqu'u (שׁׁחַד לְקֹחַ), 'bribes they took,' corrupting justice to enable murder (Deuteronomy 27:25). **Thou hast taken usury and increase** (neshek ve-tarbit, נֶשֶׁךְ וְתַרְבִּית, two Hebrew terms for interest forbidden between covenant brothers (Leviticus 25:35-37), exploiting vulnerable debtors.

Thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion (vatebats'i re'eki be-oshek, וְתַבְּצֵה בְּעֵשֶׂק)—violent profit-taking. The climax: **And hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD** (ve-oti shachakht, וְאָתִי שְׁחַקְתִּי). Economic injustice isn't merely social failure but theological apostasy—forgetting God who redeemed slaves (Leviticus 25:42, 55).

Historical Context

These economic crimes plagued late Judean society. Jeremiah condemned similar practices (Jeremiah 22:13-17), and Amos had earlier indicted the northern kingdom for identical violations (Amos 2:6-8). Debt slavery, land seizures, and judicial bribery created a brutal economy contradicting Jubilee principles. Jerusalem's market reflected Canaanite values, not Sinai covenant.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How is economic exploitation presented as fundamentally theological—"thou hast forgotten me"—rather than merely ethical?
2. What does the connection between bribery, usury, and bloodshed reveal about the systemic nature of injustice?

Interlinear Text

תְּשַׁדְּךָ	לְקַנְתָּה	לְמַעַן	בְּרִית	שְׁפָגָה	בְּשָׁרֶב	בְּדָם
gifts	In thee have they taken	H0	H4616	to shed	blood	usury
H7810	H3947			H8210	H1818	H5392

רֹאשֵׁב יְתָרָב	לְקַנְתָּה	וְתִּתְבָּצֵעַ	רֹעֵי
and increase	In thee have they taken	and thou hast greedily gained	of thy neighbours
H8636	H3947	H1214	H7453

בְּעֵשֶׂר	וְאַתָּה	שְׁכַנְתָּה	נָאָמָן	יְהוָה:	אָדָן	וְאַתָּה
by extortion	H853	and hast forgotten	H5002	me saith	the Lord	GOD
H6233		H7911		H136		H3069

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 27:25 (Parallel theme): Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Ezekiel 23:35 (References God): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

Psalms 15:5 (Parallel theme): He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Psalms 106:21 (References God): They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

Jeremiah 2:32 (Parallel theme): Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

Deuteronomy 16:19 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Deuteronomy 23:19 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:

Ezekiel 18:13 (Blood): Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

Ezekiel 18:8 (Parallel theme): He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,