

Ezekiel 23:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments,

Analysis

And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far introduces new accusation—soliciting foreign alliances and their religious practices. Unto whom a messenger was sent details active pursuit. And, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments describes preparations like a prostitute adorning herself for clients. The imagery is deliberately provocative—Judah beautified herself to attract foreign powers. Washing, eye-painting (kohl), and jewelry all suggest sexual availability. Applying cosmetics appears repeatedly in contexts of seduction or questionable character (2 Kings 9:30; Jeremiah 4:30). Judah's frantic beautification for foreign allies reveals desperation disguised as sophisticated diplomacy.

Historical Context

Judah's diplomacy with Egypt, Babylon, and other powers involved elaborate reception ceremonies. Kings sought to impress foreign envoys with wealth and beauty, hoping to secure advantageous treaties. This diplomatic seduction brought foreign religious influence and compromise, as alliances required acknowledging partners' deities through treaty ceremonies.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we 'beautify ourselves' to attract worldly approval and alliances?
2. What does our attempt to impress others reveal about spiritual priorities?
3. Why is seeking validation from the world a form of spiritual adultery?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵיךְ And furthermore H637	כִּי H3588	שֶׁל וְיָ that ye have sent H7971	לְאַנְשֵׁי יָם H376	בָּ אִו and lo they came H935	
מִמֶּרְחֹק ק from far H4801	אֲשֶׁר ר H834	מֵלֶאךָ נָ unto whom a messenger H4397	שֶׁל וְיָ that ye have sent H7971	אֲלֵיהֶם H413	וְהֵנָּה H2009
בָּ אִו and lo they came H935	לְאַשְׁרֵי ר H834	כִּם צָתָה for whom thou didst wash H7364	כָּתַם לָתָה thyself paintedst H3583	עֵינֶיךָ יָ thy eyes H5869	
וְעָדִית and deckedst H5710	עִדִּיתָ thyself with ornaments H5716				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 4:30 (Parallel theme): And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

2 Kings 9:30 (Parallel theme): And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.

Isaiah 57:9 (Parallel theme): And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell.

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