

Isaiah 30:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

Analysis

Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold (וְטִמַּמְתֶּם אֶת־צִפּוּי כֶסֶף וְאֶת־אֲפֻדַּת זָהָב) (מִסֵּכַת זֶהָבָה)—This verse describes radical repentance through idol destruction. The verb timme'tem (defile, make unclean) indicates treating as ritually impure what was once treasured. **Covering** (tsippuy) and **ornament** (afudat) refer to silver and gold plating on idols. **Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth**—The comparison to davah (menstruous cloth/woman) shocks with its revulsion. What was once beautiful and valuable now disgusts like the most unclean thing in Levitical law.

Thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence (צֵא תֵאֲמָר לוֹ)—The command tse (get out!) is direct address, personifying the idol to emphasize its expulsion. This represents the fruit of God's judgment and restoration (vv. 18-21): when people truly encounter God, idols lose all appeal. Not gradual reform but sudden revulsion. The language mirrors Hezekiah's purge (2 Kings 18:4) and anticipates Josiah's reforms (2 Kings 23). True revival doesn't gently phase out idols; it violently expels them. Jesus's cleansing the temple (John 2:13-17) and Paul's confrontation at Ephesus (Acts 19:19) follow this pattern—decisive, costly rejection of what once was prized.

Historical Context

Judah under Ahaz and early Hezekiah struggled with syncretism—worshiping Yahweh while maintaining idols for political alliances and cultural conformity. Expensive idols (silver and gold) represented both religious apostasy and economic investment. Destroying them meant financial loss and social stigma. Isaiah prophesies that genuine repentance costs, but renewed relationship with God makes the cost worthwhile.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What modern 'idols' do Christians prize (career, image, comfort) that true encounter with God would make us cast away with revulsion?
2. Why does the menstrual cloth comparison shock—and what does this extreme language reveal about God's view of idolatry?
3. How does gradual reformation differ from the radical repentance described here—and which does the gospel produce?

Interlinear Text

וְשִׁמְאַתְךָ	אֶת	צָפֹי	פְּסִילֵי י	כֶּסֶף כְּ	אֶת
Ye shall defile	H853	also the covering	of thy graven images	of silver	H853
H2930		H6826	H6456	H3701	
וְאֶפְדָּת	מִסַּכֵּי ת	זָהָב כְּ	תִזְרֹם	כָּמֹו	
and the ornament	of thy molten images	of gold	thou shalt cast them away		H3644
H642	H4541	H2091	H2219		
כִּי ה	צָא	תֵּאמַר	לֹא		
as a menstruous cloth	unto it Get thee hence	thou shalt say			H0
H1739	H3318	H559			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 31:7 (Parallel theme): For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin.

Isaiah 46:6 (Parallel theme): They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.

Zechariah 13:2 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

Ezekiel 36:31 (Parallel theme): Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Hosea 14:8 (Parallel theme): Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.