

Isaiah 42:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.

Analysis

Those trusting in idols will be 'turned back' and 'greatly ashamed' (Hebrew 'bosh'—deep humiliation). The irony: saying to molten images 'Ye are our gods' exposes absurdity—addressing human creations as creators. Shame is the inevitable result when trust is misplaced in impotent objects.

Historical Context

When Babylon fell to Persia, the elaborate idol worship couldn't prevent defeat. Those who trusted in Marduk and Bel experienced the shame of false confidence, while Israel's God vindicated His power.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What modern forms of idolatry promise security but deliver shame?
2. How can you identify and abandon functional idols before they disappoint?

Interlinear Text

נָסוּ גוֹ	אַחֲרָי	יִבְּשׁוּ	בְּנֶשֶׁת	הַבֹּטְחֵי יָם
They shall be turned	back	ashamed	they shall be greatly	that trust
H5472	H268	H954	H1322	H982
בְּפִסֵּל	הַאֲמֹרֵי יָם	לְמַסַּכָּה	אֶתָּם	אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
in graven images	that say	to the molten images	H859	Ye are our gods
H6459	H559	H4541		H430

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 97:7 (References God): Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

Isaiah 1:29 (Parallel theme): For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

Isaiah 44:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together.