

Isaiah 57:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them; thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it.

Analysis

This verse intensifies the adultery metaphor with shocking intimacy. "Behind the doors and posts" suggests secret, domestic idolatry—household gods and pagan symbols within private spaces (see Deuteronomy 6:9 for the ironic contrast of what should be on doorposts). The phrase "set up thy remembrance" (zikkaron) likely refers to pagan symbols that parodied the memorial tokens God commanded (Exodus 13:9, Deuteronomy 6:8-9). "Discovered thyself" uses the Hebrew gillah, a euphemism for sexual exposure, literally uncovering nakedness (Leviticus 18:6-19). "Enlarged thy bed" and "made a covenant with them" portrays Israel's insatiable appetite for foreign alliances and their accompanying false religions. The final phrase "thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it" uses the verb ahab (covenant love) for illicit passion, showing perverted affections. Reformed theology recognizes this as total depravity's manifestation: the affections, not merely actions, are corrupted. What should be loved (God) is abandoned for what should be hated (idols).

Historical Context

The domestic idolatry described here reflects practices evident in biblical and archaeological records. Household gods (teraphim) were common in Israelite

homes despite being forbidden (Genesis 31:19, Judges 17:5, 1 Samuel 19:13). Foreign alliances, particularly with Egypt and Assyria, tempted Judah's kings to adopt their allies' religious practices as signs of political loyalty. The mezuzah, which should have contained Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:9), was apparently replaced or accompanied by pagan symbols. This private idolatry was perhaps more dangerous than public apostasy because it showed how deeply false worship had penetrated Israelite society.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What private idolatries do we maintain that contradict our public profession?
2. How does our culture's pursuit of political or social alliances tempt us to compromise truth?
3. In what ways can religious observance mask a heart that loves created things more than the Creator?

Interlinear Text

כ	זְכָרֹנָג	רָגָג	שְׁמַת	לְתַ	אֶם	רָ
Behind	the doors	also and the posts	hast thou set up	thy remembrance		H3588
H310	H1817	H4201	H7760	H2146		
מָאתָ	מִתְפַּלֵּ	אֶל	יְתַ			
H853	for thou hast discovered	thyself to another than me and art gone up				
	H1540	H5927				
הָרְמָם	בַּת	מִשְׁכָּב	תִּתְכַּרְתָּ	לְ	מִמְּ	
thou hast enlarged	their bed	and made	H0	H1992		
H7337	H4904	H3772				
אֶפְ בַּתְ	מִשְׁכָּב	וְ	חִזִּיתָ			
thee a covenant with them thou lovedst	their bed	H3027	where	thou sawest		
H157	H4904	H3027	H2372			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 23:41 (Parallel theme): And satest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it, whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil.

Ezekiel 16:32 (Parallel theme): But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!