

Song of Solomon 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

Analysis

Thy neck is as a tower of ivory—(צַאַרְךָ כְּמִגְּדָּל הַשָּׁׁן) —the comparison emphasizes strength, elegance, and preciousness. Ivory was rare and valuable, imported from distant lands. A tower suggests dignity, uprightness, and steadfastness. The neck connects head to body, symbolizing the connection between thought and action, governance and execution. **Thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim**—(עֵינֶיךָ בְּרִכּוֹת בְּחַשְׁבּוֹן עַל-שַׁעַר בְּתִירְבִּים) —Heshbon was an ancient Moabite city with famous pools. The imagery suggests depth, clarity, and refreshing beauty. Eyes like pools are deep, reflective, life-giving.

Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus (אַפְּנָה) —(כְּמִגְּדָּל פָּלָנָן צֹפֶה פָּנִים דְּמָשָׁק) —Lebanon's mountains were famous for height and majesty. A tower 'looking toward Damascus' suggests watchfulness and dignified prominence. Together, these images celebrate the bride's noble bearing, clarity of vision, and majestic dignity. Church fathers saw the neck as the Church's unity, the eyes as spiritual perception, the nose as discernment of truth from error.

Historical Context

Heshbon was conquered by Israel from the Amorites (Numbers 21:25-26) and allotted to Reuben and Gad. Its pools were famous landmarks. Bath-rabbim means 'daughter of multitudes,' possibly a gate name. Lebanon's cedar-covered mountains formed Israel's northern border, representing strength and beauty.

Damascus was a major Syrian city northeast of Israel. The tower 'looking toward Damascus' may reference a literal watchtower or metaphorically celebrate the bride's dignified bearing. Ivory was imported from Africa and India, used for luxury items in Solomon's palace (1 Kings 10:18). Church tradition saw the 'tower of ivory' as Mary's purity (in Catholic tradition) or the Church's strength through persecution. The 'fishpools' represent the refreshment believers find in God's word and Spirit.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the imagery of strength (towers) and beauty (ivory, pools) combined teach about Christian character?
2. What does it mean to have 'eyes like fishpools'—deep, clear, reflective spiritual vision?
3. In what ways should believers be 'watchtowers'—alert, vigilant, and discerning regarding spiritual threats?

Interlinear Text

עַל בְּחַשְׁבָּן וּ בְּרַכְתָּה וְתִשְׁעַת יְמֵינֶךָ לְכַמְּגַדֵּל צָאָת הַלְּבָב
Thy neck is as a tower of ivory thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon H5921
H6677 H4026 H8127 H5869 H1295 H2809

צָוֹפֵה בְּלֹבֶב וּ בְּרַכְתָּה שְׁעַר בְּתִימָן כַּמְּגַדֵּל אַפְנָן
by the gate of Bathrabbim thy nose is as a tower of Lebanon which looketh H6822
H8179 H0 H1337 H639 H4026 H3844

לְמִשְׁׁלָךְ גִּתְּאֵן
toward Damascus
H6440 H1834

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 4:4: Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

Psalms 144:12: That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

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