

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 (צִמְרֶךָ כַּמִּגְדָּל הַשֵּׁן)—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 בְּחֶשְׁבוֹן עַל-שַׁעַר בַּת-רַבִּים)—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 (אַפְּךָ כַּמִּגְדָּל הַלְבָנוֹן הַלֹּבֶנֶן צוֹפֶה פְּנֵי דַמְשֶׁק)—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	בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן	וְכַדְמֹן	כְּעֵינַיִךְ	הַשֵּׁן	כְּמִגְדָּל	לְצַוֵּיךְ	H5921
	in Heshbon	like the fishpools	thyne eyes	of ivory	is as a tower	Thy neck	
	H2809	H1295	H5869	H8127	H4026	H6677	
צֹפֶה	הַלְבָּנוֹן	כְּמִגְדָּל	אֶפְרַח	רַב־יָם	בֵּית	שֶׁעַר	
which looketh	of Lebanon	is as a tower	thy nose	of Bathrabbim	H0	by the gate	
H6822	H3844	H4026	H639	H1337		H8179	
דְּמָשְׁקִי	כְּפִי	יְ					
Damascus	toward						
H1834	H6440						

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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