

Deuteronomy 30:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

Analysis

I denounce unto you this day—the Hebrew higgadti (from nagad, to declare, announce solemnly) carries legal force, like a prosecutor's indictment or a prophet's oracle. Moses functions as covenant witness, formally declaring consequences before they occur. **That ye shall surely perish** uses the intensive Hebrew construction avod to'vedun ("perishing you will perish"), emphasizing certainty and totality of judgment. This isn't physical annihilation but covenantal death—exile, loss of land, and subjugation.

Ye shall not prolong your days upon the land—ironic reversal of the fifth commandment's promise (Exodus 20:12). Obedience brings longevity in the land; disobedience brings expulsion. The land itself would "vomit out" covenant breakers (Leviticus 18:28), as it did the Canaanites before them. This establishes conditional tenure—Israel possesses the land through covenant faithfulness, not ethnic entitlement. God is sovereign over the land; Israel are tenants, not owners.

Historical Context

Spoken in the Moab plains just before Jordan crossing (1406 BC), this warning was fulfilled with devastating precision. The Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria in 722 BC after persistent Baal worship; Judah fell to Babylon in 586 BC after ignoring prophetic warnings. Both kingdoms experienced exactly what Moses predicted—

perishing from the land they were about to possess. This demonstrates Scripture's prophetic accuracy and God's covenant faithfulness (even in judgment).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the conditional nature of Israel's land tenure inform Christian understanding of blessing and perseverance?
2. What privileges or blessings in your life depend on ongoing faithfulness rather than past commitments?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	תִּמְלֹא	זֶה	דְּתַי	לְכֶם	יְמִים	כִּי	תִּמְלֹא	זֶה	דְּתַי	לֹא	תִּמְלֹא	זֶה	דְּתַי	
I denounce	H0	unto you this day	H3588	perish	perish	H3808								
H5046		H3117		H6	H6									
אַשְׁר	רְבָבָה	אַדְמָה	הָעָלָה	יְמִים	עַל		תִּמְלֹא	זֶה	דְּתַי	לֹא	תִּמְלֹא	זֶה	דְּתַי	
and that ye shall not prolong	H748	unto you this day	H3117	H5921	upon the land	H834								
				H127										
אַתָּה	עַבְרָה	אַתָּה	בְּרִיאָה	אַתָּה	לְבָבְךָ	שְׁמַה	לְבָבְךָ	שְׁמַה	לְבָבְךָ	לְרַשְׁתָּה:	לְרַשְׁתָּה:	לְרַשְׁתָּה:	לְרַשְׁתָּה:	
H859	whither thou passest over	H853	Jordan	H935	to go	H8033	to possess	H3423						
	H5674		H3383											

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:26 (Parallel theme): I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go

over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

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