

Ezekiel 31:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs, neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

Analysis

To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height—The purpose (לְמַעַן, lēma'an, 'in order that') of publicizing Assyria's fall: warning other nations. אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִגְבְּהוּ (ăsher lō'-yigbēhû, 'that they may not exalt themselves') בְּקָרְבָּן (bēqōmātām, 'in their height').

Neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water—Even well-watered, prosperous nations must not pride themselves. **For they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit**—All nations face מֵת (māwet, 'death'), אֶרֶץ תַּהְתִּית (’ereṣ taḥtît, 'lowest earth/underworld'), בָּור (bôr, 'pit/Sheol'). No matter how great, all empires are mortal. This levels all human achievement: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome—all descend to the pit. Only God's kingdom endures (Daniel 2:44).

Historical Context

Every ancient superpower Ezekiel's audience knew eventually fell: Assyria (612 BC), Babylon (539 BC), Persia (331 BC), Greece (30 BC), Rome (476 AD). Each

thought itself eternal; each ended. The 'trees by the waters' (well-resourced empires) all fell. This pattern continues throughout history, demonstrating that human glory is temporal, divine kingdom eternal.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the mortality of all empires serve as a warning against pride?
2. What does 'delivered unto death...with them that go down to the pit' teach about human achievement?
3. How should awareness of our own mortality and nation's temporality affect our priorities?

Interlinear Text

כָל־
בְּקֹמֶת מִגְבָּה וְלֹא אָשָׁר לִמְעָן
exalt themselves for their height
H1361 H6967 H3605

כִּתְבֵּן וְלֹא מִצְאֵי
To the end that none of all the trees by the waters for they are all delivered
H6086 H3808 H5414

עַל־
עַל־צְפָרָתָם
their top among the thick boughs stand up
H853 H413 H996 H5688 H3808 H5975

כָּל־
כָּל־בְּגַבְבָּה מִן־אֵלֶיךָ מִן־
neither their trees in their height all that drink by the waters
H352 H1363 H3605 H8354 H4325 H3588 H3605

כִּתְבֵּן וְלֹא מִצְאֵי
for they are all delivered unto death of the earth to the nether parts
H5414 H4194 H413 H776 H8482

בָּורָה
בְּתַת וְ
בְּבָבְיִם אֶל אֶל אֶל אֶל
in the midst of the children of men with them that go down to the pit
H8432 H1121 H120 H413 H3381 H953

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 82:7 (Parallel theme): But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Ezekiel 26:20 (Parallel theme): When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living;