

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, *lěma'an*, 'in order that') of publicizing Assyria's fall: warning other nations. אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִגְבְּהוּ (*ăsher lō'-yigbēhû*, 'that they may not exalt themselves') בְּקוֹמָתָם (*běqômātām*, '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 מָוֶת (*māwet*, 'death'), אֶרֶץ תַּחְתִּית (*'ereṣ taḥtīt*, 'lowest earth/underworld'), בּוֹר (*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

כָּל	בְּקוֹמָתָם	יִגְבְּהוּ וְ	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	לִמַּעַן
H3605	H6967	H1361	H3808	H834	H4616
	themselves for their height	exalt			
נִתְּנוּ וְ	וְלֹא	מִן הַמַּיִם	עַד	לְעֵצֵי הָעֵץ	וְ
H5414	H3808	H4325	H6086		
for they are all delivered		by the waters	To the end that none of all the trees		
יִשְׁמְדוּ וְ	וְלֹא	עֵבֶת יָם	בֵּין	אֶל	צֶמְרָתָם
H5975	H3808	H5688	H996	H413	H853
stand up		among the thick boughs		their top	
כָּלם	מִן הַמַּיִם	שֶׁתִּי	כָּל	בְּגִבְהָם	אֲלֵיהֶם
H3605	H4325	H8354	H3605	H1363	H352
	by the waters	all that drink		in their height	neither their trees
תַּחַת יַם	אֶרֶץ הָאָרֶץ	אֶל	לְמָוֶת	וְ	נִתְּנוּ
H8482	H776	H413	H4194		H5414
to the nether parts	of the earth	unto death	for they are all delivered		
בֹּרֶ:	י וְיֹרְדֵי	אֶל	אֲדָם	בְּנֵי יִ	בֵּית וְ
H953	H3381	H413	H120	H1121	H8432
to the pit	with them that go down	of men	of the children	in the midst	

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;