

Isaiah 1:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

Analysis

The simile of a withered oak and waterless garden depicts spiritual barrenness resulting from idolatry. What promised life and fertility yields only death and drought—the inevitable consequence of seeking satisfaction apart from the living God. This echoes Jeremiah 2:13's imagery of broken cisterns and anticipates Jesus' teaching on fruitless branches (John 15:6). Reformed theology sees this as the outworking of sin's curse: life sought independently from God produces only death.

Historical Context

Oaks were symbols of strength and vitality; gardens represented flourishing life. Their withering reverses the intended blessing, illustrating covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28:23-24) for idolatry.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What areas of our lives have become 'withered' through seeking fulfillment apart from God?

2. How does recognition of spiritual barrenness drive us to the life-giving waters of Christ?

Interlinear Text

כִּי תְּהִי כָּאֵל הַלְּתָבֵד נְבָלָת שָׁלֵב
H3588 H1961 For ye shall be as an oak fadeth whose leaf and as a garden
H424 H5034 H5929 H1593

אֲשֶׁר לֹהֶן אֵין מַיִם
H834 that hath no water H369 H0
H4325

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