

Isaiah 13:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

Analysis

Babylon will remain perpetually uninhabited—never settled, no nomads pitching tents, no shepherds grazing flocks. The three negatives (never, neither, neither) emphasize permanent desolation. Even nomads and shepherds—who use any land—will avoid it. This curse of complete abandonment demonstrates divine judgment's thoroughness. What God curses remains cursed. The land itself bears witness to God's judgment on Babylon's sins.

Historical Context

After initial conquest (539 BC), Babylon declined gradually. By Christian era, it was abandoned ruins. Alexander the Great planned to rebuild it but died before accomplishing this. Throughout centuries, the site remained desolate. Attempts to rebuild have consistently failed, fulfilling this prophecy precisely. The archaeological site confirms perpetual desolation—a testimony to prophetic accuracy and divine judgment's permanence.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does perpetual desolation demonstrate the permanence of divine judgment?
2. What does failed attempts to rebuild Babylon teach about inability to reverse God's curses?
3. How do ancient ruins of judged nations serve as witnesses to God's justice?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	תִּשָּׁב	לֹנְצַח	וְלֹא	תִּשְׁכֹּן	עַד
H3808	be inhabited	It shall never	H3808	neither shall it be dwelt	H5704
	H3427	H5331		H7931	
	וְדֹר	וְדֹר	וְלֹא	יִהְיֶה	שָׁם
	in from generation	in from generation	H3808	pitch tent	H8033
	H1755	H1755		H167	
	עַרְבִי	וְלֹא יִהְיֶה	לֹא	יַרְבֵּצוּ	
	neither shall the Arabian	there neither shall the shepherds	H3808	make their fold	
	H6163	H7462		H7257	
	שָׁם:				
	H8033				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 14:23 (Parallel theme): I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

Jeremiah 51:43 (Parallel theme): Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

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