

Isaiah 14:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

Analysis

'All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.' This sets up contrast with verse 19. Other kings, even defeated ones, receive honorable burial—lying 'in glory' (kabod—honor, dignity) in their own tombs ('house'). This was important in ancient culture: proper burial, ancestral tombs, monuments preserving memory. Kings particularly received elaborate burials with grave goods, inscriptions, ongoing cult. This was their 'glory' in death—dignified rest, remembered name. The phrase 'every one in his own house' emphasizes individual tomb/burial site, proper final resting place. This is the normal fate of kings—even in defeat, burial with honor. But not the Babylonian king (v.19).

Historical Context

Archaeological evidence confirms elaborate royal burials throughout the ancient Near East—Egyptian pyramids, Mesopotamian royal tombs at Ur, Israelite royal tombs in Jerusalem. Even conquered or deposed kings usually received burial according to rank. The importance of proper burial runs throughout Scripture—Jacob and Joseph's concern for burial in Canaan, King Josiah's honorable burial, the disgrace of Jehoiakim's burial as donkey (Jeremiah 22:19). To lie unburied was the ultimate shame. The contrast Isaiah draws heightens the Babylonian king's degradation: denied what even other defeated kings received.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does ancient importance of burial reveal about human dignity and the cultural dimensions of honor/shame?
2. How does the Christian hope of resurrection transform attitudes toward death and burial?

Interlinear Text

H3605	All the kings	of the nations	H4428	גּוֹי מִלְכֵי כָּל	H1471	כָּל מִלְכֵי שָׁכְבָּי	H3605	בְּכָבֵד וְשָׁכְבָּי	H7901	בְּכָבֵד וְשָׁכְבָּי	H3519
	every one	in his own house		בְּבַיִתּוֹ:		אֲוָשָׁה					
	H376	H1004									

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