

Isaiah 14:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

Analysis

'Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.' The reason for dishonorable burial: crimes against his own land and people. Unlike foreign conquest (which was expected), this king destroyed his own territory and killed his own people—perhaps through oppressive policies, internal purges, or reckless wars. 'Thou shalt not be joined with them'—even denied common burial with other kings (v.18). The final sentence is principle and prophecy: 'the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned'—wicked rulers' descendants lose renown, are forgotten, cut off. No dynasty, no legacy, no honor—complete erasure.

Historical Context

Some Babylonian kings did oppress their own people—Nabonidus alienated the Babylonian priesthood and people by favoring the moon god over Marduk, contributing to Babylon's fall. More broadly, tyrannical rulers throughout history sacrifice their own people's welfare for personal glory or power. The principle that evildoers' seed loses renown has repeated fulfillment—how many ancient dynasties are lost to history, their names forgotten? Yet God's promise to David (2 Samuel 7:16) stands eternal. The contrast: wicked dynasties vanish; the Messianic line endures forever. Christ is the eternal 'seed' (Galatians 3:16) whose renown never fades.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the loss of renown for evildoers' descendants demonstrate that lasting legacy comes through righteousness, not power?
2. What does the contrast between forgotten wicked dynasties and Christ's eternal kingdom teach about true greatness?

Interlinear Text

לֹא H3808	תִּהְיֶה ד H3161	אִתָּם H854	בְּקִבּוּרָה H6900	כִּי H3588	אֶרֶץ H776
	Thou shalt not be joined		with them in burial		thy land
	שָׁחָהּ H7843	עַמָּךְ H5971	הָרָגָהּ H2026	לֹא H3808	יִקָּרֵא H7121
	because thou hast destroyed	thy people	and slain	be renowned	shall never
זֶרַע H2233	מְרִעִים: H7489				
the seed	of evildoers				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 21:10 (Parallel theme): Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

Job 18:19 (Parallel theme): He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

Psalms 109:13 (Parallel theme): Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

Psalms 37:28 (Evil): For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Job 18:16 (Parallel theme): His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.