

Isaiah 14:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.

Analysis

'He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.' The king who struck others relentlessly ('continual stroke'—unceasing oppression) is now himself persecuted. This is divine reversal—the oppressor becomes the oppressed; the striker becomes the stricken. 'None hindereth'—no one stops his persecution, just as no one stopped his former persecution of others. This is *lex talionis* (law of retaliation) on a national scale: you receive what you gave. The ruler who governed in anger faces judgment without mercy. This warns all tyrants: the same ruthlessness you show will be shown to you, if not in this life, then in judgment.

Historical Context

Babylonian inscriptions boast of brutal treatment of conquered peoples—mass deportations, tribute extraction, puppet rulers, rebellions brutally crushed. Nebuchadnezzar particularly was known for wrath against those who opposed him (see his treatment of Zedekiah, 2 Kings 25:6-7). Yet Babylonian kings' end was ignominious: Nebuchadnezzar went mad (Daniel 4); Evil-Merodach was assassinated; Belshazzar killed the night Babylon fell (Daniel 5). The dynasty that persecuted nations was itself terminated. This pattern of divine retribution runs through Scripture and history.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of reaping what you sow (Galatians 6:7) apply to nations and individuals alike?
2. What comfort does this verse provide to those currently suffering under oppressive authority?

Interlinear Text

מֶכֶּה	עַמִּים	בְּעֵבֶר ה	מֶכֶּה	בְּלֹתִי	סָבֵה
He who smote	the people	in wrath	stroke	with a continual	H5627
H5221	H5971	H5678	H4347	H1115	
רֹדֵה	בְּאַף	גּוֹיִם	מִדָּוֶה	בִּלְי	חֲשָׁה
he that ruled	in anger	the nations	is persecuted	and none	hindereth
H7287	H639	H1471	H4783	H1097	H2820

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 50:31 (Parallel theme): Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee.

James 2:13 (Judgment): For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.