

# Isaiah 14:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

## Analysis

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'Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.' The scene shifts to Sheol (Hebrew: hell/grave/underworld)—the realm of the dead. As the Babylonian king descends to death, Sheol itself is 'moved' (stirred, agitated, excited) to receive such a distinguished arrival. The dead, particularly dead rulers ('chief ones,' 'kings'), rise from their thrones in Sheol to greet him. This is bitter irony: he who sat on earth's highest throne now joins the assembly of dead kings. The reception committee consists of those he resembles—fallen rulers, deposed tyrants, dead kings.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern concepts of the afterlife varied, but generally viewed Sheol/underworld as a shadowy existence where the dead—both righteous and wicked in Old Testament theology before Christ's revelation—continued in diminished form. Kings were buried with honor, supposedly ruling in the afterlife. Isaiah subverts this: in Sheol, all distinctions blur; all are equally dead and powerless. The grand reception is mockery, not honor. Church fathers saw in verses 9-11 description of the realm of the dead before Christ's resurrection broke its power (Ephesians 4:8-10; 1 Peter 3:19).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does the mockery of the king's reception in Sheol warn against pride in earthly status and achievement?
2. What does the gathering of dead kings in Sheol teach about the leveling effect of death and judgment?

## Interlinear Text

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מִתַּחַת שָׁא וֹל	רָגַזְהָ	לֵבְךָ אֶת־	
<b>Hell</b>	<b>from beneath is moved</b>	<b>for thee to meet</b>	
H7585	H8478 H7264	H0 H7125	
בּוֹאָךְ	עוֹרֶר	כָּל־רִפְּאִים	
<b>thee at thy coming</b>	<b>it stirreth up</b>	<b>the dead</b>	
H935	H5782	H0 H3605 H7496	
עַתָּה וְיָדִי	אֶרֶץ	הַקִּיָּם	מִכְסֵּאוֹתֵם
<b>for thee even all the chief ones</b>	<b>of the earth</b>	<b>it hath raised up</b>	<b>from their thrones</b>
H6260	H776	H6965	H3678
כָּל־	מְלָכֵי־	גוֹיִם:	
<b>all the kings</b>	<b>of the nations</b>		
H3605 H4428	H1471		

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