

Isaiah 15:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

Analysis

The drying up of waters symbolizes life, prosperity, and hope draining away. Nimrim ("clear waters") becoming desolate and the grass withering represent agricultural devastation—the economic foundation destroyed. Ancient warfare targeted water sources and crops to create famine and force surrender. The comprehensive destruction ("no green thing") indicates total judgment, not partial chastisement. This physical desolation mirrors spiritual barrenness—life apart from God's blessing ultimately withers. The contrast between Nimrim's name (clear/pleasant waters) and its reality (desolation) illustrates the gap between human naming/claiming and divine reality. Reformed covenant theology teaches that blessing flows from covenant faithfulness; rejection of God inevitably produces curse, regardless of a land's natural advantages.

Historical Context

Nimrim's location south of the Dead Sea made it a verdant oasis in otherwise arid terrain, valuable for agriculture and settlement. Water sources held strategic military importance—armies regularly poisoned wells or diverted streams to weaken enemies. The prophecy's fulfillment likely occurred during Assyrian or later Babylonian campaigns that systematically destroyed Transjordanian kingdoms. Archaeological surveys show widespread settlement disruption in this region during the 8th-6th centuries BCE.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 – God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the drying up of waters serve as metaphor for spiritual barrenness apart from God?
2. What does comprehensive judgment ("no green thing") teach about the thoroughness of divine justice?
3. In what ways do natural advantages prove meaningless without God's covenant blessing?

Interlinear Text

גַּם	נִמְרֵם	וְתִּשְׁמַח	בַּיִת	שִׁבְעָה
H3588	For the waters	of Nimrim	shall be desolate	H1961
	H4325	H5249	H4923	H3588
				is withered away
				H3001
בַּיִת	לְאָ	רַק	לְאָ	בַּיִת
צָרֵ	לְהָ	שָׁא	לְהָ	צָרֵ
for the hay	faileth	the grass	there is no green thing	H3808
H2682	H3615	H1877	H3418	H1961

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 32:36 (Parallel theme): And Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, fenced cities: and folds for sheep.