

Isaiah 22:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house.

Analysis

He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country—

The imagery intensifies: *ṣānōp yiṣnoṣkā ṣenēpâ* (צָנוֹף יִצְנוֹסְכָּה שְׁנֵיפָא) uses wordplay meaning 'wrap up, whirl around, toss violently'—like winding up a ball and hurling it far away. The large country (*'ereṣ raḥḇaṭ yādayim*, literally 'land broad of hands/borders') suggests either Assyria or Babylon, vast empires where Shebna would die in anonymity.

There shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house—Shebna's prized chariots (*markəḥōt kəḥōdeḳā*, מַרְכָּבוֹת כְּהֹדֶקָא, 'chariots of your glory'), symbols of his wealth and power, would become his shame (*qəlōn*, קֶלֶן). His downfall would disgrace not just himself but 'his lord's house' (*bêt 'ădōneḳā*, בֵּית אֲדֹנֵיךָ)—King Hezekiah's administration. Bad stewardship brings reproach on the master.

Historical Context

Chariots were the ancient world's status symbols, expensive military equipment affordable only by the elite (cf. 1 Kings 10:26-29 on Solomon's chariots). For a non-military official like Shebna to possess chariots of glory indicates ostentatious wealth and possibly military ambitions beyond his station. His downfall would validate Isaiah's consistent message: trust in Yahweh, not in horses and chariots (Isaiah 31:1). The irony compounds: the man with no family tomb in Jerusalem

(v.16) possessed prideful chariots that would become symbols of shame. His death in a foreign land meant no proper burial—the very thing his elaborate tomb was meant to prevent.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do Shebna's 'chariots of glory' becoming shameful illustrate Jesus's teaching that the first shall be last and the last first?
2. What does the phrase 'shame of thy lord's house' teach about how leaders' failures affect those they represent?
3. Why does God emphasize that Shebna will die far from his prepared tomb, and what does this teach about human planning without divine approval?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| יְצַנְפֹּךָ | יְצַנְפֹּךָ | צִנֵּף ה | כַּדּוּר | אֶל | אֶרֶץ | רַחֲבָה ת |
| He will surely | He will surely | and toss | thee like a ball | H413 | country | into a large |
| H6801 | H6801 | H6802 | H1754 | | H776 | H7342 |
| יָדָם | שָׁמָּה יָדָם | תָּמּוּ וְתָ | וְשָׁמָּה | וְתָ | מִרְכָּבֹת וְתָ | |
| H3027 | H8033 | there shalt thou die | H8033 | and there the chariots | | |
| | | H4191 | | H4818 | | |
| כְּבוֹדְךָ | קָל וְ | בֵּית | אֲדֹנֶיךָ: | | | |
| of thy glory | shall be the shame | house | of thy lord's | | | |
| H3519 | H7036 | H1004 | H113 | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 17:13 (Parallel theme): The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

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