

Isaiah 25:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.

Analysis

The fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust (וּמִבְצָר מִשְׁגֵּב חֹמֹתָיִךְ הַשָּׁחַ הַשְׁפִּיל הִגִּיעַ לָאָרֶץ עַד)—Four Hebrew verbs describe total destruction: shachach (bow down, bring low), shaphil (humble, abase), higgia (cause to touch/reach), ad-aphar (unto dust). The progression moves from high to low: fortress → brought down → laid low → reaching ground → even to dust. Nothing remains standing.

The 'high fort' (misgav) represents human confidence in military strength and architectural achievement. Walls (chomoth) symbolize security. God demolishes both literal and figurative fortifications—physical walls and psychological confidence. This verse completes the Moab oracle by emphasizing judgment's thoroughness: not partial defeat but utter annihilation. The dust motif recalls Genesis 3:19: 'dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' Fortresses built from earth return to undifferentiated earth. All human construction, however impressive, reverts to original materials when God's judgment comes. Only what's built on Christ the Rock survives (Matthew 7:24-27). Everything else—careers, reputations, institutions, nations—becomes dust.

Historical Context

Moabite fortifications were substantial. Cities like Ar and Kir-hareseth had strong defensive walls. The Moabites trusted these military installations to protect them from Israelite and other invasions. Archaeology shows destruction layers at

Moabite sites from various conquests (Babylonian, later periods), literally fulfilling this prophecy of walls brought to dust. The ruins still testify to judgment's reality.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What 'high forts' and 'walls' do people today trust in instead of God—and how certain is their destruction?
2. How does the four-stage demolition (brought down, laid low, to ground, to dust) illustrate the progressive nature of judgment?
3. What does it mean that everything not built on Christ ultimately returns to dust—and how should this shape our building priorities?

Interlinear Text

וּמִבְצָר	מִשְׁגֵּב	חוֹמֹתַיִךְ	הֵשֵׁב	הַשֹּׁפָל
And the fortress	of the high fort	of thy walls	shall he bring down	lay low
H4013	H4869	H2346	H7817	H8213
וְהָיָה	לְאֶרֶץ	עָדָה	עָפָר:	
and bring	to the ground	H5704	even to the dust	
H5060	H776		H6083	

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 18:21 (Parallel theme): And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Isaiah 26:5 (Parallel theme): For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.

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