

Jeremiah 22:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

Analysis

He shall be buried with the burial of an ass (קבורת חמור, *gevurat chamor*)—no phrase could more graphically depict shame and desecration. Donkeys received no burial; their carcasses were simply **drawn and cast forth beyond the gates**, dragged (Hebrew סָחַב, *sachav*) like refuse to decompose outside the city walls. For a king who built palaces, this fate represented ultimate humiliation: he would become carrion, unburied and unmourned, his corpse defiling rather than being honored.

The prophecy's fulfillment remains historically debated—2 Kings 24:6 simply states he 'slept with his fathers,' but Josephus and other sources suggest his body was cast outside Jerusalem's walls during Babylon's siege. Whether literal or symbolic, the image conveys divine repudiation: those who live like beasts die like beasts. Jesus warned that what profits gaining the world while forfeiting one's soul (Matthew 16:26)?

Historical Context

Ancient kings obsessed over elaborate tombs—pyramids, mausoleums, rock-hewn sepulchers with grave goods and inscriptions ensuring remembrance. Jehoiakim's lavish palace construction (Jeremiah 22:14) suggests he also planned a magnificent tomb. Instead, Nebuchadnezzar's invasion (598 BC) brought ignominious death, his body possibly desecrated by conquering forces.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What monuments to yourself are you building that death will expose as vanity?
2. How does this stark image challenge your assumptions about earthly legacy and honor?
3. In what ways might you be living 'like a beast' while maintaining religious appearances?

Interlinear Text

קִבּוּר ת	חֵמ וֹר	יִקָּבֵר	סָח וֹב	וְהִשָּׁלָךְ	מֵהָ לָאָה
with the burial	of an ass	He shall be buried	drawn	and cast forth	beyond
H6900	H2543	H6912	H5498	H7993	H1973
לְשַׁעַר יְרוּשָׁלַם:					
the gates	of Jerusalem				
H8179	H3389				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 36:30 (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.