

Jeremiah 25:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

Analysis

And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. The phrase ḥallê YHWH (חַלְלֵי יְהוָה, the slain of the LORD) identifies these deaths as divine judgment, not mere casualties of war. The extent miqqəṣêh hā'āreṣ wə'ad-qəṣêh hā'āreṣ (מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ וְעַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ, from one end of the earth to the other) emphasizes universal scope. The threefold denial—wəlō' yissāpēdû wəlō' yē'āsēpû wəlō' yiqqābērû (וְלֹא יִסְפְּדוּ וְלֹא יֵאָסְפוּ וְלֹא יִקְבְּרוּ, not lamented, not gathered, not buried)—describes maximum dishonor.

In ancient Near Eastern culture, proper burial was essential for honoring the dead. Lack of burial was ultimate disgrace (Psalm 79:2-3). The phrase lēdōmen 'al-pēnê hā'ādāmâ yihyû (לִדְמֹן עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה יִהְיוּ, they shall be dung upon the ground) employs shocking imagery—human bodies treated as animal waste, left to decay and fertilize the soil. This reverses human dignity, reducing people to organic matter. It demonstrates the dehumanizing horror of divine judgment against persistent rebellion. Yet even this terrible imagery serves a purpose—warning the living to repent before facing such judgment.

Historical Context

The Babylonian conquests produced exactly this horror. Lamentations describes Jerusalem's destruction: 'The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them...They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills' (Lamentations 4:4-5). Archaeological excavations reveal mass graves and evidence of violent destruction throughout Judah and surrounding nations. The prophecy was fulfilled with terrible precision.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the dishonor of being 'unburied, like dung upon the ground' emphasize the horror and totality of God's judgment?
2. What does the universal scope ('from one end of the earth to the other') teach about the comprehensiveness of final judgment?
3. How should these graphic warnings of judgment's reality shape our evangelistic urgency and personal holiness?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| וְהָיָה H1961 | וְהָיָה H2491 | וְהָיָה H3068 | וְהָיָה H3117 | וְהָיָה H1931 |
| And the slain | of the LORD | shall be at that day | | |
| even unto the other end | of the earth | even unto the other end | of the earth | |
| H7097 | H776 | H5704 | H7097 | H776 |
| לֹא יִסְפָּדוּ | וְלֹא יִקָּבְרוּ | וְלֹא יִסְפָּדוּ | וְלֹא יִקָּבְרוּ | וְלֹא יִקָּבְרוּ |
| H3808 | H5594 | H3808 | H622 | H3808 |
| they shall not be lamented | neither gathered | nor buried | | |
| H1828 | H5921 | H6440 | H127 | H1961 |
| they shall be dung | upon the ground | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 66:16 (References Lord): For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

Jeremiah 8:2 (Parallel theme): And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.

Psalms 79:3 (Parallel theme): Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.

Isaiah 5:25 (References Lord): Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

