

Job 21:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

Analysis

All lie down together: 'They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.' Death as the great equalizer—prosperous and bitter, healthy and sick, all become dust and worm food. This graphic imagery emphasizes mortality's leveling effect. Physical death eliminates all earthly distinctions. This should humble both prosperity's pride and suffering's despair—neither lasts forever.

Historical Context

Ancient burial practices made decay's reality unavoidable. Unlike modern embalming, bodies visibly deteriorated. Worms consuming corpses was observed reality, not merely metaphor. This created vivid awareness of mortality's leveling effect on all social and economic distinctions.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How should death's leveling effect on earthly distinctions shape our values?

2. What does it mean that resurrection restores distinctions that death eliminates (rewards, responsibilities)?
3. How do we live in light of both death's equality and resurrection's differentiation?

Interlinear Text

אַלְכִים: תְּכַס הַיְמָן בְּרִמְמָה וְרַמְמָה
 alike H5921 in the dust They shall lie down and the worms shall cover H5921
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Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 14:11 (Parallel theme): Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

Ecclesiastes 9:2 (Parallel theme): All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.

Job 20:11 (Parallel theme): His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.