

Isaiah 33:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

Analysis

He shall dwell on high (הוּא מְרוֹמִים יֵשֶׁכֶן, hu meromim yishkon)—he will dwell (יֵשֶׁכֶן, shakhan) in מְרוֹם (marom, the heights). **His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks** (מְצָדוֹת סֵלָעִים מְשֻׁגָּבוֹ, metsadot sela'im misgabo)—fortresses (מְצוּדָה, metsudah) of rocks (סֵלָע, sela) are his refuge (מִשְׁגָּב, misgav). **Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure** (לֶחֶמוֹ נִתֵּן מֵימָיו נֶאֱמָנִים, lachmo nitan meymaw ne'emanim)—his bread (לֶחֶם, lechem) will be given, his waters (מַיִם, mayim) are אָמֵן (aman, sure, faithful, reliable).

The righteous person (v. 15) receives comprehensive security: elevated position (dwelling on high), impregnable defense (rock fortresses), guaranteed provision (bread and water). These aren't earned rewards but covenant blessings—God protects and provides for those who walk righteously. Psalm 91:1-2: 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty... He is my refuge and my fortress.' Matthew 6:33: 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'

Historical Context

Mountain fortresses provided security in ancient warfare—inaccessible positions, natural defenses. During Sennacherib's invasion, many Judeans fled to fortified cities or mountain strongholds. But ultimate security came from God Himself.

Psalm 18:2: 'The LORD is my rock, and my fortress.' Jesus promised: 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (Hebrews 13:5). Paul testified: 'my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:19).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does dwelling 'on high' with 'rock fortresses' picture spiritual security in God's presence?
2. What does it mean that bread and water are 'given' and 'sure'—not earned but provided by covenant faithfulness?
3. When have you experienced God as refuge and provider, giving security and sustenance you didn't earn?

Interlinear Text

מְרוֹם יָם הָ וְאֵל H1931	וְאֵל H4791	יֵשֶׁבֶת H7931	מִצָּד וְאֵל H4679	סֶלֶעַ יָם H5553
on high		He shall dwell	shall be the munitions	of rocks
מִשְׁגֵּב וְ H4869	לֶחֶם וְ H3899	נָתַן H5414	מִיָּם יוֹ H4325	נֶאֱמָרִים: H539
his place of defence	bread	shall be given	him his waters	shall be sure

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 32:18 (Parallel theme): And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

Isaiah 49:10 (Parallel theme): They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

Proverbs 1:33 (Parallel theme): But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Isaiah 25:4 (Parallel theme): For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Psalms 107:41 (Parallel theme): Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.

Psalms 90:1 (Parallel theme): Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Psalms 33:18 (Parallel theme): Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Psalms 111:5 (Parallel theme): He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

Psalms 37:3 (Parallel theme): Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Psalms 18:33 (Parallel theme): He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.