

Isaiah 56:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

Analysis

Israel's watchmen are indicted: they are 'blind' (unable to see threats), 'ignorant' (lacking knowledge), 'dumb dogs, they cannot bark' (failing to warn). They are 'sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.' These shepherds who should alert and protect instead sleep and ignore danger.

Historical Context

Prophets and priests were Israel's watchmen. This indictment describes leaders in Isaiah's day who failed their warning function, allowing judgment to approach unannounced.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What are the consequences when spiritual leaders fail to warn of danger?
2. How do you evaluate whether spiritual leaders are truly watching and warning?

Interlinear Text

כָּלְבִּים כְּלָמִים עִירִים צָפִים
dogs all ignorant cities blind watchmen
H3605 H3808 H3605 H6822 H5787

אֲלֵם יִם שְׁכַב יִם הַזִּים לְנַבְּךָ יִכְלֶל
loving lying down sleeping cannot bark all dumb
H157 H7901 H1957 H3201 H3808 H483

לְנַבְּךָ:
to slumber
H5123

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 3:2 (Parallel theme): Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

Isaiah 29:10 (Parallel theme): For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Isaiah 58:1 (Parallel theme): Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Matthew 15:14 (Parallel theme): Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Nahum 3:18 (Parallel theme): Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.

Ezekiel 33:6 (Parallel theme): But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

Isaiah 52:8 (Parallel theme): Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

Ezekiel 13:16 (Parallel theme): To wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD.

Hosea 4:6 (Parallel theme): My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

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