

Proverbs 14:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Analysis

This verse returns to the foundational theme: 'The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.' The metaphor 'fountain of life' (meqor chayyim) presents the fear of Yahweh as an inexhaustible source of vitality, refreshment, and flourishing. In arid climates, a flowing fountain meant survival; spiritually, fearing God provides all needed for life. The purpose clause explains: this fountain enables departing from 'snares of death' (moqeshei mavet)—traps that lead to destruction. Fear of God provides both positive blessing (life) and negative protection (escape from death's snares). This echoes the Two Ways tradition: the way of life versus the way of death (Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

Historical Context

Water imagery carried profound significance in ancient Near Eastern contexts where water scarcity made fountains precious. The metaphor appears throughout Scripture (Psalm 36:9, Jeremiah 2:13, John 4:14, Revelation 21:6). The fear of Yahweh as life-source contrasted sharply with pagan fertility cults that promised blessing through idolatry. Only covenant relationship with the living God provides true life.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How have you experienced the fear of the LORD as a 'fountain of life' providing spiritual refreshment and vitality?
2. What specific 'snares of death' has reverent fear of God enabled you to avoid or escape?

Interlinear Text

תִּירְאָה	נִמְתָּחָה	וְרָקָם	מִקְדָּשָׁה	לְפָנֶיךָ	לְפָנֶיךָ	מִתְּנִנְתָּה	מִתְּנִנְתָּה
The fear	of the LORD	is a fountain	of life	to depart	from the snares	of death	
H3374	H3068	H4726	H2416	H5493	H4170		H4194

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 13:14 (Parallel theme): The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Revelation 21:6 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Isaiah 33:6 (References Lord): And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure.

Psalms 18:5 (Parallel theme): The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

Proverbs 22:5 (Parallel theme): Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.