

Proverbs 14:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.

Analysis

In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince. Berov-am hadrat-melekh (בְּרַב־עַם הָדָר־תֶּמֶלֶךְ, in abundance of people is the glory of the king). A thriving population honors rulers. Uve'efes le'om mechittat razonsulting (וּבְעָפְס לְאִם מְחַטֶּת רָצוֹן, but in lack of people is the ruin of a prince). Depopulation destroys rulers. This proverb addresses governance—good leadership grows populations through justice and prosperity; oppression and folly depopulate through death, emigration, and decline. It reminds leaders they serve people, not themselves.

Historical Context

Ancient kingdoms measured power by population. Large populations provided soldiers, laborers, and taxpayers. Wise rulers like Solomon oversaw population growth and prosperity (1 Kings 4:20). Foolish rulers like Rehoboam drove away ten tribes through oppression (1 Kings 12). Exile left Judah depopulated—a ruined prince. The principle applies to all leaders—churches, businesses, nations—those who serve well see growth; those who oppress see decline.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. For leaders: Are you serving to build up people or using people to build up yourself?
2. How does this principle apply to church leadership, where numerical growth reflects (though doesn't guarantee) healthy ministry?
3. In what ways does God's kingdom grow through multiplying disciples rather than mere organizational expansion?

Interlinear Text

בְּרֹב	עַם	הַדָּבָר	מֶלֶךְ	וּבָא פָס	לְ אֵם
In the multitude	of people	honour	is the king's	but in the want	of people
H7230	H5971	H1927	H4428	H657	H3816
מַחֲרֵת	כְּזֹן:				
is the destruction	of the prince				
H4288	H7333				

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 13:7 (Kingdom): Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing.