

Proverbs 17:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

Analysis

He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction. Ohev pesha ohev matsah (אהב פֶּשַׁע אֶהֱב מַצָּה, loving transgression loves strife). Those who love conflict love sin—strife enables and expresses rebellion. Magbiyah pitcho mevaqesh shever (מַגְבִּיחַ פֶּתַח מְבַקֵּשׁ שֶׁוֹר, exalting his gate seeks destruction). Magbiyah pitcho (raising his doorway/gate) represents pride, ostentation, self-exaltation. Such arrogance invites ruin. The proverb warns that contentious pride leads to destruction. James 4:1-6 connects strife with proud desires, urging submission to God who gives grace to the humble.

Historical Context

Ancient architecture expressed status—higher gates and doorways indicated wealth and importance. Exalting one's gate meant prideful self-promotion. This provoked envy, invited enemies, and attracted divine judgment. Haman built gallows to exalt himself by hanging Mordecai, but died on them himself (Esther 5:14, 7:10). Herod's prideful self-exaltation brought divine judgment (Acts 12:21-23). Pride precedes destruction (Proverbs 16:18).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Do you love strife, finding perverse pleasure in conflict and argument?
2. In what ways might you be 'exalting your gate'—promoting yourself pridefully?
3. How does humble submission to God (James 4:10) protect from destruction that pride invites?

Interlinear Text

אֵהָב	פֶּשַׁע	אֵהָב	מִצָּח	מַגְבִּיָּה	פֶּתַח
He loveth	transgression	He loveth	strife	and he that exalteth	his gate
H157	H6588	H157	H4683	H1361	H6607
מְבַקֵּשׁ	שָׁרָה:				
seeketh	destruction				
H1245	H7667				

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:18 (Parallel theme): Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 18:12 (Parallel theme): Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.

Proverbs 17:14 (Parallel theme): The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

Proverbs 29:9 (Parallel theme): If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.

Proverbs 24:27 (Parallel theme): Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

James 1:20 (Parallel theme): For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

1 Kings 1:5 (Parallel theme): Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

2 Samuel 15:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

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