

Proverbs 19:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Analysis

Human plans and devices (Hebrew 'machashavot'—thoughts, purposes) are many and diverse, but only God's counsel will ultimately 'stand' (Hebrew 'qum'—rise, be established). This proverb teaches God's absolute sovereignty over human affairs while acknowledging that people do make plans. The wise person aligns his plans with God's revealed will rather than pursuing autonomous schemes.

Historical Context

Solomon's reign demonstrated this truth—his great wisdom came from God (1 Kings 3), and his building projects succeeded because they aligned with God's purposes. Later kings who pursued their own devices apart from God's counsel brought ruin on Israel.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you discern whether your plans align with 'the counsel of the LORD'?

2. What does it mean practically to hold your plans loosely while trusting God's sovereign purposes?

Interlinear Text

רַב וְ	מִמְשָׁב וְ	בְּלֵב	אִישׁ	וְעַצֵּת
There are many	devices	heart	in a man's	nevertheless the counsel
H7227	H4284	H3820	H376	H6098
הַ ה' !	ה' יֵא	תִקּוּם:		
of the LORD	H1931	that shall stand		
H3068		H6965		

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:9 (References Lord): A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Isaiah 14:24 (References Lord): The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

Proverbs 16:1 (References Lord): The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

Isaiah 46:10 (Parallel theme): Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Proverbs 21:30 (References Lord): There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

Job 23:13 (Parallel theme): But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

Ephesians 1:11 (Parallel theme): In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Proverbs 21:1 (References Lord): The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Ecclesiastes 7:29 (Parallel theme): Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Daniel 4:35 (Parallel theme): And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

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