

Proverbs 20:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

Analysis

A wise king exercises judicial discernment to identify and punish evildoers ('scattereth the wicked') and executes judgment decisively ('bringeth the wheel over them'). The wheel imagery likely refers to threshing—separating grain from chaff, a common biblical metaphor for judgment. The righteous ruler doesn't tolerate wickedness but actively roots it out to protect the innocent and maintain justice. This reflects God's own governance: He separates sheep from goats, wheat from tares. While the church must not wield the sword, civil magistrates are ordained by God to punish evil and praise good (Romans 13:1-7). Wisdom in leadership requires both discernment to identify evil and courage to confront it.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings held absolute judicial power. Israel's kings were supposed to govern according to God's law, executing justice impartially and protecting the vulnerable from oppression.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Do you exercise appropriate authority to confront evil in your sphere of influence?
2. How should Christians view civil government's role in punishing wickedness?

Interlinear Text

אָפָן: עַלְיָה מ אָפָן: עַלְיָה מ
scattereth the wicked king A wise and bringeth the wheel
H2219 H7563 H4428 H2450 H7725 H5921 H212

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 20:8 (Kingdom): A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

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