

Proverbs 21:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

Analysis

The wise man achieves what brute force cannot—he 'scaleth the city of the mighty' through strategy and intelligence. Physical strength alone is insufficient; wisdom provides superior advantage. The 'strength' trusted by the mighty becomes their downfall when opposed by superior tactics. This affirms wisdom's supremacy over mere power. In spiritual warfare, believers overcome not through human might but through God's wisdom and power (2 Corinthians 10:4). The principle extends broadly: wisdom solves problems that force cannot, wins conflicts that violence escalates, and achieves objectives that coercion attempts. Wisdom harnesses strength effectively; without wisdom, strength often produces destruction.

Historical Context

Ancient warfare included besieging fortified cities. While military strength mattered, clever strategy often determined outcomes—Jericho fell through obedience, not assault.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Do you rely on your own strength and resources, or do you seek God's wisdom?
2. How can you apply strategic wisdom to challenges you face rather than merely trying harder?

Interlinear Text

עִיר	גִּבּוֹרִים	עַל־הַ	חָכָם	וַיִּכְדּוּ	עֲזָ
the city	of the mighty	man scaleth	A wise	and casteth down	the strength
H5892	H1368	H5927	H2450	H3381	H5797

מִבְטָחָהּ:
of the confidence
H4009

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 7:19 (Parallel theme): Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

Proverbs 24:5 (Parallel theme): A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.