

Proverbs 21:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

Analysis

This verse stands as one of Scripture's most definitive declarations of divine sovereignty. The threefold negation—'no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel'—emphatically asserts that all human resources utterly fail when opposed to God. The Hebrew construction uses *לִנְגַּד יְהוָה* (leneged YHWH, 'against the LORD'), indicating active opposition or standing 'before/in the presence of' God. No human strategy, intelligence, or planning can succeed when it contradicts God's purposes. This echoes Job 42:2: 'I know that thou canst do all things, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.' Isaiah proclaimed: 'The LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?' (Isaiah 14:27). History validates this truth repeatedly: Pharaoh's wisdom couldn't prevent Israel's exodus; Babylon's understanding couldn't preserve its empire; the Sanhedrin's counsel couldn't stop the church. Paul teaches that God 'catcheth the wise in their own craftiness' (1 Corinthians 3:19). This doesn't condemn human wisdom per se—Proverbs extols wisdom—but subordinates all human knowledge to divine sovereignty. True wisdom begins with fear of the LORD (Proverbs 1:7).

Historical Context

Solomon, author of most Proverbs, possessed legendary wisdom (1 Kings 4:29-34). World leaders sought his counsel (1 Kings 10:1-9). Yet even Solomon recognized wisdom's limits when opposed to God's will. His own life demonstrated this—his political alliances and marriages, though shrewd by human standards, violated God's commands and led Israel to idolatry (1 Kings 11:1-13). The destruction of

Jerusalem in 586 BC proved this proverb: Judah's kings, prophets, and wise men couldn't avert judgment when the nation persisted in covenant rebellion. The crucifixion provides the supreme example: Jewish and Roman authorities conspired to kill Jesus, thinking to eliminate a threat. Yet Acts 2:23 declares: 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' Their 'wisdom' accomplished God's redemptive plan. Church history records countless attempts to destroy Christianity through persecution, heresy, and corruption—all failing because 'if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it' (Acts 5:39).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. In what areas are you tempted to rely on human wisdom rather than submitting to God's revealed will?
2. How does this verse comfort you when facing opposition from powerful, intelligent people?
3. What is the difference between godly wisdom that submits to the LORD versus worldly wisdom that opposes Him?

Interlinear Text

אֵין	חָכְמָה	אֵין	תְּבוּנָה	אֵין	עֵצָה	לְנֶגֶד
H369	There is no wisdom	H369	nor understanding	H369	nor counsel	H5048
	H2451		H8394		H6098	

יְהוָה:

against the LORD

H3068

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:39 (Parallel theme): But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

Jeremiah 9:23 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

Isaiah 14:27 (References Lord): For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

Proverbs 19:21 (References Lord): There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

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