

Proverbs 22:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

Analysis

The wicked serves as 'ransom' for the righteous—experiencing judgment meant for God's people. Throughout history, God judges Israel's enemies while delivering His people. The principle appears in Esther (Haman executed instead of Mordecai) and in Egypt (firstborn slain while Israel spared). This doesn't mean the righteous deserve deliverance; rather, God providentially arranges circumstances to preserve His people while judging the wicked. The ultimate fulfillment is Christ—though this verse speaks of wicked for righteous, the principle's reversal points to the Righteous One ransoming sinners. God's justice ensures the wicked don't prosper indefinitely; their plots rebound upon themselves.

Historical Context

Israel's history repeatedly demonstrates this: Egyptian army drowned, Assyrians destroyed, Babylonians conquered. God judges those who touch His anointed people.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Do you trust God to deliver you from those plotting evil, or do you fear their schemes?
2. How does this principle point ultimately to Christ ransoming sinners?

Interlinear Text

כִּי עֵינָם תִּשְׁמַר מִבְּטָן בְּנָה בְּכִלְתָּם
H3588 For it is a pleasant thing H5273 H3588 if thou keep H8104 H990 H3559 be fitted

תְּבִלֵּתָךְ עַל שְׁפָטִיךְ
thee they shall withal H5921 in thy lips H8193

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 2:10 (Parallel theme): When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

Jeremiah 15:16 (Parallel theme): Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Psalms 119:103 (Parallel theme): How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Proverbs 15:7 (Parallel theme): The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

Proverbs 8:6 (Parallel theme): Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

Proverbs 10:21 (Parallel theme): The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.

