

# Proverbs 22:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

## Analysis

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The 'prudent' (Hebrew 'arum'—shrewd, sensible) foresees danger and hides, while the 'simple' (Hebrew 'pethi'—naive) pass on and are punished. Wisdom involves anticipating consequences and taking preventive action. The simple lack foresight and suffer accordingly. Reformed theology values prudence as a virtue—using God-given reason to assess risks and act accordingly. This isn't fatalism but stewardship. While trusting God's sovereignty, we're responsible to exercise wisdom in avoiding foreseeable harm.

## Historical Context

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In ancient times, failure to prepare for known dangers (approaching armies, storms, wild animals) could be fatal. Prudence distinguished the wise from the foolish and often meant the difference between survival and death.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. Do you exercise prudent foresight in financial, relational, and spiritual matters?
2. In what areas might you be 'simple,' ignoring warning signs and heading toward punishment?
3. How do you balance trusting God's providence with exercising personal prudence?

## Interlinear Text

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עַבְרִ 1      אַפְתָּ 1      עַבְרִ וְמַעַן  
A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself but the simple pass on  
H6175      H7200      H7451      H5641      H6612      H5674

וְנִנְצְּשֻׁוּ  
and are punished  
H6064

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 27:12** (Evil): A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.

**Proverbs 14:16** (Evil): A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

**Proverbs 29:1** (Parallel theme): He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

**Hebrews 11:7** (Parallel theme): By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

**Proverbs 7:7** (Parallel theme): And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,

**Hebrews 6:18** (Parallel theme): That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

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