

Proverbs 24:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Analysis

'Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth'—don't celebrate when those who opposed you suffer judgment. This commands remarkable grace: instead of vindictive joy, show restraint even toward enemies. Verse 18 explains why: 'lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.' Gloating over judgment might cause God to show mercy to your enemy (to humble your pride) and judgment to you. This teaches that vengeance belongs to God alone; our response should be sober recognition of justice, not gleeful celebration. Paul echoes this in Romans 12:14-21—bless persecutors, don't seek revenge. Such grace reflects God's character and Christ's teaching to love enemies. Even when God judges wickedness justly, avoid prideful gloating.

Historical Context

Proverbs 25:21-22 commands feeding hungry enemies. Jesus taught loving and praying for persecutors. This radical grace distinguished God's people from pagan cultures that celebrated enemies' destruction.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Do you celebrate when those who wronged you suffer, or do you show grace?
2. How can you cultivate godly sorrow over necessary judgment rather than vindictive joy?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֶפֶל ל	א, וְיָבִיב	אֶל	תִּשְׂמַח ח	וּ בְכֻשָׁל ו	אֶל	יֵג ל
falleth	not when thine enemy	H408	Rejoice	when he stumbleth	H408	be glad
H5307	H341		H8055	H3782		H1523
לִבְּךָ:						
and let not thine heart						
H3820						

Additional Cross-References

Obadiah 1:12 (Parallel theme): But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

Proverbs 17:5 (Parallel theme): Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.

Job 31:29 (Parallel theme): If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him:

Psalms 35:15 (Parallel theme): But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:

Psalms 35:19 (Parallel theme): Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

Psalms 42:10 (Parallel theme): As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Judges 16:25 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

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