

Proverbs 24:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

Analysis

This verse explains why we shouldn't rejoice at enemies' falls (v. 17): 'Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.' Gloating displease God and might prompt Him to show mercy to your enemy (humbling your pride) or turn wrath toward you instead. This reveals God's hatred of prideful vindictiveness. He alone judges righteously; our celebration of others' judgment reveals wicked hearts. The principle echoes Jesus' teaching: the measure you use will be measured to you (Matthew 7:2). Those who show no mercy receive none. Even when judgment is just, respond with sober recognition, not gleeful satisfaction. Vindictiveness invites divine discipline; mercy and humility invite divine favor.

Historical Context

Jonah's anger when Nineveh repented exemplifies this principle negatively. He wanted judgment and resented mercy, revealing his hard heart. God rebuked Jonah's attitude.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does your response to others' suffering reveal about your heart?
2. How can you cultivate merciful attitudes even toward those who deserve judgment?

Interlinear Text

וְהַשְׁׁיב בְּעִיר יְהוָה יְרַא הַשְׁׁבָת
H6435 see Lest the LORD it and it displease H5869 him and he turn away
H7200 H3068 H7489 H7725

אַפּוֹן מִעַל יְהוָה
H5921 his wrath H639

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