

Proverbs 24:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

Analysis

The wicked's heart 'studieth destruction' and their lips 'talk of mischief.' The Hebrew 'hagah' (studieth/meditates) describes deliberate focus. The wicked don't fall into evil accidentally; they plot it. Their speech reveals their hearts—constant talk of 'amal' (mischief/trouble). This describes the unregenerate heart actively opposing God. Reformed theology's doctrine of total depravity affirms that apart from grace, humans are bent toward evil. Association with such people invites corruption. As 1 Corinthians 15:33 warns, 'evil communications corrupt good manners.'

Historical Context

Wicked counselors in Israel's history (like those advising Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12) led to national disaster. The company one kept determined one's trajectory toward wisdom or folly.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What influences are you allowing into your life through associations and media?
2. How do you recognize when someone's constant focus is on destruction and mischief?
3. What boundaries do you need to establish to protect yourself from corrupting influences?

Interlinear Text

תְּדַבֵּרְנָה: שְׁפֵתִים מִשְׁפְּתִיכְמִים יְהִגְהַה לְבָם לְעַמְּלָה וְעַמְּלָה

H3588 destruction H1897 studieth H3820 For their heart H5999 of mischief H8193 and their lips H1696 talk

H7701 H1897 H3820 H5999 H8193 H1696

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 7:14 (Parallel theme): Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

Psalms 10:7 (Parallel theme): His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.

Psalms 28:3 (Parallel theme): Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.

Isaiah 59:4 (Parallel theme): None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

Job 15:35 (Parallel theme): They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

Acts 13:10 (Parallel theme): And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

1 Samuel 23:9 (Parallel theme): And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org