

Proverbs 25:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

Analysis

Confidence in an unfaithful person in trouble is like a broken tooth or lame foot. The Hebrew 'batach' (trust/confidence) in 'boghed' (treacherous/unfaithful) creates vivid imagery. Broken tooth and lame foot: both fail when needed most. Tooth breaks when chewing; foot fails when walking. Similarly, unfaithful people fail when you most need them. This warns: evaluate others' faithfulness before crisis, not during. Unreliable people can't be relied on when reliability matters most.

Historical Context

Ancient life involved genuine dependence on others' faithfulness - traveling companions, business partners, treaty allies. Unfaithfulness in crisis could prove fatal. David's mighty men demonstrated faithfulness in his adversity (2 Samuel 23). Conversely, Ahithophel's betrayal devastated David (2 Samuel 15-17). Modern individualism may obscure interdependence, but wisdom still requires discerning who's faithful before trusting them in crises.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Who have you trusted who proved unfaithful when you needed them?
2. How can you evaluate others' faithfulness before crisis forces the question?
3. What makes you faithful or unfaithful when others depend on you in difficulty?

Interlinear Text

שׁוֹן	רָעָה	וְגֵל	מוֹעֵדֶת	מִבְטָח	בְּאִגֵּד
tooth	is like a broken	and a foot	out of joint	Confidence	in an unfaithful man
H8127	H7465	H7272	H4154	H4009	H898

בִּי וְ	צָרָה:
in time	of trouble
H3117	H6869

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 36:6 (Faith): Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.