

Proverbs 25:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

Analysis

Whoever has no rule over his spirit is like a city broken down without walls. The Hebrew 'ma`tsar ruach' (restraint of spirit/self-control) and 'ir perutsah' (broken city without walls) creates vivid imagery. Ancient cities depended on walls for protection; broken walls meant vulnerability to every enemy. Similarly, lack of self-control leaves person vulnerable to every temptation. Self-discipline protects; impulsiveness exposes. Wisdom requires governing your spirit, not being governed by it.

Historical Context

Ancient warfare made walls essential. Nehemiah's rebuilding Jerusalem's walls was crucial for security (Nehemiah 1-6). A city without walls faced constant threat. Proverbs 16:32 similarly teaches: 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.' Paul lists self-control as fruit of Spirit (Galatians 5:23). Peter warns: 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour' (1 Peter 5:8).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What areas of life lack self-control, leaving you vulnerable to spiritual attack?
2. How can you build 'walls' of discipline that protect you from besetting temptations?
3. What role does the Holy Spirit play in developing self-control you cannot produce independently?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------|------|----------|
| עִיר | כִּי רוּצָה | אֵין | חוֹמָה | יֵשׁ | אֵין | אֶשְׁרֵי |
| is like a city | that is broken down | H369 | and without walls | He | H834 | |
| H5892 | H6555 | | H2346 | H376 | | |
| אֵין | מַעַצֵּר | לְרוּחוֹ: | | | | |
| H369 | that hath no rule | over his own spirit | | | | |
| | H4623 | H7307 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:32 (Spirit): He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Proverbs 22:24 (Parallel theme): Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

Nehemiah 1:3 (Parallel theme): And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

1 Samuel 20:30 (Parallel theme): Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

2 Chronicles 32:5 (Parallel theme): Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

1 Samuel 25:17 (Parallel theme): Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.

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