

Proverbs 26:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

Analysis

An undeserved curse 'shall not come'—like a wandering bird or flying swallow, it won't land on its target. The Hebrew 'qalal' (curse) and 'lo tabo' (shall not come/will not arrive) teach that mere words cannot harm the innocent. This encourages the righteous not to fear baseless accusations or curses. Reformed theology affirms God's sovereignty over all words. Numbers 23:8 asks, 'How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?' If God protects, human curses are powerless. This truth should give courage to the falsely accused.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern culture took curses seriously, believing words had power. This proverb counters magical thinking, insisting that undeserved curses have no effect because God governs reality, not mere human words.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when falsely accused or cursed?
2. Does this verse give you confidence that God protects the innocent from baseless attacks?
3. What is the relationship between God's sovereignty and the powerlessness of undeserved curses?

Interlinear Text

בָּבָשָׂר וּבָבָדָד
As the bird by wandering as the swallow by flying so the curse causeless
H6833 H5110 H1866 H5774 H3651 H7045 H2600

לֹא תָבֹא:
shall not come
H3808 H935

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 23:8 (Curse): How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?

Psalms 109:28 (Curse): Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

Nehemiah 13:2 (Curse): Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.

2 Samuel 16:12 (Parallel theme): It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.

1 Samuel 17:43 (Curse): And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

Proverbs 27:8 (Parallel theme): As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.

