

Proverbs 28:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

Analysis

Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved (הוֹלֶךְ תָּמִימִים יִשָּׁע) describes the (tamim, 'blameless, complete, having integrity') life. This one will be saved, delivered, rescued'). Note: tamim does not mean sinless perfection but wholehearted devotion, walking in covenant faithfulness (Genesis 17:1, 'Walk before me and be blameless').

But he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once (וַיַּעֲקֹשׁ דְּרָכָים יִפּוֹל בָּאָתָה) vene'qash derakhayim yippol be'echat)—aqash, 'twisted, crooked, perverse') in derekh, 'way, path, manner of life') results in nafal (nafal, 'to fall, collapse') be'echat, 'at once, suddenly, in one moment'). Integrity brings gradual deliverance; duplicity brings sudden destruction. Ananias and Sapphira exemplify this principle (Acts 5:1-11).

Historical Context

The metaphor of 'walking' pervades biblical ethics—not static belief but dynamic obedience. Israel's covenant called for walking in God's ways (Deuteronomy 5:33, 8:6). The wisdom tradition consistently contrasts the straight path of the righteous with the crooked path of the wicked (Proverbs 2:15, 4:18-19).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. In what areas of life might you be walking 'perversely' (with a divided heart) rather than 'uprightly' (with integrity)?
2. How does the promise of being 'saved' through upright living relate to salvation by grace through faith?
3. What crooked paths are you tempted to take that promise shortcuts but threaten sudden collapse?

Interlinear Text

הוּא מִמְּרָאָתָךְ	וְאֶלְעָזֶר	בְּרוּךְ הוּא
Whoso walketh	uprightly	shall be saved
H1980	H8549	H3467
but he that is perverse	וְאֶלְעָזֶר	בְּרוּךְ הוּא
H6140		H1870

וְאֶלְעָזֶר	בְּרוּךְ הוּא
shall fall	at once
H5307	H259

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 10:9 (Parallel theme): He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

Proverbs 28:6 (Parallel theme): Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

Revelation 3:3 (Parallel theme): Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Psalms 84:11 (Parallel theme): For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Numbers 22:32 (Parallel theme): And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me:

Psalms 125:5 (Parallel theme): As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.

Psalms 25:21 (Parallel theme): Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Psalms 26:11 (Parallel theme): But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

Proverbs 10:25 (Parallel theme): As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 (Parallel theme): For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.