

Proverbs 29:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lightenth both their eyes.

Analysis

The poor and the deceitful man meet together—(בָּשׁ וְאִישׁ תַּכְכִּים בְּפָנָיו) the impoverished (rash) and the oppressor (ish tekhakim, man of oppressions/extortions) meet or encounter each other. Both exist in the same world, with vastly different power. Yet **the LORD lightenth both their eyes**—(מְאִיר־עִינֵּי שְׁנֵיכֶם וְהַנֶּה) YHWH gives light to the eyes of both.

This stunning statement affirms God's common grace and providence over all humanity regardless of moral character or economic status. The same sun rises on just and unjust (Matthew 5:45). Yet it also implies accountability: both see by God's light, both are responsible for what they do with God-given life. The oppressor cannot claim ignorance; the poor cannot claim abandonment. This prepares for final judgment where God's impartial light exposes all.

Historical Context

Ancient societies had stark class divisions. The poor were often exploited by the powerful. Yet Israel's theology insisted on YHWH's sovereignty over all, rich and poor. Job wrestled with this same tension (Job 24:1-12). The wisdom tradition held together both God's providential care for all and coming judgment for oppression.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's impartial provision of 'light' (life, reason, opportunity) increase both the privilege and accountability of the powerful?
2. What does it mean that God 'lightens the eyes' of both victim and oppressor— how should this shape our view of justice?
3. How do you respond to the tension between God's common grace to all and His special concern for the oppressed?

Interlinear Text

עֵין־אֵיר נִפְגַּשׁ יְמֵינֵיכֶם וְאַיִשׁ תִּקְרַבְתֶּם
The poor man and the deceitful meet together lighteneth their eyes
H7326 H376 H8501 H6298 H215 H5869

שְׁנַיִם יְהִי־הָרָא בָּאָתָה
both the LORD
H8147 H3068

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:45 (Parallel theme): That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Proverbs 22:2 (References Lord): The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.

Psalms 13:3 (Light): Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;

Ephesians 2:1 (Parallel theme): And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

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