

Proverbs 3:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

Analysis

The promise of safe walking without stumbling assumes wisdom guides our path. The Hebrew 'betach' (safely/securely) and 'nagaph' (stumble) use pedestrian imagery for life navigation. Wisdom provides sure-footedness on life's hazardous paths. This isn't promise of trouble-free existence but confident traversing of difficulties without catastrophic failure. The stumbling-free path comes from following divine wisdom rather than human cleverness.

Historical Context

Ancient travel involved genuine physical danger - rocky terrain, wild animals, bandits. The metaphor would resonate powerfully with original audience. Spiritually, Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan demonstrated that following God's guidance provides safe passage through dangerous territory.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What 'stumbling blocks' in your life might be avoided by following wisdom more carefully?
2. How does walking in wisdom provide security that no amount of human planning can achieve?
3. In what areas of life do you need confidence that God's wisdom will keep you from falling?

Interlinear Text

תַּגְזֹרֶף: לֹא אֵכֹל בְּכָל נָאָר
H227 H1980 H983 H1870 H7272 H3808 H5062
safely in thy way and thy foot shall not stumble

Additional Cross-References

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

Proverbs 4:12 (Parallel theme): When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

Psalms 121:3 (Parallel theme): He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Psalms 37:31 (Parallel theme): The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

Psalms 121:8 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Proverbs 2:8 (Parallel theme): He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

Zechariah 10:12 (Parallel theme): And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

