

Proverbs 30:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

Analysis

The spider taketh hold with her hands (שֶׁמָמִית בְּיָדַיִם תִּתְפֹּס, semamit beyadayim tetappes)—שֶׁמָמִית (semamit, 'spider' or possibly 'lizard') תִּתְפֹּס (tafas, 'grasps, seizes, takes hold') with יָדַיִם (yadayim, 'hands'). The creature uses its 'hands' (legs) skillfully to weave or climb.

And is in kings' palaces (וְהִיא בְּהִיכְלֵי מֶלֶךְ, vehi beheikhlei melek)—yet she is found in הֵיכָל (hekhal, 'palace, temple') of מֶלֶךְ (melek, 'king'). Despite being catchable by hand, small and vulnerable, the spider (or lizard) inhabits the highest places. The lesson: persistence and skill, not size or strength, open doors. Spiritually, diligent use of what God has given, however small, grants access to His presence. 'His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things' (Matthew 25:23).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern palaces, despite their grandeur, could not exclude small creatures. The proverb's irony: the lowliest creature inhabits the loftiest residence. This democratization of wisdom—that small, weak creatures teach profound lessons—characterizes biblical wisdom literature and contrasts with ancient Near Eastern texts that celebrated only the mighty.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What small gifts or limited resources has God given you that, used faithfully, could grant access to greater influence?
2. How does the spider's presence in palaces encourage you about God's ability to bring you into places beyond your natural reach?
3. Where are you despising 'the day of small things' (Zechariah 4:10) rather than using what's in your hand?

Interlinear Text

שׁ מְמִית	בְּיָד יָמַי	תִּתֵּן שׁ	אֵלֶּה יְכִלֵּי	מֶלֶךְ:
The spider	with her hands	taketh hold	palaces	and is in kings
H8079	H3027	H8610	H1964	H4428

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