

Proverbs 4:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

Analysis

The wicked's way is like darkness - they stumble and don't know what trips them. Moral darkness produces both disorientation and ignorance of danger. The wicked lack understanding of what causes their downfall because they lack moral and spiritual light. This contrasts with the righteous's increasing light (v.18). The verse exposes wickedness's self-destructive nature - sin blinds to its own consequences until destruction arrives.

Historical Context

Continues the path/light imagery common in wisdom literature. Ancient night travel was perilous without illumination; the metaphor effectively conveyed spiritual danger of moral darkness.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What areas of spiritual darkness in your life are causing you to stumble repeatedly?

2. How can you seek God's light to illuminate dangers you're currently blind to?

Interlinear Text

דֶּרֶךְ	רְשָׁעִים	כְּאֶפֶל הַ	לֵא	יָדְעוּ	בְּמָה
The way	of the wicked	is as darkness	H3808	they know	H4100
H1870	H7563	H653		H3045	

לֹא בְּכִשְׁלָם:

not at what they stumble
H3782

Additional Cross-References

John 12:35 (Darkness): Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

Jeremiah 23:12 (Darkness): Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

1 Samuel 2:9 (Darkness): He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

Jeremiah 13:16 (Darkness): Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

Job 18:18 (Darkness): He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

Job 5:14 (Darkness): They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

Job 12:25 (Darkness): They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

Proverbs 2:13 (Darkness): Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

Matthew 7:23 (Parallel theme): And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Matthew 15:14 (Parallel theme): Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

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