

# Proverbs 6:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

## Analysis

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This verse presents God's commandments as life-giving light. 'The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light' uses parallel metaphors—lamp for individual commandments and light for the whole law (torah). In darkness, a lamp guides steps and reveals dangers; similarly, God's commandments illumine the moral path and expose sin. 'Reproofs of instruction are the way of life' completes the thought: corrective discipline guides toward life. This anticipates Psalm 119:105 ('Thy word is a lamp unto my feet') and the New Testament's presentation of Christ as the light of the world (John 8:12). Without God's revealed word, humans stumble in moral darkness; with it, we walk safely toward life.

## Historical Context

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In ancient Israel, actual lamps provided crucial illumination in dark homes and streets. The metaphor of God's word as light was therefore visceral and practical. The Torah provided moral and civil guidance for community life, making this comparison apt. Early Christians continued this imagery, recognizing Scripture as authoritative guide.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How do you actively use Scripture as a 'lamp' to guide specific decisions and illuminate moral dangers?
2. When have you experienced God's word exposing sin or guiding you away from destructive paths?

## Interlinear Text

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|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| כִּי  | נֵר       | מִצְוָה             | וְתוֹרָה    | אֵל      | וְדָרֶךְ    | חַיִּים |
| H3588 | is a lamp | For the commandment | and the law | is light | are the way | of life |
|       | H5216     | H4687               | H8451       | H216     | H1870       | H2416   |

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| וְתוֹכָהּ    | מוֹסֵר:        |
| and reproofs | of instruction |
| H8433        | H4148          |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 119:105** (Word): Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**2 Peter 1:19** (Word): We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

**Psalms 19:8** (Word): The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

**Proverbs 15:31** (Parallel theme): The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

**Proverbs 4:13** (Parallel theme): Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

**Proverbs 4:4** (Word): He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

**Jeremiah 21:8** (Parallel theme): And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

**Psalms 141:5** (Parallel theme): Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

**Proverbs 15:24** (Parallel theme): The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

**Proverbs 3:18** (Parallel theme): She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.