

Psalms 121:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Analysis

Yomam hashemesh lo yakkekah v'yareach balaylah (By day the sun shall not strike you, nor the moon by night). Nakah (strike/smite/harm) indicates harmful impact. Shemesh (sun) and yareach (moon) represent day and night dangers comprehensively. Ancient belief held that moon could cause harm (English "lunacy" from Latin luna, moon). Whether literal (sunstroke) or symbolic (any daytime/nighttime danger), God promises comprehensive protection around the clock. This builds on verse 5's shade imagery—protected from both day and night perils.

Historical Context

Sunstroke was real danger in Mediterranean climate, especially for travelers, workers, shepherds. 2 Kings 4:18-20 records a child dying after crying "My head, my head" (possibly sunstroke). Isaiah 49:10 promises the redeemed: "neither shall the heat nor sun smite them." Revelation 7:16 echoes: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." Ancient cultures also feared moon's influence—hence "moon-struck" or "lunatic." Whether literal or symbolic, the point: comprehensive divine protection from all dangers, day and night.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What "day" dangers (obvious threats) and "night" dangers (hidden perils) do you face?
2. How does God's comprehensive protection (day and night) address different types of anxieties?
3. What is the relationship between divine protection and believers experiencing genuine suffering?

Interlinear Text

יֹמָם	הַשֶּׁשֶׁשׁ	לֹא	יִכָּכֶה	וְיָרֵחַ	בְּלַיְלָה:
thee by day	The sun	H3808	shall not smite	nor the moon	by night
H3119	H8121		H5221	H3394	H3915

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 7:16 (Parallel theme): They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

Isaiah 49:10 (Parallel theme): They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

Jonah 4:8 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.