

Psalm 35:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

Analysis

The Hebrew concept of measure-for-measure justice (middah keneged middah) appears here—the hunter caught in his own trap. This principle, evident throughout Proverbs and fulfilled in Haman's execution on his own gallows (Esther 7), reveals God's poetic justice. The word 'unawares' emphasizes that as the wicked surprise the innocent, so divine judgment will surprise them, unable to escape the very destruction they plotted.

Historical Context

This reflects ancient legal principles of *lex talionis* (law of retaliation), though here applied by God rather than human courts. Divine retribution often mirrors the crime, teaching that judgment fits the sin.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How have you witnessed the principle that 'what goes around comes around' in God's justice?
2. Why is it important that divine judgment often uses the wicked's own schemes against them?

Interlinear Text

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|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------|-----|--------|
| אֲשֶׁר | ירשָׁת | וְ | לֹא | לֹא | בְּשֹׁאָה | הַתְּבֹאָה | וְ | בְּ | אֲשֶׁר |
| come | Let destruction | | H3808 | | upon him at unawares | | and let his net | | H834 |
| H935 | H7722 | | | | H3045 | | H7568 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| בָּהּ | יַפְלֵל | בְּשֹׁאָה | תַּלְכֵד | וְ | בְּ | אֲשֶׁר | הַתְּבֹאָה | וְ | בְּ |
| that he hath hid | catch | Let destruction | let him fall | | | | | | |
| H2934 | H3920 | H7722 | H5307 | | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 9:15 (Parallel theme): The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

Proverbs 5:22 (Parallel theme): His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

Luke 21:34 (Parallel theme): And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

Psalms 57:6 (Parallel theme): They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.

Isaiah 47:11 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 (Parallel theme): For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Proverbs 29:1 (Parallel theme): He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

1 Samuel 18:17 (Parallel theme): And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

Esther 7:10 (Parallel theme): So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

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