

Proverbs 10:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

Analysis

The labor of the righteous tends to life, the fruit of the wicked to sin. Righteous work produces life-giving outcomes; wicked activity produces more sin. This verse presents a moral feedback loop - righteousness breeds more righteousness and life, wickedness breeds more wickedness and death. The principle applies both individually and socially - patterns of righteousness or wickedness become self-reinforcing.

Historical Context

Reflects covenant theology where obedience led to blessing which enabled more obedience, creating upward spiral. Conversely, sin led to curse which tempted more sin, creating downward spiral.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What patterns in your life are creating upward spirals toward life versus downward spirals toward sin?

2. How can you interrupt destructive cycles and establish life-giving patterns?

Interlinear Text

לְמַטְאָתָן:	רָשׁ עַ	לְמַטְאָתָן:
פָּעַל תְּ	צַדְיקָן	לְמַיִם
The labour	of the righteous	tendeth to life
H6468	H6662	H2416
תְּבוֹא תְּ	תְּבוֹא תְּ	תְּבוֹא תְּ
the fruit	of the wicked	to sin
H8393	H7563	H2403

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 6:10 (Righteousness): For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Romans 6:23 (Sin): For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (Parallel theme): Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

John 6:27 (Parallel theme): Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.