

Proverbs 10:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.

Analysis

As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him. The sluggard causes intense irritation to those depending on him - like vinegar's sting or smoke's irritation. This verse addresses the social dimension of sloth - it doesn't merely harm the sluggard but frustrates everyone relying on him. Sloth violates love of neighbor by failing to fulfill responsibilities others depend upon.

Historical Context

Agricultural and commercial society depended on reliable workers. A sluggard's failure to fulfill responsibilities caused cascading problems for entire household or business venture.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does your sloth or diligence affect others depending on you?
2. In what ways might you be causing 'vinegar to the teeth' of those you serve?

Interlinear Text

כַּחַּ מְצִין	לְשֹׁן יָם	וְכַעַשׂ	לְעֵינַי יָם	כִּי	הֵאָעַץ לֵךְ
As vinegar	to the teeth	and as smoke	to the eyes	H3651	so is the sluggard
H2558	H8127	H6227	H5869		H6102

לְשֹׁלְחָיו:

to them that send
H7971

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 25:13 (Parallel theme): As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

Proverbs 26:6 (Parallel theme): He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage.