

Proverbs 11:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.

Analysis

The wicked works a deceitful work, but to him that sows righteousness shall be a sure reward. Wicked labor is deceitful (sheqer - false, illusory) - appearing profitable but ultimately empty. Sowing righteousness brings certain (emet - true, faithful) reward. The agricultural metaphor emphasizes both effort (sowing) and harvest (reward). Righteousness may require patient cultivation, but the harvest is guaranteed.

Historical Context

Agricultural imagery pervaded wisdom literature in agrarian society. The principle that sowing determines harvest was self-evident and applied to moral life - sow righteousness, reap blessing.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What are you currently sowing that will determine your future harvest?
2. How does confidence in certain reward for righteousness sustain faithful labor?

Interlinear Text

אָזֶן הָ	וְשָׁבַע	פְּעָלָת	עָשָׂה	רָשָׁע	שָׁבַע	זָרָע	אָזֶן הָ
The wicked	worketh	work	a deceitful	but to him that soweth	righteousness		
H7563	H6213	H6468	H8267	H2232			H6666
רָשָׁע	שָׁבַע	אָמָתָה:					
reward	shall be a sure						
H7938	H571						

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 10:8 (Parallel theme): He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

James 3:18 (Righteousness): And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Proverbs 22:8 (Parallel theme): He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.

Proverbs 1:18 (Parallel theme): And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives.

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

Ephesians 4:22 (Parallel theme): That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;