

Proverbs 13:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.

Analysis

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished, but he that gathers by labor shall increase. Ill-gotten wealth (hebel - vapor, vanity) dissipates quickly; honestly earned wealth grows. The verse distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate wealth acquisition. Shortcuts to riches (gambling, fraud, get-rich-quick schemes) lead to loss. Patient, honest labor builds lasting wealth. The principle: means matter, not just ends.

Historical Context

Reflects wisdom tradition's emphasis on honest labor versus schemes to acquire quick wealth. Ancient con games and gambling depleted resources as surely as modern versions.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How much of your wealth-building strategy relies on honest labor versus 'vanity' shortcuts?

2. What 'vain' wealth-seeking should you abandon for patient, diligent work?

Interlinear Text

בְּלֹא מִתְּמֻנָּה מִמְּדֻנָּה יְמִתְּמַנֵּה יְמִתְּמַנֵּה עַל־יָד־עַל־יָד

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished but he that gathereth H5921 by labour H3027

H1952 H1892 H4591 H6908

ירְבָּה:
shall increase

H7235

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 20:21 (Parallel theme): An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

Proverbs 10:2 (Parallel theme): Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.

Proverbs 28:8 (Parallel theme): He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

Proverbs 28:20 (Parallel theme): A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

Proverbs 28:22 (Parallel theme): He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Psalms 128:2 (Parallel theme): For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Jeremiah 17:11 (Parallel theme): As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

Job 20:15 (Parallel theme): He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

