

Proverbs 14:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

Analysis

Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good. This proverb contrasts those who plan evil versus good. Halo-yit'u chorshey ra (הֲלוֹ-יִתְּאוּ חֹרְשֵׁי רָעָה, do not those who devise evil go astray?). Ta'ah (תָּעָה, err, wander, go astray) describes losing the way. Vecheded ve'emet chorshey tov (וְעֵדֶד וְאֵמֶת חֹרְשֵׁי טוֹב, but mercy and truth for those who devise good). Chesed (חֶסֶד, steadfast love, loyalty) and emet (אֱמֶת, truth, faithfulness) reward those planning good. The proverb teaches that what we devise determines our outcome—evil leads astray, good brings covenant blessings.

Historical Context

The verb charash (חָרַשׁ, plow, devise, plan) appears in both clauses—emphasizing deliberate planning. Ancient Near Eastern courts had advisors who counseled kings toward war or peace, justice or oppression. Those devising evil policies led nations astray into disaster. Those planning good brought stability and prosperity. Biblical examples include Ahithophel's evil counsel versus Hushai's good advice (2 Samuel 17).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What are you devising or planning in your heart—evil schemes or good purposes?
2. How do mercy and truth characterize your plans and motivations, reflecting God's character?
3. In what ways does devising good align with God's will and bring His blessing upon your life?

Interlinear Text

הָלֹא	! תַּעֲוִי	חַ רְשִׁי	כָּ ע	וְחַסְדִּי	וְאֵמֶת
H3808	Do they not err	shall be to them that devise	evil	but mercy	and truth
	H8582	H2790	H7451	H2617	H571
	חַ רְשִׁי	טוֹב:			
	shall be to them that devise	good			
	H2790	H2896			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 12:2 (Evil): A good man obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

John 1:17 (Grace): For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.