

Proverbs 14:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.

Analysis

Where no oxen are, the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox. Without livestock, the barn stays tidy but produces no crops. Productive work creates mess but yields increase. This verse observes that fruitfulness requires accepting inconvenience. The choice: sterile tidiness or messy productivity. Applied broadly: ministry, parenting, business - all productive endeavors create disorder while producing fruit.

Historical Context

Agricultural imagery: oxen were essential for plowing and threshing but required feeding, cleaning, and care. The work they enabled far exceeded the burden they created.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What 'messes' are you avoiding that would actually produce fruitfulness?
2. How does fear of inconvenience keep you from productivity God desires?

Interlinear Text

וְבַאֲזַרְעָלָם	אַלְפִים	אַבְּרָס	בְּרָא	זָרָב	זָרָב	זָרָב	זָרָב
H369	Where no oxen	are the crib	is clean	but much		increase	
H504		H18	H1249	H7230		H8393	
	בְּעֵזֶב	שׂוֹר:					
is by the strength	of the ox						
H3581		H7794					

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 13:23 (Parallel theme): Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.

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