

Proverbs 15:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

Analysis

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness. To'avat YHVH derekh rasha (דָּרְךָ רָשָׁע, an abomination to the LORD is the way of the wicked). To'evah (תֹּוֹבַה, abomination, disgusting thing) expresses God's intense revulsion toward wicked paths. Umeraddef tsedaqah ye'ehav (אַדְּךָה יְאַהַב, but one pursuing righteousness He loves). God actively loves (ahav, אַהֲבָה) those pursuing (radaf, רָדָף, chase, hunt, follow after) righteousness. The contrast is absolute—God's disposition toward lifestyles, not just isolated acts.

Historical Context

Covenant theology emphasized God's hatred of wickedness and love for righteousness. Malachi 1:2-3 declares God loved Jacob but hated Esau (based on covenant faithfulness). Psalm 5:5 states God hates workers of iniquity. Yet He demonstrated love toward sinners through Christ (Romans 5:8). Believers must pursue righteousness, knowing God loves this path while abhorring wickedness.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God finds wickedness abominable and loves righteousness affect your daily choices?
2. In what areas might you be walking in paths God finds abominable rather than pursuing righteousness?
3. How does Christ's righteousness imputed to believers secure God's love while motivating pursuit of practical holiness?

Interlinear Text

תֹּעַבְתִּי	! הָנָה	אֵלֶּנֶה	רֹשֶׁעֶן	וְמַבְדֵּל
is an abomination	unto the LORD	The way	of the wicked	him that followeth
H8441	H3068	H1870	H7563	H7291
אַלְקֵנָה	וְאֶחָבָה			
after righteousness	but he loveth			
H6666	H157			

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 6:11 (Love): But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Proverbs 21:21 (Righteousness): He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

Jeremiah 44:4 (Parallel theme): Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

Matthew 7:13 (Parallel theme): Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Habakkuk 1:13 (Righteousness): Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal

treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

Hosea 6:3 (References Lord): Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

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