

Proverbs 20:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good.

Analysis

This verse repeats the condemnation of 'diverse weights' (dishonest scales) found throughout Proverbs. Commercial fraud—whether inflating measures for sales or deflating them for purchases—is 'not good' (a deliberate understatement meaning 'abominable'). Such dishonesty violates both justice and love of neighbor. The repeated emphasis on honest weights reflects how pervasive such fraud was and how seriously God views it. Every transaction is a moral act reflecting either covenant faithfulness or selfish exploitation. Honest business dealings demonstrate love for God and neighbor, while fraud reveals heart corruption. God will judge every act of commercial dishonesty because it oppresses the poor and despises His image in others.

Historical Context

Archaeological discoveries confirm widespread use of dishonest weights and measures in the ancient Near East. Israelite law explicitly commanded honest business practices (Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 25:13-16).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Are your business practices characterized by complete honesty and fairness?
2. In what subtle ways might you be using 'diverse weights' in your dealings with others?

Interlinear Text

תֹּעַבְתִּי	הִיא	אֲכִילָה	אֲכִילָה	כָּמָדִין
are an abomination	unto the LORD	Divers weights	Divers weights	balance
H8441	H3068	H68	H68	H3976
תָּוֹבֵב	לֹא	מְרַמֵּה	ה	
and a false	H3808	is not good		
H4820		H2896		

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 20:10 (References Lord): Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.

Proverbs 11:1 (References Lord): A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

Ezekiel 45:10 (Parallel theme): Ye shall have just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.

Hosea 12:7 (Parallel theme): He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress.

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