

Proverbs 21:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

Analysis

The sluggard's desire becomes his executioner—"the desire of the slothful killeth him." He wants outcomes without effort, prosperity without work. His hands 'refuse to labour,' yet he craves the fruit that only labor produces. This internal contradiction destroys him. Desire without corresponding action produces only frustration, poverty, and death. The sluggard demonstrates that good intentions mean nothing without implementation. Believers must not only desire righteousness but pursue it diligently. Faith without works is dead; desire without labor is deadly. The solution isn't eliminating desire but directing it properly and accompanying it with faithful diligence. Work is God's appointed means of provision; refusing it is rebelling against His design.

Historical Context

Agrarian economies made the connection between labor and survival immediate. Modern welfare systems can obscure this principle but don't eliminate it—sloth still produces poverty and dysfunction.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Do you accompany your desires with diligent work, or do you merely wish for outcomes?
2. What areas require you to overcome laziness and act on your stated intentions?

Interlinear Text

תְּנִזְנֵת	לְאַתְּ	בְּאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ	לְאַתְּ
The desire	of the slothful	killeth	refuse	him for his hands	to labour			
H8378	H6102	H4191	H3588	H3985	H3027			H6213

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 13:4 (Parallel theme): The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Proverbs 12:24 (Parallel theme): The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

Proverbs 12:27 (Parallel theme): The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

Proverbs 19:24 (Parallel theme): A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

Proverbs 26:16 (Parallel theme): The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

Proverbs 15:19 (Parallel theme): The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

Matthew 25:26 (Parallel theme): His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

Proverbs 20:4 (Parallel theme): The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

