

Proverbs 22:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

Analysis

Those who ignore the poor's cries will themselves cry unheard. This reciprocity reflects God's moral governance: we receive mercy as we show mercy. The rich man ignored Lazarus and found himself unheard in torment (Luke 16:19-31). God identifies with the poor; refusing to help them is refusing Him. This doesn't earn salvation but reveals whether we've been transformed by grace. Those who have received divine mercy naturally extend human mercy. Hard-heartedness toward the vulnerable demonstrates unconverted hearts. The principle applies broadly: our treatment of others prefigures God's treatment of us. Judgment is without mercy to those who show no mercy (James 2:13).

Historical Context

Prophetic literature repeatedly condemned Israel for oppressing the poor while maintaining religious externals. God demanded justice and mercy, not empty ritual.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Do you respond compassionately to those in need, or close your heart and ears?
2. How does receiving God's mercy compel you toward mercy for others?

Interlinear Text

אִם ר	ע צִל	אֵל י	בַּח וַי	בֵּית וְ	חֵב וְ
man saith	The slothful	There is a lion	without	in	the streets
H559	H6102	H738	H2351	H8432	H7339

אֶרְצָם:
I shall be slain
H7523

Additional Cross-References

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.