

Proverbs 22:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.

Analysis

He who sows 'iniquity' reaps 'vanity' (Hebrew 'awen'—trouble, sorrow), and 'the rod of his anger shall fail.' The sowing-reaping metaphor appears throughout Scripture (Galatians 6:7-8). Injustice produces its own punishment—trouble and emptiness, not the prosperity the wicked expect. The 'rod of his anger' (instrument of oppression) will be broken. Reformed theology affirms God's justice: the wicked's schemes ultimately fail. This is both encouragement for the oppressed and warning for oppressors. God will not be mocked; what we sow, we reap.

Historical Context

Ancient agricultural metaphors were immediately understood. Just as bad seed yielded poor harvests, so wicked actions produced disastrous consequences, both in this life and eternally.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What seeds are you sowing in your life—righteousness or iniquity?

2. How have you seen the principle of sowing and reaping at work in your experience?
3. What hope does this proverb offer to those suffering under oppression?

Interlinear Text

זָהָר עַ	וְלֹה אָ	קְצֹר שָׁ	עַל אָ	בֵּט שָׁ	עַבְרָת וְ	אֵלָה
He that soweth	iniquity	shall reap	vanity	and the rod	of his anger	shall fail
H2232	H5766	H7114	H205	H7626	H5678	H3615

Additional Cross-References

Job 4:8 (Sin): Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Isaiah 30:31 (Parallel theme): For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

Hosea 10:13 (Sin): Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

Psalms 125:3 (Sin): For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

Proverbs 14:3 (Parallel theme): In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

Isaiah 14:29 (Parallel theme): Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.

Isaiah 10:5 (Parallel theme): O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

Isaiah 9:4 (Parallel theme): For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Hosea 8:7 (Parallel theme): For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.

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