

Proverbs 23:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

Analysis

Envyng sinners betrays spiritual perspective—they may prosper temporarily but face eternal judgment. Instead, fear the LORD continually, focusing on covenant relationship rather than comparative outcomes. This anticipates Psalm 73's resolution of why the wicked prosper while the righteous suffer.

Historical Context

Israel constantly faced temptation to envy neighboring nations' prosperity while they suffered. Prophets called them back to covenant faithfulness regardless of circumstances.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. When do you envy sinners' prosperity instead of fearing the LORD?
2. How can you maintain eternal perspective when the wicked seem to flourish?

Interlinear Text

אֵל	יִקְנֶה אֶ	לִבְךָ	בְּחַטָּאֵי יָם	כִּי	אִם	בְּיִרְאָת
H408	envy H7065	Let not thine heart H3820	sinner H2400	H3588	H518	but be thou in the fear H3374
הַ	יְהוָה	כָּל	הַיּוֹמִים:			
of the LORD H3068	H3605	all the day H3117				

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 28:14 (Parallel theme): Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

Acts 9:31 (References Lord): Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

Proverbs 15:16 (References Lord): Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (Parallel theme): Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

1 Peter 1:17 (Parallel theme): And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

Proverbs 3:31 (Parallel theme): Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

Ecclesiastes 5:7 (Parallel theme): For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.

Proverbs 24:1 (Parallel theme): Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

