

Proverbs 23:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

Analysis

Don't eat the bread of one with an 'evil eye,' nor desire his 'dainty meats.' The 'evil eye' (Hebrew 'ra ayin') refers to stinginess, envy, or malicious intent. A grudging host's food brings no blessing. The parallel with verse 3 warns against meals with ulterior motives—whether from rulers or from envious hosts. Reformed theology values genuine fellowship over manipulative social transactions. We should prefer modest fellowship with sincere hearts over luxurious meals with hidden agendas.

Historical Context

The 'evil eye' was a common ancient concept indicating jealousy, stinginess, or curse. Sharing meals was covenant-making activity, so eating with someone who had an evil eye was spiritually dangerous.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Do you discern people's true motives when they offer hospitality or benefits?
2. Are you generous-hearted in your own hospitality, or do you give grudgingly?

3. How can you cultivate sincere fellowship rather than manipulative social interactions?

Interlinear Text

אַל תְּלַמֵּד אֶת־עֲמָלֵךְ לֹא־כְּרָמֵךְ בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֵל!

H408 Eat H853 thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye H408 H5869

לֹא־תְּצַרְתָּא לְמַטְעָמָתָיו:
neither desire thou his dainty meats

H183 H4303

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 141:4 (Evil): Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.

Proverbs 23:3 (Parallel theme): Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.

Deuteronomy 15:9 (Evil): Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

Proverbs 28:22 (Evil): He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Proverbs 22:9 (Parallel theme): He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

Matthew 20:15 (Evil): Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

Deuteronomy 28:56 (Evil): The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,

