

Proverbs 27:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

Analysis

Wrath is cruel, anger is outrageous, but 'who is able to stand before envy?' The Hebrew 'qinah' (envy/jealousy) exceeds even wrath and anger in destructiveness. Envy destroys quietly and relentlessly, harder to confront than open anger. Proverbs 14:30 calls it 'rotteness of the bones.' Reformed theology recognizes envy as violation of the tenth commandment and fruit of covetousness. Envy destroyed Cain, Saul, and the Pharisees. Unlike anger which may pass, envy festers indefinitely, making it peculiarly dangerous.

Historical Context

Biblical history demonstrates envy's destructiveness: Joseph's brothers' envy led to his enslavement (Genesis 37:11), Saul's envy drove him to pursue David murderously (1 Samuel 18:8-9), and religious leaders' envy crucified Christ (Matthew 27:18).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Where does envy lurk in your heart toward others' possessions, gifts, or blessings?
2. How does envy poison your relationships and spiritual life?
3. What is the relationship between contentment and freedom from envy?

Interlinear Text

וְעַמְدָה ! אַכְזָרִי וְתַּחַת מֵהָן מִתְּנַשְּׁאָלָה וְאַנְגָּרָה וְאַנְגָּרָה וְאַנְגָּרָה !

is cruel Wrath is outrageous and anger but who is able to stand

H395 H2534 H7858 H639 H4310 H5975

לִפְנֵי אֲנָאָה: לִפְנֵי

before envy

H6440 H7068

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 6:34 (Parallel theme): For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

Proverbs 14:30 (Parallel theme): A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

Acts 7:9 (Parallel theme): And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

Job 5:2 (Judgment): For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

Matthew 27:18 (Parallel theme): For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.