

Proverbs 28:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Analysis

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye (נִבְהָל לְהַונְ אִישׁ עֵין רָע (nivhal lehon ish ayin ra)—nivhal, 'hastening, hurrying') toward הַונְ (hon, 'wealth, riches') reveals עֵין רָע (ayin ra, 'evil eye'), a Hebrew idiom for stinginess, envy, and greed. Jesus warns against this 'evil eye' (Matthew 6:22-23, 20:15). The greedy person's vision is distorted—seeing others as competition, God's gifts as insufficient.

And considereth not that poverty shall come upon him (וְלֹא-יֵדַע כִּי-חֵסֶר יִבְאָנו (velo-yeda ki-cheser yevo'ennu)—yada, 'to know, understand') is negated: he does not know that חֵסֶר (cheser, 'want, lack, poverty') approaches. Proverbs repeatedly warns that greed leads to poverty (Proverbs 11:24, 13:11). 'He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver' (Ecclesiastes 5:10); the insatiable appetite for more guarantees eventual loss.

Historical Context

First-century Palestine saw dramatic wealth disparities, with wealthy landowners exploiting peasant farmers. Jesus's parables frequently address greed (Luke 12:13-21, the rich fool; Luke 16:19-31, the rich man and Lazarus). Paul commands contentment: 'Having food and raiment let us be therewith content' (1 Timothy 6:8).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How can you recognize whether you have an 'evil eye'—a greedy, envious disposition?
2. What warning signs indicate you're 'hastening to be rich' rather than trusting God's provision?
3. Where has greed paradoxically led to poverty in your life—relational, spiritual, or even material?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	וְיָדָעַ	וְלֹא	בְּעֵין	בְּעֵין	אֵשׁ	לְהַווּ	נְבָבָה	לְ
that hasteth	to be rich	He	hath an evil	eye	H3808	and considereth		H3588
H926	H1952	H376	H7451	H5869			H3045	

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 23:6 (Evil): Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

1 Timothy 6:9 (Parallel theme): But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Proverbs 28:20 (Parallel theme): A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

