

Proverbs 28:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Analysis

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack (נוֹתֵן לָרֶשׁ אֵין מַחְסוֹר, noten larash ein machsor)—נָתַן (natan, 'to give') to the רֶשׁ (rash, 'poor, destitute') results in אֵין מַחְסוֹר (ein machsor, 'no lack, no want'). This paradox pervades Scripture: giving produces abundance (Proverbs 11:24-25, 19:17, 22:9). Jesus taught: 'Give, and it shall be given unto you' (Luke 6:38). Paul: 'He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully' (2 Corinthians 9:6).

But he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse (וּמַעְלִים עֵינָיו רַב־מְאָרוֹת, uma'lim einav rav-me'erot)—הָאֵין (alam, 'to hide, conceal') the עֵין (ayin, 'eyes') from the poor's plight brings רַב (rav, 'many, abundant') מְאָרָה (me'erah, 'curses, oaths'). Refusing to see need doesn't eliminate it—it brings judgment. The rich man ignored Lazarus at his gate and suffered eternally (Luke 16:19-31). James 2:15-16 condemns empty words without material help.

Historical Context

Ancient Israel's law commanded care for the poor: leaving gleanings (Leviticus 19:9-10), canceling debts (Deuteronomy 15:1-11), protecting widows and orphans (Deuteronomy 24:17-22). The prophets thundered against those who exploited or ignored the poor (Amos 5:11-12, Isaiah 58:6-7). Early Christians practiced radical generosity (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-37).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Who are the 'poor' in your sphere—and are you giving generously or 'hiding your eyes'?
2. How has God proven this principle true in your life when you've given sacrificially?
3. What would 'not hiding your eyes' look like practically in your context this week?

Interlinear Text

נוֹתֵן	לְרֵשׁ	אֵין	מִחֶסֶד וֹר	וּמַעַל יָמִים	עַיִן יוֹ
He that giveth	unto the poor	H369	shall not lack	but he that hideth	his eyes
H5414	H7326		H4270	H5956	H5869
רַב	מְאֻרוֹת:				
shall have many	a curse				
H7227	H3994				

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 19:17 (Parallel theme): He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Proverbs 11:24 (Parallel theme): There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

Deuteronomy 15:7 (Parallel theme): If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

Deuteronomy 15:10 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

Proverbs 11:26 (Curse): He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

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

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