

Proverbs 3:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

Analysis

Generosity is presented as a matter of justice, not optional benevolence. The phrase 'when it is in the power of thine hand' indicates moral obligation wherever ability exists. This reflects the image of God in humanity—we represent Him to those in need. Hoarding resources denies our stewardship role and violates the second great commandment.

Historical Context

Israel's law prescribed specific provisions for the poor (gleaning rights, Sabbath year releases, Jubilee). Personal generosity complemented systemic justice, both grounded in remembering God's redemptive grace to Israel.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What resources has God entrusted to you that could benefit others in need?
2. How can you move from viewing generosity as optional to seeing it as obligation?

Interlinear Text

אַל	תִּמְנַע	טוֹב	מִבְּעַל יוֹ	בְּהִיּוֹת
H408	Withhold	not good	from them to whom it is due	H1961
	H4513	H2896	H1167	
לְאֵל ל	יְדִיךָ	לַעֲשׂוֹת:		
when it is in the power	of thine hand	to do		
H410	H3027	H6213		

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 6:10 (Good): As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Romans 13:7 (Parallel theme): Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

James 5:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Genesis 31:29 (Good): It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.