

Proverbs 31:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

Analysis

She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life—The Hebrew contrast is stark: *tov* (טוב, good) versus *ra'* (רָע, evil/harm). The phrase **all the days of her life** (*kol yemei chayeha*, כָל יְמֵי חַיָּה) emphasizes covenant permanence—not selective kindness but lifelong faithfulness. The verb *gamal* (גָמַל, to deal with/requite) implies active, intentional benefit.

This echoes Ruth's *hesed* (חֵדֶד, covenant loyalty)—loyal love that endures beyond convenience. Marriage in Scripture is a creation ordinance and covenant sign (Genesis 2:24, Ephesians 5:31-32), reflecting Christ's unwavering commitment to His bride the church. The *eshet chayil* embodies this covenant faithfulness, doing good not from duty alone but from transformed character that images God's unchanging goodness.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern marriage contracts often included clauses about mutual obligations, but biblical marriage transcends contract into covenant—unconditional commitment reflecting God's relationship with His people. Divorce was permitted (Deuteronomy 24:1) but always as concession to hard hearts, never God's design.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does covenant faithfulness ('all the days of her life') differ from transactional relationships based on performance?
2. In what practical ways can you 'do good and not evil' to those in your household today, even when unrewarded?
3. How does Christ's 'good and not evil' toward His spiritually adulterous bride (the church) deepen your understanding of grace?

Interlinear Text

פִּיהָ יְמִינֵי כְּלָבֵד גַּמְלֵל תְּהוֹ
She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life
H1580 H2896 H3808 H7451 H3605 H3117 H2416

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