

# Proverbs 4:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

## Analysis

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The wicked eat wickedness like bread and drink violence like wine - it sustains them. The Hebrew 'lechem' (bread) and 'yayin' (wine) are basic sustenance. What should horrify them has become their nourishment. Moral inversion is complete: they feast on what should starve them. This illustrates total depravity - not that humans are as evil as possible, but that sin pervades every aspect of life when given full reign.

## Historical Context

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Amos 6:12-13 condemned Israel for turning 'judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock...which rejoice in a thing of nought.' Moral corruption inverts values so completely that evil becomes good. Romans 1:28-32 describes similar progression where people not only do evil but 'have pleasure in them that do them.'

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. What cultural evils have become so normalized they no longer shock or disturb?
2. How can Christians maintain moral sensitivity in cultures that celebrate wickedness?
3. What practices help you 'taste and see that the LORD is good' rather than acquiring taste for evil?

## Interlinear Text

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| כִּי  | לֵאמֹר              | לֶחֶם            | כִּי שֶׁעַ           | וַיֵּין         | חֲמֹס יַם          | יִשְׁתּוּ:       |
| H3588 | <b>For they eat</b> | <b>the bread</b> | <b>of wickedness</b> | <b>the wine</b> | <b>of violence</b> | <b>and drink</b> |
|       | H3898               | H3899            | H7562                | H3196           | H2555              | H8354            |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 14:4** (Parallel theme): Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.

**Micah 6:12** (Parallel theme): For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.