

Psalm 104:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

Analysis

God causes grass to grow for cattle and 'herb for the service of man' that he might bring forth food from the earth. This verse establishes God's provision for both animals and humans through vegetation. 'Service' (avodah) can mean work or worship, suggesting human agricultural labor cooperates with God's provision. Humans don't create food but cultivate what God causes to grow. This grounds work theology in God's providence—human labor is stewardship, not autonomous production. Christ fed multitudes (Matt 14:13-21), demonstrating divine provision.

Historical Context

Agriculture was central to ancient Israelite economy. Understanding crops growing as God's work, not merely human effort, prevented prideful self-sufficiency while encouraging diligent labor as cooperation with God.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does viewing your work as 'service' in cooperation with God's provision transform your attitude toward labor?
2. What does God causing plants to grow teach about the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility?

Interlinear Text

מִצְמָע	רַא	חָזֵק	הַבָּהָם	לְעַשֵּׂב	וְעַשְׂבָּה	לְעַבְדֵּת	לְעַבְדֵּן
to grow	He causeth the grass	for the cattle	and herb	for the service	of man		
H6779	H2682	H929	H6212	H5656	H120		
וְצִיא	לְהַ	לְחַם	מִן	בָּאָרֶץ			
that he may bring forth		food		out of the earth			
H3318		H3899		H4480		H776	

Additional Cross-References

Job 28:5 (Parallel theme): As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.

Psalms 136:25 (Parallel theme): Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Genesis 3:18 (Parallel theme): Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

1 Corinthians 3:7 (Parallel theme): So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Genesis 9:3 (Parallel theme): Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Job 38:27 (Parallel theme): To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

Joel 2:22 (Parallel theme): Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

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