

Proverbs 1:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

Analysis

Understanding proverbs (mashal - comparisons, parables), dark sayings (chidah - riddles, enigmas), and wise men's words requires interpretive skill. This verse acknowledges that wisdom literature demands careful study, not casual reading. The 'dark sayings' aren't deliberately obscure but express profound truth through figurative language requiring meditation and Spirit-illumination. Reformed hermeneutics values both Scripture's perspicuity in essential matters and its depths requiring diligent study.

Historical Context

Reflects ancient Near Eastern wisdom tradition's use of pithy sayings, numerical proverbs, and enigmatic utterances requiring contemplation. Solomon's wisdom included ability to compose and interpret such sayings (1 Kings 4:32).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How much effort do you invest in understanding Scripture's deeper meanings versus settling for surface readings?
2. What practices help you meditate on biblical wisdom until understanding emerges?

Interlinear Text

חָכְמָה יִמְלִיכְתָּה
To understand a proverb and the interpretation the words of the wise
לְבַבּ יִשְׁלַח מִלְיאָת הָנֶגֶב
H995 H4912 H4426 H1697 H2450

וְחִידָּתָם:
and their dark sayings
H2420

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 78:2 (Darkness): I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Mark 4:11 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

Hebrews 5:14 (Parallel theme): But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Psalms 49:4 (Darkness): I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

Mark 4:34 (Parallel theme): But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

2 Peter 3:16 (Word): As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned

and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Ecclesiastes 12:11 (Word): The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

Numbers 12:8 (Darkness): With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

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