

Proverbs 15:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

Analysis

The 'tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright'—Hebrew 'yatab' means to make good, beautiful, or beneficial. Wisdom doesn't just possess knowledge but deploys it appropriately, speaking truth in love at the right time. Meanwhile, 'the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness'—Hebrew 'naba' means to gush or bubble forth uncontrollably. This illustrates discipline versus impulsiveness. Reformed theology values ordered affections and Spirit-controlled speech. The wise person's tongue is a tool skillfully wielded; the fool's mouth is an uncontrolled fountain of folly.

Historical Context

In ancient oral cultures, skill in speech was highly valued. Elders and judges were respected for their ability to speak wisely, while uncontrolled speech marked one as immature and unworthy of leadership.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Do you speak thoughtfully and purposefully, or do words 'pour out' without consideration?
2. How can you develop greater skill in using knowledge appropriately in conversation?
3. What practices help you control your tongue rather than letting it control you?

Interlinear Text

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|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| לֶשׁוֹן | הַ כְּמִים | תֵּיטֵב יָב | יָד עֵת | וּפִי | כִּי טִיל יָם |
| The tongue | of the wise | aright | useth knowledge | but the mouth | of fools |
| H3956 | H2450 | H3190 | H1847 | H6310 | H3684 |
| יָב יַעַ | אֲלִית: | | | | |
| poureth out | foolishness | | | | |
| H5042 | H200 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 12:23 (Parallel theme): A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

Proverbs 15:28 (Parallel theme): The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

Proverbs 13:16 (Parallel theme): Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.