

Proverbs 16:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

Analysis

Kings delight in 'righteous lips' and love 'him that speaketh right.' The ideal ruler values truth-tellers, not flatterers. The Hebrew 'yashar' (right/upright) describes straightforward, honest speech. This contrasts with Ahab, who preferred false prophets over truth-speaking Micaiah (1 Kings 22). Reformed theology emphasizes the importance of speaking truth to power. Leaders who surround themselves with yes-men invite disaster. Wise rulers seek counsel from those who speak God's truth, even when difficult or unwelcome.

Historical Context

Ancient courts were filled with advisors competing for royal favor. The temptation to tell kings what they wanted to hear rather than truth was constant, leading to disastrous policies when lies were preferred over honest counsel.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Do you speak truth lovingly to those in authority over you, or do you flatter and appease?
2. If you're in leadership, do you reward honesty or punish those who bring unwelcome truths?
3. How can you cultivate a culture that values 'righteous lips' over smooth flattery?

Interlinear Text

רָצוֹן	מֶלֶכִּים	שִׁפְתָּי	צַדִּיק	וְדָבָר	יָשָׁר יָם
are the delight	of kings	lips	Righteous	him that speaketh	right
H7522	H4428	H8193	H6664	H1696	H3477
וְאֵהֱבָה:					
and they love					
H157					

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 14:35 (Kingdom): The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.

Proverbs 22:11 (Love): He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.