

Proverbs 17:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.

Analysis

This 'better than' proverb prioritizes peace over plenty. A dry morsel (minimal food) with quietness surpasses a house full of sacrifices (abundance) with strife. The Hebrew 'shalem' (quietness) suggests wholeness and peace. Reformed theology recognizes contentment as gift of grace, valuing covenant harmony over material prosperity.

Historical Context

Sacrificial feasts were occasions of abundance in ancient Israel, yet family strife could poison even these sacred meals. Solomon contrasts external religious observance with genuine relational peace.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How do you prioritize peace over prosperity in your household?
2. What contentment with little would bring more joy than abundance with conflict?

Interlinear Text

מִלְאָקֶת	מִבֵּית	מִבְּנָה	פֶּתֶט	וּבְ	וְשִׁלְוָה	בְּהַ	בְּהַ	וְשִׁלְוָה	וְתַּחַת	וְתַּחַת	וְתַּחַת
Better	morsel	is a dry			and quietness		^{וְ}		therewith than an house		full
H2896	H6595	H2720			H7962				H1004		H4392
רִיב:	זָבְחִי										
of sacrifices	with strife										
	H2077	H7379									

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 15:17 (Parallel theme): Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

Proverbs 21:19 (Parallel theme): It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

Psalms 37:16 (Parallel theme): A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

Proverbs 21:9 (Parallel theme): It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org