

Proverbs 22:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and
apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

Analysis

Loving pleasure leads to poverty; loving 'wine and oil' (luxury and indulgence) prevents wealth accumulation. This warns against hedonism—making pleasure life's organizing principle. Those who prioritize gratification squander resources on temporary satisfaction rather than investing wisely. The principle extends beyond economics to spiritual poverty: those who live for pleasure miss life's true purpose. Delayed gratification, self-control, and proper priorities characterize wisdom. The pleasures at God's right hand far exceed temporal indulgence. Believers should enjoy God's gifts with gratitude but never make comfort or pleasure ultimate. True satisfaction comes from God, not from wine and oil.

Historical Context

Wine and oil represented luxury in ancient Israel. Excessive consumption indicated wasteful living that would deplete resources needed for survival and provision.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What pleasures are you pursuing that compromise faithful stewardship and spiritual priorities?
2. How can you cultivate contentment and self-control rather than chasing sensual gratification?

Interlinear Text

הָט	אָזְנוֹךָ	וּ שְׁמַע	דְּבַר י	חֻמֵּי ים	לִבְךָ	תִּשְׁ יֵת
Bow down	thine ear	and hear	the words	of the wise	thine heart	and apply
H5186	H241	H8085	H1697	H2450	H3820	H7896
לִדְעוּתִי:						
unto my knowledge						
H1847						

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 23:12 (Word): Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

Psalms 90:12 (Parallel theme): So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Proverbs 3:1 (Word): My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

Proverbs 1:3 (Parallel theme): To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

Ecclesiastes 7:25 (Parallel theme): I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness: