

Proverbs 22:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

Analysis

The wise person's dwelling contains stored treasure and oil—abundance from diligent work and prudent management. The fool squanders everything through improvidence and indulgence. Wisdom produces prosperity through hard work, planning, and frugality; folly produces poverty through waste. This isn't promising wealth to all wise people but affirming general principles: disciplined stewardship usually creates abundance; foolishness leads to want. The wise save for future needs; fools consume everything immediately. This economic wisdom reflects spiritual principles: stewarding God's gifts faithfully honors Him; wastefulness despises His provision. Believers should manage resources as faithful stewards accountable to the Master.

Historical Context

Storing provisions (oil, grain, etc.) was essential in agrarian societies facing crop failures and seasonal variations. Wise households maintained reserves; foolish ones lived hand-to-mouth.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Are you managing resources wisely with provision for the future?
2. What spending patterns reveal foolishness that needs correction?

Interlinear Text

אַל כִּי בְּתִי שְׁלַשׁ וּמָלֵךְ בְּמִדְעָה
H3808 Have not I written H3789 H0 to thee H8032 H4156 and counsels H1847 and knowledge

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 8:6 (Parallel theme): Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

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