

Proverbs 25:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Analysis

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. The Hebrew 'davar' (word/matter) and 'al ophnayv' (on its wheels/aptly) describe perfectly timed, appropriately crafted speech. Beautiful imagery: golden apples in silver settings - aesthetically perfect, valuable, artfully arranged. Right words at right time are similarly beautiful and valuable. This verse celebrates skillful communication - content, timing, and delivery all appropriate.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued eloquence and artful speech. While biblical wisdom condemns manipulative flattery, it celebrates truthful skillful communication. Ecclesiastes 12:10 describes the Preacher seeking 'acceptable words' that were 'upright, even words of truth.' Proverbs consistently values wise speech: 'Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones' (16:24).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What makes speech 'fitly spoken' - how do content, timing, and delivery contribute?
2. When have you experienced or offered perfectly timed words that were extraordinarily valuable?
3. How can you develop skill in crafting beautiful, valuable, appropriate communication?

Interlinear Text

תַּפּוּחַ י	זָהָב	בְּמִשְׁכֵּי וְזֹת	כֶּסֶף	דָּבָר ר	דָּבָר ר	עַל	אֲפָנְיוֹ:
is like apples	of gold	in pictures	of silver	A word	spoken	H5921	H655
H8598	H2091	H4906	H3701	H1697	H1696		

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 15:23 (Word): A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

Isaiah 50:4 (Word): The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Ecclesiastes 12:10 (Word): The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

Proverbs 24:26 (Parallel theme): Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer.