

Proverbs 25:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.

Analysis

Withdraw your foot from your neighbor's house, lest he weary of you and hate you. The Hebrew 'yaqar' (rare/precious/honor) your foot and 'quwts' (loathe/be grieved) warns against overstaying welcome. Even good friendships need space. Constant presence breeds contempt; appropriate distance maintains appreciation. This verse teaches relational wisdom: respect boundaries, don't overstay, give space. Familiarity can breed contempt without intentional boundaries.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern hospitality valued generosity, but wisdom recognized limits. Even good hosts have limited capacity for guests. Modern culture's connectivity makes this harder - constant texting, social media presence, unlimited accessibility. Boundaries seem unfriendly but actually preserve relationships. Ecclesiastes 3:5 recognizes 'a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.'

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What relationships are you straining by overstaying welcome or demanding constant attention?
2. How can you establish healthy boundaries that preserve friendships rather than straining them?
3. What does it mean to make your presence 'precious' through appropriate limits?

Interlinear Text

רֹאשׁוֹת בְּ גַלְבָּה מִבֵּית רַעַת נָשָׁת שְׁבָעָת !
Withdraw thy foot house from thy neighbour's lest he be weary

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וְשִׁנְאָבָן

of thee and so hate

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