

Proverbs 26:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Analysis

A talebearer's words are like wounds; they go down into innermost parts. The Hebrew 'mithlahameym' (dainty morsels) describes gossip's perverse appeal - wounds presented as delicacies. Gossip tastes sweet but injures deeply. It penetrates to 'innermost parts' (soul's depths), creating lasting damage. This verse exposes gossip's dual nature: superficially attractive, profoundly destructive. Proverbs 18:8 makes identical point. Wisdom resists gossip's appeal by recognizing its true nature - poison in attractive packaging.

Historical Context

Throughout Scripture, speech's power to harm is emphasized. Jeremiah 9:8 says: 'Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit.' Psalm 64:3 describes those who 'whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.' James 3:8 calls the tongue 'an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.' Gossip wounds in ways visible injuries don't - destroying reputations, relationships, peace. Its damage persists long after spoken.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What gossip have you consumed as 'dainty morsels' while ignoring its poisonous effects?
2. How has gossip wounded you deeply, penetrating to your 'innermost parts'?
3. What practices would help you resist gossip's appeal by recognizing its true destructive nature?

Interlinear Text

דְּבַר י	נִרְגָּן	כְּמַתְלֵהֶם יָם	וְהֵם	יֵרֵד וְ
The words	of a talebearer	are as wounds	H1992	and they go down
H1697	H5372	H3859		H3381
חֲדָרָי	בֶּטְןִי			
into the innermost parts	of the belly			
H2315	H990			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 18:8 (Word): The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.