

Proverbs 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

Analysis

Wisdom's value exceeds merchandise of silver and fine gold. The commercial metaphor establishes wisdom as superior investment to precious metals. This comparative valuation demands prioritizing spiritual over material wealth. The verse doesn't condemn riches but subordinates them to wisdom. Reformed theology affirms appropriate wealth pursuit while warning against making mammon the supreme good. True prosperity includes wisdom enriching the soul.

Historical Context

Written during Solomon's era of unprecedented wealth accumulation through trade. Yet the king who possessed vast treasures declared wisdom more valuable, challenging materialistic values.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do your actual investment priorities (time, money, energy) reflect wisdom's supreme value?
2. What would change in your life if you genuinely valued wisdom above material gain?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	טוֹב	סְחָרָה	מִסְחָר	כִּי־סֶרֶף
H3588	of it is better	For the merchandise	than the merchandise	of silver
	H2896	H5504	H5505	H3701
וּמִחָר וְיָ	תְּבוּאָתָהּ:			
thereof than fine gold	and the gain			
H2742	H8393			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:16 (Parallel theme): How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Proverbs 8:19 (Parallel theme): My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

Matthew 16:26 (Parallel theme): For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Psalms 119:111 (Parallel theme): Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

Revelation 3:18 (Parallel theme): I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Psalms 119:72 (Parallel theme): The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

Psalms 119:162 (Parallel theme): I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

Proverbs 2:4 (Parallel theme): If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

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