

Proverbs 3:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.

Analysis

Wisdom provides life to the soul and grace to the neck. The Hebrew 'chayim' (life) refers to vitality and flourishing, while 'chen' (grace) to the neck suggests adornment - wisdom beautifies the one who possesses it. This dual benefit addresses both internal reality (soul life) and external appearance (attractive character). True wisdom transforms both who we are and how we appear to others.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued both inner character and outer reputation. Wisdom literature recognizes both dimensions - wise living produces genuine virtue (internal) and good reputation (external), unlike hypocrisy (external without internal) or obscure righteousness (internal without external recognition).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does wisdom add 'life' to your soul in ways that mere knowledge or wealth cannot?

2. What does it mean for wisdom to be 'grace to thy neck' - how does it adorn you?
3. In what ways should internal wisdom become externally visible in your character and conduct?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה	חַיִּים	לְנַפְשְׁךָ	וְחַיִּים	לְגִרְתְּךָ:
H1961	So shall they be life	unto thy soul	and grace	to thy neck
	H2416	H5315	H2580	H1621

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 4:22 (Parallel theme): For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Proverbs 1:9 (Grace): For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

Isaiah 38:16 (Parallel theme): O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.