

Proverbs 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Analysis

Physical health is connected to spiritual obedience. The Hebrew 'riphuwth' (health/healing) to the navel and 'shiqquwth' (refreshment) to the bones suggest that fearing God and turning from evil produces bodily wellness. While this isn't mechanical cause-effect promising perfect health, it recognizes the psychosomatic connection - anxiety, bitterness, and guilty conscience produce physical stress, while peace with God promotes holistic health. Modern medicine increasingly validates the mind-body connection that Scripture has always affirmed.

Historical Context

Ancient medicine was primitive by modern standards, but biblical wisdom recognized connections between spiritual/emotional states and physical health. The Levitical priesthood combined spiritual and physical hygiene laws, reflecting holistic understanding of human wellness.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What physical ailments might be connected to spiritual or emotional unhealth in your life?
2. How does pursuing God's wisdom contribute to holistic wellness beyond merely physical fitness?
3. In what ways does modern healthcare need to recover the biblical integration of spiritual and physical health?

Interlinear Text

לעַצְמוֹתִיךְ וְשָׁקָר וְלֶשֶׁךְ בְּתַהַר וְפָאֹתָה
It shall be health H1961 **to thy navel** H8270 **and marrow** H8250 **to thy bones** H6106

Additional Cross-References

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

Psalms 147:3 (Parallel theme): He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

Job 21:24 (Parallel theme): His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

Proverbs 16:24 (Parallel theme): Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Isaiah 1:6 (Parallel theme): From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.