

Proverbs 4:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Analysis

The father's instruction carries divine authority, mediating God's wisdom to the next generation. The imperative 'hear' (shema) is the same word beginning the Shema prayer, demanding obedient response. Familial teaching channels covenantal truth, establishing the home as primary context for discipleship.

Historical Context

Israelite fathers bore covenant responsibility to teach children God's commandments (Deuteronomy 6:7). This wasn't delegated to religious professionals but remained the father's sacred duty within the household.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How are you fulfilling your responsibility to pass on spiritual wisdom to the next generation?
2. What wisdom from previous generations are you in danger of losing if not transmitted?

Interlinear Text

שְׁמַע וּ	בְּנִים	מִן הַ	אָב	וְהִקְשִׁיב	לְדַעַת
Hear	ye children	the instruction	of a father	and attend	to know
H8085	H1121	H4148	H1	H7181	H3045

בִּינָה:

understanding
H998

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 2:1 (Parallel theme): Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Psalms 34:11 (Parallel theme): Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 1:8 (Parallel theme): My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 5:1 (Parallel theme): My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding:

Proverbs 22:17 (Parallel theme): Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

Proverbs 7:4 (Parallel theme): Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

Proverbs 19:20 (Parallel theme): Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.