

Proverbs 4:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

Analysis

Keep wisdom in your sight; don't let it depart from your eyes. The Hebrew 'luwz' (depart/turn aside) warns against allowing wisdom to slip from focus. Wisdom requires sustained attention - momentary neglect allows it to drift away. This verse emphasizes vigilance: actively maintain wisdom's centrality rather than passively assuming it will remain. Spiritual vision requires intentional focus.

Historical Context

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 commanded Israel to keep God's words constantly before them - bind them on hands, foreheads, gates, doorposts. Constant visual reminders maintained spiritual focus amid competing influences. Early Christians continued this practice through Scripture memorization, liturgy, and visual symbols maintaining gospel centrality.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What practices keep wisdom 'before your eyes' rather than allowing it to drift to periphery?
2. What competes for your attention and threatens to displace wisdom from central focus?
3. How can you create 'visual reminders' that maintain wisdom's priority?

Interlinear Text

בְּתַת וְאַל יָזֹר יְלִיאָה מְנַצֵּחַ יְבָשָׂה שְׁמָר מְבָשָׂה
H408 Let them not depart from thine eyes keep them in the midst
H3868 H5869 H8104 H8432

לִבְבָּךְ:
of thine heart
H3824

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 3:21 (Parallel theme): My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

Psalms 40:8 (Parallel theme): I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

Proverbs 3:3 (Parallel theme): Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: