

Proverbs 4:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

Analysis

Solomon identifies himself as his father's (David's) son, tender and beloved. The Hebrew 'rak' (tender/delicate) and 'yachid' (only one/beloved) describe parental affection and careful nurture. This personal testimony grounds wisdom transmission in family relationships characterized by love. Good teaching flows from loving relationships, not merely formal instruction. The fact that wisdom came through David (a man after God's own heart despite failures) demonstrates that wisdom transcends personal perfection.

Historical Context

David's charge to Solomon is recorded in 1 Kings 2:1-9, emphasizing faithfulness to God's law. Despite David's moral failures (Bathsheba, Uriah), he transmitted godly wisdom to his son. This illustrates that imperfect parents can still pass on divine truth when centered on God's Word rather than personal example alone.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does being 'tender and only' in your father's sight affect your receptivity to wisdom?
2. What wisdom have you received from imperfect but faithful teachers?
3. How can parents transmit godly wisdom even when aware of their own failures?

Interlinear Text

לֹאָבֶן יְהִי בְּנֵי כִּי יְתִי בְּנֵי
H3588 son H1961 For I was my father's tender and only beloved in the sight
H1121

אֶתְּנָא:
of my mother
H517

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 22:5 (Parallel theme): And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

Romans 12:16 (Parallel theme): Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

1 Chronicles 29:1 (Parallel theme): Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God.