

Proverbs 4:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Analysis

The repeated emphasis on getting wisdom (also v. 7) shows its supreme value. The Hebrew 'qanah' (get) means acquire at cost, implying wisdom requires sacrifice. Neither forgetting nor declining suggests the constant danger of spiritual drift—wisdom must be actively retained through renewed commitment and dependence on God's grace.

Historical Context

Unlike inherited wealth or position, wisdom required personal pursuit and acquisition. Even Solomon's God-given wisdom needed cultivation through diligent study and application of divine truth.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What have you sacrificed to gain spiritual wisdom, and what more might God require?
2. How do you combat spiritual forgetfulness and decline in your walk?

Interlinear Text

קִנֵּה ה	חֵכְמָה	קִנֵּה ה	בִּינָה ה	אֵל	תִּשְׁכַּח ח	אֵל
Get	wisdom	Get	understanding	H408	forget	H408
H7069	H2451	H7069	H998		H7911	
ט	ת	מֵאֲמָרַי	פִּי:			
it not neither decline	from the words	of my mouth				
H5186	H561	H6310				

Additional Cross-References

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

2 Chronicles 34:2 (Parallel theme): And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.

Psalms 44:18 (Parallel theme): Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way;

Proverbs 19:8 (Parallel theme): He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

Proverbs 8:5 (Parallel theme): O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

Proverbs 17:16 (Parallel theme): Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?

Proverbs 23:23 (Parallel theme): Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

Psalms 119:157 (Parallel theme): Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.

Psalms 119:51 (Word): The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.

Job 23:11 (Parallel theme): My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

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