

Proverbs 4:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

Analysis

Don't forsake wisdom, for she will preserve you; love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom is personified as protective companion. The Hebrew 'shamar' (keep/preserve) indicates guarding from harm. This verse establishes reciprocal relationship: love wisdom, and she guards you. Wisdom isn't merely abstract knowledge but living relationship requiring affection and commitment. Those who love wisdom receive its protective benefits.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature often personified wisdom, but Israel's distinctive contribution was connecting wisdom with Yahweh's character and covenant. Wisdom wasn't independent force but divine attribute offered to humans through relationship with God.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'love' wisdom rather than merely respect or acknowledge it?
2. How has wisdom 'kept' or preserved you from dangers you may not even have recognized?
3. In what ways is relationship with wisdom analogous to relationship with Christ (the Wisdom of God)?

Interlinear Text

אָל	פָּעַזְתָּ בָּם	וְתִשְׁמַר בָּם	אָהָב בָּם	וְתִזְמַכֵּת בָּם
H408	Forsake	her not and she shall preserve	H157	thee love her and she shall keep
H5800		H8104		H5341

Additional Cross-References

2 Thessalonians 2:10 (Love): And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Ephesians 3:17 (Love): That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,