

Proverbs 4:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Analysis

This verse boldly declares wisdom as the supreme acquisition. 'Wisdom is the principal thing' (חֵכְמָה רִאשִׁית/re'shit chokhmah) uses 're'shit' (beginning/chief thing) to establish wisdom as the highest priority, the foundation for everything else. 'Therefore get wisdom' (חֵכְמָה קְנֶה/qeneh chokhmah) employs the commercial verb 'qanah,' meaning purchase, acquire, buy. Wisdom costs something—time, effort, sometimes material resources (paying for education). The parallel phrase 'with all thy getting get understanding' (בְּכֹל־קִינְיָנְךָ קְנֶה וִינָה/bekhol-qinyanecha qeneh vinah) emphasizes that amid all other acquisitions, understanding must be obtained. This verse calls for prioritizing wisdom above wealth, pleasure, or status. It anticipates Jesus' command to 'seek first the kingdom of God' (Matthew 6:33) and Paul's counting all else as loss compared to knowing Christ (Philippians 3:8).

Historical Context

This proverb reflects the priority ancient Israelite culture placed on acquiring wisdom above material wealth.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

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