

Proverbs 8:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

Analysis

In this chapter, Wisdom personified speaks, offering herself to all who will listen. 'Receive my instruction, and not silver' presents a stark choice: instruction (discipline, correction, wisdom) over silver. 'Knowledge rather than choice gold' similarly prioritizes wisdom over wealth. The comparative 'rather than' indicates not that silver and gold are evil but that wisdom surpasses them in value. This theme echoes throughout Proverbs (3:13-15, 16:16) and anticipates Jesus' teaching about treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21) and Paul's counting all as loss for Christ (Philippians 3:8). The verse challenges materialistic priorities and calls for radical reorientation of values.

Historical Context

In Solomon's era of unprecedented prosperity (1 Kings 10), the temptation to prioritize wealth was acute. Silver and gold flowed into Jerusalem through trade networks. Against this backdrop, wisdom literature insisted that true wealth lies in understanding God's ways. The wisdom tradition thus offered prophetic critique of materialism within Israelite society.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does your actual allocation of time and resources reveal about whether you truly value wisdom over material wealth?
2. How can you practically 'receive instruction' as more valuable than financial gain?

Interlinear Text

רָאֵן מִתְּחִילָה וְאֶל כְּבָשָׂר וְעַתְּדִילָה
Receive my instruction and not silver and knowledge gold
H3947 H4148 H408 H3701 H1847 H2742

נִבְּחָר:
rather than choice
H977

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:72 (Parallel theme): The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

Psalms 119:127 (Parallel theme): Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

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

Proverbs 16:16 (Parallel theme): How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Psalms 119:162 (Parallel theme): I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

Proverbs 10:20 (Parallel theme): The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

Ecclesiastes 7:11 (Parallel theme): Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

Acts 3:6 (Parallel theme): Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

Proverbs 8:19 (Parallel theme): My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

2 Corinthians 6:10 (Parallel theme): As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.