

Proverbs 8:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Analysis

Wisdom surpasses material wealth in value. The comparison with rubies (precious stones) establishes wisdom's incomparable worth. While riches are temporal and uncertain, wisdom provides eternal benefit. This Reformed priority orders all earthly goods beneath spiritual treasure.

Historical Context

Solomon's legendary wealth (1 Kings 10:14-29) made his valuation of wisdom over riches especially credible. Having possessed both, he could testify to wisdom's superior value from experience.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do your financial decisions reflect wisdom's supreme value in your priorities?
2. What material pursuits compete with seeking God's wisdom in your life?

Interlinear Text

בַּטְּהָרָהּ מִפְּנֵן יְמִינָהּ טֹבָה הַכְּמַהּ בְּכִיּוֹתָהּ וְכִיּוֹתָהּ
H3588 is better H2896 For wisdom H2451 than rubies H6443 H3605 and all the things that may be desired
H2656

בְּבָתָהּ אֲלֵיןָהּ בְּבָתָהּ אֲלֵיןָהּ
H3808 are not to be compared H7737 H0

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 19:10 (Parallel theme): More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

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

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!

Matthew 16:26 (Parallel theme): For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Proverbs 20:15 (Parallel theme): There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.