

Proverbs 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Analysis

Wisdom declares: 'I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.' The reciprocal love relationship is striking—wisdom loves those who love her. 'Seek me early' can mean early in the morning or early in life (diligently, earnestly). The promise 'shall find me' assures that diligent seeking succeeds. This personification of wisdom anticipates the New Testament revelation of Christ as divine Wisdom incarnate (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3). The verse promises that God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6) and that seeking produces finding (Matthew 7:7-8).

Historical Context

The personification of Wisdom as a woman calling in the streets (chapters 1, 8, 9) was a striking literary device in ancient Israel. Some scholars see connections to ancient Near Eastern goddess worship, though Proverbs clearly subordinates Wisdom to Yahweh. The imagery emphasized wisdom's accessibility and urgent invitation to all people.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Are you seeking wisdom 'early'—making it a priority at the beginning of your day and life rather than an afterthought?
2. How have you experienced the truth that diligent seeking of wisdom results in finding it?

Interlinear Text

וְמִשְׁאַתָּה אֶת־בָּאָתִי
I shall find those that seek me early

H589 I love H157 I love H157 me and those that seek me early H7836 shall find H4672

Additional Cross-References

John 14:23 (Love): Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:21 (Love): He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Psalms 91:14 (Love): Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

1 Samuel 2:30 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

Isaiah 55:6 (Parallel theme): Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

1 John 4:19 (Love): We love him, because he first loved us.

Isaiah 45:19 (Parallel theme): I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

John 16:27 (Love): For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

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.

Matthew 6:33 (Parallel theme): But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.