

Proverbs 8:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Analysis

Wisdom was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before earth existed. The Hebrew 'nasak' (set up/established/appointed) and 'olam' (everlasting/eternity) emphasize wisdom's preexistence. Before temporal creation, wisdom existed eternally. This verse moves from v.22's 'beginning of His way' to 'from everlasting' - pushing back beyond creation to eternity. Wisdom is eternal, not contingent; absolute, not relative.

Historical Context

Platonic philosophy sought eternal forms behind temporal particulars. Biblical wisdom provides this but personally - not abstract forms but God's eternal wisdom expressed in creation and incarnate in Christ. Hebrews 1:2-3 describes Christ as heir of all things, 'by whom also he made the worlds...upholding all things by the word of his power.' Eternal Wisdom sustains all reality.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does wisdom's eternal nature provide certainty amid changing circumstances?
2. What does it mean that truth exists eternally, independent of human recognition?
3. How should wisdom's eternality affect your confidence in biblical teaching?

Interlinear Text

אָזֶן מִקְדָּמִי מִרְאֵשׁ נֶסֶת מִעַדְלָמָן
from everlasting I was set up from the beginning or ever the earth
H5769 H5258 H7218 H6924 H776

Additional Cross-References

John 17:24 (Parallel theme): Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Psalms 2:6 (Parallel theme): Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Micah 5:2 (Eternal Life): But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Genesis 1:26 (Parallel theme): And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

John 17:5 (Parallel theme): And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.