

# Proverbs 13:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner  
heareth not rebuke.

## Analysis

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This proverb addresses responsiveness to parental instruction: 'A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.' The wise son actively listens (shama—hears with intent to obey) to fatherly instruction (musar). This reflects the fifth commandment to honor parents (Exodus 20:12) and the wisdom tradition's emphasis on parental teaching (Proverbs 1:8, 6:20). The 'scorner' (lets—mocks, scoffs) represents one who treats wisdom with contempt. The statement 'heareth not rebuke' doesn't mean physical inability to hear but willful refusal to listen. Scorners actively resist correction, mocking those who offer it. This creates two trajectories: wise sons grow in wisdom through receptivity; scorners decline into folly through resistance.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Israelite society structured around patriarchal family units where fathers bore primary responsibility for teaching sons. Honoring parents and receiving their instruction was foundational to covenant faithfulness. Post-exilic Jewish tradition developed elaborate systems of rabbinic teaching building on this father-son pedagogical model. New Testament Christianity maintained this emphasis on honoring parents and receiving godly instruction.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

### Study Questions

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1. Do you actively listen to godly counsel from parents, spiritual mentors, or church leaders, or do you resist instruction you find uncomfortable?
2. In what ways might you be acting like a 'scorner' who refuses rebuke rather than a wise son who heeds instruction?

### Interlinear Text

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בן	חכם	מ	וְסֵר	אֶב	לִי	לֹא	שִׁמְעָה
son	A wise	instruction	heareth his father's	but a scorner	H3808	heareth	
H1121	H2450	H4148	H1	H3887		H8085	

גְּעָרָה:  
not rebuke  
H1606

### Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 15:5** (Parallel theme): A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

**Proverbs 15:20** (Parallel theme): A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

**Proverbs 10:1** (Parallel theme): The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

**1 Samuel 2:25** (Parallel theme): If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

**Proverbs 14:6** (Parallel theme): A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.

