

Proverbs 15:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

Analysis

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. (פָּרָע מִשְׁרָם מִזְאָס נַפְשׁוֹ, one refusing discipline despises his soul). Rejecting instruction is self-hatred. (veshome'a tokhachat qoneh-lev (קָוָנָה-לֵב), but one hearing reproof acquires heart/understanding). Qanah lev (literally "acquires heart") means gets understanding, gains wisdom. Accepting correction is self-love through growth. The proverb challenges us to prove love for ourselves through humility toward reproof.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom traditions emphasized teachability. The wise sought correction; fools rejected it. Proverbs repeatedly contrasts these responses (10:17, 12:1, 13:18, 15:5). Biblical examples include David receiving Nathan's rebuke (2 Samuel 12) versus Rehoboam rejecting elders' counsel (1 Kings 12). Christians should welcome biblical correction as God's loving discipline (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Do you receive correction as loving yourself (gaining wisdom) or refuse it as despising yourself (remaining foolish)?
2. Who in your life provides godly reproof, and are you listening to them?
3. How can you cultivate a heart that craves rather than resents correction?

Interlinear Text

פֹּוֹתֶה עַ	מִתְּבָרֵךְ	מִזְאָסֶה	נֶפֶשׁ יְ	וְשֹׁמֶן עַ
He that refuseth	instruction	despiseth	his own soul	but he that heareth
H6544	H4148	H3988	H5315	H8085
לְבָבְךָ וְנֶהֱתָה תְּ וְכַחַת	לְבָבְךָ	וְנֶהֱתָה	תְּ וְכַחַת	
reproof	getteth	understanding		
H8433	H7069	H3820		

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 3:19 (Parallel theme): As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Proverbs 1:7 (Parallel theme): The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Isaiah 1:5 (Parallel theme): Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Proverbs 18:15 (Parallel theme): The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.