

Proverbs 17:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

Analysis

A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool. Techat ge'arah maevin (תְּחִתָּת גָּעָרָה מַבֵּן), a rebuke descends into the discerning). One reproof deeply impacts the wise. Mehakkot kesil me'ah (מְהֻקּוֹת קֵסִיל מֵאָה), more than striking a fool a hundred times). A hundred beatings don't teach fools. The contrast is dramatic—wisdom makes one blow sufficient; folly makes a hundred insufficient. The proverb celebrates teachability versus hardened resistance. Believers should be teachable, learning from gentle correction rather than requiring harsh discipline (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Historical Context

Ancient discipline included corporal punishment. Mosaic Law prescribed flogging (Deuteronomy 25:2-3, limited to 40 lashes). Proverbs frequently mentions physical discipline (13:24, 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15). Yet this proverb says wise people don't require beating—verbal reproof suffices. Fools remain unchanged despite severe punishment. The principle: internal receptivity matters more than external severity. Jesus taught disciples gently; they responded with transformation.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Do you learn from one gentle reproof, or do you require many painful experiences before changing?
2. What cultivates teachability that makes gentle correction effective?
3. How does the Holy Spirit's gentle conviction differ from the severe discipline required by hard-hearted resistance?

Interlinear Text

מִאָה: בָּסָר יְלִמּוּד מִמְּבָרֶכֶת וְתִמְמָנָה
entereth A reproof more into a wise man stripes into a fool than an hundred

H5181 H1606 H995 H5221 H3684 H3967

Additional Cross-References

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

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