

# Proverbs 19:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.

## Analysis

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This verse prescribes different pedagogical methods for different character types. The 'scorner' (Hebrew 'lets,' one who mocks wisdom) learns only through public consequences; when he is punished, the 'simple' (naive, uncommitted) take warning. The scorner himself rarely learns from correction, but his judgment educates others. In contrast, the 'understanding' person profits from mere reproof without needing punishment—he receives wisdom gladly. This reflects varying degrees of teachability and wisdom. The truly wise learn from words; the simple learn from observation; the scoffer learns only through suffering (if at all). This validates both verbal instruction and discipline in wisdom's pedagogy.

## Historical Context

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Public punishment in Israelite society served both justice and education, teaching the community God's standards. The gates where judgment occurred became classrooms in righteousness.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

### Study Questions

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1. Which category describes your response to correction—understanding, simple, or scorner?
2. How can you cultivate greater teachability and responsiveness to wisdom?

### Interlinear Text

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לֵץ	תֶּכֶה	וּפִי תִי	יִשָּׁר מִ	וְהוֹכִי יָם	יָבִי יָן
a scorner	Smite	and the simple	will beware	and reprove	and he will understand
H3887	H5221	H6612	H6191	H3198	H995
	יָבִי יָן	דַּעַת:			
	and he will understand	knowledge			
	H995	H1847			

### Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 21:11** (Parallel theme): When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

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

**Proverbs 17:10** (Parallel theme): A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

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