

Proverbs 23:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Analysis

'Withhold not correction from the child' commands parents to discipline children consistently and appropriately. The second clause addresses parental fear: 'if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.' Physical discipline, properly administered, isn't harmful but beneficial. Modern society recoils from corporal punishment, but biblical wisdom affirms its necessity. The 'rod' isn't abuse but controlled correction that teaches consequences. Verse 14 explains the stakes: such discipline delivers the soul from hell. Faithful discipline aims at the child's eternal good, not parental convenience. Love disciplines; false love indulges. Parents must overcome sentimentality and fear to fulfill their duty of correcting children toward righteousness.

Historical Context

Biblical and historical parenting included corporal discipline as normal and necessary. Modern rejection of this wisdom has coincided with widespread familial and social breakdown.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Are you faithfully disciplining your children or allowing fear of their displeasure to prevent correction?
2. How does understanding discipline's eternal stakes motivate faithful parenting?

Interlinear Text

אַל	תִּמְנֶה ע	מִן עַר	מוֹסֵר	כִּי	תִּכּוּ נָו
H408	Withhold H4513	from the child H5288	not correction H4148	H3588	for if thou beatest H5221
בַּשֵּׁבֶט	ל א	יָמוּת:			
him with the rod H7626	H3808	he shall not die H4191			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 19:18 (Parallel theme): Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Proverbs 13:24 (Parallel theme): He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

Proverbs 29:15 (Parallel theme): The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

Proverbs 29:17 (Parallel theme): Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.