

# Proverbs 24:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

## Analysis

This proverb warns against plotting evil. 'He that deviseth to do evil' (mezimmot lehare'a, one who schemes/plans to do evil) identifies not impulsive sin but calculated wickedness. 'Shall be called a mischievous person' (בָּעֵל מִזְמֹת יִקְרָא) assigns a reputation. The Hebrew בָּעֵל could also be translated 'master of evil schemes' or 'mischief-maker.' The point is that character is revealed through actions, and reputation follows behavior. Those who consistently plot evil become known as evil. This principle operates in both directions: 'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches' (Proverbs 22:1). Jesus taught: 'by their fruits ye shall know them' (Matthew 7:20). Actions reveal character; character determines reputation.

## Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures placed enormous value on reputation. A person's name represented their character and legacy. Good names brought honor across generations; shameful names brought lasting disgrace. Scripture records both: David's name remained honored despite his sin because he repented (2 Samuel 12:13). Absalom's name became synonymous with rebellion (2 Samuel 15-18). Judas's name became proverbial for betrayal. Biblical names often reflected character: Jacob ('supplanter') became Israel ('God prevails'). Simon ('hearing') became Peter ('rock'). In the early church, reputation mattered for ministry qualification: elders must have 'a good report of them which are without' (1

Timothy 3:7). Christians' behavior affected the gospel's reputation (1 Peter 2:12). Church discipline addressed persistent schemers (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). A good name honored Christ; a bad name brought reproach.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

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

## Study Questions

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1. What reputation are you building through your consistent choices and behaviors?
2. Are there schemes or plans in your heart that, if known, would reveal evil character?
3. How does your reputation reflect on Christ and the church?

## Interlinear Text

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בַּקְרָאֵן! מִזְמָרָת מִשְׁעָן בָּעֵל לֹא לְפָרָע מִשְׁעָן  
He that deviseth to do evil person a mischievous shall be called  
H2803 H7489 H0 H1167 H4209 H7121

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 21:11** (Evil): For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

**Proverbs 14:22** (Evil): Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

**Proverbs 6:14** (Parallel theme): Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.

**Proverbs 6:18** (Evil): An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

**Romans 1:30** (Evil): Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

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