

# Proverbs 25:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

## Analysis

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By patience a ruler is persuaded, and a gentle tongue breaks bones. The Hebrew 'erekh aph' (long of nostrils/patient) and 'lashon rakah' (soft/gentle tongue) versus 'shavar etsem' (break bone) creates striking contrast. Gentle persistence accomplishes what force cannot. Patience and gentleness persuade even resistant authority. The bone-breaking imagery: soft tongue achieves what seems impossible - breaking hardest substance through gentle persistence. Wisdom uses gentle persistence, not angry force.

## Historical Context

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Throughout Scripture, gentle persuasion proves more effective than force. Abigail's gentle speech turned David from vengeful murder (1 Samuel 25). Esther's patient diplomacy saved her people (Esther 4-7). Proverbs 15:1 teaches: 'A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.' Jesus embodied this: 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break' (Isaiah 42:2-3).

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

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

## Study Questions

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1. What situations in your life require patient gentle persuasion rather than forceful demands?
2. How can you cultivate patience and gentleness when facing resistant authority or hard hearts?
3. What 'bones' (hard resistant situations) might gentle persistence eventually break?

## Interlinear Text

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בָּאֵרֶב אֲפִים יִפְרַת הִכָּא יְלִשְׁוֹן וְבָשָׂר

By long forbearing persuaded is a prince tongue and a soft breaketh

H753 H639 H6601 H7101 H3956 H7390 H7665

קָרְבָּן:

the bone

H1634

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 15:1** (Parallel theme): A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

**Ecclesiastes 10:4** (Parallel theme): If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

**Proverbs 16:14** (Parallel theme): The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.