

Proverbs 25:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

Analysis

Don't hastily go to court, lest you not know what to do when your neighbor shames you. The Hebrew 'yahtsa' (go out) to 'riyb' (legal dispute) warns against impulsive litigation. Hasty lawsuits often backfire. Before initiating conflict, ensure you can sustain it. What appears as your neighbor's clear wrong might prove complicated under examination. Wisdom requires patient evaluation before legal action. Impulsive litigation often produces regret.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal disputes occurred publicly at city gates, involving elders' judgment. Bringing false or weak case resulted in public shame and potentially legal penalties. Jesus taught: 'Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge' (Matthew 5:25). Paul condemned believers suing believers: 'Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another' (1 Corinthians 6:7).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What conflicts are you rushing into without sufficient consideration of potential outcomes?
2. How can you pursue justice without hastily initiating legal action you might regret?
3. What alternatives to litigation might resolve disputes while preserving relationships?

Interlinear Text

אַל	אַל	תִּצְא	אַ	בְּ	לֹר	בְּ	מִן	נִפְנִי	מִה	פְּנֵי	לְשָׁנָה	פְּנֵי	עֲשֵׂה
H408	Go not forth	to strive		hastily			H6435		H4100		lest thou know not what to do		
H3318		H7378		H4118							H6213		

בְּאַחֲרֵיכֶם	בְּהַכְלֵל	יְמִם	אַתָּה	רַעֲבָנָה	
in the end	hath put thee to shame		H853	thereof when thy neighbour	
H319	H3637			H7453	

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:25 (Parallel theme): Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Proverbs 17:14 (Parallel theme): The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

Proverbs 18:6 (Parallel theme): A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

Proverbs 30:33 (Parallel theme): Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

Proverbs 14:12 (Parallel theme): There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

