

Proverbs 26:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

Analysis

The lazy person is wiser in his own eyes than seven who can answer discreetly. The Hebrew 'chakam me`eynayv' (wise in own eyes) and 'shivah meshivey ta`am' (seven answering with discretion) creates striking arrogance. Sluggard won't receive correction from even abundant wise counsel. Seven represents completeness; answering discreetly indicates wisdom. But sluggard's self-deception resists all counsel. Laziness and unteachable pride combine destructively.

Historical Context

This verse combines two Proverbs themes: lazy sluggard and self-deception. Proverbs 12:15 says: 'The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.' Rehoboam rejected elders' counsel for young men's foolishness, splitting his kingdom (1 Kings 12). No amount of wisdom penetrates willful self-deception. Teachability requires humility; pride prevents learning regardless of counsel's quality.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What wise counsel are you rejecting because you're confident you know better?
2. How does laziness relate to unteachability - are you too lazy to change despite knowing you should?
3. What humility would make you receptive to abundant wise counsel currently being ignored?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁׁבָּעַ	מִשְׁׁיבָּי	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי יִצְחָק	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ ה	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ תְּבִיא	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ שְׁבָעַ	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ שְׁבָעַ	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ שְׁבָעַ	מִשְׁׁבָּעַ שְׁבָעַ
is wiser	The sluggard	in his own conceit	than seven men	that can render	a reason				
H2450	H6102	H5869	H7651	H7725	H2940				

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 26:12 (Parallel theme): Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Proverbs 12:15 (Parallel theme): The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

1 Peter 3:15 (Parallel theme): But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

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