

# Proverbs 29:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

## Analysis

**The rod and reproof give wisdom** (שֶׁבֶט וַתּוֹכַחַת יְקַנְ-חַכְמָה) — physical discipline (shevet, rod/staff) combined with verbal correction (tokachat, rebuke/instruction) imparts wisdom (chokmah). Proverbs repeatedly endorses corporal discipline as loving correction (Proverbs 13:24, 22:15, 23:13-14). The goal isn't abuse but formation—shaping the will toward wisdom.

**But a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame** (וַיַּגְעַר נֶשֶׁלֶח מִבֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ) — a youth (naar) sent away/abandoned (meshullach, let loose, undisciplined) brings shame to his mother. Permissive parenting produces shameful outcomes. Hebrews 12:5-11 applies this to God's fatherly discipline of believers—painful but producing 'the peaceable fruit of righteousness.'

## Historical Context

Ancient Israelite parenting emphasized active formation through both physical discipline and verbal instruction (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). The family was the primary institution for transmitting covenant faith and wisdom. A child's behavior reflected on the entire family's honor. Eli's failure to restrain his wicked sons brought divine judgment (1 Samuel 2:22-36).

## Related Passages

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

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

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

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How do you balance the biblical mandate for discipline with contemporary concerns about child safety and dignity?
2. What does it mean to discipline 'faithfully'—correcting out of love rather than anger or neglect?
3. How does God's fatherly discipline in your life produce wisdom, and how do you respond to it?

## Interlinear Text

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מִבָּשָׂר מִשְׁלָחָן שֶׁבֶט  
The rod and reproof give wisdom but a child left to shame

H7626 H8433 H5414 H2451 H5288 H7971 H954

אֶתְּנָא  
to himself bringeth his mother

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## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 17:25** (Parallel theme): A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

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

**Proverbs 10:1** (Parallel theme): The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

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

**Proverbs 22:6** (Parallel theme): Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

**Proverbs 17:21** (Parallel theme): He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

**Proverbs 22:15** (Parallel theme): Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

**Proverbs 10:5** (Parallel theme): He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.