

Proverbs 3:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

Analysis

Don't contend without cause. The Hebrew 'riyb' (strive/quarrel) describes legal or personal disputes. Picking fights without legitimate reason reveals foolishness and contentious spirit. Wisdom pursues peace and avoids unnecessary conflict. This verse doesn't prohibit necessary confrontation but condemns quarrelsome ness. Peaceable character marks the wise; contentiousness marks fools.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern legal culture involved public disputes at city gates. Proverbs warns against litigiousness - constantly bringing accusations without merit. Jesus later taught similar wisdom: settle matters quickly, seek reconciliation, don't be quarrelsome (Matthew 5:25; 2 Timothy 2:24).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What conflicts in your life might be unnecessary, and how could you pursue peace instead?
2. How can you discern between necessary confrontation and foolish contentiousness?
3. In what ways does social media culture encourage striving without cause?

Interlinear Text

תִּמְלֹךְ לֹא אָמַר חַטָּאת אֲלֹם וְבָרָךְ עַמּוֹ אֲלֹם שְׁרֵךְ וְבָרָךְ
H408 Strive H5973 not with a man H120 without cause H518 H3808 if he have done
H7378 H1580

בְּנָה:
thee no harm
H7451

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 29:22 (Parallel theme): An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

2 Timothy 2:24 (Parallel theme): And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

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

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.