

Proverbs 8:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

Analysis

By wisdom princes rule, and nobles judge the earth. Continuing v.15's theme, this verse expands political wisdom's scope - not just kings but princes, nobles, all levels of authority. The Hebrew 'sarar' (princes/leaders) and 'shaphat' (judge) describe comprehensive governmental functions. Wisdom is essential for every level of leadership. Foolish governance at any level produces injustice and harm.

Historical Context

Israel's governmental structure included multiple leadership levels - kings, princes, elders, judges. Each required wisdom for their function. Exodus 18 records Jethro advising Moses to appoint judges at various levels - choosing 'able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness' (v.21). Wise governance requires character and competence throughout organizational hierarchy.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What leadership responsibilities (workplace, family, church) require you to govern wisely?
2. How can you cultivate wisdom needed for your spheres of authority and influence?
3. What foolish governance have you witnessed at various levels, and what does wisdom require instead?

Interlinear Text

אֶלְךָ שְׁפֵטִי נְשָׁרִים בְּרִים בְּרִים
H0 By me princes rule and nobles even all the judges of the earth
H8269 H8323 H5081 H3605 H8199 H776

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