

Proverbs 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.

Analysis

Each person bears individual responsibility for their response to wisdom. Being wise benefits oneself, while scorning brings self-inflicted harm. This personal accountability before God refutes both deterministic fatalism and the notion that sin harms only others—we each answer for our own choices.

Historical Context

Ezekiel 18 emphasizes individual responsibility before God, countering the proverb about fathers eating sour grapes. Each generation and person must personally appropriate or reject wisdom.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing personal responsibility affect your response to God's wisdom?
2. What consequences have you experienced from either receiving or rejecting wisdom?

Interlinear Text

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|------|-----------------------|-----------------|------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| אָם | חָכָם תְּהִי | חָכָם תְּהִי | לְךָ | ! לְצַדִּיק | לְבַדְּךָ |
| H518 | If thou be wise | If thou be wise | H0 | for thyself but if thou scornest | H905 |
| | H2449 | H2449 | | H3887 | |
| | תִּשָּׂא: | | | | |
| | thou alone shalt bear | | | | |
| | H5375 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Job 22:21 (Parallel theme): Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.

Ezekiel 18:20 (Parallel theme): The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.