

Proverbs 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man,
and he will love thee.

Analysis

The scorner's proud rejection of reproof contrasts with the wise person's grateful reception. Correcting a scoffer invites hatred, but instructing the wise produces love. This shows wisdom's social dimension—teachability marks the truly wise, while unteachability proves folly regardless of intelligence.

Historical Context

Scorners or scoffers appear throughout Proverbs as the opposite of the wise. Their defining trait is not ignorance but proud rejection of correction, making them morally and spiritually incorrigible apart from God's transforming grace.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when others point out your faults or errors?

2. What makes you more like the wise person or the scorner in receiving correction?

Interlinear Text

אל	הוֹכֵחַ	לֹא	פֶּן	יִשְׁנֶא בְּ	הוֹכֵחַ	לְדָכָם
H408	Reprove	not a scorner	H6435	lest he hate	Reprove	a wise man
	H3198	H3887		H8130	H3198	H2450

וְיִאֲהָבָה׃
and he will love
H157

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 141:5 (Parallel theme): Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

Proverbs 13:18 (Parallel theme): Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

Proverbs 23:9 (Parallel theme): Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

Proverbs 15:12 (Love): A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.

Matthew 7:6 (Parallel theme): Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Proverbs 29:1 (Parallel theme): He, that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Proverbs 28:23 (Parallel theme): He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

Leviticus 19:17 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

Matthew 15:14 (Parallel theme): Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

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