

Psalm 94:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

Analysis

The address to 'brutish' (bo'arim—stupid, senseless like cattle) and 'fools' (kesilim—obstinate fools) among the people uses strong language to confront willful ignorance. The question 'when will ye be wise' (taskilu) implies that wisdom is both urgent and attainable—the issue isn't capacity but willingness. This verse distinguishes between intellectual limitations and moral obtuseness. The fool's problem isn't low IQ but stubborn rejection of truth. Proverbs repeatedly contrasts the wise who embrace correction with fools who persist in folly.

Historical Context

Israel's wisdom tradition (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) made clear distinctions between those who sought wisdom and 'fools' who rejected instruction and divine truth.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What 'brutish' thinking patterns do you need to repent of and replace with godly wisdom?

2. How can you move from folly to wisdom by embracing God's correction in your life?

Interlinear Text

מִתְּבָרֵן	בֵּין	בְּנָתִים	מִתְּבָרֵן
Understand	ye brutish	among the people	and ye fools
H995	H1197	H5971	H4970

תִּשְׁפִּילוּ:
when will ye be wise
H7919

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 92:6 (Parallel theme): A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

Titus 3:3 (Parallel theme): For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Psalms 49:10 (Parallel theme): For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

Romans 3:11 (Parallel theme): There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Deuteronomy 32:29 (Parallel theme): O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!

Isaiah 27:11 (Parallel theme): When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

Psalms 73:22 (Parallel theme): So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

Proverbs 12:1 (Parallel theme): Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.

Proverbs 8:5 (Parallel theme): O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

Jeremiah 10:8 (Parallel theme): But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities.