

Mishlei 22-15

Immaturity

Key Concepts

There are times when a parent or teacher becomes frustrated and discouraged by the foolishness of a young person. The mentor needs to remind himself that the foolish attitude of a youngster is likely to be a sign of immaturity that can easily change under the influence of patient guidance.

A wise teacher realizes that there is no such thing as a “bad” child. A person can be branded “bad” only if he transgresses with a fully mature mind. The educating influence of a wise teacher or parent is called upon to combat not only badness, but want of judgment.

The positive influence that an adult can bring to bear includes many factors, such as words, presentation, admonition, reproach, or reprimand, or by any other procedure that causes painful awareness. Such procedures may include non-fulfillment of wishes or deprivation. It is only under the rarest of situations that some form of physical discipline may be excused or justified.

When the concept of discipline is put in the proper context, we realize that when Mishlei uses the term “rod of correction”, it is intended as a metaphor for effective influence and refers primarily to the broader perspective of guidance that a loving mentor can introduce to the life of a child.

Exploring Mishlei

(טו) אִוְלָת קִשׁוּרָה בְּלֵב נֶעַר שִׁבֵּט מוֹסֵר יִרְחִיקֶנָּה מִמֶּנּוּ:

(15) Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a youth; but the rod of correction will drive it away from him.

Mishlei reminds the teacher or parent that the foolishness of youth is only temporary and can be driven away by effective guidance.

Learning Mishlei

(15) Foolishness is temporarily **bound up** — אִוְלַת קְשׁוּרָה
in the heart of a youngster. — בְּלֵב נָעַר
But the rod of correction. — שֵׁבֶט מוֹסֵר
will drive it far away from him — יִרְחִיקָנָה מִמֶּנּוּ.