

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger

Proverbs 15:1 – A proverbial story

By Ted Hildebrandt using Chatgpt

Johnny and Maya were best friends. They did everything together — rode bikes, built forts, and shared their secret candy stash. But one sunny afternoon, something unexpected happened.

They were building a treehouse in Johnny's backyard. It was their biggest project yet! Johnny hammered nails while Maya painted a big, bright sun on one of the wooden walls.

"I think the ladder should go on this side," Johnny said, pointing to the left.

"No way! It should go on the right," Maya insisted. "It'll be easier to climb from there."

Johnny frowned. "Your way is wrong. I'm the one who thought of this treehouse first!"

Maya crossed her arms. "Well, you wouldn't even have the idea if I hadn't found this old wood in the garage!"

Their voices grew louder. The birds in the tree flew away. Wrath and anger was rising like steam from a boiling pot.

"You always think you know everything!" Johnny shouted.

"Oh yeah? Well maybe I should build my *own* treehouse and not share it with you!" Maya snapped.

For a moment, it felt like their friendship might break just like a weak branch.

But then Johnny remembered something his grandfather repeatedly told him:

"A soft answer turns away wrath."

He took a deep breath. His face was still hot, and his heart was thumping, but he tried to calm down.

"You know what, Maya?" Johnny said quietly. "I'm sorry for yelling. Maybe your idea is better. You're really good at figuring out stuff like this."

Maya blinked in surprise. She wasn't expecting that.

Her anger melted a little. "I'm sorry too," she said, lowering her voice. "I didn't mean to be bossy. We're a team, right?"

Johnny smiled. "Yeah. A treehouse-building team!"

They both laughed and decided to test both spots for the ladder. After trying them out, they agreed that Maya's side *was* easier to climb, but Johnny's side had a better view.

So, being the clever team they were, they built **two ladders** — one for climbing up, and one for looking out.

By the time the sun started to set, the treehouse was finished. It had two ladders, a bright painted sun, and two happy friends inside.

From up there, everything seemed smaller — even their argument.

So grandpa's Bible proverb did its magic once again: **A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger, Proverbs 15:1**