

## Proverbs 1

## The use of the proverbs given by Solomon

**1.** *The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; 2. To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;*

After the title, and author given in verse one, there is a series of parallel statements, five in number. These statements are the heart and soul of the book of Proverbs, and they contain several "*technical terms*" that one needs to understand.

The "***to know***," preceding "*wisdom*" and "*instruction*," is an ***active*** word; the idea of ***doing***, not just knowing, what is learned. It means "*to discern, to be alert, to carry out a decision*" - acting out wisdom!

The word translated "***wisdom***" means, "*that which controls, makes firm or fixed solidly.*" This word has more to do with righteousness and justice, rather than just intelligence. It has the meaning of practical, ***moral***, intelligence that produces strength of character, or, practical knowledge of how to fashion or control one's life -- discovering God's mind on a matter, or "*seeing life as God sees it.*" "*Attaining wisdom*" is the goal and subject of the book of Proverbs.

The word "***instruction***" is also translated, "*discipline*" and refers to the *method*, or process, of attaining wisdom. It has the meaning of "*obedience.*" The instructions within the book of Proverbs will correct the believer and bring submission to the higher authority of God, "*moral discipline.*"

The word "*understanding*" means, "*to be able to distinguish, separate, or divide, good from evil.*"

Verse 2 gives the goal of Proverbs: "*to attain [for the purpose of doing<sup>1</sup>] **wisdom** [moral intelligence, producing strength of character] and **discipline** [practical knowledge fashioning one's life-style] to **understand words of insight**...[distinguishing between right and wrong]."*

**3.** *To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;*

Speaking of what "*wisdom*" will accomplish, in verse 3, the Holy Spirit expresses precise, extremely, exact, words. The original punctuation of the last three terms are "***adverbial accusatives***" - showing the *manner* in which wisdom is to be manifested, which is ***right, just*** and ***fair***!

The "*wisdom*" found in Proverbs will produce: **(1) "*Justice***" - This word comes from the courtroom where the judge rules as to who is right and who is wrong in a dispute. It has the meaning of "*doing the **right** thing.*" **(2) "*Judgment***" - This is a legal term meaning "*doing what is **just**.*" **(3) "*Equity***" - has the meaning of "*doing what is **fair**.*" The root meaning of this word is "*smooth, straight or being on the level,*" and has the meaning of uprightness.

Proverbs 1:2-3 teaches that as the principles of the book of Proverbs are studied and applied, they will give *wisdom, moral character* and *discipline*, as one actively pursues

these principles. They will enable one to see things from God's point of view, enabling one to be **right, just** and **fair** in all of life's dealings

*Now, who is it that acquires this wisdom?*

*4. To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion*

**1.** *"For giving **subtilty** (or, prudence) to the simple..."*

This word, *subtilty*, come from a root word meaning, "to strip aside, to make naked, to get down to the basic, bare facts." It refers to the principles in the book of Proverbs enabling us to see beyond the surface of things, or to see the basic facts in life's situations.

The word, "simple," means, "the naive, someone who is open to deception, easily enticed, or gullible" - someone who accepts anything and everything that comes along -- one with no insight.

The word, "knowledge," means having insight into God's mind and action in carrying this insight out.

"Discretion" means "something with purpose." The principles of the book of Proverbs will give purpose of life to the young; replace aimlessness with a "goal" in life. It will put the young on target!

*5. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:*

We gain wisdom by *continuing* to learn. The process of wisdom is not completed simply because we *meditate* on the principles of the book of Proverbs. Even though we incorporate these principles into our life, we must continue to hear and increase in learning.

*6. To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*

The word, "**understanding**," means, "perceive" or "discern," -- "cultivating a keenness of mind." God will give us the ability to *understanding these proverbs and figures, and these words of the wise and their riddles.*

If we study and apply the principles, God will give us understanding of these proverbs, or figures of speech, their riddle and the point of what they mean.

An exhortation to fear God and believe His Word

*7. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

The word, "fear," has nothing to do with a cowering, or a frightening feeling; but rather, it refers to "a deep reverence, a respect, or, an awe, of Almighty God."

THE GOAL OF PROVERBS IS TO TEACH US  
A DEEP REVERENCE OF THE LORD

**8.** *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: **9.** For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

The instructions and laws of your parents – (as given according to God's Word), if carefully observed and lived up to, will bring prominence to one's life.

To avoid the enticing of sinners

**10.** *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. 11. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: 12. Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: 13. We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: 14. Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:*

When bad companions tempt you to do wrong, don't go along with them. They promise you riches and say, "Let's stir up trouble," don't agree with them.

Note the sevenfold enticement of bad companions, showing how gangs are formed (verses 10-14); then contrast these recruiting arguments with the seven reasons why a young man should not join bad companions (verses 15-19).

**15.** *My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: 16. For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. 17. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. 18. And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. 19. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.*

Wisdom complains that she is scorned

**20.** *Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: 21. She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,*

Wisdom is scorned as she cries out in five places: in open places, streets,  mobs, gates, and cities (verses 20-21).

**22.** *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?*

Wisdom asks, "How long will you unwise ones love deception and flattery?" "How long will you scorers continue to scorn wisdom?" "How long will you senseless ones hate knowledge?"

**23.** *Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*

Wisdom pleads, "Turn at my reproof." The word, "reproof," appears throughout the Proverbs, meaning, "to convict of what is right." Reproofs are the circumstances God allows to reveal our character deficiencies.

Wisdom says, "I will pour out my spirit unto you and make known my words to you!"

**24.** *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: 26. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; 27. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your*

*destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. 28. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:29. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: 30. They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. 31. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. 32. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*

**Step to the destruction of one's life  
and the consequences that follows**

**Verse 24**, "Refusing wisdom's call" and, "disregard of her invitation." **Verse 25**, "Setting at naught her counsel," and "rejection of her reproof." **Verse 26**, "One's calamity laughed at," and "his terror mocked." **Verse 27**, "Fear and desolation a reality," "Destruction like a whirlwind," "Distress coming upon him," and "Anguish seizing him." **Verse 28**, "Not heard when praying to God," and, "Seeking God when it is too late to find Him." **Verse 29**, "Hatred of wisdom's knowledge," and "refuse reverencing the Lord." **Verse 30**, "Rejection of wisdom's counsel," and "despising her reproof." **Verse 31**, "Reaping what has been sown," and, "Reaping fruit of own way," "Being filled with own schemes," and "Being required to be satisfied with own plans." **Verse 32**, "Turning away or backsliding," and "Being satisfied with prosperity"

*33. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*

**Twofold end of the righteous:**

1. He shall dwell safely.
2. He shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Wisdom is personified indicating that every man is endowed with natural faculties to know right from wrong and to make godly decisions (John 1:9; Romans 2:12-16). It is man's own God-given wisdom that will laugh and mock at the calamity he brings upon himself through folly and rejection of her pleading

Proverbs 2

Wisdom promises godliness to her children

*1. My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; 2. So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

The word "if" calls attention to the disciplines of receiving godly wisdom. We must evaluate our heart at each of the "if's" found in these first four verses, for they are prerequisites to discovering God's rich treasure -- *wisdom!*

"Incline," means, "being alert, keen, and sensitive." We must be attentive to -- discipline ourselves to be alert to God's Word, having a keen desire to increase in being receptive to God's counsel and reproofs.

Another discipline of our inner desire is to, *"incline, open, or cultivate, our hearts to understanding."* Just as miners, or prospectors, we search for the treasure of wisdom, asking God to enable us to see life's situations as He sees them, and respond correctly.

*"Incline"* is an active word. We must not be *passive* -- but *aggressive* in mining for godly wisdom.

*3. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; 4. If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

The next series of disciplines are:

- (1). As a miner of God's treasures, we proclaim our need for knowledge - (also translated, *"discernment."*)
- (2) As a miner we must request understanding
- (3) As a miner our search must be consistent

We must seek godly wisdom as precious silver, and, once we have found it, with patience, continue to probe and persist in digging. The word, *"searchest,"* implies a process, that takes time. Anxious, impatient miners do not make a significant find!

*5. Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

The result of these disciplines is a magnificent treasure! When these disciplines are carried out one will have *"the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God"* -- that is, (1) a reverence and a deep awesome respect for God, taking God seriously, and (2) knowing God intimately, a complete nearness to God!

*6. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. 7. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. 8. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

The benefits of mining is godly wisdom and able to speak knowledge and understanding. Verse 6 gives the benefit that is within - verses 7 & 8 give the benefit that are without. If we seek wisdom by these disciplines mentioned, God promises protection and to preserve our ways.

*9. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*

The word, ***"Then"*** indicates a second conclusion (The first was in verse 5). --

**Note the "If's" of Blessing: Verse 1, "If you receive My words," and "If you treasure My commandments." Verse 2, "If you incline your ear to wisdom," and "If you apply your heart to understanding." Verse 3, "If you cry after knowledge," and "If you lift your voice for understanding." Verse 4, "If you seek for knowledge as for silver," and "If you search for knowledge as for hidden treasure."**

***The Blessings of Obedience -- First Conclusion:***

**Verse 5, "Then you will understand the fear of the Lord," and, "Then you will find the knowledge of God." Verse 6, "Then you will receive wisdom from God," "then you will receive knowledge from God," and "then you will receive understanding from**

God." **Verse 7**, "Then you will receive protection from God." **Verse 8**, "Then you will have security in God," and "Then you will have preservation in life."

**Blessings of Obedience -- Second Conclusion:**

**Verse 9**, "Then you will understand righteousness, Then you will understand judgment," "Then you will understand equity, and "Then you will understand every good path." **Verse 10**, "Then wisdom will enter your heart, "Then knowledge will be pleasant to your soul." **Verse 11**, "Then discretion will preserve you, "Then understanding will keep you.

safety from evil company

**10.** *When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;*

These verses, up to this point, show, **(1)** What great advantage true wisdom will be to us, keeping us from the paths of sin, that lead to ruin. **(2)** This wisdom will do us a great kindness if it enriches us with all the wealth of the world. **(3)** We should make good use of the wisdom God gives us, using it for guidance in the paths of virtue, arming ourselves against temptations of every kind. **(4)** Reveals rules we try ourselves with when we don't have this Godly wisdom.

**A tree is known by its fruits!** If we are truly wise, it will appear by our care to avoid all evil company and evil practices.

**(1)** When Godly wisdom has dominion over us, not only fills the head, but enters into the heart, commanding and influencing our life -- is on the throne of our heart -- **then** it will do us good! **(2)** When we can relish it in its rules and regulations -- taking pleasure in its godliness as the wealthiest life a man can live in this world -- then we will find the benefit of it.

**11.** *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:*

*Discretion,*" is discrimination between right and wrong; and understanding of this will "protect and keep" -- delivery us from:

- (1) The way of the evil man (verses 12-15)
- (2) The strange woman (verses 16-19)
- (3) Every evil way (verses 20-22)

**12.** *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; 13. Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; 14. Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; 15. Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:*

This wisdom will bring deliverance, or rescue, from men of corrupt principles, who endeavor to corrupt men's judgments, instilling into their prejudices against religion. Against those:

- Who speaks perverse things, civil or religious (verse 12).
- Who leaves path of righteousness (verse 13).
- Who walks in ways of darkness (verse 13).

Who rejoices to do evil (verse 14).  
 Who delights in sins of others (verse 14).  
 Who walks in crooked ways (verse 15).  
 Who walks in perverse paths (verse 15).

**16.** *To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words; 17. Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. 18. For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. 19. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*

Verse 16 begins the promise that godly wisdom will deliver one from the lusts of the unsanctified mind; that leads to fleshly lusts, defiling the body -- the temple of the Holy Spirit, warring against the soul.

The Hebrew word, “*strange*” has the meaning of, “*apostate to a foreign religion of which prostitution was a major, primary, part in making converts.*” Such religions were always a snare to Israel. The warning, of course, includes prostitutes, but the main scope of alarm here is “*spiritual adultery*” (See James 4:4).

No man with wisdom will have acquaintance with a strange adulteress woman. These false religions were to be shunned by every Israelite as “*heathen*” -- a stranger to the sacred commonwealth of Israel. All heathen religions were compared to “*a prostitute*” because they were utterly estranged from all principles of reason, virtue, and honor. It is a great mercy to be delivered from the allurements of false teaching considering, false cults:

- flatters with their lips (verse 16).
- forsakes parental guidance (verse 17).
- forgets God's covenant -- renounces true religion and vows.(verse 17).
- shortens their life (verse 18).
- leads others to hell (verse 18).
- destroys men utterly (verse 19).
- leads to permanent ruin (verse 19).

**20.** *That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous. 21. For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. 22. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.*

In spite of how strong verses 16-19 seem, remember anyone can be saved by God who follows the Gospel program that gives hope for all

(Read Matthew 12:31-32; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John. 1:9).

### Proverbs 3

This third chapter of Proverbs is one of the most excellent in the entire book! It argues to persuade us to be godly wise and provides directions for it. We are here taught to live a life of communion with God; and without controversy. Great is this mystery of godliness! And we are shown how the consequence of this godly living is of unspeakable advantage.

## An exhortation to obedience

**1.** My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:  
**2.** For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. **3.** Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: **4.** So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

We are to be constant to keep God's law because it is the way to be happy. The word, "keep," means to watch or guard. Note the threefold blessing to those who remember and keep God's commandments.

- (1) Length of days (Proverbs 3:2, 16; 4:10 & 9:11)
- (2) Long life (1Peter 3:10-11)
- (3) Peace (Isaiah 26:3)

Keep God's law and commandments and add lovingkindness, or grace.

"Bind God's law about thy neck," as graceful ornament (See 6:21 & 7:3). "Write them on the table of your heart," by the Spirit of the living God (2 Corinthians 3:3).

"So you will find favor and good esteem before God and man," The three acts of verse:3 are the secrets of favor with God and man.

**5.** Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. **6.** In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. **7.** Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. **8.** It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. **9.** Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: **10.** So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Exhortation to humility -- (putting our self in God's loving hands).

We are to continually regard God's providence and depend upon it in all situations of life; resting our entire confidence in His wisdom, power, and goodness; trusting in Him with all our hearts; believing that He is able to do what He wills that is wise to do, according to His promise. We must, with entire submission, depend upon Him to perform all things good for us, and not lean to our own understanding. In all our conduct we must be hesitant of our own judgment, and confident of God's wisdom, power, and goodness.

The Doctrine of Tithing certainly seems to be an important issue in honoring the Lord and in wise godly living! Verse 10 expresses material prosperity. "Despise not" means, "Don't shrink away from the disciplines of God," Quoted from Job 5:17, also found in Hebrews 12:5-6

**11.** My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: **12.** For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Correction" is the same word that is translated as "reproof," meaning the circumstances that God allows to bring about maturity in us. We must neither despise



affliction nor be weary of God's exhortation through it. As fatherly correction; it comes not from His vindictive justice as a Judge, but his wise affection as a Father.

#### The happy gain of wisdom

**13.** *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.* **14.** *For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.* **15.** *She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.*

We are earnestly urged to diligently seek for wisdom, but what do we receive when we have found it? Verse 13 shows how much it will profit us, -- Happy is the man that finds true wisdom because it consists in the knowledge and love of God.

*"Understanding" here, also means, "discernment, or discrimination."*

**16.** *Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.* **17.** *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* **18.** *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

This wisdom brings true happiness; inclusive and equivalent to all that makes men happy -- *length of days, riches and honor, and pleasant ways -- abundance of delight and satisfaction!*

Wisdom is represented as a bright and bountiful queen, giving forth gifts to her faithful and loving subjects, and offering them to all who submit to her. In wisdom is the happiness of paradise; a tree of life.

#### **Note 6 blessings of wisdom/knowledge:**

- (1) Length of days (verse 16)
- (2) Riches and honor (verse 16)
- (3) Pleasantness (verse 17)
- (4) Peace (verse 17)
- (5) Tree of life (verse 18)
- (6) Happiness (verse 18)

**19.** *The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.* **20** *By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.*

#### The benefits of wisdom

**21.** *My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:* **22.** *So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.* **23.** *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.* **24.** *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.*

*Then"* (of verse 23) refers to *wisdom and understanding* (See verse 13).

#### **Note 8 things that will bring Life**

- (1) Law and commandments (verses 1-2)
- (2) Mercy and truth (verses 3-4)

- (3) Trust in God (verse 5)
- (4) Acknowledgement of God (verse 6)
- (5) Reverence for God (verses 7-8)
- (6) Departure from evil (verses 7-8)
- (7) Wisdom and understanding (verses 13-18)
- (8) Wisdom and discretion (verses 21-24)

Reference to attractive ornaments around the neck in verse 22:.

“**THEN**” is a conclusion -- when all the conditions of verses 1 through 22 have been met -- one will not stumble, but “*then*” live in confidence, security, and safety, and sleep will be sweet.

*25. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. 26. For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*

The “MESSAGE Bible” renders verses 25-26, “No need to panic over alarms or surprises, or predictions that doomsday's just around the corner, Because GOD will be right there with you; He'll keep you safe and sound.”

#### An exhortation to charity

*27. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. 28. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee. 29. Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee. 30. Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.*

True wisdom includes honest dealings toward man, as well as toward God. Therefore we have here various excellent guidelines of wisdom that relate to our neighbor.

These verses hardly need any explanation!

*31. Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. 32. For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous. 33. The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just. 34. Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly. 35. The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*

Never design any hurt or harm to any body, never contrive how to do someone an ill-turn, or have any prejudice, especially if he dwells securely by you, and has not given you any provocation.

#### Proverbs 4

God’s wisdom must be diligently and earnestly sought after, because it is of the greatest value, but also because our mind cannot grasp, or understand, true wisdom, or good judgment. Proverbs 4 offers a flood of divine eloquence, summing up the same things pressed upon us in the foregoing chapters. Verses 1-13 presents an earnest exhortation to the study of wisdom, that is, of godliness, borrowed from the superior

instructions that Solomon's father gave him, and enforced with considerable influence. Verses 14-19 give a caution against bad company and fellowship with any unfruitful works of darkness. Verses 20-27 disclose particular directions for the attaining and preserving of wisdom, and bringing forth the fruits of it. So plainly, so advisedly are the instructions laid before us, that it is inexcusable if we perish in our folly.

Solomon, to persuade obedience

*1. Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. 2. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. 3. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. 4. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. 5. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. 8. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. 9. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. 10. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. 11. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. 12. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*

In verses 1-2 Solomon gives an invitation to his children to come and receive instruction from him, however, the Holy Spirit inspired and preserved these words for us to accept and appropriate to our life!

I think that perhaps the Living Bible states these verse as well as any, verses 1 through 9 states, **1,2** "Young men, listen to me as you would to your father. Listen, and grow wise, for I speak the truth--don't turn away. **3** For I, too, was once a son, tenderly loved by my mother as an only child, and the companion of my father. **4** He told me never to forget his words. 'If you follow them,' he said, 'you will have a long and happy life. **5** Learn to be wise,' he said, 'and develop good judgment and common sense! I cannot overemphasize this point.' **6** Cling to wisdom--she will protect you. Love her--she will guard you. **7** Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do! And with your wisdom, develop common sense and good judgment. **8,9** If you exalt wisdom, she will exalt you. Hold her fast, and she will lead you to great honor; she will place a beautiful crown upon your head."

The word, "live" in verse 4 refers to "eternal life" -- but not just in eternity, but "living the good life **NOW!**"

Note 14 commands and 14 blessings in these verses

Solomon continues pleading for his son to search out wisdom. The command is also God's command to us!

**13. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.**

Shun the path of the wicked

*“Carry out these instructions, never forget them, and they will bring you genuine, real, life -- now, in this life on earth and for all eternity!!”*

**14.** *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.*

**15.** *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. 16.* *For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. 17.* *For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.*

*“Don’t go along with the wrong doers, nor do as they do, but get as far away from them as you can.”* These wrong doers will not rest until they cause trouble for someone.

*“They would rather do mischief and do harm to someone than to eat.”*

**18.** *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

Here the path of the just and the path of the unjust are contrasted! Verses 14-17, & 19 show the gloomy, dark, and violent path of the *unjust*. In verse 18 the bright and luminous path of the *just* is revealed.

**19.** *The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.*

The way of those who walk in darkness is deep darkness and can never see what causes their fall

#### Exhortation to faith

**20.** *My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21.* *Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22.* *For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.*

*“Listen carefully to what I am saying. Meditate constantly on these sayings; let them penetrate deep into your soul, then they will produce real life and radiant health for you.”*

#### Secrets of health and eternal life:

- (1) Attend to my words (verse 20).
- (2) Incline your ears to my sayings (verse 20).
- (3) Constantly look into God's Word (Proverbs 1:2-3).
- (4) Keep the Word in the heart (verse 21).

These secrets are life and health to *all* who find and obey them (Psalm 91 & 107:20; John 15:7; Romans. 1:16).

The word, “*Health*,” is also translated, “*healing*,” “*cure*,” “*remedy*,” “*sound*” and “*wholesome*”. That physical health and healing are referred to is clear. It states “*health to all their flesh*.”

**23.** *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Above all, guard the heart from going astray, for out of it are the issues of life. The reference is not to the arteries, which carry the blood to all parts of the body, but to the evil and good deeds that come from the heart (center) of man. When one keeps the

heart from evil it is an easy matter to obey the other commands of this passage (verses 4:23-27). These wrong doers never rest until they cause trouble for someone.

**24.** *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.*

This covers all the speaking faculties and their sinful exercise. Every idle word will be judged (See Matthew 12:36-37).

**25.** *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.*

The eyes and eyelids must be kept from sin (See 1 John 2:15-17).

**26.** *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.* **27.** *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*

Consider carefully the path you walk, let your ways be well established.

## Proverbs 5

Solomon exhorts to the study of wisdom

Chapters 4 through 8 are given, as a father would instruct his son on the ways of the world, warning him of its dangers. The warning of “*strange women*,” of course, include prostitutes, however, the focus of the warning is mainly concerning the heathen worship surrounding the children of Israel, of which the prostitutes of the heathen temple were one of the main avenues of proselytizing young men, enticing them into their heathen practices. Thus, the warnings of “*strange women*” were primarily cautions of false cults.

Chapter 5 is an exhortation to get acquaintance with and submit to the laws of wisdom. Verses 3-4 give a particular caution against these heathen temple prostitutes and remedies are prescribed against that sin. Verses 15-20 speak matrimonial love. Verse 21 warns of God's omniscience. Verses 22-23 reveal the miserable end of wicked people. All this is to warn young people against those fleshly lusts that war against the soul.

These cautions, to abstain from fleshly lusts, from adultery, fornication, are warnings against the seventh-commandment sins and all uncleanness that youth are prone to. However, the primary scope of this chapter is to relate the symbol of the adulterous woman of idolatry, that tend to degrade men's minds and manners -- these temple harlots certainly apply!

**1.** *My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: 2. That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. 3. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: 4. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. 5. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.*

“*Strange woman*,” used here, refers to an apostate woman gone over to the idolatrous impurities of heathen religion of which prostitution was a part to win converts. Such religions were always a snare to Israel (Numbers 25).. The “*wormwood*,”

of verse 4, refers to sin that seems luscious in the mouth, but rises in the stomach and turns sour.

**6.** *Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them.* **7.** *Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.* **8.** *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:* **9.** *Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:* **10.** *Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger;* **11.** *And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,* **12.** *And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;* **13.** *And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!* **14.** *I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.*

This passage refers to the fact that these heathen temple prostitutes keeps one from reflecting on his present conduct and its end, as she constantly changes her allurements to trap her victim. He cannot conceive of all her tricks and wiles. These women were apostate, deceptive and flattering (vs. 3); their end is like a bitter taste and destructive (vs. 4); their feet go down to death and hell (vs. 5); their ways are unpredictable (vs. 6); they will ruin your reputation and cause years of trouble (vs. 9); bring material ruin (vs. 10); ruin your health (vs. 11); bring remorse (vs.12-13); reduce to wickedness (vs. 14); and bring about eternal ruin (vs. 23).

Wisdom exhorts us to contentment, liberality, and chastity

**15.** *Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.* **16.** *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.* **17.** *Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.* **18.** *Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.* **19.** *Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.* **20.** *And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?*

Satan's direct tendency the sins of these false cults sin is the destruction of man's body and soul. Feet, caught in their snare, go down to death, and take hold on hell (verse 5).

Verses 15-20, show that love for God's true Church enables one to enjoy with satisfaction and comforts likened unto lawful marriage, both being ordained for the prevention of uncleanness, proving an effectual cure, preventing spiritual whoredom.

He is to take delight in his children and look upon them with pleasure (verses 16, 17) "Look upon them as streams from thy own pure fountains" God's Word pictures His people as "coming forth out of the waters of Judah," Isaiah 48:1. "So that they are parts of thyself, as the streams are of the fountain keep to thy own wife, and thou shalt have,"

**21.** *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.* **22.** *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he*

*shall be holden with the cords of his sins. 23. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*

He is to take delight in his children and look upon them with pleasure (verses 16, 17) *“Look upon them as streams from thy own pure fountains”* God’s Word pictures His people as *“coming forth out of the waters of Judah,”* Isaiah 48:1. *“So that they are parts of thyself, as the streams are of the fountain keep to thy own wife, and thou shalt have,”*

## Proverbs 6

### Warning against guaranteeing a friend's liabilities

Verses 1-5 cautions against rashly pledging securities. Verses 6-11 give a rebuke to slothfulness Verses 12-15 reveal the character and fate of a malicious mischievous man. Verses 16-19 give an account of seven things God hates. Verses 20-23 are an exhortation to make the Word of God familiar to us. Verses 24-35 repeat the warning of the destructive consequences of the sin of spiritual whoredom.

*1. My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, 2. Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth. 3. Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend. 4. Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. 5. Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

Pledging security for anyone tends to relieve the borrower of the responsibility he should feel, and often lowers the respect of a co-signer in the sight of the one he helps.

### **Five facts about surety:**

1. The command against surety (Proverbs 22:26)
2. The command to get out of surety as quickly as possible (Proverbs 6:1-5).
3. Surety is a sign of lack of understanding (Proverbs 17:18).
4. Suffering and disappointment are what is promised in surety (Proverbs 11:15)
5. To refrain from surety is the only safe way (Proverbs 11:15).

*“Stricken thy hand”* in verse 1 refers to, *“shaking hands”* -- considered the ratification of a verbal contract or promise, and thus a man became ensnared with the words of his mouth (Job 17:3).

Verses 3-5 warns us to continue to press the one we pledged security for to pay his debt -- or we will be left to pay it. If we are ensnared and obligated, make every effort, as the antelope taken in a net or a bird in a snare, to free our self from captivity.

God’s Word teaches, not only divine wisdom for the world to come, but *human prudence* for this world, that we may order our affairs with discretion; and this is one good rule.

### Proverbs warning against idleness

*6. Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: 7. Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, 8. Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. 9. How long wilt thou sleep, O*

*sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? 10. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: 11. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

The ant is a remarkable creature -- an emblem of industry in the East (See Proverbs 30:25).

### **Facts about the Sluggard, or Slothful in Proverbs**

1. Unteachable, careless, and indifferent (6:6-9).
2. Love excessive sleep (9:9; 19:15 & 24:33).
3. Are irritating to others (10:26).
4. Are servants to others (12:24).
5. Are too lazy to cook food (12:27).
6. Are wishful thinkers (13:4 & 24:34).
7. Have a life full of troubles (15:19).
8. Are great wasters (18:9).
9. Are lazy (19:24; 24:30-34 & 26:14-15).
10. Refuse to work (20:4 & 21:25).
11. Make the most senseless excuses for their laziness (22:13 & 26:13).
12. Are void of understanding (24:30).
13. Permit property to ruin (24:31-34 & Eccl. 10:18).
14. Are too lazy to move themselves (26:14).
15. Are conceited (26:16).
16. Are unfaithful to trust (Matthew 25:26).
17. Are unbelievers (Hebrews 6:12).
18. Lack business ability (Romans 12:11).

### Proverbs warning against willful mischief-making

**12.** *A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. 13.* *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers; 14.* *Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord. 15.* *Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.*

“Naughty” means, a worthless or wicked; actually, “a man of Belial;” a good-for-nothing. His seven sins (vs. 12-15)

1. *Froward* (perverse) *speech* (verse 17)
2. *Winketh with his eyes* (verse 17).
3. *Speaketh with his feet* (verse 18).
4. *Teacheth with his fingers* (verse 17).
5. *Frowardness* (deceitfulness) *of heart* (verse 18)
6. Continual plots, schemes, and plans of sin (vs. 18)
7. Soweth discord in families, churches, communities, or nations (verse 19).

Points 2 through 4 refer to sign language used to convey evil intentions and sinful practices of partners in sin.

**16.** *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17.* *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent*



blood, **18.** *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

### 7 Things the Lord hates

1. A proud look (verses 16-17)
2. A lying tongue (verse 17)
3. Hands that shed innocent blood (verse 17)
4. A wicked scheming heart (verse 18)
5. Feet quick to sin (verse 18)
6. A false witness that speaks lies (verse 19)
7. One who sows discord (verse 19)

### Proverbs of the blessings of obedience

**20.** *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. 23. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:*

These verses give a general exhortation to faithfully adhere to the Word of God and to take it for our guide in all our actions. God's Word is both a light (verse 23) and law, (verse 20 & 23.)

### Three places to bind truth:

1. Upon the heart (verse 20)
2. Around the neck (verse 21 & 3:3)
3. Upon the fingers (Proverbs 7:3)

Truth is personified here as a guide, guardian teacher, and companion (verses 22-23). Three things that truth is: **(1)** A lamp (Psalm 119:105) **(2)** A light (Psalm 119:105, 130) **(3)** Reproofs of instruction (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12)

**24.** *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. 25. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. 26. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.*

Warns against all adultery – [that is, any sex outside of marriage] -- as verse 29 makes clear, however, the warning to stay far away “evil women” – the context refers to the false heathen religions that used these temple prostitutes to proselytize young men. It is primarily a warning to “stay away” from false religions.

The Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “For the value of a harlot is as much as of one loaf.” There were so many prostitutes that they hired themselves out for a piece of bread.

**27.** *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28. Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? 29. So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.*

Just as a man cannot take fire into his bosom or walk on hot coals without being burned, so he that seduces his neighbor's wife shall not go unpunished.

**30.** Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; **31.** *But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.* **32.** *But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.* **33.** *A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* **34.** *For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.* **35.** *He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.*

"Despise," means, "to disrespect; utterly despise; consider insignificant." People will not think it insignificant for a thief to steal when he is hungry, but, if caught, the thief shall restore sevenfold, even if it means being sold into slavery (Exodus 22:1-4; Leviticus 25:39). The law does not clear a thief, regardless of how desperately in need he is.

Again, the passage returns to warning against adultery and giving one's self to a prostitute.

#### **Six evil effects of adultery:**

1. Spiritual death (Romans 8:12-13)
2. Physical death (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22)
3. Eternal death (1Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8 & 22:15)
4. A wound and dishonor (Pr. 6:33)
5. Lasting reproach
6. Blinding rage of the husband (Pr. 6:34-35)

Among the Romans one caught in the act of adultery was delivered to the injured husband to be punished with infamy, disgrace, and even death if he chose (Pr. 6:33-35).

### Proverbs 7

This chapter warns young men against the lusts of the flesh. While Solomon's writing were divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit, he certainly had observed many hopeful young men among his subjects who had been ruined by these lusts; and could never say enough to dissuade men from them.

In this chapter we have, in verses 1-5, a general exhortation to get our minds principled and governed by the Word of God, as a sovereign antidote against sin. In verses 6-23 is a particular representation of the great danger that unwary young men are in of being enticed into this snare. In verses 24-27 a serious caution is inferred. The chapter closes by warning us to take heed of all approaches toward sin. We should all pray, "Lord, lead us not into this temptation."

Solomon reasons for a sincere familiarity with wisdom

**1.** *My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.* **2.** *Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.* **3.** *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.* **4.** *Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.* **5.** *That*

*they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*

An example he has known

6. *For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,*

“**Casement**” was the lattice work to the window which allowed for air circulation (See Judges 5:28). They had no glass windows at the time.

*7. And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, 8. Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house, 9. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: 10. And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart. 11. (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: 12. Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) 13. So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, 14. I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. 15. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. 16. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. 17. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. 19. For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: 20. He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. 21. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. 22. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; 23. Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

### **Eight Facts about a Foolish Young Man**

1. I saw among the simple, the young man (verse 7).
2. He was void of understanding. He did not have wisdom to discern the evil intended by the prostitute, nor did he have the character and courage to resist her flatteries (verse 7).
3. He walked along the street near her corner where she waited for victims (verse 8).
4. He went the way to her house (verse 8).
5. In the night he passed by where she waited on the corner (verse 9).
6. He was met by the harlot (verse 10).
7. He was persuaded by her to spend the night with her (verses 11-21).
8. He went to his doom as an ox to the slaughter, as a fool to his punishment, and as a bird to the snare (verses 22-23).

Verses 5-23 are a warning to any young “*simple*” ones -- (literally: “*inconsiderate; unwary; artless, guileless, and unsuspecting; those who, through lack of knowledge and experience, act rashly and unwisely*”) -- who open them self to temptation, and the consequences of his actions. Void of understanding, they go into the world, not principled, as they ought to be with *wisdom* and the *fear of God*. They become an easy

prey to Satan who, when they have arrived to the stature of men, have barely the understanding of children. Those that are simple choose for their companions those simple them self, and are hardened in their simplicity. This young man steered his course towards the house of one that he thought would entertain him, and that he might be merry with; he went near her corner, the way to her house (verse 8). She is *subtle* of heart, mistress of all the arts of wheedling, and knowing how by all her caresses to serve her own base purposes.

**Three comparisons of the stupidity of his folly:**

1. As an ox going to slaughter (verse 22).
2. As a fool to the stocks (verse 22).
3. As a bird to the snare (verse 23).

He pleads for abstaining from such wickedness

*24. Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. 25. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. 26. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. 27. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*

Solomon again appeals to those who would be "simple" and inexperienced to follow his advice; he warns against the prostitute and the consequences of those who sin with her (verses 24-27).

Proverbs 8

This 8<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning the way it does, is extremely convincing evidence that the prostitutes spoken of in the previous chapters -- "the *foolish*," the *strange*") -- are a references to the false cults and heathen heresies that surrendered Israel. The comparison is the false contrasted with true wisdom.

Here, in chapter 8, the pure and undefiled wisdom of God is revealed. Verses 1-21 speak of true wisdom, recommending it as faithful, and worth accepting. God, by it, instructs, governs, and blesses, all men. God's eternal Word is wisdom, "*the Logos*," (Jesus Christ). He is the Wisdom that speaks to the children of men in the former part of this chapter. Verses 22-31 states that all *divine* wisdom passes through His hand and centers in Him. This was the judgment of the ancients. The chapter concludes with a repeated charge to the children of men diligently to attend to the voice of God in His Word, (verses 32-36).

Wisdom's fame

*1. Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? 2. She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. 3. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. 4. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. 5. O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. 6. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. 7. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. 9. They are all plain to him that*

*understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. 10. Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. 11. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.*

Wherever men are, wisdom cries and warns of wrong ways (verses 2-5). The will of God revealed to us for salvation is represented as easy to be known and understood, that no one may have an excuse for their ignorance or error, and it is worthy to be embraced, that none may have an excuse for their carelessness and unbelief.

Here is a 3<sup>rd</sup> personification of wisdom. She lifts her voice in the public places and warns the young to avoid the ways of seduction and sin (verses 1-14). She promises riches, honor, wisdom, knowledge, and success in every field of endeavor to those who love her (verses 15-21). She speaks of her eternity with God and advises men to obey her because of her ancient experiences (verses 22 through 9:18). Wisdom speaks "*noble, upright, honest things*" (verse 6).

*"All her words are truth and never speaks anything false or sinful"* (verse 7)

All the words of her mouth are "*righteous, never twisted or crooked, or false*" -- declaring what man owes to God, his neighbor, and to himself, so that each can receive his due (verse 8).

Her words are "*straightforward and easy to understand by those seeking discernment*" (verse 9). This is in contrast to words that are crooked, crafty, and unrighteous of verse 8. Those of understanding and wisdom do not despise truth.

Choose instruction and knowledge over all riches of this world. Wisdom is better than precious jewels and all the things one can desire (verses 10-11, also 3:15).

**12.** *I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.***13.** *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.*

*Prudence*" is "*practical wisdom,*" or wisdom in action, choosing the best means to an end. Meaning, "*witty shrewd inventions.*"

Verse 13 lists five things those who reverence God will hate: **(1) Evil, (2) Pride, (3) Arrogance, (4) The evil way, and, (5) a perverted, or lying mouth.**

**14.** *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.* **15.** *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.*

The "*sound wisdom,*" spoken of in verse 14 is counsel that is, "*stable; has essence, substance and reality.*" From it come all inventions and knowledge of all sciences known to man. This same Hebrew word is translated "*wisdom*" in Job 6:13 & 12:16; Proverbs 2:7; 3:21; 8:14; 18:1; Micah 6:9); "*enterprise*" in Job 5:12; "*that which is*" in Job 11:6; "*the thing as it is*" in Job 26:3; "*substance*" in Job 30:22; and "*working*" (Isaiah 28:29).

**16.** *By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.* **17.** *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*

According to verses 16-17 those in authority, or positions of influence, are wise to listen to this wisdom. Wisdom is speaking in verse 17; *"I love those who love me!"* Seek wisdom and knowledge and take advantage of every improvement in life.

**18.** *Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.*  
**19.** *My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.* **20.** *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:* **21.** *That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*

Verses 18-21 offers blessings abundantly -- riches, lasting substance, honor, great possessions, righteousness, increase better than gold and benefits better than silver.

#### The eternity of wisdom

**22.** *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.* **23.** *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* **24.** *When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.* **25.** *Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:* **26.** *While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.* **27.** *When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:* **28.** *When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:* **29.** *When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:*

God does not have a need to acquire wisdom, but men, angels, and created beings do. Wisdom existed before:

1. God's creations of old (verse 22)
2. The creation of the earth (verse 23)
3. The depths and fountains of waters (verse 24)
4. The mountains and hills (verse 25)
5. The earth, fields, and dust of the world (vs. 26)
6. The heavens and the clouds (verse 28)
7. The laws governing creation (verse 29)
8. From the beginning of the ages (verse 23)
9. Produced in the plan of God as well as in the creation of all things (vs. 24).  
(Also Psalm.104:24 &. 136:5).
10. Before God made the first particle of matter -- the primitive atom.
11. When God prepared the heavens, before the creation of the earth (verses 27-29).

All this refers to the original creation of the heavens and earth long before the six days of Genesis 1:3 - 2:25. Between this creation and Adam's day the earth was inhabited by pre-Adamite beings who were ruled by Lucifer for an indefinite period in sinlessness, followed by a long period of rebellion before his defeat and that of the pre-Adamite beings and the angels and demons who took part in his invasion of heaven in the attempt to dethrone God.

*30. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;*

Wisdom is pictured as a child always near its parent, watching him in his work and under his constant care. The passage is a personification of wisdom, *not* a proof of the deity and eternity of Jesus Christ as some teach. However, these doctrines are plainly expressed in many other Scriptures directly on the subject (Isaiah 9:6-7; Micah 5:2; John 1:1-2; Colossians 1:15-18; Hebrews 1:1-8; Revelation 1:8; etc.).

*31. Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.*

In verse 31 Wisdom is especially displayed in the works of God in the affairs of men. God's providence is over all, and all are subjects of His eternal care.

Wisdom is to be desired for the blessedness it brings

*32. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. 36. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.*

Verse 34 -- **Happy** are they who keep wisdom's ways, and whoever finds wisdom obtains favor or grace from the Lord (verses 32-35). The one who rejects wisdom and sins against her does so to the damnation of his own soul (verse 36). It is therefore not so much sin and Satan, but the man himself that is responsible for his rejection or reception of wisdom that leads to eternal life. If he receives the teaching of God, sin will not have dominion over him, and if he resists Satan, the devil will flee from him (Also James 4:7; Romans 6:14-23 & 8:12-13).

## Proverbs 9

God's righteousness and sin are contenders for the soul of man, each desiring to have the innermost and uppermost place in it. This 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Proverbs reveals how they go about contend for man's soul. The design of this demonstration is to set before us as "life and death," and "good and evil." This chapter gives an accurate assessment of the situation to help and enable us to determine which to choose, and surrender our hearts to. This chapter describes what the issue is, so, the matter being laid before us, we must consider, take advice, and make up our minds. We are therefore concerned to put a value upon our own souls, because we see there is such striving for them. In verses 1-6, Christ, under the name of Wisdom, invites us to accept His pursuit, and so to enter into acquaintance and communion with Him, And, in verses 7-9, having foretold the different success of His invitation, He shows, what He requires from us in verse 10. Verse 11, reveals what He designs for us. Verse 12 leaves it to our choice what we will do. Verse 17 shows sin, under the character of a foolish woman, contending for us to accept her entertainment. Verses 13-17 present sin as very charming. Verse 18 tells us what the reckoning will be. And now choose you, this day, whom you will choose.

The discipline

**1.** *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: 2. She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.*

The personification of wisdom continues in this chapter. In chapter 8, wisdom was manifested in all of God's creation. Here she is the ruler of what she has built (verses 1-12). In verses 1-3 she is building a house, making a banquet, and sending out her maids to invite guests to partake of her bounties. She is pictured here as a builder, sculptress, butcher, and gracious hostess.

**3.** *She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city,*

An Eastern custom, also pictured in the New Testament, was for men to be sent forth with the banquet invitations (Matthew 22:3; Luke 14:17). The custom was that invitations were sent out to guests by a company of women, preceded by eunuchs. They went from door to door of the invited, delivering their message.

**4.** *Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, 5. Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. 6. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.*

Wisdom's message to the simple and those who lack understanding is, "*Forsake the foolish things of life and live by going the way of understanding.*"

The "simple," of verse 4 refer to the "*inconsiderate; unwary; guileless, and unsuspecting,*" those who, through lack of knowledge and experience, act rashly and unwisely.

The word "*understanding*" is translated from a word meaning, "*to be able to distinguish, separate, or divide*" -- in this case "*dividing good from evil.*"

The invitation of wisdom to eat her bread and drink her wine is a symbol of life through proper wisdom and understanding. In the Bible bread and wine symbolize the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ, which give life to all who appropriate their benefits by faith. (Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 & 11:23-30).

"*The wine which I have mingled,*" of verse 5, refers to the fact that among Jews, Greeks, and Romans, wine was rarely used without mixing with water. Mostly mixed 3 parts water with 1 of wine.

**7.** *He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. 8. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*

The instructions that Wisdom gives to the maidens she sends to invite those who are endeavoring to serve her interests and designs. She tells them, not only what preparation is made for souls, and to offer of it, but they must address the particular persons, telling them their faults, *reprove, rebuke.*

**9.** *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.*



Verse 9, they must instruct them how to teach. The Word of God is intended for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

*10. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. 11. For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased. 12. If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.*

Again, "the fear of the Lord, means reverence

Up until verse 13 Wisdom has been speaking. You would think that the whole world would heed her advice, but we are told the seducer, "foolish woman," in oppression to Wisdom, tempts man to sensual pleasure, and seeking to win man's heart, calls them *simple* and *wanting in understanding*, and courts them to her, that they may be cured of the restraints of their religion.

The custom and error of folly

*13. A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing. 14. For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, 15. To call passengers who go right on their ways:*

**Five facts about a foolish woman in Proverbs 9:**

1. She is clamorous -- in continual uproar; noisy; boisterous (verse 13).
2. She is simple -- silly; easily seduced (verse 13) [the opposite of wisdom in Proverbs. 9:1]
3. She knows nothing -- knows no shame; utterly ignorant and depraved (verse 13).
4. She watches for victims of sin (verse 14).
5. She is impudent or bold to call to any stranger and tempt the innocent to sin (verse 15-17).

This woman says that unlawful pleasures are sweeter than lawful ones. Upon this is built all the adulterous behavior in the land (verse 17).

*16. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, 17. Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. 18. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.*

*"Are you confused about life, don't know what's going on? Steal off with me, I'll show you a good time! No one will ever know—I'll give you the time of your life. But they don't know about all the skeletons in her closet, that all her guests end up in hell." – Message Bible*

Proverbs 10

Up to this 10<sup>th</sup> chapter, has been the preface to the book of Proverbs. Now the proverbs begin. They are short, pithy sentences; many of them are parallelism, or couplets -- two sentences in one verse, illustrating each other. Seldom is there any coherence or rational between the verses, much less any thread of continued dialogue. These next cannot be reduced to systematic theology. Each sentence appears best in its own place. The reason and scope of them is to set before us good and evil, blessing or curse. Many of the proverbs in chapter 10 relate to the good control of the tongue, without which men's religion is vain – (James 1:26).

The 10<sup>th</sup> chapter begins with, “*proverbs of Solomon,*” There are 288 individually contrasted persons and things between chapters 10:1 to 19:19). These sayings were all composed by Solomon who spoke 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:32). All the proverbs in this section are composed of 2 statements, except 19:7. They are miscellaneous and generally not connected in thought.

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

**1.** *The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother. 2. Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death. 3. The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*

Wisdom, speaking as a wise father to his children, observes here how much the comfort of parents, (natural, political, and ecclesiastical), depends upon the good behavior of those under their charge.

Wealth which men get unjustly will not do them any good, because God will eventually discharge it. At death they will stand in judgment when God casts away the substance of the wicked (verse 3).

**4.** *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

A “*slack hand,*” here means a “*deceitful hand.*” Those who think to enrich themselves by fraud and deception, will, in eternity, impoverish themselves. Those who are diligent, honest about their affairs, live it with all their might, in a fair and honorable way, and are rich in eternal matters.

**5.** *He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.*

He who provides for hereafter while provision can be made, is wise. He who idles away his time, and neglects his work, when he should be laying in for winter, who lets slip the season of furnishing himself with that which lasts for eternity, is foolish.

**6.** *Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked. 7. The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.*

Verses 6-7 “*The blessing of the Lord is on the head of the righteous; but untimely grief shall stop the mouth of the wicked. The just are remembered with praise; but the name of the wicked is extinguished.*” - Septuagint

“*Blessings accrue on a good and honest life, but the mouth of the wicked is a dark cave of abuse. A good and honest life is a blessed memorial; a wicked life leaves a rotten stench*” - Message Bible

**8.** *The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.*

*Those who are wise will accept God’s commandments, but one who babbles excessively, pointlessly will stumble and come to ruin.”*

**9.** *He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.*

He who lives with integrity is never afraid of detection, because he never acts to deceive. His integrity is his security; he walks uprightly before God and man.

**10.** *He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.*

The New American Bible renders, “He who winks at a fault causes trouble, but he who frankly reproves promotes peace.”

**11.** *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*

The mouth, the outlet of the mind, is a well of life; constantly issuing edification to others; the words of the wicked disguises designed mischief.

**12.** *Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.*

“Hatred is ever ready to pick a quarrel; love passes over all kinds of offence” – [Knox, from Latin Vulgate]. Hatred seeks an occasion to provoke enmity and delights in brawls, but love is appeasing and conciliatory and removes all occasion for trouble.

**13.** *In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.*

One who understands speaks wisdom; correction is an instrument of knowledge if properly applied. [See my study on “What is the Biblical `Rod? ”]

**14.** *Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.*

A wise man will keep secret things he hears about others, but a fool will repeat them everywhere and cause strife.

**15.** *The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.*

*A rich man's wealth is his protection, but poverty is the ruin of the poor” -- Moffatt Translation*

**16.** *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.*

The righteous labor to support life and shares with the others; the wicked live to produce sin to satisfy their appetites.

**17.** *He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.*

The righteous man accumulates knowledge so that he can better serve God, but the wicked refuses correction and instruction.

**18.** *He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.*

A fool hides resentment and plots, by lies, pretending he holds no ill feelings over injuries received. He that slanders is also a fool.

**19.** *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

It is unusual for one to talk constantly without sinning and defaming someone's character. The control of the tongue is a show of wisdom.

**20.** *The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

What a just man speaks is like silver, but what comes out of the heart of a wicked man is like worthless dross.

**21.** *The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.*

The words of the righteous "shepherd," instructs many, but fools die off for lack of knowledge.

**22.** *The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.*

One can live wealthy to have the Lord's blessing, with no sorrow!

**23.** *It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.*

Iniquity is as sport to a fool, but a man of understanding hates sin.

**24.** *The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.*

The wicked reaps what he fears, but the righteous man's desire will come to pass.

**25.** *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.*

As a tornado sweeps away everything in its path, so the wrath of God will destroy the wicked. The righteous will live forever and not witness the wrath of God.

**26.** *As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.*

As vinegar sets the teeth on edge and as smoke irritates the eyes, so the lazy individual hurts and grieves those who hire him.

**27.** *The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.*

The fear of God promotes righteousness and long life, but wickedness shortens life

**28.** *The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.*

The hope of the righteous will be realized, but that of the wicked will not.

**29.** *The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*

The righteous are constantly renewed in strength, but sudden destruction will come to the wicked

**30.** *The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.*

Redeemed people will inhabit the earth eternally

**31.** *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.*

The mouth of the just speaks wisdom, but the tongue of the rebellious will be cut out. It was an ancient custom in some nations to cut out the tongue for blasphemy, lying, treasonable speeches, and other vocal crimes. "Froward," is also translated, "perverse" -- has the meaning of being "subversive."

**32.** *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness.*

The righteous know what is acceptable and profitable to speak, but the wicked know what is perverse.

## Proverbs 11

### Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

**1.** *A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.*

"False" refers to a balance that is faulty in construction. This figure is used to show that unjust and fraudulent practices are an abomination to the Lord. God always demands fair and honest dealings.

**2.** *When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. 3. The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.*

Pride is a sin that we should be ashamed of; but those who humble them self will receive wisdom, and honor. Those who live right are guided by honesty; the dishonest will be ruined by their own vices!

**4.** *Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.*

Riches do wonders among men, but with God riches purchase nothing. No sin profits "in the day of wrath," but righteousness rescues from hell.

**5.** *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*

The righteousness of the blameless man will enable his path to always be lite so that he may see his way, but the lawlessness of the wicked will be full of stumblingblocks.

**6.** *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.*

The righteousness of the upright man will deliver him from condemnation and eternal judgment, but sins of the wicked will bring them to judgment.

"Naughtiness," means, "worthless or wicked; a good-for-nothing."

*7. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth. 8. The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.*

The wicked hope to be saved and have the things the righteous enjoy, but their hope will perish because they refuse to turn to God. The righteous is saved in trouble, but, the sinner has lots of trouble.

*9. An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.*

This original word, “*hypocrite*,” means worse than the modern understanding of hypocrite, but rather, means “*infidel, a godless, profane person.*” This one destroys his neighbor with his mouth, enticing him to sin, but the righteous escape because of knowledge.

*10. When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, there is shouting. 11. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.*

The righteous are respected and honored for their examples, bringing blessings to a city that rejoices in prosperity, but when the wicked perish there is no regret. The city rejoices in the blessing of the righteous because it is exalted and honored by their good deeds, however the words of the wicked help destroy it.

*12. He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.*

One without wisdom reproaches his neighbor, but one with wisdom holds his peace and keeps his mouth.

*13. A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*

A “*talebearer*” is a “*busybody; a spreader of scandal,*” revealing whatever is confided to him; even reveals his own secrets rather than have nothing to say.

*14. Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

“*Counsel*” is also translated, “*helmsman; guide; and giving advice.*” There is protection, providing they are really counselors.

*15. He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.*

“*Surety*” is pledging to stand good for anyone. Proverbs 6:1 teaches *surety* relieve the borrower of responsibility, and lowers the respect of a co-signer in the sight of the one he helps.

*16. A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches.*

A gracious woman preserves her reputation for wisdom and modesty, humility and courtesy, and all those other graces that are the true ornaments -- and a courageous man obtains wealth.

**17.** *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh. 18.* *The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.*

The man who shows mercy edifies his own soul, but the unmerciful, fretful, and vengeful destroys his own flesh and will be sickly in body. The lawless earns empty profits; but whoso soweth righteousness – receives a true reward!

**19.** *As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death.*

Righteousness promotes health and long life (Psalm 91 & 1 Peter 3:10-11), but wickedness shortens life.

**20.** *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.*

Evil-minded men are loathsome to God, but honest dealings are His delight!

**21.** *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.*

Verbal contracts were closed with a handshake. Here, though the wicked pledge such support to each other in sin -- they will not go unpunished. Only the righteous will be delivered.

**22.** *As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*

Nose jewels are common in the East (See Genesis 24:47 & Isaiah 3:21). A jewel in the swine's snout is as becoming as a beautiful woman who lacks moral discretion.

**23.** *The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.*

The righteous are consecrated to goodness, but the wicked are consecrated to things that will produce the wrath of God.

**24.** *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. 25.* *The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

Speaking of heavenly rewards, "What you give you gain; what you keep you lose." God blesses the bountiful soul and repays what is cheerfully given.

**26.** *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

Speaking of heavenly rewards, "What you give you gain; what you keep you lose." God blesses the bountiful soul and repays what is cheerfully given.

**27.** *He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.*

He that seeks the good of others gains their favor, but he that seeks their harm shall reap it himself.

*28. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*

Anyone who places his confidence in his wealth, will wither and fade like the fall leaves, but the righteous will flourish like the green leaves of spring!

*29. He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.*

He who misrules his household will reap nothing but empty air for his inheritance; and, being a fool, become a slave to those who are wise.

*30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*

The righteous produce eternal life for men, by winning them to God.

*31. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.*

Both the righteous and the wicked will reap what they sow.

## Proverbs 12

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.*

Those that have wisdom delight in instructions given in God's Word, but he that hates correction is as stupid as a dumb animal.

*2. A good man obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.*

God gives His grace to the righteous, but condemns the wicked

*3. A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.*

Evil devices will not obtain security, but good men have roots that cannot be dislodged.

*4. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.*

A wife with strength of character is a crown to her husband, but she that is shameful is like him having an incurable disease

*5. The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.*

The aims of a good man are reliable, but the suggestions of a bad man are underhanded.

*6. The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.*



The speech of the wicked brings destruction, but the advice of a conscientious person delivers from the plans of the wicked.

*7. The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*

The immoral will be defeated and be no more, but the house of the upright will remain forever.

*8. A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.*

A man is praised in proportion to his wisdom, but one with a corrupt heart is held in contempt.

*9. He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.*

The man of low rank who provides for himself is better than the one who boasts – - but lacks food.

*10. A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

The righteous are merciful, even to his livestock, but the wicked are heartless through and through.

*11. He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding.*

He who works his farm diligently will have plenty of food, but he who follows after vain interests has no sense.

*12. The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*

The wicked delight in the booty taken as prey of evil men, but the root of the righteous will sprout.

*13. The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.*

The ungodly is caught by his own words, but the righteous man escapes out of his trouble

*14. A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.*

A good man will be satisfied with the fruit of his lips, and he will reap the results of the words he sows and what he does with his hands will be rendered unto him.

*15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.*

It is a fool who thinks that he is always right and not listen to wise counsel -- as does a wise man.

*16. A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.*

A fool lets his anger be known at once when he is offended, but a wise man will ignore an insult.

**17.** *He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.*

He that speaks truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness practices deception.

**18.** *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.*

Those who speak rashly are like the piercing of a sword, but the words of the wise bring healing.

**19.** *The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*

Lips that are truthful endure forever, but a lying tongue only lasts for a little while.

**20.** *Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.*

Disappointment comes to those who plot evil, but to those who are purposing peace there is joy.

**21.** *There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.*

The word, “evil,” here refers to “iniquity, vanity or a vain thing. No vain thing will happen to the just, for “all things work together for their good.” God turns to the advantage of the righteous or just any intended evil that happens.

**22.** *Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.*

Liars are loathsome to God but the sincere bring Him delight.

**23.** *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.*

A wise man never brags on his education, knowledge, or experience, but a foolish man is known by his bragging how wise he is.

**24.** *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.*

The hard-working, industrious hand will have an upper hand, but the lazy will be put to forced labor.

**25.** *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.*

Anxiety, sorrow, and rebuke depresses a man, but a single statement of encouragement makes him glad.

*26. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.*

The good man guides his friend in righteousness, but a wicked neighbor can lead him astray.

*27. The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.*

The idle hunter is too lazy to roast his prey, but the industrious man reaps a rich harvest.

*28. In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.*

The pathway of the righteous is eternal life and immortality!

### Proverbs 13

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.*

A wise son will receive correction by his father's rebuke, but an arrogant son will not profit by it.

*2. A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence.*

Inward comfort and edifying will be a continual feast of a righteous man, but the soul of the transgressor will have their belly full of violence.

*3. He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.*

He who guards his lips, guards his soul. He that loves to scream, rant, and complain, will bring the destruction of his reputation.

*4. The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*

The lazy person's desires will never be satisfied, but those of the righteous will be.

*5. A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.*

Not only will the righteous not tell a lie, but abhor lying, and to them there is nothing more detestable than the shame of a liar.

*6. Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.*

Righteousness protects those who live upright, but sin will destroy the sinner.

*7. There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.*

The rich poor man who hoards all riches for himself, not caring about others so he could receive more riches, and does not know what true riches are; the poor rich man who gives his all for others, is rich toward God

**8.** *The ransom of a man's life are his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.*

A rich man is able to ransom his life by riches, but no amount of threatening can force a poor man to pay what he does not have.

**9.** *The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*

The light of a good man shines out bright, the lamp of the wicked will go out

**10.** *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.*

Pride generates contention and strife between men, but those who will listen to counsel will act wisely and suppress arguments.

**11.** *Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.*

Ill-gotten wealth will not last, but wealth received by honest labor will last and be blessed.

**12.** *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*

Hope, when delayed in its realization, sickens the heart, but when it is realized it comforts and invigorates body and soul.

**13.** *Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.*

He that despises God's Word is marked for ruin, but he that has a reverence for God's Word, will be rewarded for his godly fear.

**14.** *The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*

God's law is a spring of life to the wise, for by obedience he escapes the penalty of breaking it.

**15.** *Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.*

Good understanding produces favor, but the conduct of the ungodly leads to disaster. The word "hard," means "rough" Verse 15 is saying that sinners suffer more pain and hardships in damning their souls than the righteous do following the path of salvation. The way of the transgressor is hard, desolate, and fruitless.

**16.** *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.*

The wise man does all things with understanding, but a fool opens himself to folly.

**17.** *A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.*

A wicked messenger fails to carry out his duty, but a righteous one brings honor and safety to his king.

**18.** *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.*

Poverty and shame come to him that rejects correction, but honor to him that profits by his mistakes.

**19.** *The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.*

A completed desire for good is sweet to the soul, but evil desires never satisfy.

**20.** *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*

One who fellowships with a wise man will imitate his wisdom, but one who follows a fool will become base and vile.

**21.** *Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repayed.*

Sinners will reap the evil of their doings, and the righteous will reap the good they do.

**22.** *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*

A good man leaves an inheritance of prayers, a godly life, a good name, a wonderful example, and many cherished memories, and *in some cases*, houses, lands, and wealth for his children. In contrast, the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just -- *in eternity!*

**23.** *Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.*

The poor may sow enough to have plenty of food, but if there is lack of management, it will keep them in poverty. If they have little foresight, when they get something they quickly spend and then go without for a long time.

**24.** *He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*

He who withholds correction from his son, really does not love him, but he who corrects and trains his child has his future at heart. [See study on "A Scriptural 'Rod' "}]

**25.** *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.*

He who withholds correction from his son, really does not love him, but he who corrects and trains his child has his future at heart.

## Proverbs 14

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

**1.** *Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*

The wise woman through proper management increases the property, furniture, food and clothing of the household, but the thriftless woman causes these blessings to depart.

*2. He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.*

The upright reverences God, but the double-dealer ridicules Him.

*3. In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.*

The words of the foolish are a source of pride causing his fall, but the words of the wise keep them from falling.

*4. Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.*

If there is no oxen the crib is clean from dung, but consequently there is no tilling of the ground and treading out the corn. We must tolerate the muck in order to increase in prosperity.

*5. A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.*

A conscientious witness will not give a testimony that is untrue, but a witness that can be bribed, will utter lies.

*6. A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.*

Rebels seek wisdom but can't find it because they reject God, the source of wisdom. Knowledge is hard for the one who rebels and won't believe truth when he hears it; but it is easy for him to understand who is open to truth and will believe what he hears

*7. Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*

Never associate with vain, empty, ignorant men who can neither convey nor receive truth

*8. The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.*

The wisdom of the cautious is to direct his way rightly, but it is foolishness to live deceitful lives.

*9. Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.*

Fools make light of sin and live in disfavor with all who are good, but the righteous find favor.

*10. The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*

The heart knows its own grief best; no one can hinder its joy.

**11.** *The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*

The house of the wicked, built ever so strong and high, shall be overthrown, his hope for heaven will be brought to poverty and disgrace, but the tabernacle of the righteous, will flourish into true riches and honor.

**12.** *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

A man may persuade himself that his besetting sin, false religion, and selfish way are right, but whatever is not God's way will end in death and hell.

**13.** *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.*

A sorrowful heart can hide behind a forced smile and laughter, but the end of that merriment is heaviness, showing the vanity of carnal mirth.

**14.** *The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.*

The backslider in heart will be satisfied with his ways, but a good man will be satisfied when he is free from his own ways

**15.** *The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*

The thoughtless believes every word, but the wise discerns between the ways of good and evil.

**16.** *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.*

A wise man fears God and never trusts himself in departing from evil, but the fool boasts in self-confidence.

**17.** *He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.*

A person who is quickly angered will blunder; the wicked schemer is hated.

**18.** *The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*

The thoughtless have a disposition to foolish behavior, but the wise embrace knowledge.

**19.** *The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*

The wicked will be brought to respect the righteous.

**20.** *The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.*

Riches brings many fair-weather friends

**21.** *He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

Our character and bliss is measured and judged by our attitude and conduct toward our neighbors.

*22. Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.*

To plan for evil, is sin. Happy is he who has compassion and is kind to the poor.

*23. In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.*

All labor profits, but all talk and no work brings poverty. A man of words is not always a man of deeds.

*24. The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.*

Riches of the wise bring respect -- and gives more authority and influence. But if the unwise have riches their wealth will shame them, as they do sin and are the more hardened in their foolish practices.

*25. A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.*

A true witness liberates the innocent, but a liar slanders him.

*26. In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. 27. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*

A holy reverence for God gives strong confidence, provides a refuge of security, and is a life-giving spring by which one can avoid the snares of death.

*28. In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.*

The king's security is his popularity; rebellion of the people will be his downfall.

*29. He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*

It is a wise man who is slow to wrath, but he is a fool who is hasty of spirit and displays his folly.

*30. A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.*

A strong heart has good blood circulation, producing health and longevity; but envy, jealousy, and passionate hatred produce corruption.

*31. He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.*

He that oppresses the poor insults God who made them, but he who blesses the poor honors God.

*32. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*

The wicked have no hope in the harvest of their life of wickedness, but the righteous have hope of reaping life eternal



*33. Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.*

A wise man does not display his wisdom, but a fool parades all he knows.

*34. Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

Virtue exalts a nation, but sin is a people's disgrace.

*35. The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.*

A wise servant gains favor of the king, but a foolish servant will bring upon himself the king's wrath.

### Proverbs 15

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*

Gentle words and action will disarm the most furious, but angry words will only produce more wrath.

*2. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*

A wise man speaks, using his knowledge properly, but a fool has no sense of the proper use of his tongue.

*3. The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

The Lord sees everywhere, keeping watch over good men and bad, discerning what they do!

*4. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.*

A gentle, soothing, tongue is like a tree life, but an undisciplined tongue will break hearts.

*5. A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.*

A foolish son rejects his father's correction, but he who heeds admonition shows good sense.

*6. In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.*

Where righteousness is -- riches are. Where wickedness is, there is trouble, robbing them of the joy of their revenues.

*7. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.*

The words of the wise will scatter knowledge, but this is not so with fools.

*8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

The gifts of an evil-doer is disgusting to the Lord, but He takes great delight in the prayer of His people.

*9. The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.*

A wicked life is loathsome to God, but He loves those bent on living righteously.

*10. Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.*

There will be severe correction for him who goes astray; he who hates being reprimanded will die.

*11. Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?*

God knows all things, even those things that are hidden from the eyes of all living: Hell and destruction are before the Lord, and He knows what is in the hearts of all men.

*12. A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.*

The mocker hates corrections and admonitions and will not seek advice from the wise.

*13. A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*

A happy disposition shows in the countenance, but a gloomy one keeps his spirit broken.

*14. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.*

A wise man seeks knowledge, but a fool feeds on foolishness

*15. All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.*

Affliction brings sorrow and the miserable man is unhappy all day, but those of a cheerful heart are continually enjoying a banquet.

*16. Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.*

It is better to have a little of this world's goods and have a proper reverence for the Lord, than to have riches and all the anxiety that goes along it.

*17. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.*

Better is a poor man's dinner where love is than a rich man's feast with hatred and strife.

*18. A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*

A fiery-tempered man causes trouble, but a man slow to anger promotes peace.

**19.** *The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.*

A lazy man imagines many obstructions in the way, but the righteous sees a way through them all.

**20.** *A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.*

A wise son honors his parents, but a foolish one has no respect for his them.

**21.** *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.*

The wicked takes pleasure in sin, but the man of discernment walks a straight path.

**22.** *Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.*

Plans fail when there is no counsel, but succeed where many wise men counsel.

**23.** *A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*

A wise man is joyful when he can give good advice; how wonderful it is to say the right thing at the right time.

**24.** *The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.*

The path of true living ascends upward for the wise, leading him away from hell beneath.

**25.** *The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.*

The Lord will judge the proud but preserves the humble

**26.** *The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.*

God hates wicked thoughts, but the words of the pure are His delight!

**27.** *He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.*

The greedy man is a torment to his own family and a curse to those with whom he deals, but the contented man, one who hates bribery, shall live.

**28.** *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*

A righteous man ponders his answers before he speaks, but the wicked spews out the useless words of his heart.

**29.** *The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*

The Lord has no fellowship with the wicked, but He draws near and hears the prayers of the righteous.

*30. The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.*

The sparkling of bright eyes reveals the joy of the heart, and good news is always healthful.

*31. The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.*

He who heeds advice shall be a companion of the wise.

*32. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.*

He who refuses advice has no respect for his soul, but the one who listens to instructions receives wisdom and understanding.

*33. The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.*

Reverence for God imparts instruction and correction of wisdom, and humility proceeds honor.

## Proverbs 16

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.*

God designs His purpose in the heart of a righteous man and inspires the words of his tongue.

*2. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.*

The conduct of a self-righteous man may seem alright to him, but God judges the motives of his heart.

*3. Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

Take God into partnership and your mind will have peace.

*4. The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

God has made all things for a purpose and has reserved the wicked for the day when he shall receive his well-deserved punishment

*5. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*

Those who have a high opinion of themselves, the Lord despises -- though they strengthen one another with their associations, joining forces against God, they will not escape righteous judgment

*6. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*

It is only because of God's mercy, and the reality of the atonement for sin -- is *sin purged*, and only godly reverence causes men to depart from sin.

*7. When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

When a person's ways pleases God, He causes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

*8. Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.*

A little gained honestly, is better than great wealth gotten by dishonest means.

*9. A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.*

We may attempt to govern our life by human intelligence and natural instinct -- -- but, if we desire to please God, He will devise our way and direct our steps.

*10. A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.*

The king must judge by the law of God, and not err in judgment.

*11. A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work.*

God is concerned with all scales and balances, and the honest weight of the bag. This verse has reference to the weights in the bag in the sanctuary by which all weights in the land were to be measured to ascertain their accuracy. It also refers to the weights carried about by merchants in their girdles by which they weighed the money taken in exchange for their merchandise.

*12. It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.*

Throughout the book of Proverbs the form of government was the sovereign king. Verses 11-15 speaks of the king's rule being administered in righteousness.

*13. Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.*

Righteous words are a delight to the king, he loves a man of honest words.

*14. The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it. 15. In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.*

These verses show the power of kings in those eastern countries; they were absolute and arbitrary. Whom they would they slew and whom they would they kept alive. Their will was law. A man would be wise to appease the king. When the king's face is friendly, all goes well, his good-will is like rain-clouds in spring time.

*16. How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!*

Acquiring wisdom is much better than getting gold, and obtaining understanding is better than silver!

*17. The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.*

A righteous man avoids evil and preserves his eternal soul.

*18. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

Those of a haughty spirit, thinking of them self, looking with contempt on others, will be brought down.

*19. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.*

How much better it is to be humble and associate with ordinary people than to make friends with the proud.

*20. He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.*

One who work out the situations that arises wisely will win the favor of others and, by trusting in the Lord, will be happily blessed.

*21. The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.*

Those with wisdom will be recognized and gain reputation for it; they shall be called a person of discernment and good sense, and respect will be paid to their judgment.

*22. Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.*

Understanding is a well-spring of life to the wise, always flowing and never running dry. Nothing good can be gotten from a fool; even his instructions are nothing but foolishness.

*23. The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.*

The wise person educates him self to speak words of edification.

*24. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*

As honey is nourishing and refreshing, so pleasant words refresh the soul.

*25. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

A man may convince himself that his sin and selfish ways are right, but whatever is not God's way will end in death and hell -- [Quoted also in 14:12]

*26. He that laboreth laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.*

The reason man labors is to satisfy his appetite; to meet some need in his life.

*27. An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire. 28. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends*

An ungodly man works as hard to dig up evil and to set men against each other - as a laboring man does to make a living.

*29. A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. 30. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.*

A man of violence seduces others and entices them away from ways of righteousness. He meditates intensely on how to commit sin.

*31. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

If old people are found in the way of righteousness, their age will be their honor. The gray hair of old age is only a crown of glory among the righteous — (Many old sinners, of course, also have gray hair.)

*32. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*

Conquest and self-control of one's own self is better than conquest of enemies without.

*33. The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.*

Referring to the bag of the ephod that held the Urim and Thummim, used in casting lots. The stone drawn out after prayer and meditation would be God's decision, yes or no.

## Proverbs 17

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.*

Poverty with peace and contentment is better than plenty with strife.

*2. A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.*

Wisdom in servants is better than folly in sons.

*3. The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.*

As silver and gold are purified by fire, so the Lord purifies the hearts of men by fiery trials.

*4. A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.*

A dishonorable person will listen to malicious gossip and a liar pays attention to a vicious tongue.

*5. Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.*

The one who ridicules the poor provokes God; and he who gloats over another's trouble will answer for it.

*6. Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.*

Grandchildren are the rejoicing of old men, and parents are the glory of children.

*7. Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.*

A fool, in Solomon's proverbs, signifies a wicked man. Refinement and eloquent speech are as unbecoming to a vulgar man as lying is to a noble person.

*8. A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.*

A gift is like a precious stone that sparkles wherever it turns. The receiver of a gift loves to look at it and keep it for show.

*9. He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.*

To hide the faults and sins of a friend from others, fosters friendship and love; to expose them brings bitterness, hatred, and enmity and parts the best of friends.

*10. A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.*

A rebuke does more good to a wise man than whipping a dense or stupid man with a hundred stripes.

*11. An evil man seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him. 12. Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.*

The dreadful person who constantly stirs up contention, seeking occasions to rebel against God, contradicts and quarrels with those around him, and continue in his wicked way in spite of all restraint and check, if he will not be reclaimed -- must be executed with dreadful judgment in order to keep peace.

*13. Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.*

The one who pays evil for good, unkindness for kindness, and lives in ingratitude will reap what he sows all the days of his life.

*14. The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.*

As water presses toward the smallest break in a dam until it becomes too great to hold, so it is hard to hold back contention and strife when they begin.

*15. He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.*



He who exonerates the lawless and he who denounces and attacks the innocent are both an outrage to the Lord

**16.** *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*

Why give a fool money to get wisdom when he has no sense, no skill, no will, or any courage, to use it wisely?

**17.** *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

A friend loves in adversity or prosperity, becoming a brother to support and comfort you in times of distress.

**18.** *A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.*

It is poor judgment to countersign another's note and become responsible for his debts.

**19.** *He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.*

To love sin is to love conflict; and he that builds a stately courtyard that he may outdo his neighbors, to show off his wealth -- only invites destruction and becomes a mark for robbers

**20.** *He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.*

He that has a stubborn heart, full of resentment, will come to mischief, and he that has a deceitful and unmanageable tongue will fall into sin.

**21.** *He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.*

The father of a foolish and wicked son has many sorrows and no joy because he is ashamed of his son.

**22.** *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

A glad heart is healthful, but one broken in spirit and dejected will develop many physical illnesses. Nothing ruins health more than grief, continual worry, anxiety, fretfulness, bad tempers, hatred, and malice.

**23.** *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.*

Easterners carry their purses in their bosoms above the girdles. Here, a wicked man accepts a bribe and depraves judgment.

**24.** *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.*

Wisdom is within reach of every one who seeks it, but the fool never receives it because he is always aiming at impossible things that are out of his reach.

*25. A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.*

A fool who has no sense of responsibility is a shame to his parents.

*26. Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity.*

It is not right to punish the innocent, nor to smite the noble for his honesty.

*27. He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*

One of true knowledge is not a vain, empty talker; and one with comprehension demonstrates he is one of wisdom.

*28. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.*

Even a fool can be considered a wise if he knows when to speak, and when *not* to speak; if he keeps his mouth closed he will be considered intelligent.

### Proverbs 18

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.*

One seeking wisdom and knowledge with his whole heart must separate himself from all other pursuits so he can devote himself to his investigations. He becomes a voluntary recluse for the sake of his desires for true wisdom.

*2. A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.*

A dense and sinful man has no delight in knowledge even though it is available to him. His sole desire is to show his own stupidity and emptiness.

*3. When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.*

When the wicked comes into any company, then comes contempt of God, bringing with it disgrace, shame, and reproach.

*4. The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.*

The sayings of a wise man are like deep waters and his wellspring of wisdom is like a gushing torrent.

*5. It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*

It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, or to deprive a righteous man of justice.

*6. A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.*

A fool's words cause brawls that calls for punishment.

*7. A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*

A fool's tongue will bring him destruction, bringing a snare to himself.

**8.** *The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*

The words of a slanderer are like poison in dainty morsels that are quickly swallowed but cause destruction to the receiver

**9.** *He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.*

A lazy man neglects his work and the materials will ruin. He is brother to the waster who destroys the materials.

**10.** *The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

The name of the Lord is a place of complete safety to all who trust in Him.

**11.** *The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.*

The possessions of the rich are their trust, like a high wall of protection to them -- ***in their own imagination!***

**12.** *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.*

A man's arrogant and self-important spirit brings him destruction, but a humble spirit brings honor.

**13.** *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*

To answer a question before you hear it completely is both unintelligent and insulting.

**14.** *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Man's spirit will sustain him in his infirmities if it is not cast down and defeated by constant trials.

**15.** *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.*

The sensible person hungers for knowledge, and the wise keeps his ears open all the time to receive it.

**16.** *A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.*

In order to receive an audience, favor or justice, it was an ancient Eastern custom to bring gifts into the presence rulers or kings. This sprang from the practice of bringing offerings to God when approaching Him. Rulers and kings, wishing to be considered as petty gods, demanded similar homage. A valuable gift would bring one into favor with potentates.

**17.** *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*

He that is first in his answer in a disputed matter may appear to be right, but his opponent comes to cross-examine him and brings the real truth to light.

**18.** *The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.*

"Casting lots" was a method used to settle matters between two parties.

The word, "parteth" means, "to separate," or "to part." When matters are settled between the two parties, this keeps them from having further war or enmity. It separates them from joining in battle.

**19.** *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.*

A brother who is estranged by wrong dealing is harder to be reconciled than taking a strong city, but brothers who stand united are stronger than a castle.

**20.** *A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.*

A man is inwardly satisfied by his wise answers and the consequence of his words brings him satisfaction.

Throughout the book of Proverbs, the words, "death and "life," are used, showing man's union, or lack of, union, with God. The Hebrew word, "death" merely meant "separation," while the word "life," refers to living the full life that God intended for man.

**21.** *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

Death and life are greatly determined by the power of the tongue, and he who uses this power rightly shall live because of it.

**22.** *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.*

Celibacy is not required and "marriage is honorable in all" (Hebrews 13:4). God said "it is not good that the man should be alone."

**23.** *The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly.*

The poor cry to the rich for the necessities of life, but they are answered roughly.

**24.** *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*

A man who has friends must maintain their friendship, but there is a friend that will stand by you in adversity -- **Jesus Christ!**

## Proverbs 19

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

**1.** *Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.*

A godly man that is poor is better off than an ungodly man who is rich -- he is a fool!

*2. Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.*

It is not good to be ignorant of the ways of God, and he who acts hastily will mis-step and blunder.

*3. The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.*

The fool distorts and ruins his own ways and blames God for it.

*4. Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.*

The rich have many friends, but the poor person loses his.

*5. A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.*

A liar will reap what he sows and be punished in due time

*6. Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.*

Generally speaking, men are friendly when it is to their advantage; they seek favors from the generous rich.

*7. All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth them with words, yet they are wanting to him.*

If a poor man is ignored by his own brethren, how much more by possible friends? All his efforts to be friendly and his appeals to them are rejected.

*8. He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.*

The one who gets wisdom loves their own soul, and the greatest satisfaction comes through guarding and obeying wisdom and understanding.

*9. A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish. [A repeat of verse 5]*

A liar will reap what he sows and be punished in due time

*10. Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less for a servant to have rule over princes.*

**Two uncommon practices:**

1. For a fool to enjoy luxury, rank, and honor as if he were royalty
2. For a servant to rule princes -- he would most likely be cruel and tyrannical

*11. The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*

**Two good qualities:**

- (1) A sensible man is slow to wrath
- (2) He will overlook the offenses and faults of others

12. *The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favour is as dew upon the grass.*

**Two contrasted effects:**

(1) A king's wrath

A lion's roar instills fear in all who hear it.; animals tremble, flee, or hide at its sound

(2) A king's favor

Dew refreshes all plant life

13. *A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.*

**Two unbearable things:**

(1) A foolish son who brings troubles, calamities and ruin to parents

(2) The contentious wife - who is always perpetually nagging

14. *House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD.*

**Two great blessings of man:**

(1) Inheritance of riches

(2) A prudent wife from the Lord -- in stark contrast to the wife in verse 13, she may have many causes for complaint, but she avoids them all.

15. *Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

**Two effects of laziness:**

(1) Deep sleep

(2) Hunger and want

The "deep sleep" in verse 15 is, "unconsciousness," the kind that fell upon Adam (Genesis 2:21) and Abraham and others (Genesis 15:12; 1 Samuel 26:12; Job 4:13 & 33:15; Isaiah 29:10). The idea is that the slothful man becomes oblivious to all interests and responsibilities in life.

16. *He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his ways shall die.*

In keeping God's commandments there is life; not only "eternal life" in the hereafter -- but real living here in this life; in rejecting them there is death.

17. *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

To lend to the Lord is a great privilege in life! Think of it! The poor are everywhere, so is the opportunity to lend to God. God Himself becomes debtor for everything given to the poor!

18. *Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*

Discipline your son before his habits are formed for life. This is not cruel punishment, but against showing *partiality* and *favoritism* that ultimately leads the child to ruin and death (separation from god's intended purpose). It is better for him to cry now from strict punishment than for you both to cry later.

**19.** *A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again.*

A man who has an irritable, fiery disposition never learns how to stay out of trouble. If you give in to him once, you will only have to do again and again.

**20.** *Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.*

### **Two ways of getting wisdom:**

- (1) Hear counsel and profit by it.
- (2) Receive instruction (discipline) and live by it.

**21.** *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

The heart of the natural man will come up with many schemes and proposals, but only those plans that are worked in harmony with the will of God will stand

**22.** *The desire of a man is his kindness: and a poor man is better than a liar.*

That which makes a man desirable is his kindness: -- a poor man, who wishes you well but is unable promise you anything, because he has nothing to be kind with, is better than a rich man who is a liar -- making you believe he will do mighty things, but, when it comes right down to it, does nothing.

**23.** *The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.*

### **Three blessings of reverencing God:**

- (1) Obtain real living now and eternal life hereafter
- (2) Gives personal satisfaction
- (3) Protects from sin and danger

**24.** *A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.*

The lazy man hides his hand in his bosom, pretends he is lame and cannot work; he is so lazy he will not even lift his hands to his mouth to eat.

**25.** *Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.*

Punish scoffers and mockers and it will be good for others as well. If men are so hardened they will not change, or improve, even though severe methods are used to reclaim and reform them, even so, such methods must be used for the sake of others observing, so they will hear and fear.

**26.** *He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.*

A son who wastes his father's goods by riotous living and forces his aged mother from her home is a shameful man who incurs reproach.

*27. Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.*

Listen to nothing that is not truth.

*28. An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.*

An ungodly witness mocks at judgment; his mouth swallows iniquity as it would a choice morsel.

*29. Judgments are prepared for scorers, and stripes for the back of fools.*

Punishment for scoffers is already arranged and, in like manner, strips for fools

## Proverbs 20

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*

Wine mocks its victims and strong drink makes them wild and boisterous. Whosoever submits to their sense-destroying powers is senseless.

*2. The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul.*

The wrath of a king is to be feared like the roaring of a lion, and whoever provokes him does it to his own hurt.

*3. It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.*

A man of honor will cease from strife, but a fool gladly begin it.

*4. The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

The lazy man, under the excuse of unfavorable weather, neglects cultivating his land till the proper time has past, so he has to beg in time of harvest.

*5. Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.*

The innermost purpose of a man's heart may be difficult to understand, but a wise man will draw it out like water from a deep well.

*6. Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*

Many will boast about charity, generosity, hospitality, and piety; what little goodness they have they loudly proclaim -- but it is hard to find those that really are kind and liberal.

*7. The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.*



A righteous man will be rewarded having his children blessed by his integrity after his death.

*8. A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*

A king who sits to judge men and execute the laws of God will strike terror in the hearts of evil men who know that they will receive justice for their deeds.

*9. Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*

No man can ever say that he has made his own heart clean or that he has purified himself of his sins. No man can say that he is pure unless the blood of Christ cleanses him. After that he can say that his heart is clean and that he is purified from sin. Even Old Testament saints were cleansed, purified from sin, and fully redeemed from sin by faith in the coming Redeemer.

*10. Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.*

These were the standard weight and measure. Unscrupulous men used the one weight to buy and other weight to sell. This was an abomination to God who wants standard weights and measures for all transactions

*11. Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*

The deeds of a child reveal his character and predict what his future will be if he is not properly trained and transformed by God's power.

*12. The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.*

God has made all things for Himself and they should be used for His glory

*13. Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.*

Don't love sleep more than you should, lest you become lazy and come to poverty. Be alert and diligent in business and you will prosper.

*14. It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.*

People belittle something they want to buy, but boast of their bargain afterward.

*15. There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.*

Godly knowledge is more valuable than gold and rubies. Good understanding to guide the lips to diffuse the knowledge is to be preferred far before jewels.

*16. Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*

Take sufficient collateral from strangers to ensure they meet their obligations, and especially take security if he is a foreigner or a person unknown.

*17. Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.*

Wealth gotten by fraud or lying, may be sweet at the time, but afterward will become bitter disappointment. This refers to the fact that some nations punished malefactors by mingling gravel with their bread.

*18. Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.*

Our plans should be made after counsel with competent people, and never begin a war without sound advice. Most wars have been started through malice or for the personal gain of leaders who haven't had good counsel. Many could have been avoided, and few serve the purpose of God and His plan.

*19. He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.*

Have no fellowship with the talebearer – or one who reveals secrets and speaks flattering words.

*20. Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness. 21. An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed. 22. Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.*

**Three unailing laws:**

1. He who curses father and mother shall be put to death and leave no posterity.  
(See Exodus. 21:17 & Leviticus 20:9)
2. Inheritances hastily gotten generally lead to idleness, pride, and sin.
3. To pay back “evil for evil” will not be blessed by the Lord; but those who trust God to reward evil in His own time shall be saved.

*23. Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good.*

See verse 10 for “Divers weights” -- God hates dishonest weights.

*24. Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?*

God's providence is over all His creation, governing all of it to His desired end. It is beyond man's understanding to comprehend all God's ways. If man cannot know his own way, how can he ever fathom God's ways?

*25. It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.*

It's a snare for a man to selfishly use that which belongs to God, or to make rash vows without knowing whether they are right or wrong.

*26. A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.*

In Palestine grain was threshed by the oxen walking among the sheaves and bringing a rough-shod wheel over them. The chaff was scattered by the wind and the

wheat gathered into the garner. Likewise, the wise king separated the wicked from the good so his kingdom could continue in righteousness.

*27. The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*

God uses our spirit as a light to search out the inward parts and determine what is good or bad. The “*spirit of man*” is that third dimension of our being that is “*born-again*” when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior (John 3:6).

Our “*spirit*” is a divine light (*the candle of the Lord*). It is the inspiration of the Almighty that gives us understanding, as we light the world around us.

*28. Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.*

When a king is merciful and truthful his subjects have confidence in him and they uphold him as their leader.

*29. The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.*

Both young and old have advantages, therefore each of them, according to their capacities, should be of service -- neither of them should despise nor envy the other. The glory of young men is their strength, so they delight in publicly displaying their athletic abilities. (Very few seek to excel in knowledge and wisdom) The attractiveness of old men is the gray head. They no longer make a public show of strength, but excel in wisdom and counsel.

*30. The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.*

As the closing of a wound produces healing as the dead flesh and germs are purged, so proper correction will cleanse the inward moral evil and vice from the heart of a child. When children are thus chastened and corrected their conscience and life are purged of further disobedience

## Proverbs 21

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

“*Rivers of water,*” better translated, “*divisions of waters,*” a term used in the East for small channels that divide a garden for irrigation. A good king's heart is as pliable in the hands of God as the gardener controls the small irrigation channels.

*2. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.*

Man might have a good opinion of himself and his own ways, but he should always remember that God weighs and tests the heart.

*3. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.*

Doing what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than carrying out religious duties.

**4.** *An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.*

One who has a proud and haughty look, always “*plowing*,” that is, “*plotting, designing and devising*” some mischief or other, is indeed a wicked man.

One translation renders this verse, “*A lofty look and a proud heart, which is the tillage of the lawless, is more acceptable to them than a sin offering.*”

**5.** *The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.*

The counsels, reckonings, and calculations of the diligent increase his abundance; but he who is hasty, impatient, and restless in his pursuit of gain will not succeed.

**6.** *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.*

He who gets rich by a lying tongue reaps vanity and is ensnared by death.

**7.** *The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.*

The wicked refuse righteousness and will be destroyed because they refuse to do what is right.

**8.** *The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the pure, his work is right.*

The way of a guilty man is full of crooked turns; but the work of the pure is straight in his dealings.

**9.** *It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.*

It is better to live alone in the attic, than in a large apartment with a brawling woman

**10.** *The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.*

Because of the longing of the evildoer to do mischief, his neighbors receives no sympathy from him.

**11.** *When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.*

Proper and just punishment of the mocker, makes possible for the unlearned to be made wise, and no longer in danger of being led astray by the acts and doctrines of the wicked.

**12.** *The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.*

The righteous may have sympathy for the wicked, but God will judge them for their wickedness. (This attitude of the righteous is the opposite of the wicked in verse 10.)

*13. Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*

The man who hardens his heart to the poor will reap what he sows

*14. A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.*

A gift will appease anger, as will a gift slipped into the hand, will calm anger.

*15. It is joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*

It is a pleasure and satisfaction to good men to see justice administered, however, it is a terror to wicked men to witness the execution of laws against lawlessness.

*16. The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.*

Those who wander endlessly from the way of wisdom, breaking the hedge that God has set, and following the conduct of their own flesh; will stay among the company of the dead -- separated from God's plan and purpose!

*17. He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.*

To love pleasure and drunkenness, living for them when you should be providing for your family, will make you poor. To set your heart on oil -- (a sign of luxury living) -- to relishes lavish, extravagant living -- will not bring riches!

*18. The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.*

The wicked will be cut off by God's judgments in order to preserve the righteous. By the providence of God, the righteous are delivered out of trouble, and the wicked inflicted instead -- as ransom for the righteous.

*19. It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.*

It is better to be alone in the world than to dwell with a contentious and angry woman

*20. There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.*

The wise one has precious treasures and oil in his dwelling, but the fool spends everything he gets.

*21. He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.*

If you pursue God's righteousness and mercy, you will receive:

1. *Eternal life* (Romans 2:7-8)
2. *Righteousness* (Romans 3:24 -- 4:25)
3. *Honor* (John 12:26)

**22.** *A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.*

Wisdom is better than might in war or peace. Wisdom wins the battle in taking a city or in defending it

**23.** *Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.*

Guarding the tongue is the secret of peace and contentment

**24.** *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*

The infidel or scoffer is arrogant, proud, haughty, and conceited.

**25.** *The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.*

The lazy wants to eat, drink, and be clothed, but refuses to work.

**26.** *He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.*

The lazy covets greedily all day long. Hence, he lives and dies with his desires unsatisfied, envying those who have plenty because they work hard. The righteous gives and does not hold back from doing good

**27.** *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?*

The carrying out of religious duties by wicked men is repugnant to God; how much more is it repulsive for him to offer to God with evil intent.

**28.** *A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.*

A false witness shall soon be discovered and punished as a perjurer and forced to quit testifying, but a reliable man speaks truth that will live forever.

**29.** *A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way.*

A wicked man steels his face to hide the guilt of his crimes, but an upright man conducts his way in righteousness.

**30.** *There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.*

No human wisdom, understanding, or counsel can stand in opposition to God.

**31.** *The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.*

Horses were not used among the Jews until Solomon (See 1 Kings 10:29). There was a command against them, lest Israel trust in them for safety (See Deuteronomy 17:16). Asians first used the horse for war (See Exodus 14:9-28; 1 Samuel 13:5 & Jeremiah 8:6); oxen for plowing and for the cart (See Numbers 7:3-88; 1 Samuel 11:7 & 14:14); donkeys and camels for loads (See Genesis 24:10-63 & 44:13, with 1 Chronicles 12:40); and mules and horses for riding (See Exodus 15:1; Esther 8:10, 14; Ezekiel 27:14). Later, camels, donkeys, mules, and horses were used interchangeably for riding and for loads.

## Proverbs 22

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

*1. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.*

A good reputation is vary more value than great wealth.

*2. The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.*

God did not make some to be poor and others to be rich, but He made all men regardless of their standing in life.

*3. A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*

The wise man sees danger and escapes it; but the uninformed do not realize that danger is near, and suffers for it

*4. By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.*

Riches, honor, and life depend upon humility and honest reverence for the Lord.

*5. Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.*

Difficulties and pitfalls of all kinds are in the pathway of those who live corrupt and dishonest lives, but he who safeguards his life will escape such hardships.

*6. Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Train a child, (shaping his life as a vinedresser prunes a vine), and when he is old enough to be responsible for himself, he will not leave the path of the Lord.

*7. The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is seroant to the lender.*

Those that have little will be obligated to those that have much, because they have dependence upon them. One who borrows is required to pay the lender, for that reason we should endeavor to keep out of debt. Don't sell your liberty to gratify luxury!

*8. He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.*

The law of sowing and reaping, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

*9. He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.*

"A bountiful eye" was a description of a charitable man. God will bless a benevolent, generous individual.

*10. Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.*

. If you would secure peace, exclude the scorner -- get rid of him who sows discord and causes mischief wherever he is. -- If he disturb the peace and construes

every thing into the worst; deride every one that comes his way; take pride in bantering and abusing others, make every effort to avoid him.

*11. He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.*

He whose lives a pure life and speaks with kindness will be a friend to those in authority.

*12. The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.*

God guards those who have knowledge, and He upsets the plans of the faithless.

*13. The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.*

The lazy person makes the most senseless excuses for laziness.

*14. The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.*

The seductive language of a prostitute is as a dark, deep dungeon into which men fall. The false religions around Israel, of which prostitution was a part to make converts, were always a snare to Israel

*15. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*

The word, "foolishness," here is from the Hebrew word meaning, "evil, silliness; perverseness; careless of body and soul." Silliness and perverseness are born in every child, but proper correction is the remedy. It is necessary to drive such things from a child; hence, he who does not care enough to correct his son does not really love his son. [See study on, "The Biblical **Rod**" "]

*16. He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.*

### **Two great evils that affect life:**

- (1) Oppression of the poor to increase personal riches  
(See James 2:6 & 5:1-6)
- (2) Giving great gifts to the rich to obtain personal favors  
(See note for Proverbs 18:16).

Both poor and rich, if guilty of these evils will come to poverty because the poor are robbed in either case. In the first, the poor are oppressed; in the second, the gifts given to secure favor from the rich should be given to supply the poor.

«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«:.\*^3Q3^\*:\*»§«

At this point in the book of Proverbs Solomon changes his style and manner of speaking. Beginning of chapter 10., he has laid down *doctrinal truths*, (only now and then giving a word of exhortation, leaving us to make the application where we have gone along) however, beginning with this 17 verse, to the end of chapter 24, he speaks as a father speaks to his son.



For the most part, wisdom's thoughts have been comprised in just one verse, but from this point on his thoughts are drawn out further. Note how "**Wisdom**" shares a variety of methods, lest we be weary by excess and lose interest with any one consideration. To awaken and keep our attention and to assist our application the method of direct address is now adopted. It is not enough to preach to others, but we must preach to our self as well -- and it is not enough to preach in generalities, but address particular problems. And that is what wisdom teaches here -- Wisdom says, "*You should do such and such*" -- Here is,

**17.** *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.* **18.** *For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.* **19.** *That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.* **20.** *Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,* **21.** *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*

Verses 17-21 give an earnest exhortation to get wisdom, by attending to the words of wise men, particularly the knowledge in this book. To these words and this knowledge, the ear must bow in humility and give serious attention; the heart applied by faith, love, and careful consideration. The "*ear*" will not serve without the "*heart*."

Verses 18 & 21 refer being qualified to speak words of wisdom to others.

**22.** *Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:*

Do not oppress the poor because they are poor, but let them have a just hearing in judgment. Eastern courts were often held in the gates of the cities

**23.** *For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.*

The Lord will deal with all who oppress the poor.

**24.** *Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:* **25.** *Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.*

Do not fellowship with a man of anger and fury, lest you learn his ways and be snared in your own soul (Pr. 22:24-25). Those we are intimately associated with tend to rub their dispensation off on us; we unconsciously imitate them in various ways, so we cannot be too careful of the company we keep if we want to live the right way.

**26.** *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.* **27.** *If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?*

Do not be quick to shake hands (that is, "*make contracts and give promises*") or to co-sign for the debts of others. If you have nothing to pay, why lose the necessities of life by pledging them as security? (See notes for Proverbs. 6:1)

**28.** *Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.*

Treat the legal landmarks as sacred and don't try to enlarge your own property by moving them further into your neighbor's field.

The law forbade moving boundaries

-- Deuteronomy 19:14 & 27:17; Job 24:2; Proverbs 23:10-11; Hosea 5:10.

**29.** *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*

A man diligent in business will be honored by kings and respected by his subjects. Speedy execution of a king's command is a virtue that he appreciates. Kings search for the most diligent and capable businessmen of their realm to place over certain affairs of the kingdom.

The words, "mean men," are translated from the Hebrew word meaning, "men of no repute," This is the only place in the Bible where this word is used – it refers to the fact that obscure persons of the kingdom will respect the men who stand before the king.

### Proverbs 23

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

Verses 1-3 speaks of, "When you are invited to eat with the upper class, eat moderately, not appearing to have been starved at home."

**1.** *When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee:*

Consider who is present at the dinner and act accordingly. If it is someone of rank, your blessing is that of honor instead of feasting

**2.** *And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.*

Don't be a glutton; subdue your own appetite and thus make a favorable impression.

**3.** *Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.*

Do not lust after the host's delicacies or appear as if you are not accustomed to such food.

Some are given to appetite; others to covetousness, so Solomon takes these to task here:

**4.** *Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.*

Labor not to be rich, for riches take wings and fly away. Concentrate on eternal things

**5.** *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*

Don't depend upon your own wisdom; the kind that makes riches the chief end in life "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?" means, "Do not make any temporary thing an objective of life."

To understand the following verses we need to understand on exactly what the writer of Proverbs is speaking about. One on hand, there are *“those that were given to enormous appetite”* (verse 2). They are glad to be where there was a great amount of delicacies. They were stingy and sparing at their own home, so were thrilled to be invited to someone else’s table. Proverbs warns not to be too bold in giving invitations. On the other hand, there were hosts who pretend to welcome friends, but were not sincere. They spake well, and know exactly what to say, because it is expected that the master of the feast should compliment his guests; but they had an *“evil eye,”* (evil intentions); that is, they begrudged their guests every bit they ate, especially if they ate freely. They seem to be generous in providing and wouldn’t hesitate to take credit, but they had so much love for their money, they couldn’t enjoy their guests. To this miser the feast was his *“penance”* -- He didn’t want to appear selfish -- to have anyone think that he couldn’t find it in his heart to bid his friends welcome to what he has.

One cannot have comfort in accepting the entertainment that is given grudgingly: *“Eat not thou the bread of such a man;”* (verse 6) let him keep it to himself.

Proverbs is saying, *“Don’t sponge on those that are bountiful, nor make yourself burdensome to anyone, especially don’t be obliged to those that are not sincere. Better a dinner of herbs, and true welcome, than `dainty meats’ without sincerity. Judge a man by his attitude! You think to pay your respect to him as the friend you take him to be, because he compliments you, but as he thinks in his heart so is he, not as he speaks with his tongue.”*

He gives you to understand that you are not welcome, so the morsel you have eaten makes you sick to your stomach; the very thought of that will make you vomit the meat you have eaten, and even eat the words you have spoken in returning his compliments, giving him thanks for his kindness. You will lose your sweet words that he has given you -- and you have given him

**6.** *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:*

Do not accept invitations to eat with a stingy man, for if he entertains you at his expense he will begrudge every morsel you eat

**7.** *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.*

A stingy man says to eat and drink, but he does not mean it from the heart. On reflection you will see that you are not welcome and accepting his invitation.

**8.** *The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.*

The MESSAGE Bible renders this 8<sup>th</sup> verse -- *“His miserly serving will turn your stomach when you realize the meal’s a sham.”*

**9.** *Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.*

Don't carry on a conversation with a fool who will only despise and not appreciate your words

**10.** *Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: 11. For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.*

Don't remove the old landmarks. Do not enter into the fields of orphans to rob them. "Redeemer," refers to kinsman redemption, not to God (*Redeemer of the soul*" (See Leviticus 25:25-54; Numbers 27:1-11 & 36:1-13; Ruth 3:9--4:13; Jeremiah 32:1-25). The "kinsman redeemer" had power to avenge the fatherless and marry the widow to preserve the family (See Deuteronomy 25:5-10).

**12.** *Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.*

Apply your heart to wisdom. Give ear to knowledge

**13.** *Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. 14. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*

Don't hesitate to correct a child, even if you have to use a rod. You will not kill him, but you will save his soul from hell

**15.** *My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.*

A wise son is a pleasure to parents

**16.** *Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.*

"Reins," is translated from the same as the Hebrew word, "heart" (or innermost soul). If your heart is right, then you will speak wise words.

**17.** *Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.*

Do not envy wrong doers in your heart, but reverence the Lord all day long

**18.** *For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.*

There is a future of another life, and your expectation of immortality will not be cut off

**19.** *Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.*

Listen, and be wise, so you can direct your life in the ways that are right.

**20.** *Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21. For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.*

Don't associate with drunkards or those who gorge themselves with food.

Why? -- Well, for one reason because being a drunkard, or glutton, will bring you into poverty, a stupor, and put you in rags.

**22.** *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.*

Don't despise your parents

**23.** *Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*

Do everything you can to obtain truth, wisdom, instruction, and understanding – - be willing to part with any thing for it -- do not let it go for any reason or amount of money. Acquire the truth by all rightful means, and then hold on to it, guard it, and defend it even to the risk of your life

**24.** *The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.*

The father of a righteous child has cause for joy, what a pleasure a wise child is.

**25.** *Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.*

So, let your father and mother have such pride and your mother will be glad you were born.

**26.** *My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.*

Wisdom personified again, as in chapters 8 & 9, speaks, and wants our whole heart and our eyes wholly on her ways.

**27.** *For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. 28.* *She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.*

Again, the character, “*strange woman*,” (prostitutes) is used of false cults, while “*wisdom*” is pictured as pure, godly true! These heathen practices surrounding Israel, using prostitutes in entice young men into their temples, were certainly a “*deep ditch*” and “*narrow pit*.” Verse 28 tells why sons should be devoted to wisdom and not to prostitutes of these cults.

**29.** *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?*

Six curses of drunkards: woes; sorrows; contentions; squabbles; wounds; and redness of eyes.

**30.** *They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.*

“*Wine*,” in Scripture simply means, “*what is pressed out; the juice of grapes, mulberries, dates, figs, etc.*” Used 140 times of every kind of wine, both fermented and unfermented. “*Mixed wine*,” refers to, “*mixed or spiced wine.*”

**31.** *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. 32.* *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. 33.* *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. 34.* *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. 35.*

*They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.*

“Wine,” is forbidden here specifically when it turns red, bubbles, and when it intoxicates, implying that it isn't always intoxicating.

**Note Seven characteristics of drunkards:**

1. Intemperance (verses 30-31)
2. Delirium tremens (verse 32)
3. Sexual sins (verse 33)
4. Babblings and indecent talk (verse 33)
5. Reeling and falling (verse 34)
6. Insensibility (verse 35)
7. Bondage to drink (verse 35)

Proverbs 24

Varied observations on moral virtues and their contrary vices

- 1.** *Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them. 2.* *For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.*

Have no fellowship with evil men and do not envy anything about them, for they think and talk only of violence

- 3.** *Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: 4.* *And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

A household can only be built and maintained through wisdom, knowledge, and mutual understanding

- 5.** *A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. 6.* *For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

Wisdom is stronger than physical strength, for with it a man can invent labor-saving devices that will do the work of thousands.

- 7.** *Wisdom is too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.*

A fool will never attain to wisdom, so he will never be chosen as a judge to sit in the gate where court is held.

- 8.** *He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.*

He that plans evil will be called a mischief-maker.

- 9.** *The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men.*

The plans and devices of evil man is sin; and the one who scoffs is disgusting to others.

- 10.** *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

If we fail in time of discouragement and trial, it 's because our strength is small.

**11.** *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; 12.* *If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

Deliver those who are carried away to death (*separation from God*), those seized by mortal sickness; those who have slipped and are on the brink of destruction -- oh rescue them! If you pretend not to know about them being destroyed you will be judged!

**13.** *My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: 14.* *So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.*

Eating honey is wholesome and the honeycomb will sweeten your palate. In like manner let your soul taste wisdom, then you find out about the future life and hope will never leave you

Knowledge and wisdom to the soul are like honey and the honeycomb to the mouth

**15.** *Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place: 16.* *For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.*

Don't try to overthrow the righteous man, nor do violence to his home. If you attempt to overthrow the righteous man, God will enable him to stand and you will fall into your own trap

**17.** *Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: 18.* *Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.*

Don't rejoice if an enemy of yours fails, nor be elated at his downfall, but respect that the Lord will see, that it will displease Him and His wrath will be turned away from him..

**19.** *Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked; 20.* *For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.*

Do not be impatient when wicked men thrive and don't envy their prosperity, for they have nothing to look forward to after this life. Their possessions are only temporary and their punishment will be eternal. "*The candle of the wicked shall be put out,*" is an idiom meaning there will be no posterity to carry on the family name.

**21.** *My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change:*

Worship and obey God, and respect and obey those in authority. Have nothing to do with anarchists who are always trying to change government and religion.

**22.** *For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?*

Calamity will come to those who rebel, whether against the king or against God.

The last of this 24<sup>th</sup> chapter is the end of this section of Solomon sayings. A new section begins with chapter 25. In verses 23 through 35 of this chapter Solomon is summing up and has something to say to the kings and those in authority.

**23.** *These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.*

Solomon says, "I have something to say to those who are in place of authority. It is not good to show partiality in making judgments."

**24.** *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:*

Those who justifies the wicked, and condemns the just, will be denounced by the people.

**25.** *But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.*

Instead of denouncing we are to bless those in authority if they mete out justice to the wicked

**26.** *Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer.*

"Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer" -- is an expression for honoring the man that is wise enough to give right answers.

**27.** *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.*

Prepare and plan the outside work; making and repairing your tools in winter so they will be ready to work in the fields in the spring. Afterward, continue to build and establish your house.

**28.** *Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive not with thy lips. 29. Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.*

Do not take up any cause against your neighbor unless it is absolutely necessary. Never do it through prejudice or revenge

**30.** *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; 31. And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. 32. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. 33. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: 34. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.*

As I passed by the field of a man who lacked understanding -- a lazy man -- I saw that it was completely overgrown with thorns, the ground was covered with nettles, and the stonewall around the field was falling down.



I considered this for some time and received wisdom and instructions from it --  
*"Sleep just a little longer, yawn a little more, just a little more head on pillow -- and, like a highwayman, poverty comes, and scarcity, like an unyielding armed warrior, will fall upon you."*

## Proverbs 25

### Observations about kings

*1. These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.*

Here begins another section of proverbs by Solomon copied by men under King Hezekiah, continuing to Proverbs 29:27. The word "also" makes it clear that the preceding proverbs are Solomon's. These proverbs were Solomon's; who was divinely inspired as he wrote for our benefit, these wise and weighty sentences; we have had many, but still there are more.

*2. It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*

God gets glory by not exposing the acts of man, but kings get glory from exposing them. This verse has no reference to God making His revelation a mystery, for then it would not be a revelation. There are no mysteries in Scripture. The "secret things" of Deuteronomy 29:29 are those that God has not revealed; but those things that are revealed belong to man and he should know them. To be just, God cannot judge man for not knowing something that He Himself has hidden.

*3. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.*

The subjects of a king cannot understand all the workings of the heart of their king, no more than they can understand the height of heaven and the depth of the earth.

Verse 2 reveals that God's glory is that He does not need to search into a matter; He knows it without searching. Now, in verse 3, we are told that the honor of kings is that, with diligence of mind, and all the methods of enquiry available, need to search out the matters brought before them.

*4. Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. 5. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.*

Men cannot have pure metal of any kind until the dross is taken out; and no nation can have a king that is blameless until the wicked counselors are banished from the court and the throne is established in righteousness

*6. Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: 7. For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.*

Do not be haughty or too bold in the presence of kings and their nobles. It is better that great men exalt you, instead of humbling you.

## Avoiding causes of quarrels

**8.** *Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. 9. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:*

Don't be hasty in bringing an action before you have considered it, and consulted with friends about it. Don't go hastily to strive; but weigh the matter deliberately, because we are all apt to be partial in our own cause. Consider the certainty of the expenses and the uncertainty of success, how much care and aggravation it will cause, and, after all, the cause may go against you; surely then you not go forth hastily to strive.

**10.** *Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.*

Verse 9 tells us to settle our differences with our neighbor out of court, if at all possible; and don't betray his secrets to another. The one who hears you betray your neighbor will rebuke you and put you to shame -- You will always have a reputation of being an untrustworthy man. Verse 10 says, "*Lest you lose your case and men rebuke you.*" Even just causes are often lost due to prejudices and wrong influences upon the judge and jury, or to some minor technicality of law.

**11.** *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. 12. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.*

A word, timely or appropriately spoken is like apples in a graving of gold. The word, "*apples,*" is translated from a word that means "*a fruit of the pome order,*" (edible flesh fruit) -- as the apple, pear, quince, orange, pomegranate, etc. All these varieties were grown in Palestine and any one of them on a background of carved silver work or in a ornamental basket of silver would be beautiful -- so is a reprimand to a listening ear.

**13.** *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.*

Snow was frequent in Judea. In some places it was stored for future use in caves or holes dug in the ground.

**14.** *Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.*

Some boast of gifts that they never give. They promise much but deliver little, or nothing.

**15.** *By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.*

(The word, "*prince*" means, "*a decider, judge, magistrate; one who decides matters.*" It is not the word, "*prince,*" found in Proverbs [14:28](#); [17:7](#); [19:6](#) & [25:7](#). "*Soft tongue breaketh the bone*" -- *A soft answer subdues the most obstinate resistance, or turns away wrath*

**16.** *Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.*

This teaches moderation in all things of life -- in food, work, pleasure, etc.

**17.** *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.*

Too much familiarity breeds contempt.

**18.** *A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.*

A liar is like a maul (large wooden hammer or war club, a sword, and a sharp arrow) -- all weapons of destruction.

**19.** *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*

A treacherous man is like a broken tooth and a foot out of joint.

**20.** *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.*

As he that lays aside warm clothing in cold weather, caring more for appearance than health; and as vinegar poured upon carbonate of soda produces immediate strong fermentation, so singing to a heavy heart is senseless. Carbonate of soda was known to the ancients as nitre.

**21.** *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:*

Give to even your enemies whatever need they may have

**22.** *For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.*

This saying, "Heap coals of fire upon your enemy's head," has certainly been misunderstood. In the culture of that day, they did not have matches, so when anyone's fire went out that had to depend upon someone to bring them hot coals - usually carried in a decanter of some kind upon the head. This adage means to do something good and kind for your enemy. Verse 21 means to do a good deed for your enemy, provide for him in his need -- not some scorching trick.

**23.** *The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*

The winds scatter the clouds and drives away rain, just like an angry countenance causes the backbiting tongue to cease.

**24.** *It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.*

It is better to dwell in the attic, than with a squabbling woman in a spacious apartment

**25.** *As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*

Good news from home when you are away is as refreshing as cool water to a thirsty soul.

*26. A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.*

An up-right man trembling, and giving in to the wicked is like polluting a fountain and poisonous spring of water.

*27. It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.*

Just like eating too much honey is not good, so is the seeking of one's own glory not good

*28. He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.*

He who cannot bridle his passions and emotions is like a city without walls and utterly defenseless.

## Proverbs 26

### Observations about fools

*1. As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.*

Honor doesn't go with fools any more than snow with summertime or rain with harvest time. Snow in summer and rain in harvest are as rare as honor to a fool. According to Jerome rain is an unheard of thing during harvest time in Palestine. In ordinary years no rain falls at all from the end of the spring showers to October or November.

*2. As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.*

As the sparrow flies around the house and the swallows migrates to strange countries, so an undeserved curse being pronounced may flutter about for a short time but will disappear. The curse uttered against an innocent person will have no effect and will return to those who uttered it.

*3. A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.*

One guides a horse with a whip, a donkey with a bridle -- for direction and to check them when they would turn out of the way; so a rebel, who will not be under the guidance and restraint and reason, ought to be corrected, rebuked severely; even made to smart for what he has done amiss, and be restrained from offending any more -- [See study on, "Biblical Rod"].

*4. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. 5. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.*

It seems as if Scripture contradicts itself, but really does not. We have need to know how to deal with "fools;" and we have never more need of wisdom than in dealing with such --that is, to know when to keep silence and when to speak, for there

may be a time for both. The point of verses 4-5 is that you cannot reason with a fool, because you would have to reason with him on his own level and this would force you to become a fool yourself. However, if you don't answer him according to his folly, he thinks he is as wise as you are. If you do answer according to his own folly, he thinks you are as big fool as he is, so your reasoning is defeated.

*6. He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage. 7. The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*

Wisdom recommends that we realize that fools are not fit to be trusted to send on an errand. Don't send a message by a careless drinking fool, one who is so full of his foolishness that he cannot apply his mind to any thing that is serious. The message will be misunderstood, forgotten, or so awkwardly delivered, and so many blunders made, that he might as well have cut off his legs -- that is, never have sent him. His legs hang loose, as the message hangs loose in his mouth.

*8. As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool.*

Giving a fool the honor of sending him on an errand is like tying a stone tight in the slingshot then having it backfire on you.

*9. As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*

Your message in the mouth of a fool is like thorny bramble branches in the hand of a drunken man.

*10. The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.*

God, Who formed all things, will give fools and the offenders their just rewards.

*11. As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.*

This verse is quoted in 2 Peter 2:22 where it refers to backsliders going back into sin.

*12. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*

This is a lesson on self-conceit, self-importance, and self-exaltation. Man should never overestimate himself for it closes the gate to real wisdom that gives a true evaluation of self.

about sluggards

*13. The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.*

Verses 13-16 give four proverbs against laziness. Verse 13 is almost identical with Proverbs 22:13. The lazy man uses this as an excuse for his laziness, that there is a lion in the street so he must stay inside or be killed.

*14. As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.*

As the door stays on its hinges and never goes any place, so the lazy man never moves from his bed to fill a useful place in life

**15.** *The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.*

The lazy man puts his hand in his bosom, or in the dish, and he is too lazy to lift it to his mouth to eat (Pr. 19:24). In both these proverbs the idea is eating from a dish, not the bosom.

**16.** *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.*

A lazy man is more self-conceited and wise in his own eyes than seven reputable wise men who can truly solve problems.

about quarrelsome busybodies

**17.** *He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*

A stranger who delights in strife and willful aggravation and who enters into strife that does not concern him is like one who takes a dog by the ears. He gets into trouble with all people through his meddling.

**18.** *As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, 19. So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?*

The man who deceives his neighbor, slandering him while pretending to do so in jest, is like an insane man casting fiery darts, arrows, and death

**20.** *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.*

It is as impossible for strife to begin and continue where there is no talebearer as it is for a fire to be kindled and kept going where there is no fuel. The talebearer and those who listen to his gossip are the agents of strife. If no man receives a slander it will automatically die. Hence, the receiver is as guilty as the talebearer.

**21.** *As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.*

It is as impossible for contention to start where there is no contentious person as it is for fire to start and continue without coals of fire and fuel.

**22.** *The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*

The words of a slanderer are like poison in dainty morsels that are quickly swallowed and cause destruction to those who receive them

**23.** *Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.*

Great professions of friendship and warm kisses with a wicked heart are like a piece of broken pottery covered over with the dross of silver. As such they demonstrate hypocrisy and are without moral worth, but with a pure heart they demonstrate true love.

**24.** *He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; 25. When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart. 26. Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.*

The man who hates pretends no harm with his lips, but plots deceitful and destructive acts in his heart, will eventually be exposed before all men

**27.** *Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.*

Those who would deal violently with others will have their cruel deeds return upon their own heads. They will themselves fall into the pit they dug, and the stone they rolled will return on them.

**28.** *A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.*

A lying tongue hates those who are afflicted by it. He that injures another hates him in proportion to the injury he has done him. The one who does the wrong seldom, if ever, feels kindly toward those he has hurt. The debtor cannot bear the sight of a creditor, nor a robber those whom he has robbed. Only in Christ is this law broken.

## Proverbs 27

### Observations on self-love

**1.** *Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*

Don't boast about what you are planning to do tomorrow, because you don't know what the day may bring forth. This not only applies to one day ahead, but to all boasting of the future. If one cannot know what will happen one day ahead how can he know what will happen beyond that?

**2.** *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.*

Do things that will cause others to praise you but, even then, do not expect praise. Expecting self-praise is a show of pride.

**3.** *A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.*

Stone is heavy and sand is dead weight, but to be irritated by a fool is more burdensome than either.

**4.** *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?*

Envy and jealousy are like a cyclone sweeping things before it.

on true love

**5.** *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*

A frank word of criticism demonstrates more love than a love that is concealed and refuse to give justified criticism.

*6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*

Sincere criticism from a friend may be cutting and sharp, but will do more good than the kisses of a treacherous, deceptive, and a crafty enemy.

*7. The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.*

Only the hungry are satisfied with what they have to eat. To the full nothing tastes good.

*8. As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.*

A restless and wandering person is like a wandering bird. The bird leaving her own brood, places of retreat, and breeding ground behind, and going into strange places, exposes itself to many dangers. So is the person who leaves their home, family, and relatives to seek fortunes elsewhere, they often find misery and hardships.

*9. Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.*

Anointing of the head and certain parts of the body with aromatic oil was frequent in the East, and scenting the beards of guests at the end of an entertainment was extremely common. All this seemed to refresh and rejoice the heart of vain men. So also do the pleasant, kind, and assuring words of friendship or counsel from a true friend. Hearty counsel means the sincere counsel of the soul.

*10. Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.*

Do not forsake the old and valued friends of your family. Never forget or neglect them for they are rare indeed who will stick by you in both adversity and prosperity. In time of adversity do not go to a distant relative whose heart is far from your interests. It is better to go to a close friend or sympathetic neighbor.

on care to avoid offenses

*11. My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.*

Wisdom says, "Son, live such an example of righteous teaching that it will be a rebuke to any who criticize. You will make me happy when I can point to you as such an example."

*12. A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.*

A cautious, discreet, man foresees danger and escapes it, but the inexperienced and the young do not, so they suffer for it



**13.** *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*

A cautious, discreet, man foresees danger and escapes it, but the inexperienced and the young do not, so they suffer for it

**14.** *He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.*

Be suspicious and wary of the man who always flatters you with a loud voice and goes out of the way to do so. It will turn out to be a curse instead of a blessing. “*Rising early in the morning,*” was an expression referring to excessive flattery. Extravagant public praise is always suspicious. Seldom does it fail that those who pretend to be great friends and boast of your friendship sooner or later turn out to be a curse and a disappointment.

**15.** *A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike. 16. Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself.*

#### **Three similitudes of a contentious woman:**

- (1) She is like perpetual cloudbursts that are overwhelming and cannot be contained (Proverbs 19:13). Her contentions overwhelm the soul and leave one in despair. The Arabic translation denotes a rain poured out of buckets.
- (2) She is like the wind and storm that cannot be stopped or confined by a dam (verse 16).
- (3) She is like the smell of aromatic oil that your hands have been anointed with. It is impossible to hide. The oil betrays itself.

The statements in this verse show a man attempting to do the impossible.

**17.** *Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*

As hard iron or steel will sharpen a knife, so a man may sharpen the intellect, moral and spiritual life of another.

**18.** *Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.*

If you cultivate and take care of a fruit tree, you deserve to eat of it, so if you take good care of your master you will be honored.

**19.** *As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.*

As in water the face is reflected, so the human heart reflects the disposition discerned by others.

**20.** *Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.*

As hell and destruction are never full, so restless, lustful, and covetous eyes are never satisfied.

*21. As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.*

As the refining pot and furnace test gold and silver, so praise of a man tests his real character by the effect it has upon him. His humility or self-exaltation is soon discovered and his true worth is thus known.

*22. Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.*

Though you pound, pulverize, and mix the fool in a mortar -- (a vessel in which substances are crushed or pounded) among wheat with a pestle -- (an instrument for crushing and mixing substances), yet it will be impossible to eradicate his foolishness from him.

*23. Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. 24. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?*

Don't just trust your flocks to some other shepherd, but count them yourself and see that they are well tended and fed. While flocks will multiply generation after generation, other riches, even the crowns of kings -- are temporary and will soon pass away.

*25. The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered. 26. The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field. 27. And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens.*

#### **Five admonitions to farmers:**

- (1) Make hay to feed the stock for the winter.
- (2) Feed the flock on the new pasture in the spring.
- (3) Sell the lambs to buy clothes.
- (4) Sell the goats to pay for the farm or pay the rent
- (5) Use the goats' milk for the whole household and to maintain the servants.

These last verses are calling us to be diligent in our calling. While it is directed to shepherds, it extended to all lawful callings; whatever our business is.

1. We ought to have some business to do in this world and not to live in idleness.
2. We ought rightly and fully to understand our business, and know what we have to do.
3. We ought to see to it ourselves, and not turn over all the care to others. We should inspect the state of our flocks
4. We must be discreet and considerate in the management of our business, know the state of things, and look well to them, that nothing may be lost, no opportunity let slip, but every thing done in proper time and order for the best advantage.

5. We must be diligent and take pains; to be up and doing: *"Set thy heart to thy herds, as one in care; lay thy hands, lay thy bones, to thy business."*

### Proverbs 28

#### Observations on impiety and religious integrity

1. *The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*

The wicked may appear to be bold and unafraid, but they fear facing God, because of their wrongdoing, but the upright are without fear, like the lion.

2. *For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.*

When rebellion breaks out in a land there arise many who desire to rule, but through men of wisdom and intelligence, order will long prevail.

3. *A poor man that oppreseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.*

The first word "poor" in this verse is from the Hebrew meaning, "one lacking the necessities of life." The second word "poor" is from a Hebrews word meaning, "an impoverished man." The proverb is about one poor man oppressing another (Also see verses 8, 11 & 15). Jesus illustrates it in the parable of the two debtors (Matthew 18:21-35). One man is so greedy that he leaves nothing to others when he gets the chance to oppress, rob, and carry away. He is like a torrential rain that destroys and sweeps everything in its path away (Proverbs 28:3, 6, 19, 27). This kind of pouring, pounding, rain is frequent in the East and sometimes carrying flocks, crops, and even houses away in the floods.

4. *They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.*

Here is war between lawbreakers and lawkeepers. Lawbreakers are praised by the wicked for their success in breaking the law and because they claim they have a right to do so. This calls for contention with the wicked by the righteous.

5. *Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.*

Wicked men do not regard justice, but those who seek God understand it completely.

6. *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.*

It is better to be poor and walk in the way of integrity, than to be rich and live a wicked life.

7. *Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.*

A wise son who keeps the law blesses his father, but he who associates with riotous men shames him

**8.** *He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*

Ill gotten gains, collected and assembled by unjust interest on loans -- such as, lending to those in distress, may increase. A man, by such means, may raise a great estate in a short amount of time -- by usury, extortion, fraud, and oppression of the poor, but it will not continue forever. It may well be that his heirs will have compassion on the poor. He gathers it for himself, but it will prove to have been gathered for somebody else that he has no kindness for. God may, in His providence, know those who receive riches unjustly -- another who will use their riches charitably; and strangely turn riches into the hands of those that will pity the poor and do good with it.

**9.** *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.*

The man who turns away from truth will not receive answers to prayer.

**10.** *Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.*

He who tempts the righteous to go astray shall fall into his own trap of destruction, but the upright shall continue to be helped and blessed by God

**11.** *The rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.*

The unwise rich man is wise *in his own eyes*; but the poor man, if he is wise, knows his weakness has overtaken him in his struggle for true, eternal riches.

**12.** *When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.*

When the righteous rule there is great glory and rejoicing, but when the wicked are in power good men are obliged to retire and remain quiet.

**13.** *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

The man who will not acknowledge his sins and who seeks to hide them and excuse himself will never be converted; but the man who confesses and forsakes them will receive mercy.

**14.** *Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.*

Blessed and happy is the man who lives with a sincere reverence of Almighty God, but the man who hardens his conscience is headed for serious trouble.

**15.** *As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.*

A wicked ruler is as unmerciful as a hungry lion or a bear.

**16.** *The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor: but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.*

When a leader lacks understanding, there is cruel oppression

**17.** *A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.*

A man who has done violence, even murder, will be continually haunted; he will flee to the pit -- that is, betray and torment himself. He cannot get away from his wrongs.

**18.** *Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.*

God will help those who live lives of integrity, but those who live lives of unrighteousness will be entangled in rebellious ways.

#### Proverbs of wealth and poverty

**19.** *He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.*

The one who is diligent in his vocation; tills his land, attends to his shop, cares for his business -- whatever it is, he will have plenty of the necessities of life for himself and his family. But the one who pursues worthless things will come to poverty.

**20.** *A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.*

A faithful man will be richly blessed, but the one who seeks to get rich quickly brings guilt upon himself and will witness hardship.

**21.** *To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress.*

To show partiality toward others is not fair; for anyone who is prejudice will do wrong for just a piece of bread.

**22.** *He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*

The one who tries to get rich quickly because of a covetous, greedy eye, does not realize that his dreams will never be realized

**23.** *He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.*

The one who tells you the truth will eventually gain more favor than the one who flatters you.

**24.** *Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.*

The one who robs his parents is worse than a common thief and a murderer, for he adds to that sin ingratitude and cruelty.

*25. He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.*

Those that are conceited and looks with a contempt upon others, stirs up strife, makes mischief, and creates disturbances to every body else. They who put their trust in the Lord, instead of struggling for themselves will have abundant supply of their need. None live so easily, so pleasantly, as those who live by faith.

*26. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*

The one who puts confidence in his own ability is foolish, but the one who lives by godly wisdom will be safe.

*27. He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*

The one who helps the poor will never want, he who ignores them will receive many a curse.

*28. When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.*

When the wicked are in power the righteous take cover; when the righteous rule godliness is revived.

## Proverbs 29

### Observations on public government

*1. He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

One who remains stubborn after many warnings, will all of a sudden be past help.

*2. When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*

When the wicked are in power the righteous hideout; when the righteous rule godliness is revived.

*3. Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.*

A wise son honors his parents, but a foolish one despises them. Keeping company with temple harlots will bring a man to poverty.

*4. The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.*

A just king establishes the kingdom, but he that accepts bribes overthrows it through injustice.

*5. A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.*

Beware of any man who flatters, for he does it only to deceive you and profit himself, because he expects a return compliments and flattery. He is unreasonable and even repulsive to those he flatters.

*6. In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.*

The wicked ensnare themselves by their own sins, but the righteous always feel free to rejoice and sing.

*7. The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.*

The righteous know and consider the poor, but the wicked make no attempt to know their needs.

*8. Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.*

Those given to mockery kindle discord in a city, but the wise suppress the indignation.

*9. If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.*

If a righteous man contends with a fool he will have no rest because of the fool's raging and laughter.

*10. The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.*

The bloodthirsty hate the upright, however, the righteous seeks to convert his soul.

*11. A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*

A fool gives vent to wrath and says all that is on his mind, but a wise man holds his peace until he can, calmly, answer.

*12. If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.*

If the king lies, his people will be wicked also. Like king, like people.

*13. The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.*

The poor man and the oppressor have this in common -- what happiness each has comes from God.

*14. The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.*

The king who metes out true justice will be established forever

Proverbs on control in private affairs

*15. The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.*

A spoiled child brings shame to his parents. [See study on, "A Biblical Rod"]

*16. When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.*

When wicked men are given more power, sinfulness is increased in a nation. Their rule will be only temporary for they will be overthrown and the righteous will live to see it.

*17. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*

**Two blessings of correction:**

1. It gives parents rest.
2. It gives them joy in witnessing obedience in their children.

*18. Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*

Where there is no vision or sense of responsibility to keep the law, the people perish for its lack of enforcement; but the one who keeps the law in such times is blessed and happy

*19. A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.*

A stubborn and disobedient servant will not reform through mere words. He needs a more harsh method of correction.

*20. Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*

A fool has more hope than a man with a fiery temper.

*21. He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.*

He that brings up a servant from a child should adopt him.

Proverbs on anger, pride, thievery, cowardice, and corruption

*22. An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*

An angry man produces discord, and a hot-tempered man is the cause of much mischief.

*23. A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*

Pride will bring humiliation, but he who is humble of spirit obtains honor.

*24. Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.*

A partner of a thief brings judgment upon his own soul because he hears the plot and conceals it to his own destruction.

*25. The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*



To fear man is a dangerous trap, but those who trust in the Lord will be preserved.

*26. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.*

Many seek the favor and pardon of rulers, but they have yet to face God in judgment.

*27. An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.*

The good hate the ways of the wicked. The wicked hate the ways of the righteous.

### Proverbs 30

#### Agur's confession of faith

Chapters 30 and 31 are an appendix to Solomon's proverbs; and are both expressly called prophecies in the first verses of each chapter, by which it appears that the penmen of them, whoever they were, were divinely inspired. One thing is sure these chapters were inspired and preserved by the Holy Spirit, and kept for our benefit.

Though the men mentioned in verse one may not be known. The Talmud says, "Solomon was called by six names: Solomon, Jedidiah (2 Samuel 12:25), Koheleth, Son of Jakeh, Agur, and Lemuel." This much is certain. Agur was the son of Jakeh and he uttered a prophecy to Ithiel and Ucal (verse 1). We can accept the facts of these chapters as literal as we accept the Minor Prophets, some are as little known as these men.

The name "Agur" means, "collector," or, "gatherer" -- one that did not compose himself; but collected wise sayings of others. Which is probably why he says in verse 3, "I have not learned wisdom myself, but have been a scribe, or amanuensis, to other wise and learned men."

Interestingly, the Hebrew name, "Ithiel," (like the Greek word, "Emmanuel") means, "God with me." The name, "Ucal," signifies the "Mighty One." Some commentaries feel that these names make reference to types of none other but the Son of God, Jesus Christ! Words that magnified Him as One concealed; Christ is now revealed as the exalted as One!

*1. The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,*

See the above concerning these names.

*2. Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.*

Before he makes confession of his faith he makes confession of his weakness and deficiency of reason. Before He speaks concerning the Savior he speaks of himself as needing a Savior. "I am dumb as a beast, scarcely with the understanding of a man," as one translation renders it.

*3. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.*

I have not gotten wisdom by teaching, so that I might have the knowledge of the Holy One

*4. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*

*“Who has ascended up to heaven, to take a view of the orbs above, and then descended, to give us a description of them? Who has had the command of the winds, to have grasped them in his hand and managed them, as God does, or has bound the waves of the sea with a swaddling band, as God has done? Who has established the ends of the earth, or can describe the strength of its foundations or the extent of its limits? Tell me what is the man's name who can undertake to vie with God or to be of his cabinet-council, or, if he be dead, what is his name to whom he has bequeathed this great secret?” – Certainly seems reminiscent of Ephesians 4:9-10!*

*5. Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. 6. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*

We are instructed in the things of God, *“Go to the word of God; see what He has revealed of Himself. What is His mind and will? You can rely upon His Word as sure and sufficient. His promises are a shield of protection to those who trust in Him. Don't add to His Word, or He will make clear your error, and you will be seen to be false.”*

The two points of his prayer

*7. Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: 8. Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:*

O God, I beg two things before I die: **(1)** Help me never to tell a lie. **(2)** Give me neither poverty nor wealth, but feed me with the food that is needful for me.

*9. Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*

**Six reasons for his requests:**

- (1) Lest I be full, and
- (2) Deny the Lord.
- (3) Lest I say, Who is the Lord?
- (4) Lest I be poor, and
- (5) Steal, and
- (6) Take the name of God in vain.

The most menial are not to be wronged

*10. Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.*

Do not falsely accuse a servant, lest you be found guilty and he sue you for slander.

**11.** *There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.* **12.** *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.* **13.** *There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.* **14.** *There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.*

**Four classes of people:**

- (1) Those who do not honor parents (verse 11)
- (2) Those who are self-righteous (verse 12)
- (3) Those who are full of vanity, pride and insolence (verse 13)
- (4) Those who are cruel, greedy, and oppressive to the poor (verse 14)

Four things insatiable

**15.** *The horseleech hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough:* **16.** *The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.*

A "horseleech" is a "bloodsucker." This is figurative of people who are never satisfied and who will take advantage to gain the last portion of good from their victims.

**Six quartets** (verses 11-31):

- (1) Four classes of men (verses 11-14)
- (2) Four insatiable things (verses 15-16)
- (3) Four inscrutable things (verses 18-20)
- (4) Four disquieting things (verses 21-23)
- (5) Four little wise things (verses 24-28)
- (6) Four graceful things (verses 29-31)

**Four insatiable things** (verses 15-16):

- (1) Hell is never full, but constantly opening its mouth to swallow people.
- (2) The barren womb that always craves a child.
- (3) Dry earth longs for water to quench its parched surface.
- (4) The fire that is greedy for everything that burns.

**17.** *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.*

Those who show irreverence to their parents will be cursed by God -- (See Proverbs 20:20; Exodus. 21:17 & Leviticus 20:9). Those who mock, looking with disdain upon their parents and despise to obey them will become monuments of God's vengeance; hanged in chains, as it were, for the birds to pick out their eyes, those eyes with which they looked so scornfully on their parents.

Four things hard to be known

**18.** *There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:* **19.** *The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a*

*rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.*

**Four inscrutable things** (verses 18-19):

- (1) The way of an eagle in the air
- (2) The way of a serpent upon a rock
- (3) The way of a ship in the sea
- (4) The way of a man with a maid

**20.** *Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.*

How a large and heavy bird can soar through the heavens, a serpent can glide over a slippery rock, a ship can plow through the seas without leaving a trace of its path, and the way of a man with a woman -- these are incomprehensible. Such is the power of an adulterous woman [temple prostitute] over her victims. She destroys them and disclaims any wrongdoing.

**21.** *For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear; 22. For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat; 23. For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.*

**Four disquieting things** (verses 21-23):

- (1) An insolent slave when made king
- (2) An ill-mannered overfed fool
- (3) An ill-tempered woman
- (4) A servant maid married to her master becomes dominating and haughty.

The word, "odious," in verse 23 means, "to hate." It is translated, "hate" 136 times in other places in the Bible -- "hateful," once, and, "haters," once.

Four things exceedingly wise

**24.** *There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: 25. The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; 26. The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; 27. The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; 28. The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.*

**Four Small Things That Are Wise**

- (1) **Ants** are diligent in preparing for the future.
- (2) **Conies** are shrewd in protecting themselves from larger animals. They are larger than the ordinary rabbit and live in holes and clefts of the rocks. They are so wary and swift they are seldom killed by hunters or snared by trappers.
- (3) **Locusts** are harmonious creatures. They have no leader yet they band together as one.
- (4) Spiders are noted for their great flexibility and the variety of their traps and lairs. Some spiders spin webs, some dig holes in the ground with trap doors.

Four things stately

**29.** *There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going: 30. A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any; 31. A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.*

Four graceful things (verses 29-31):

- (1) The lion who is more majestic than any other beast.
- (2) The greyhound who is exceedingly graceful and fleet.
- (3) The male goat who is both fierce and majestic as the head of the sheep.
- (4) A king who walks boldly and gracefully among his loyal subjects and against whom there is no hope of rebellion

**32.** *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*

If you have acted stupidly in thinking or planning evil, keep it to yourself and confess it to God who forgives, not to man who will often condemn you.

**33.** *Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.*

The forcing of wrath brings strife, as surely as the churning of milk brings butter and hitting the nose brings blood.

## P roverbs 31

### Lemuel's lesson of chastity and temperance

This chapter is added to Solomon's proverbs, some think because it is of the same author, supposing king Lemuel to be king Solomon; others only because it is of the same nature in its writing, and left in writing by another author, called Lemuel. However, it is a prophecy, given by inspiration and direction of God, which the author is under as he writes this chapter, and arranges it into this form.

**1.** *The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.*

Most interpreters are of opinion that *Lemuel* is *Solomon*; the name signifies one that is for God, or devoted to God, agreeing with the divine appointment given to Solomon. Lemuel is a fond, endearing name, by which, it is supposed, his mother used to call him. One would rather be inclined to think it is Solomon telling what his mother taught him because he tells us, in chapter 4, verse 4, what his father taught him.

Whoever *Lemuel* is, this we do know, this chapter is a prophecy, and a second supplement to the book of Proverbs.

**2.** *What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?*

The question is asked, "*What my first born son, the son of myself, the son of my prayers?*" An exhortation to a young prince to take heed of the sins he would be tempted to and to perform the duties of the place he was called to. Here is a mother considering what advice to give her son, choosing words to reason with him; so full of concern is she for his welfare.

**3.** Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. **4.** It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: **5.** Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

She cautions him against those two destroying sins: uncleanness and drunkenness. If he allows these, it would certainly be his ruin.

If they drink away their understandings and forget the law by which they are to govern; so, instead of doing good with their power, hurt with it, and pervert or alter the judgment of the sons of affliction, when they should do right by them.

**6.** Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. **7.** Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

She counsels him to do well with his wealth. Those who have wealth should relieve those in distress. Instead of doing them self harm with it, they should do others good -- *Give to those in need!* Let those that are ready to perish drink soberly, and it will be a means so to revive their drooping spirits will be the better able to bear it. -- [wine was used in that day for medicine] – See 1 Timothy 5:23].

**8.** Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. **9.** Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Lemuel's (Solomon's) counsels him to do good with his power, his knowledge, and interest, must be administered with justice, care, courage, and compassion. Speak for those who are unable to speak for themselves. Always judge right, pleasing the cause of the poor and needy.

#### The praise and characteristics of a good wife

**10.** Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. **11.** The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. **12.** She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. **13.** She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. **14.** She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. **15.** She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. **16.** She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. **17.** She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. **18.** She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. **19.** She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. **20.** She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. **21.** She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. **22.** She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. **23.** Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. **24.** She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. **25.** Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. **26.** She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is

*the law of kindness. 27. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. 28. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. 29. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. 30. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. 31. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.*

“Virtuous” is from the Hebrew word meaning, “strong in all moral and mental qualities!”

### **31 Characteristics of a Virtuous Woman**

1. Morally perfect (complete) (verse 10)
2. Invaluable (verse 10)
3. Trustworthy (verse 11)
4. Inherently good and true (verse 12)
5. Ingenious -- proficient (verse 13)
6. Thrifty -- laborious (verse 14)
7. Dutiful -- considerate (verse 15)
8. Versatile -- judicious (verse 16)
9. Tireless -- healthy (verse 17)
10. Joyful -- efficient (verse 18)
11. Watchful -- cautious (verse 18)
12. Thrifty -- skillful (verse 19)
13. Charitable -- benevolent (verse 20)
14. Generous -- merciful (verse 20)
15. Fearless -- provident (verse 21)
16. Clever at decorating -- furnishing (verse 22)
17. Refined in taste (verse 22)
18. Respected -- popular (verse 23)
19. Industrious -- prosperous (verse 24)
20. Dependable -- honest (verse 25)
21. Confident -- hopeful (verse 25)
22. Wise -- discreet (verse 26)
23. Kind -- understanding (verse 26)
24. Prudent -- practical (verse 27)
25. Energetic -- ever active (verse 27)
26. An ideal wife and mother (verse 28)
27. Honored by her family (verses 27-28)
28. Excels in virtue (verse 28)
29. God-fearing -- humble (verse 30)
30. Deserving -- successful (verse 31)
31. Honored by the public (verse 31)

The following repeats Proverbs 31:10-31 in an attempt to examine and look more closely at the exact meaning of the various descriptions given.

This description of the virtuous woman consists of twenty-two verses, each beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, making verses 10-31 an “*acrostic*” -- in the order of the Hebrew alphabet.

Lemuel’s mother evidently, taught him this method of repeating by *acrostic* -- commonly known and used among the Jews -- (for ease of learning passages of Scripture were made alphabetical.) We have the abridgment of a pure woman in the New Testament (1 Timothy 2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:1-6), where the duty prescribed to wives agrees with this description of a good wife. The reason so much stress laid upon the woman’s accountability is that it contributes as much as any thing to keeping up of religion in families.

The question is, “*Who can find a virtuous woman?*” The word “*virtuous*” literally means, “*a woman of strength*.” “*The weaker vessel*” is made *strong* by wisdom and grace, and the fear of God. “*Who can find one?*” This intimates that good women are very scarce, and many that seem to be so do not prove so. The unspeakable worth of such a one, and the value ought to put upon her by one who such a wife, showing it by his thankfulness to God and his kindness and respect to her, whom he must never think he can do too much for. Her price is far above rubies, and all the rich ornaments with which vain women adorn themselves. The more rare such good women are the more they are to be valued.

**10** *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.* **11** *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.* **12** *She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*

#### **Five things said of her husband:**

1. He has absolute confidence in her faithfulness - verse 11.
2. He knows she will not be a waster, so has no need for his neighbor's goods to supply his house - verse 11.
3. He is blessed by her tireless industry all the days of his life - verse 12.
4. He is exalted as a ruler with the elders at the gate - verse 23.
5. He praises her virtues and blessings to others - verse 28.

**13** *She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.*

She does not buy ready-woven cloth, but spins her own raw materials from her own flocks.

“*Willingly with her hands,*” means, she works for others willingly and cheerfully from the heart.



**14** *She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.*

She imports and exports. If she buys anything she sells a sufficient amount of things she has made to pay for it

**15** *She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.*

She is loving and considerate of all her household.

**16** *She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.*

She is not afraid to venture into new business to provide for her growing family

**17** *She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.*

She keeps herself and family in perfect health with proper food and clothing

**18** *She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.*

She is honest and upright in all her business dealings and not doubtful regarding the sale of her merchandise

**19** *She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.*

The distaff on which the wool or flax was rolled and the spindle that twisted the wool into thread were ancient parts of the spinning wheel.

**20** *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*

She respects and loves both God and the poor, and is good to all in need

**21** *She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.*

She doesn't worry over the health and comfort of her family in the winter, because she has fully provided all that is necessary for their protection. They are sensible enough to protect themselves with what she has provided.

**22** *She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.*

She has coverings, carpeting, and furnishings fit for her station in life. "Her clothing is silk and purple," refers to the fact that her clothing shows marks of refinement and luxury.

**23** *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.*

Her husband is known and respected in public and has a place of authority among the elders of the land. He is respected not only for his position, but because he is the husband of a woman justly held in universal esteem.

**24** *She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant*

She manufactures articles in demand. Perhaps they included the beautiful oriental dresses, girdles, turbans, towels, linens, and other fine articles of clothing.

**25** *Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.*

All the things she makes are perfect, strong, elegant, and satisfactory to the merchants and the trade. She has no occasion to blush over anything she has made. She has no fear that any article will be returned as inferior to accepted standards of trade.

**26** *She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness*

She opens her mouth and speaks wisdom. Kindness is the grace of her lips. She is wise and intelligent and highly cultured in mind and manners. She is graceful and even-tempered in all her ways. There are few managing women who are not lords over their husbands, tyrants over their servants, and haughty toward their neighbors. She is an excellent example of a meek and quiet spirit (See 1 Peter 3:1-8).

**27** *She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.*

She manages her household with economy and discretion. Her children behave well and none keep company with persons of unclean and immoral habits. She instructs her house in practical religion and industry and gives them an example of godliness, diligence in business, and untiring improvement of mind, soul, and body.

*Eats not the bread of idleness -- means, "knowing that idleness leads to vice, she sees that everyone has his own work to perform, and his proper share in food, raiment, and other necessities befitting such a household in society."*

**28** *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.*

She sees to it that a good education comes next to divine experiences and leads her household to God and His ways. Her children are well trained and rise up to call her blessed.

**29** *Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.*

She excels all other women as a wife and mother, and in religion and industry

**30** *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.*

Grace of manner is deceitful and beauty of form and features will fade, but the woman who fears the Lord shall be praised.

**31** *Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.*

Give such a woman public praise and acclaim, and give her the fruit of her hands