

PROVERBS

Authors:

Solomon wrote most of the proverbs in this book, but others wrote some of them. See 1:1; 22:17; 24:23; 30:1; 31:1. See also 1 Kings 4:32.

Date:

Solomon reigned 970-930 BC, so most and possibly all of these proverbs were written down during that time.

Themes:

Solomon himself gave the reasons why he wrote down his proverbs, and so indicated the themes. See 1:2-6. He wanted people to know how to live in this world, how to behave in the various circumstances they face. In 1:7 he gives a very important theme – the fear of the LORD. Throughout the book there is a vivid contrast between wise people and fools. The wise are those who fear God and follow His ways; fools are those who do not fear God, and follow their own ways. True wisdom results in righteousness; foolishness leads to sin. In fact, we may say that wickedness is foolishness, true righteousness is wisdom.

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1 The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel:
2 To know wisdom and instruction;
 to discern words of understanding;
3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice,
 and judgment, and fairness;
4 To give shrewdness to the simple,
 knowledge and discretion to the young
5 (A wise *person* will hear and increase learning,
 and a man of understanding will attain to wise counsels);
6 To understand a proverb,
 and the interpretation, the words of the wise,
 and their riddles.
7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning
 of knowledge, *but* fools

despise wisdom and instruction.
8 My son, hear the instruction of your father,
 and do not forsake the law of your mother;
9 For they *will be* an ornament of grace to your head,
 and necklaces around your neck.
10 My son, if sinners entice you,
 do not consent.
11 If they say, "Come with us. Let us lie in wait for blood.
 Let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause."
12 Let us swallow them up alive like the grave, and whole,
 like those who go down into the pit.
13 We will get all *kinds of* valuable stuff.
 We will fill our houses with plunder.

1:1 Altogether Solomon spoke 3000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32). There are less than 1000 proverbs in this book and not all of them were written by Solomon (30:1; 31:1), so many of his proverbs are lost. Only those God wanted to remain have remained. Solomon had more practical wisdom and discernment than any man whoever lived (except for the Lord Jesus), because they were a special gift from God (1 Kings 3:10-12). The proverbs recorded in this book were chosen from Solomon's proverbs by God's Spirit for our instruction.

1:2-6 Here are the several reasons why Solomon wrote his proverbs and why the Holy Spirit has included them in the Bible. The principal reason is that we might gain practical wisdom and know how to conduct ourselves in the various affairs of life. But knowledge alone is not enough – it must be put into practice. Unfortunately Solomon himself did not always do so (1 Kings 11:1-6).

1:4 "*Simple*" – Ps 19:7; 119:130; Prov 8:5. In the Bible, the Word of God, we have a great storehouse of wisdom and understanding. But we need to believe it, receive it into our heart, meditate on it, and practice it.

"*Young*" – even the young can attain to wisdom by God's Word. Much of this book of Proverbs is addressed to the young (1:8,10; 2:2; 3:1; 4:1).

1:7 "*Fear*" – Solomon comes to the main point right away. Without a reverential awe and fear of God there is no true wisdom. Without it one cannot even begin to be what God calls wise. See notes at Gen 20:11; Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10; 130:3-4. Without this fear of God men may be educated, intellectual, and brilliant, and may even know much of the Bible, but they will

not be wise. The phrase "fear of the LORD" (Jehovah) is used 14 times in Proverbs and is a key thought. Observe carefully how different the wisdom the Bible presents is from the wisdom of which philosophy speaks.

"*Fools*" – the word is used 61 times in this book, far more than in any other book of the Bible. It does not mean people who are uneducated, or lacking in brains or ability. It indicates those lacking in morals, those who are perverse and disobedient to righteous standards, those who do not know God and who try to live without Him in their lives. See also Ps 14:1. Fools are not interested in learning the fear of God and the wisdom which comes from it. They follow their own thoughts. They want only to satisfy their desires and behave as they please. In this book fools are everywhere contrasted with the wise. The fools are the wicked; the wise are the righteous. To sin is foolishness; to live righteously is wisdom.

1:8 It is the duty of parents to properly teach their children how to live in this world (Gen 18:19; Deut 6:7; Prov 13:24; 22:6; Eph 6:4). If they do not, they should not be surprised if their children turn out badly.

1:9 3:21-22; 4:7-9.

1:10-16 It is possible for the children of even good parents to fall into the companionship of evil men. When this happens they are on the slippery path that may lead to violence, robbery, and crime (compare 22:24-25; 1 Cor 15:33). Everyone, and especially the young, must be very careful about making friends, for friendships have a powerful effect on our behavior, and can lead either to great good or to much evil.

1:12 "*Grave*" – in Hebrew "Sheol" – Gen 37:35.

- ¹⁴ Throw in your lot among us.
Let us all have one purse”.
- ¹⁵ My son, do not walk in the way
with them.
Keep your foot from their path.
- ¹⁶ For their feet run to evil,
and hurry to shed blood.
- ¹⁷ Surely in vain the net is spread
in the sight of any bird.
- ¹⁸ And they lie in wait for their
own blood!
They lurk secretly for their *own* lives!
- ¹⁹ Such *are* the ways of everyone
who is greedy for gain.
It takes away the life of its owners.
- ²⁰ Wisdom cries out in the
public square;
she utters her voice in the streets;
- ²¹ She cries out in the principal
thoroughfares,
at the entrance of the gates
of the city she utters her words,
saying,
- ²² “How long, you simple ones,
will you love simple ways?
And the scorners delight
in their scorning,
and fools hate knowledge?”
- ²³ Turn at my rebuke. See,
- I will pour out my spirit to you,
I will make my words known
to you.
- ²⁴ “But since I have called,
and you refused;
I have stretched out my hand,
and no one paid attention,
²⁵ But you have ignored all my counsel,
and were not willing for any
of my rebuke,
²⁶ I also will laugh at your calamity.
I will mock when your fear
comes.
²⁷ When your fear comes
like desolation,
and your destruction comes
like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come
on you.
²⁸ Then they will call on me,
but I will not answer.
They will seek me early,
but they will not find me,
²⁹ For they hated knowledge,
and did not choose the fear
of the LORD.
³⁰ They would *have* none of
my counsel.
They despised all my rebuke.

1:16 Isa 59:7; Rom 3:15.

1:17 A hunter used nets to catch birds, but if the birds were watching him start to work they would fly away (6:5; 7:23; Ps 91:3). If we are alert to the plans and tricks of evil men we can escape.

1:18 An evil man will be caught in his own schemes to catch others (26:27; Ps 7:15; 35:7-8; 40:2; 94:13). By becoming ensnared in his own net he shows he has not as much sense as birds.

1:19 4:14-17; 11:19; 1 Tim 6:6-10.

1:20-21 There are two principal voices calling to men – the voice of wisdom which is the Word of God (8:12,22-31), and the voice of folly which is the counsel of the wicked (9:13; Ps 1:1). The one we obey will determine the nature of our life on earth and our eternal state.

1:22 The voice of wisdom is heard until the end of this chapter. Indeed, the voice of wisdom is heard all through the Bible and wherever the Bible has gone and wherever God speaks to men. Most are unwilling to listen to the voice of wisdom, and so show themselves to be foolish. It is a strange but true thing that foolish people love their foolish ways and delight to mock at wisdom and hate knowledge (Ps 50:17). Hence the terrible warning which follows.

“*Simple*”– in Hebrew this word in Proverbs does not mean someone who is innocent and

uncomplicated. It usually indicates a person who does not have good sense in the area of morals, a person who is likely to run after the wrong things.

1:23 This is what God longs to do for people if only they will respond to Him. For this reason He gave the Bible to mankind. Our whole lifetime should be spent in learning more and more of God’s heart and God’s thoughts.

1:24-25 Isa 65:12; 66:4; Jer 7:13; 26:5; 35:17; 36:31; Heb 12:25. The most foolish, arrogant, and dangerous thing any human being can do is to refuse to listen to the voice of wisdom, the voice of God. Compare 2 Thess 2:10-11.

1:26-32 Here are the sad results of refusing wisdom’s voice.

1:26-27 Ps 2:4; Deut 28:62-63.

1:28 There is such a thing as calling too late for help. When justice demands punishment and is already in the process of executing it, men may call in vain (Deut 1:45; 1 Sam 8:18; Isa 1:15; Jer 11:11; Hos 5:6). For example, once Noah and his family were in the ark and the judgment of the flood had begun it was too late to call for mercy.

1:29 Verse 7. The fear of the Lord is something which must be chosen by men. It must also be cultivated and practiced.

- ³¹ Therefore they will eat the fruit
of their own way,
and be filled with their own schemes.
³² For the turning away of the simple
will kill them,
and the prosperity of fools will
destroy them.
³³ But whoever listens to me will dwell
in safety,
and will securely rest from fear of
disaster”.

2 My son, if you will receive my words,
and store up my commands with you,
² So that you turn your ear to wisdom,
and apply your heart
to understanding,
³ Yes, if you cry out after knowledge,
and lift up your voice
for understanding,
⁴ If you seek her as *for* silver,
and search for her as *for* hidden
treasures,
⁵ Then you will understand the fear
of the LORD,
and find the knowledge of God.
⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom.
Out of his mouth *come* knowledge
and understanding.
⁷ He stores up sound wisdom for
the righteous.

- He is a shield to those who
walk uprightly.*
⁸ He guards the paths of justice,
and preserves the way of his saints.
⁹ Then you will understand
righteousness and justice and
fairness,
yes, every good path.
¹⁰ When wisdom enters your heart
and knowledge is pleasant to
your soul,
¹¹ Discretion will preserve you,
understanding will keep you,
¹² To deliver you from the way
of the evil *man*, from the man
who speaks perverse things,
¹³ Who leave the right paths to walk
in the ways of darkness,
¹⁴ Who rejoice in doing evil
and delight in the perversity
of the wicked,
¹⁵ Whose ways *are* crooked,
and who are devious in their paths.
¹⁶ *It will* save you from
the strange woman,
from the stranger *who* flatters
with her words,
¹⁷ Who forsakes the guide of her youth,
and forgets the covenant of her God.
¹⁸ For her house goes down to death,
and her paths to the dead.

1:31 2 Chron 36:16; Ps 18:25-26; Prov 14:14; 22:8; Jer 6:19; 21:14; 30:15; 34:17; Gal 6:7.

1:32 Men destroy themselves by their wickedness and folly. Let them not blame God for something they do themselves.

“Prosperity”– or “complacency”.

1:33 Num 24:21; Deut 33:28; Ps 23:4; 112:8; Isa 32:17-18.

2:1-4 Wisdom and understanding are not gained by the careless or the lazy or the worldly. It must be valued according to its worth, and sought as some people seek for riches (Job 28:12-28; Ps 19:9-10; 119:72; Prov 8:10; 1 Cor 1:30; Col 2:2-3). How sad it is when men spend their whole lives in the pursuit of riches, and go to their graves in their folly, without that priceless wisdom they might have had if they had sought it. Whatever else we may or may not ask, let us seek wisdom with diligence and zeal!

2:5 Here is the reward that comes to those who search diligently for wisdom. They gain the highest, brightest, and best treasure men can ever have – the knowledge of God.

2:6 But we must seek wisdom where it is – not in books of philosophers, nor in writings of men about their gods, not in some so-called jnana

marg but in the LORD (Jehovah), the God of the Bible, the only living and true God. He alone gives wisdom.

2:7-8 Gen 15:1; Deut 33:29; 2 Sam 22:3,31; Ps 3:3; 7:1; 18:25; 97:10. Observe that after speaking of wisdom he turns our attention to our way of living. True wisdom is always practical, always related to morality and ethics and holiness of life. “Wisdom” (v 7) – or “success”.

2:10 14:33.

2:11-17 True wisdom protects from all evil – evil words (v 12), evil ways (v 13), evil deeds (v 14), evil temptations (v 16).

2:13 4:19; John 3:19.

2:14 10:23; 15:21; Rom 1:32; 2 Thess 2:12.

2:15 Ps 125:5; Prov 21:8; Isa 59:8; Matt 7:13.

2:16 *“Strange woman”*– used several times in Proverbs to indicate an immoral woman. Adultery is one of the most terrible of sins. God repeatedly warns against it in His Word (Ex 20:14; Lev 18:20; 20:10; Num 5:12-13,29; Prov 6:29,32; 1 Cor 6:9-10,18; Eph 5:3; Col 3:5-6; Rev 21:8). That is why the wise father here counsels his son against it, as all wise fathers should do.

2:18 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; Eccl 7:26; Rom 6:23; 1 Tim 5:6.

- ¹⁹ None who go to her return again or reach the paths of life.
²⁰ Thus you may walk in the way of good *men*, and keep to the paths of the righteous.
²¹ For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it.
²² But the wicked will be cut off from the earth, and transgressors will be uprooted from it.

- 3** My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands,
² For they will add to you length of days and long life, and peace.
³ Do not let mercy and truth leave you. Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.
⁴ So you will find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.
⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.
⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him,

- and he will direct your paths.
⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
⁸ It will be health to your navel, and marrow to your bones.
⁹ Honour the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your harvests;
¹⁰ Then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your winepresses will burst open with new wine.
¹¹ My son, do not despise the discipline of the LORD, nor be weary of his correction,
¹² For whom the LORD loves he corrects, as a father the son *in whom* he delights.
¹³ Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom, and the man *who* gets understanding.
¹⁴ For profit from it *is* more valuable than the profit of silver, and its yield *better* than fine gold.
¹⁵ She *is* more precious than rubies,

2:19 Adultery is a sin that so captures those engaging in it, so overpowers their reason and conscience, that escape is exceedingly difficult. Those who practice it will never, in their own strength, arrive in the path of life and holiness. But God in His mercy can bring them there if they repent and turn to Him (1 Cor 6:9,11).

2:20-22 Compare Ps 37:9-11,20,27-29,35-38.

3:1 The peril of forgetting God's truth is often pointed out in the Bible (Deut 4:23-24; Ps 78:11; 106:13; Heb 12:5; 2 Pet 1:9).

3:2 Though the rewards of the righteous are given in the next world, even in this world they will benefit from good behavior.

3:3 Deut 6:6; Prov 6:21; 7:3; 2 Cor 3:3; Col 3:16; Heb 8:10. If the Word of God is not written on our hearts, if it does not become the inner spring for our behavior, it is useless to have it on our lips, or to profess to be pious.

3:4 1 Sam 2:26; Luke 2:52.

3:5-6 Here are three essentials to a walk directed by God – full trust, renunciation of one's own wisdom, and acknowledging God in everything. Such a walk is contrasted in Proverbs with "dark ways" (2:13), stumbling (4:11-12), wickedness (11:5), and foolishness (15:21). So David prayed that God would lead him in a straight way (Ps 27:1). So should we all. A straight way is a way of integrity and uprightness. It is a way full of God's blessing. It is a way that will lead to the

right goal – God Himself.

3:6 "*And He will direct your paths*" – or it could be translated "and he will make your paths straight".

3:7 "*Own eyes*" – 26:12; Isa 5:21; 47:10; Rom 12:3; 1 Cor 3:18-20. This is a fault of many men. They are so wise in their own eyes they will not listen to God's Word. Their pride keeps them from the truth, shut up in ignorance.

"*Fear*" – notes at Gen 20:11; Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10.

3:8 Compare Ps 38:3. See Prov 4:20-22.

3:9-10 Ex 22:29; Deut 26:1-15; Mal 3:10-12; Luke 6:38. If we offer nothing to God and His service we are dishonoring Him and cannot have His full blessing in our lives.

3:11-12 See Job 5:17; Ps 73:14; Heb 12:5-6 (where these words are quoted).

3:13-18 1:7,33; 2:1-6. Once again the value and fruits of true wisdom are placed before us. Remember that this wisdom has nothing to do with the so-called wisdom of philosophy, or of Advaita Vedanta. The Bible presents the true wisdom, far more valuable than anything one can gain on earth. The principal fruit of wisdom is found in v 18. That wisdom which is a knowledge of the true God and awe and reverence for Him results in eternal life and blessing (John 17:3). On blessing or blessed see notes at Gen 12:3; Num 6:22-27; Ps 1:1-2; 119:1; Matt 5:3-10.

- and all the things you can desire
are not to be compared to her.
- ¹⁶ Length of days *is* in her right hand,
and in her left hand are riches
and honour.
- ¹⁷ Her ways *are* pleasant ways,
and all her paths *are* peace.
- ¹⁸ She *is* a tree of life to those
who take hold of her;
and happy *is everyone* who
retains her.
- ¹⁹ By wisdom the LORD founded
the earth,
by understanding he established
the heavens.
- ²⁰ By his knowledge the depths are
broken open,
and the clouds let drop the dew.
- ²¹ My son, keep sound wisdom
and discretion,
not letting them depart from
your eyes.
- ²² So they will be life to your soul,
and grace to your neck.
- ²³ Then you will walk in your way
in safety,
and your foot will not stumble.
- ²⁴ When you lie down,
you will not be afraid;
yes, you will lie down and your sleep
will be sweet.
- ²⁵ Be not afraid of *something causing*
sudden terror,
or of the ruin of the wicked,
when it comes.
- ²⁶ For the LORD will be your
confidence,
and will keep your foot from
being captured.
- ²⁷ Do not withhold good from those
to whom it is due,

- when it is in the power of your hand
to do *it*.
- ²⁸ Do not say to your neighbour,
“Go and come again”,
and “Tomorrow I will give”,
when you have it with you.
- ²⁹ Do not plot to do evil against
your neighbour,
living securely near you.
- ³⁰ Do not strive with a man
without cause,
if he has done no harm to you.
- ³¹ Do not envy the oppressor,
and do not choose any of
his ways.
- ³² For the perverse *man is*
an abomination to the LORD,
but his secret *is* with the righteous.
- ³³ The curse of the LORD *is*
on the house of the wicked,
but he blesses the home of the just.
- ³⁴ Surely he scorns the scorners,
but he gives grace to the lowly.
- ³⁵ The wise will inherit glory,
but fools will be held up to shame.

- 4** Hear, you children,
the instruction of a father,
and pay attention *so as*
to find understanding.
- ² For I give you good teaching.
Do not forsake my law.
- ³ For I was my father’s son,
tender and the only *one*
in the sight of my mother.
- ⁴ And he taught me, and said to me,
“Let your heart retain my words.
Keep my commands, and live.
- ⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding.
Do not forget *it* or turn away
from the words of my mouth.

3:18 “*Tree of life*” – 10:11; Gen 2:9; Rev 2:7.

3:19-20 8:27-29; Gen 1:31; Ps 136:5-9.

3:21-26 Here are more fruits of true wisdom – a life that is gracious, secure, upright, fearless, restful. True wisdom will cause us to trust the Lord God, not ourselves (v 26).

3:27-32 True wisdom will cause us to behave righteously and compassionately in this world.

3:27 Jam 4:17.

3:28 Lev 19:13; Deut 24:15; Luke 10:25-37.

3:29 Zech 8:17.

3:31 Ps 37:1; 73:2-3.

3:32 “*An abomination*” – note at Ps 5:5.

3:33-35 One of many examples in this book of

the contrast between the reward of the righteous and of the wicked. God’s curse or blessing, His scorn or His grace, honor or shame are dependent on our state before God.

3:33 See Deut 11:26-28; and 28:1-68 for this principle at work for a whole nation.

3:34 To some extent at least God, in perfect justice, acts toward people as they act toward Him and others. Note at Ps 18:25-26.

4:1-2 1:8; 19:20.

4:3-9 Father and mother were David and Bathsheba (1 Kings 1:28-30). Solomon was the son who was to succeed David on the throne of Israel.

4:4 7:2; Deut 30:15-20; 32:45-47.

4:5 2:12; 3:13-18.

- ⁶ Do not forsake her,
and she will preserve you.
Love her, and she will keep you.
- ⁷ Wisdom *is* the principal thing.
Therefore get wisdom,
and with all your getting get
understanding.
- ⁸ Exalt her, and she will set you
on high.
She will bring you to honour,
when you embrace her.
- ⁹ She will give an ornament of grace
for your head;
she will provide a crown of glory
to you”.
- ¹⁰ Hear, O my son,
and receive my words,
and the years of your life will be
many.
- ¹¹ I have taught you in the way of
wisdom;
I have led you in right paths.
- ¹² When you walk,
your steps will not be cramped,
and when you run, you will not
stumble.
- ¹³ Take firm hold of instruction.
Do not let *her* go.
Keep her, for she *is* your life.
- ¹⁴ Do not enter the path of the wicked,
and do not go in the way of
evil *people*.
- ¹⁵ Avoid it. Do not travel on it.
Turn from it and pass on.
- ¹⁶ For they do not sleep unless
they have done evil,
and their sleep is taken away,
unless they cause *someone* to fall.
- ¹⁷ For they eat the bread of wickedness,
and drink the wine of violence.
- ¹⁸ But the path of the just *is*
like the shining light,
that shines more and more to
the perfect day.
- ¹⁹ The way of the wicked *is*
like darkness.
They do not know over what
they stumble.
- ²⁰ My son, pay attention to my words.
Turn your ear to what I say.
- ²¹ Do not let them depart from your eyes.
Keep them in the center of
your heart.
- ²² For they *are* life to those who find
them, and health to their
whole body.
- ²³ Keep your heart with all watchfulness,
for out of it *come* the issues of life.
- ²⁴ Put a crooked mouth away from you,
and put perverse lips far from you.
- ²⁵ Let your eyes look right ahead,
and let your eyelids look straight
before you.
- ²⁶ Consider the path of your feet,
and let all your ways be established.
- ²⁷ Do not turn to the right hand or
to the left.
Turn away your foot from evil.
- 5** My son, give attention to my wisdom,
and turn your ear
to my understanding,

4:6 True wisdom has such influence because God is behind it working with it.

4:7 Since wisdom is far more precious than wealth, then one must be willing to give all one's wealth to get it. It is hardly obtained otherwise (compare Matt 13:44-46; Mark 10:21-25; Luke 14:33). If there is something for which we will not give our wealth, then it is plain that we value our wealth more than that thing. And why should God give us something we value so little?

4:9 1:8-9.

4:10 Under the old covenant God promised long life to those who obeyed Him (9:11).

4:11-12 3:6; Ps 5:8.

4:13 3:18,22; 4:4.

4:14-15 1:15; Ps 1:1.

4:16-17 Wickedness is so natural to some people that it is like their food and drink, and trying to sleep without it is useless.

4:18 Ps 18:28; 37:6.

4:19 2:13; John 3:19-20; 2 Cor 4:4; 1 John 2:11.

4:20-22 3:8,18; 4:13.

4:23 Here is one of those gem-like maxims of profound meaning which appear frequently in this book. Our hearts are like storehouses and what is in them will come out some time, some way (Matt 12:34-35). They are like gardens which will produce a good crop if the seed and water and care are good, but which will produce evil weeds if left to themselves (24:30-31). Our hearts are like fountains and will pour our sweet living water or bitter deadly water, depending on what we have in them.

4:24 Eph 5:4; Col 3:8.

4:25 If we do not do so we may stumble and fall.

4:27 Deut 5:32; 17:11,20; 28:14; Josh 1:7; 1 Kings 15:5; 2 Kings 22:2. Going to right or the left means to go out of the path of complete obedience to God's Word. Out of the straight and narrow way there is only sin.

5:1-2 Verse 7; 1:8; 4:1,20.

- ² That you may regard discretion
and *that* your lips
may keep knowledge.
- ³ For the lips of a strange woman
drip *like* a honeycomb,
and her mouth *is* smoother than oil,
- ⁴ But the result *with* her is
as bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword.
- ⁵ Her feet go down to death;
her steps hold to the path
of the grave.
- ⁶ Lest you should ponder the path
of life,
her ways are unstable,
so that you cannot understand *them*.
- ⁷ Therefore, listen to me now,
O you children, and do not depart
from the words of my mouth.
- ⁸ Keep your way far from her,
and do not come near the door of
her house,
- ⁹ Lest you give your honour to others,
and your years to *those who are* cruel,
- ¹⁰ Lest strangers be filled with
your wealth,
and your labours *be* for the house
of a stranger,
- ¹¹ And you mourn at the last,
when your flesh and your body
are consumed,
- ¹² And say, "How I hated instruction!
And my heart despised rebuke!
- ¹³ And I have not obeyed the voice
of my teachers,
or turned my ear to those
who instructed me!
- ¹⁴ I was almost in total misery
in the midst of the congregation
and assembly".
- ¹⁵ Drink water out of your own cistern,
and running water out of your
own well.
- ¹⁶ Should your springs flow outside
and be like rivers of water
in the streets?
- ¹⁷ Let them be only your own,
and not strangers *sharing* with you.
- ¹⁸ Let your fountain be blessed,
and rejoice with the wife
of your youth.
- ¹⁹ *Let her be like* a loving doe
and graceful deer;
let her breasts satisfy you at all times,
and always be captivated by her love.
- ²⁰ And why will you, my son,
be captivated by a strange woman,
and embrace the bosom of a stranger?
- ²¹ For the ways of man *are*
before the eyes of the LORD,
and he ponders all his goings.
- ²² The iniquities of the wicked will
capture him,
and he will be held by the cords
of his sins.
- ²³ He will die without instruction,
and in the greatness of his folly
he will go astray.
- 6** My son, if you act as security for
your friend,
if you have struck your hand
in pledge with *that of* a stranger,
- ² You are ensnared by the words

5:3-23 He returns to the theme of adultery which he referred to in 2:16-19 and which he takes up again in 6:23-35 and 7:6-27. He shows it for what it is – one of the most dangerous and deadly of sins. It may seem sweet in the beginning (v 3), but the end will be bitterness and death (vs 4,5), and condemnation by one's own thoughts, by others, and by God (vs 11-14,21).

5:3 7:5.

5:4 Eccl 7:26.

5:5 2:18; 7:27.

"Grave" – in Hebrew "Sheol" – Gen 37:35.

5:6 9:13; 30:20; Eph 4:17-19.

5:9-14 The practice of adultery will bring a person to utter ruin. Even if he (or she) seems to escape in this life the deserved punishment, escape will not be forever (1 Cor 6:9-10; Heb 13:4; Rev 21:8).

5:15-19 Each verse here exhorts the son to be satisfied with his own wife and not to go looking

for pleasures forbidden outside the marriage relationship.

5:20 Since adultery leads to ruin and destruction why even consider engaging in this deadly sin?

5:21 Men may not find out the sin of the adulterer or punish him, but God will (Jer 29:23; Heb 4:13).

5:22 Num 32:23; Ps 7:15-16; 9:16. If we sin we are creating bonds that will hold us in slavery. See John 8:34; Rom 6:16.

5:23 If false ways that lead to death are the result of a lack of instruction how we should welcome and value instruction in our lives. See Ps 25:4-5.

6:1-5 This refers to taking the responsibility of paying someone else's debts if he should fail to do so, or any other obligation of a similar nature. The wise man says this is a foolish thing to do (17:18), and could result in complete poverty (11:15; 22:26-27), and bondage. Striking hands was a sign of agreement.

- of your mouth,
you are captured by the words
of your mouth.
- ³ Do this now, my son,
and rescue yourself,
when you have come into your
friends hands:
go, humble yourself,
and plead with your friend.
- ⁴ Do not give sleep to your eyes,
or slumber to your eyelids.
- ⁵ Rescue yourself like a roe from
the hand of *the hunter*,
and like a bird from the hand
of the fowler.
- ⁶ Go to the ant, you lazy one.
Consider its ways, and be wise.
- ⁷ It has no guide, overseer, or ruler,
- ⁸ *But* arranges for its provisions
in the summer,
and gathers its food in the harvest.
- ⁹ How long will you sleep, O lazy one?
When will you arise from
your sleep?
- ¹⁰ Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to sleep,
- ¹¹ So your poverty will come like
a traveller,
and your scarcity like an armed
man.
- ¹² A worthless person, a wicked man,
walks about with a perverse mouth.
- ¹³ He winks with his eyes,
he speaks with his feet,
he teaches with his fingers.
- ¹⁴ Perversity *is* in his heart.
He plots evil continually. He sows
discord.
- ¹⁵ Therefore his calamity will come
suddenly.
Suddenly he will be broken without
remedy.
- ¹⁶ These six *things* the LORD hates,
yes, seven *are* an abomination to him:
- ¹⁷ A proud look, a lying tongue,
and hands that shed innocent blood,
- ¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked schemes,
feet that are swift in running to evil,
- ¹⁹ A false witness *who* speaks lies,
and he who sows discord among
brethren.
- ²⁰ My son, keep your father's command,
and do not forsake the law of
your mother.
- ²¹ Bind them continually on your heart,
and tie them about your neck.
- ²² When you go about, it will lead you.
When you sleep, it will keep you,
and *when* you wake up,
it will talk with you.
- ²³ For the command *is* a lamp,
and the law *is* light,
and the rebukes of instruction *are*
the way of life,
- ²⁴ To keep you from the evil woman,
from the flattery of the tongue
of a strange woman.
- ²⁵ Do not lust in your heart for her
beauty,
nor let her take you with her
eyelids.
- ²⁶ For through a prostitute *a man is*
brought to a piece of bread,
and the adulteress will hunt
for the precious life.
- ²⁷ Can a man take fire to his chest,

6:6-11 There is much about laziness in Proverbs. We learn the character of the lazy man and the results of his laziness. See 10:26; 13:4; 15:19; 19:24; 20:4; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-16. Even small and insignificant creatures like ants have more sense than the lazy man (v 6).

6:12-15 This particular kind of scoundrel tries to destroy others by hypocrisy, deceitfulness and plots. His end will be in accordance with perfect justice. Note at Ps 18:25-26.

6:16-19 Let us write these words on our hearts and read them there daily. It is a terrible folly to practice what is detestable to God, or to love what He hates.

6:17 "*Proud*"—Ps 10:4-5; 18:27; 101:5; Isa 2:10-17; 13:11.

"*Lying*"—see 12:22; 19:22; Ps 58:3; 62:4; 63:11; 101:7; John 8:44; Col 3:9; Rev 21:8. A very

common sin and very detestable to the God of truth (Ps 31:5) who is the only God there is.

"*Blood*"—Deut 19:10; Prov 1:16; Isa 1:21; 59:7.

6:18 "*Heart*"—24:2; Isa 32:6; 65:2; Gen 6:5.

"*Feet*"—1:16; Isa 59:7; Rom 3:15.

"*Lies*"—12:17-18; 25:18; Ex 20:16. God hates seven things and two of them are telling lies. So emphatically is lying condemned in the Bible.

6:19 "*Discord*"—15:18; Zech 8:17; 1 Cor 3:3; Gal 5:19-20; Phil 2:2; Ps 133:1.

6:20 1:8; 3:21.

6:21 6:8; 3:3; 7:1-3; Deut 6:8.

6:22 4:11.

6:23 10:17; Ps 19:8; 119:105.

6:24-35 See 5:9-21.

6:25 "*Lust*"—Ex 20:17; Matt 5:28; 2 Pet 1:4.

6:26 5:10; 7:22-23.

and his clothes not be burned?
 28 Can one go on hot coals,
 and his feet not be burned?
 29 So *is* he who goes in
 to his neighbor's wife.
 Whoever touches her will not be free
 from punishment.
 30 *People* do not despise a thief,
 if he steals to satisfy his soul
 when he is hungry;
 31 But *if* he is found out,
 he must restore sevenfold,
even though he must give
 all the resources of his house.
 32 *But* whoever commits adultery
 with a woman lacks understanding.
 He *who* does it destroys his own soul.
 33 A wound and dishonour *is what*
 he will get,
 and his disgrace will 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 show regard
 for any compensation,
 nor will he rest content,
 though you give many gifts.

7 My son, keep my words,
 and store up my command with you.
 2 Keep my command and live,
 and *keep* my teaching as the apple
 of your eye.
 3 Bind them on your fingers.
 Write them on the tablet of your
 heart.
 4 Say to wisdom, "You *are* my sister",
 and call understanding *your*
 relative,
 5 That they may keep you from the
 adulteress,
 from the stranger *who* flatters
 with her words.
 6 For at the window of my house
 I looked out through my lattice,
 7 And I saw among the simple ones,

I discerned among the youths,
 a young man lacking understanding,
 8 Passing through the street
 near her corner;
 and he went along the way to her
 house,
 9 In the twilight, in the evening,
 in the black and dark night.
 10 And then a woman met him,
 dressed *like* a prostitute,
 and with a cunning heart.
 11 (She *is* loud and stubborn.
 Her feet do not stay in her house;
 12 Now *she is* in the *public* square,
 now in the streets, and lurks at
 every corner.)
 13 So she took hold of him,
 and kissed him,
 and with a brazen face said to him,
 14 "I have peace offerings with me.
 Today I have paid my vows.
 15 Therefore I came out to meet you,
 to seek your face earnestly;
 and I have found you.
 16 I have spread my bed with coverings,
 with coloured linen from 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 delight ourselves with love.
 19 For the man *is* not at home,
 he has gone on a long journey.
 20 He has taken a bag of money
 with him,
 and will come home on
 the appointed day".
 21 With her great persuasiveness
 she enticed him,
 with her flattering lips she drew
 him on.
 22 Suddenly he goes after her,
 as an ox goes to the slaughter,
 or like a fool to the correction
 of the stocks,
 23 Till an arrow pierces through
 his liver,

6:32 7:7; 9:4,16; 1 Cor 6:18. An adulterer breaks the law of God, rushes into danger of disgrace and punishment by both man and God, and sins against his own body, all for a brief passing pleasure. Is he not a fool?

7:1-4 1:8; 3:3; 4:4; 6:21; Deut 6:8; 32:47.

7:5-27 5:9-21; 6:24-35.

7:5 2:16; 6:24.

7:7 1:22; 6:32.

7:14-21 Sin appears in beautiful colours to deceive the unwary and the foolish.

7:14 Those who give themselves to the deadly sin of adultery may try to give offerings to God. Prostitutes sometimes profess to be pious, and rascals are often religious (Rom 2:21-24).

7:22-23 5:11,14,22,23; 6:26-29.

like a bird hurrying into the snare,
and does not know that it
is at the risk of his life.

²⁴ Now therefore, listen to me,
my children,
and be attentive to the words
of my mouth.

²⁵ Do not let your heart turn to
her ways.
Do not go astray in her paths.

²⁶ For many are the wounded
she has thrown down;
yes, many strong *men* have been
killed by her.

²⁷ Her house *is* the way
to the realm of the dead,
going down to the chambers of
death.

8 Does not wisdom call out,
and understanding raise her voice?
² She stands on the top of heights,
beside the way where the paths meet.
³ She cries out at the gates,
at the entrance of the city,
at the entry of the doors:
⁴ “To you, O men, I call,
and my voice *is* to the sons of men.
⁵ O you simple *ones*,
obtain wisdom! And you fools,

obtain an understanding heart!
⁶ Listen, for I will speak of excellent
things,

and right things *will come from*
the opening of my lips.

⁷ For my mouth will speak truth,
and wickedness *is* an abomination
to my lips.

⁸ All the words of my mouth *are*
in righteousness.
There is nothing crooked
or perverse in them.

⁹ They *are* all plain to the one
who understands,
and right to those who 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 with it.

¹² I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
and am the discoverer of knowledge
and discretion.

¹³ “The fear of the LORD *is*
to hate evil.
I hate pride and arrogance and the
evil way and the perverse mouth.

7:26 Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands, but who can number the countless victims of adultery?

7:27 2:18; 5:5; 1 Tim 5:6.

“*Realm of the dead*”— in Hebrew “Sheol”— see Gen 37:35.

8:1-3 Job 28:12; Prov 1:20-21. Solomon here emphasizes the availability of wisdom to all who will seek for it. It is not remote and unattainable.

8:2 “*On the top the heights*”— where all can see and hear.

“*Where the paths meet*”— where changes of direction are possible and decisions must be made.

8:3 “*At the gates*”— where city leaders met for discussion and making judgments.

8:4-11 Several important things are said about wisdom here. It can be gained by anyone, even by the simple and foolish (vs 4,5). Wisdom is related to the right, the true, the holy, the just (vs 6-9), and everything contrary to these is foolishness. Wisdom is more precious than any material possession a man may gain (vs 10,11).

In the Bible the way to gain wisdom is to turn from evil to God, meditate on His Word, obey His instructions, and seek Him for it (Jam 1:5-8). The believer in Christ is at the source of all true

wisdom, and no one else in the world is. For Christ is the wisdom of God, and He is in believers, and He is made to them wisdom, and they are complete in Him (1 Cor 1:24,30; Col 2:3,8-10). They who believe Christ and know Christ have the true enlightenment, the true wisdom of God. What they need to do is to look to Christ, yield to Christ, and learn from Christ. They who are now unbelievers can also obtain true wisdom if they will humble themselves, repent, turn to God and believe in the Lord Jesus.

8:12-21 Further facts about the nature and fruits of wisdom: Wisdom is not some philosophical speculation or impractical thing dealing with matters which do not concern our daily lives. Wisdom is closely related to an understanding of how to behave in this real world (vs 12-16). Wisdom (as all lovers do) will rush to the one who loves it (v 17). Wisdom sometimes may lead to material wealth (vs 18,21), but gives something far better than such wealth (vs 19,20). They who have true wisdom will lay up treasures in heaven, not on this earth (Matt 6:19-21).

8:13 See notes at Gen 20:11; Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10. Wisdom hates evil, pride, and crookedness because God hates them, and because they ruin and destroy men.

- 14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound judgment.
I *am* understanding.
I have strength.
- 15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.
- 16 By me rulers govern, and nobles, all who judge righteously.
- 17 I love those who love me, and those who search for me will find me.
- 18 Riches and honour *are* with me, yes, lasting riches and righteousness.
- 19 My fruit *is* better than gold, yes, than fine gold; and my revenue *is better* than choice silver.
- 20 I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice,
- 21 That I may bestow riches on those who love me; and I will fill their treasuries.
- 22 “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.
- 23 I was established from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was.
- 24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth, when *there were* no springs abounding with water.
- 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth,
- 26 While he still had not made the earth, or the fields, or the first dust of the world.
- 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there.
When he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
- 28 When he established the clouds above, when he firmly set the springs of the deep,
- 29 When he appointed to the sea its boundary, that the waters would not pass over his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
- 30 Then I was beside him, as one brought up *with him*, and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always in his presence,
- 31 Rejoicing in the inhabited world, his earth, and my delight *was* in the sons of men.
- 32 Now, therefore, listen to me, you children! For blessed *are those who* keep my ways.
- 33 Listen to instruction, and be wise, and do not refuse it.
- 34 Blessed *is* the man who hears me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.
- 35 For whoever finds me finds life, and will obtain favour from the LORD.

8:15-16 If kings, leaders, and others in authority do not have God-given wisdom they will be bad rulers. So King Solomon prayed for wisdom above everything else (1 Kings 3:7-9; 2 Chron 1:8-10).

8:17 “*Find*”– Matt 7:7-11; Jam 1:5-8. Should we not seek earnestly for something so valuable when it is attainable?

8:22-31 Wisdom speaks as if it were a person, as it does also in 1:20-33; 3:15-18; 9:1-12. Some scholars think Christ is meant here, other scholars think that Solomon is speaking in poetic language of an attribute of God. It is not right to be dogmatic about doubtful things, but it certainly seems possible that Christ is meant. In 1 Cor 1:24 Christ is called the wisdom of God, and we are told that all creation was made through Him (John 1:3,10; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:8).

8:22 “*The LORD possessed me*”– or “the LORD brought me forth”.

8:23-26 Micah 5:2; John 1:1. Christ is eternal. Wisdom, as an attribute of God, is also eternal.

There was never a moment when God did not have wisdom. Therefore the expression translated “I was brought forth” (v 24) cannot be taken to mean literally came into existence.

8:27-31 All of God’s works were created with the utmost skill and wisdom (Gen 1:9,12,18,25,31; Ps 104:24; 136:5), and they were all a reason for great rejoicing. In Job 38:4-38 we see God describing His works with joy. All was good – until man fell into sin and brought grief to God’s heart (Gen 6:5-7).

8:32-36 Wisdom is still speaking and saying that men may, and should, partake of God’s wisdom. Man was made in the image of God, and men are capable of great things if they will gain wisdom.

8:32 “*Blessed*”– notes at Gen 12:1-3; Num 6:22-27; Ps 1:1-2.

8:34 Gaining wisdom is not a once and for all event but a continuing process.

8:35 9:6.

³⁶ But he who sins against me harms his own soul.
All those who hate me love death”.

9 Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn out its seven pillars.
² She has slaughtered her animals;
she has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
³ She has sent out her maidens.
She calls out on the highest places
of the city:
⁴ “Whoever *is* simple,
let him turn in here!” *As for the*
one who lacks understanding,
she says to him:
⁵ “Come, eat my bread,
and drink the wine *which* I have
mixed.
⁶ Forsake folly, and live,
and go in the way of understanding”.
⁷ He who corrects a scorner gets
contempt for himself,
and he who rebukes a wicked
man gets an insult for himself.
⁸ Do not rebuke a scorner,

lest he hate you.

Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

⁹ Give *instruction* to a wise *man*,
and he will be even wiser.
Teach a just *man*, and he will
increase in learning.
¹⁰ The fear of the LORD *is*
the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the holy *is*
understanding.
¹¹ For by me your days will be
multiplied,
and the years of your life will be
increased.
¹² If you are wise, you will be wise for
your *benefit*, but *if* you scorn,
you alone will bear *it*.
¹³ The woman Folly *is* loud.
She is a simpleton,
and knows nothing.
¹⁴ And she sits at the door of
her house,
on a seat on the heights of the city,
¹⁵ To call to those who pass by,
going straight on their ways:
¹⁶ “Whoever *is* simple,

8:36 “*Harms his own soul*”— 15:32; Isa 3:9; 2 Pet 2:1. Ignorance will keep us from Christ, from spiritual life, from God’s blessings, from heaven itself (Eph 4:18). So it is a great destroyer of people. They who hate wisdom are hating heaven and God’s blessing and Christ who is the wisdom of God, and such people really love only death. Hating God’s wisdom is spiritual suicide.

9:1 This chapter gives the great contrast between wisdom and folly. Both have prepared something for men, both call out the same invitation (vs 4,16). But the one calls to life, to understanding, and to righteousness. The other calls to sin and death. Both call from the highest point of the city where all can see and hear them. Every person will answer the call of one or the other of these. Wisdom’s house with its seven pillars is large and perfect (seven is the Biblical number of perfection and completeness). Folly’s house is just a house (v 14) – no perfection, no completeness will ever be found there, unless it be the completeness of utter foolishness.

9:2 Luke 14:16-23.

9:3 1:20; 8:1-3.

9:4-6 This calling to the simple means that the way is open for them to become wise. And life, eternal spiritual life, comes to those who abandon their ignorant ways and receive Christ the wisdom of God.

9:7 23:9; Matt 7:6.

9:8 Willingness or unwillingness to take a rebuke reveals something of a man’s character. The wise man, unlike the foolish mocker, knows a rebuke is for his correction, for his good (Ps 141:5).

9:9 1:5; 12:15; 13:10; 14:6; 15:31; 19:25.

9:10 “*Fear*”— 1:7.

“*The holy*”— or, “the Holy One”. What men need above all is the knowledge of the holy God – not a theoretical knowledge, but the knowledge that comes from experiencing God. This is eternal life (John 17:3), and this is the only way to a holy life. Note on “holy” at Lev 20:7.

9:11 This was an Old Testament promise often repeated to those who feared God (Deut 5:16; 11:9,21; Prov 3:2; 10:27). It is not much emphasized in this New Testament age when to depart and be with Christ is often the longing of believers (Phil 1:21-24). But in any age the fear of the Lord will lead to clean, disciplined living which will tend to produce longer life than self-indulgence and sinful ways will do.

9:12 “*Benefit*”— 3:16-18; 4:22; 8:35; 14:14.

“*Scorn*”— wisdom will scorn those who scorn her (1:22,26) and God will act toward them as they deserve (Ps 18:25-26; Gal 6:7).

9:13 “*Loud*”— 7:11. Foolishness will always make more noise than wisdom, and can make a great show to attract people to her. To deceive people she uses some of the same words wisdom uses.

let him turn in here!" And as for
the one who lacks understanding,
she says to him:

¹⁷ "Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is
pleasant".

¹⁸ But he does not know that
the dead are there,
and that her guests go
to the depths of hell.

10 The proverbs of Solomon.
A wise son makes a glad father,
but a foolish son is the heaviness
of his mother.
² Treasures wickedly obtained
profit nothing,
but righteousness delivers from death.
³ The LORD will not let the righteous
go hungry,
but he thrusts aside the craving
of the wicked.
⁴ He who works with a slack hand
becomes poor,
but the hand of the diligent makes
rich.
⁵ He who gathers in summer is
a wise son,
but he who sleeps in harvest is
a son who causes shame.

⁶ Blessings are on the head
of the just,

but violence covers the mouth
of the wicked.

⁷ The remembrance of the just is
blessed,

but the name of the wicked will rot.

⁸ The wise in heart will accept
commands,
but a chattering fool will fall.

⁹ He who walks uprightly walks
securely,
but he who perverts his ways
will be found out.

¹⁰ He who winks the eye causes trouble,
and a chattering fool will fall.

¹¹ The mouth of a righteous person is
a fountain of life, but violence
covers the mouth of the wicked.

¹² Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers
all sins.

¹³ In the lips of him who has
understanding wisdom is found,
but a rod is for the back of him
who lacks understanding.

¹⁴ Wise men store up knowledge,
but the mouth of the foolish is
near destruction.

¹⁵ The rich man's wealth is
his strong city;

9:17 Compare 9:2,5. Wisdom has food of her own. Folly must steal it. Wisdom wants people to leave their foolish ways (v 6). Folly wants them to plunge further into them by sins done in secret. She does not give them the truth of 20:17. **9:18** 2:18; 7:26-27; Rom 6:23. By nature we are all the "guests" of folly (Titus 3:3; Eph 2:3; Rom 3:9). If we have escaped from its house to wisdom's palace it is all because of God's grace.

"Hell"—in Hebrew "Sheol" - Gen 37:35.

10:1 15:20; 17:21; 19:13; 23:22-25; 27:11; 29:3.

10:2 "Profit nothing"—21:6; Ps 49:10-12; Eccl 5:15; 1 Tim 6:6-9.

"Delivers"—v 16; 11:4,19; 12:28. The righteousness of Christ freely given by God to all who trust in Him delivers from eternal death (Rom 3:22; 5:21; 2 Cor 5:21).

10:3 "Righteous"—Ps 37:19,25; 111:5; Matt 6:25-27.

"Wicked"—13:25; Num 11:33-34; Ps 112:10.

10:4 "Slack hand"—6:6-11.

"Diligent"—12:24; 21:5.

10:6 "Blessings"—Ps 1:1.

10:7 "Remembrance"—Ps 112:6; Phil 1:3-4; 2 Tim 1:4-5; Heb 11; 13:7.

"Rot"—Gen 17:4; Job 18:17; Ps 9:6; 34:16.

10:8 "Commands"—9:8-9; Deut 4:5-6. The wise know something of the value of God's commands

and will keep them especially.

10:9 "Securely"—2:7; Gen 15:1; Ps 7:10; 37:23-24; Ps 91.

"Found out"—Num 32:23; Matt 10:26; 2 Tim 3:9.

10:10 "Winks"—6:13; Ps 35:19.

10:11 "Life"—vs 20,21; 3:18; 11:30; 13:14. The righteous teach others the way of the good life here on earth and eternal life with God hereafter.

10:12 "Strife"—6:14,19.

"Covers"—Jam 5:20; 1 Pet 4:8. Love will lead the sinner to God who covers and forgives his sin (note at Ps 32:1). Also love will not want to expose the sins of others unless there is a very good reason for doing so. Sometimes when the word of God is hindered or God's people endangered it must be done (compare Joshua chapter 7; Acts 5:1-11; 2 Cor 11:13; 1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 1:15; 4:14-15).

10:13 "Rod"—14:3; 19:29; 26:3; Deut 25:2.

10:14 "Store up"—Luke 6:45. A wise man will want to learn all he can about everything—except, of course, the experience of sinning (1 Cor 14:20).

10:15 Wealth brings a certain amount of worldly power which the poor cannot have (18:23; 22:7). But they should recognize that real security depends on God alone (18:2; Ps 52:1-7).

- the ruin of the poor *is* their poverty.
- ¹⁶ The labour of the righteous *tends* to life;
the fruit of the wicked to sin.
- ¹⁷ He who heeds instruction *is in* the way of life,
but he who refuses correction goes astray.
- ¹⁸ He who hides hatred *with* lying lips,
and he who utters a slander, *is* a fool.
- ¹⁹ In the multitude of words sin *is* not lacking,
but he who refrains his lips *is* wise.
- ²⁰ The tongue of the just *is like* choice silver;
the heart of the wicked *is of* little worth.
- ²¹ The lips of the righteous feed many,
but fools die for lack of wisdom.
- ²² The blessing of the LORD *is* what makes rich,
and he adds no sorrow with it.
- ²³ Doing evil *is* like sport to a fool,
but a man of understanding has wisdom.
- ²⁴ What the wicked fear will come on him,
but the desire of the righteous will be granted.
- ²⁵ When the whirlwind passes, the wicked *is* no *more*;
but the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.
- ²⁶ Like vinegar to the teeth,
and like smoke to the eyes,
so is the lazy one to those who send him.
- ²⁷ The fear of the LORD prolongs days,
but the years of the wicked will be shortened.
- ²⁸ The hope of the righteous *will be* joy,
but the expectation of the wicked will perish.
- ²⁹ The way of the LORD *is* a stronghold to the upright,
but destruction to evildoers.
- ³⁰ The righteous will never be shaken,
but the wicked will not inhabit the earth.
- ³¹ The mouth of the just brings forth wisdom,
but the perverse tongue will be cut out.
- ³² The lips of the righteous know what is suitable,
but the mouth of the wicked *speaks* perversity.
- 11** A false balance *is* an abomination to the LORD,
but a just weight *is* his delight.
- ² When pride comes, then comes shame;
but with the lowly *is* wisdom.
- ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them,
but the perverseness of transgressors will destroy them.
- ⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
but righteousness delivers from death.
- ⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way,
but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.

10:16 See 11:18-19; Deut 30:15-16; 32:46-47; Rom 6:23.

10:17 6:23; 15:5; Heb 12:5-11. Because we are sinful by nature and ignorant of God's holy ways, correction and discipline are very important. We ignore them to our peril.

10:18 Ps 31:18.

10:19 Jam 1:19; 3:2-12.

10:22 Gen 24:34-35; Ps 1:3; 128:1-2; Matt 6:19-21.

10:23 2:14; 15:21; Eph 4:19; Phil 3:19; 2 Thess 2:12.

10:24 "Fear"—Isa 66:4; Ezek 11:8. Whatever, in their more rational moments, they fear regarding God's punishment for their deeds will come on them and more besides. "Desire" Ps 37:4; 145:17-19; Matt 7:7-11; John 15:7.

10:25 "Wicked"—12:7; Ps 37:10,35,36; Matt 7:24-27.

10:26 26:6.

10:27 Verse 11; 9:10-11; Deut 11:9.

10:28 11:7; Job 8:13; Ps 112:10.

10:29 So we should earnestly pray the prayers of Ps 25:4-5; 27:11; 119:12.

10:30 Ps 37:9,28,29.

10:31 Verse 13; 15:2; Ps 52:2-5.

10:32 2:12; Eccl 10:12; Ps 59:7.

11:1 Lev 19:35-36; Deut 25:13-16; Amos 8:5; Micah 6:11. Any kind of dishonesty or crookedness is an abomination to God.

11:2 3:34; 16:18; 18:12; 29:23; Jam 4:6.

11:3 Verse 5. A person who is upright and has unmixed motives, and wants to walk in the right path, will be able to know what the right path is. The wicked will fall into the trap he has made for others (5:22; Ps 9:16).

11:4 "Riches"—Ps 49:5-15; Rev 6:15-17; 18:9-17.

"Day of wrath"—Rom 2:5.

"Righteousness"—10:2.

- ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will rescue them, but transgressors will be caught in *their own greed*.
- ⁷ When a wicked man dies, *his expectation perishes*, and the hope of unjust *men also perishes*.
- ⁸ The righteous is rescued from trouble, and the wicked meets it instead.
- ⁹ A hypocrite with *his mouth* destroys his neighbour, but through knowledge the just will be rescued.
- ¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish, *there is joyful shouting*.
- ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² He who lacks wisdom despises his neighbour, but a man of understanding keeps silent.
- ¹³ A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.
- ¹⁴ Where there *is* no counsel, the people fall; but *having* many counsellors *promotes* safety.
- ¹⁵ He who puts up security for a stranger will suffer *for it* but he who hates putting up security is safe.
- ¹⁶ A gracious woman wins honour; and strong *men* gain riches.
- ¹⁷ The merciful man does good to his own soul, but *he who is cruel* brings harm on himself.
- ¹⁸ The wicked earns deceitful wages, but to him who sows righteousness *will come* a sure reward.
- ¹⁹ As righteousness *tends* to life, so he who pursues evil *pursues it* to his own death.
- ²⁰ Those who are of a perverse heart *are* an abomination to the LORD, but *those who are upright in their way are* his delight.
- ²¹ *Though hand join in hand*, the wicked will not be unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be rescued.
- ²² *Like* a gold jewel in a pig's snout, *is* a beautiful woman who is without discretion.
- ²³ The desire of the righteous *ends* only in good, but the expectation of the wicked in wrath.
- ²⁴ There is that which scatters, and yet increases; and *there is* that which withholds more than is right, but it *results* in poverty.
- ²⁵ The generous soul will be made prosperous, and he who waters will also be watered himself.
- ²⁶ The people will curse the one who withholds grain,

11:6 Greed brings people into the bondage of sin (John 8:34; Rom 6:16; Jam 1:14-15).

11:7 10:28; 11:23. Though there may be riches, fame, and pleasure in a wicked life, it is a vain and empty life which comes to nothing.

11:8 An example of this is found in Esther 5:14; 7:10.

11:9 Slander is a very evil thing. It is an attempt to destroy the name, reputation, and usefulness of another person (Ps 101:5).

11:10 28:12; 29:2; 2 Kings 11:20; Isa 30:32; Nahum 3:19; Rev 19:1-4.

11:11 14:34; 29:8.

11:12 14:21; Matt 22:37-40; Rom 13:9; Jam 2:8.

11:13 20:19.

11:14 2 Sam 15:34; 16:23; Prov 15:22; 20:18; 24:6.

11:15 Note at 6:1-5.

11:16 Respect is better than wealth – 22:1.

11:17 14:14; Matt 5:7; Luke 6:37-38; Gal 6:7-10.

11:18 Ps 126:5-6; 1 Cor 15:58; Heb 6:10.

11:19 Deut 30:15-18; Ezek 18:30-32; Rom 5:17.

11:20 "Abomination"– 3:32; 6:16-19.

"Delight"– 12:22; 15:8; Ps 16:3; Jer 9:24. The wise person will try to do those things in which God delights, not the things He hates.

11:21 "Not be unpunished"– Lev 26:18,24; Isa 13:11; 26:20-21; Hos 4:9; Matt 25:46; 2 Thess 1:9; Heb 10:29.

11:23 "Good"– Rom 8:28.

"Wrath"– Rom 2:8-9.

11:24-25 22:9; Mal 3:10; Matt 7:2; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 9:6-11. Here is a principle we should never forget. Why should God give His blessings to us if we will not give anything to Him and to others? Note and references on giving at 2 Cor 9:15.

- but blessing *will be* on the head
of the one who sells *it*.
- ²⁷ He who diligently seeks good gains
favour,
but he who searches for evil,
will *have* it come to him.
- ²⁸ He who trusts in his riches will fall,
but the righteous will flourish like
a branch.
- ²⁹ He who troubles his own house
will inherit the wind,
and the fool *will be* servant
to the wise of heart.
- ³⁰ The fruit of the righteous *is*
a tree of life,
and he who wins souls *is* wise.
- ³¹ See *that if* the righteous
get their due on the earth,
much more the wicked and
the sinner.

- 12** Whoever loves instruction
loves knowledge,
but he who hates correction *is* stupid.
- ² A good *man* obtains favour
from the LORD,
but he will condemn a man who
devises evil.
- ³ A man will not be established
by wickedness,
but the root of the righteous will not
be shaken.
- ⁴ A virtuous woman *is* a crown
to her husband,
but she who makes *him* ashamed *is*
like rotteness in his bones.
- ⁵ The thoughts of the righteous *are*
right,

- but* the counsels of the wicked
are deceitful.
- ⁶ The words of the wicked lie
in wait for blood,
but the mouth of the upright will
rescue them.
- ⁷ The wicked are overthrown,
and *are no more*, but the house
of the righteous will stand.
- ⁸ A man will be commended
according to his wisdom,
but he who has a perverse heart
will be despised.
- ⁹ *He who is* despised and
has a servant *is* better off than
he who honours himself and
lacks bread.
- ¹⁰ A righteous *man* has regard
for the life of his beast,
but the tender mercies
of the wicked *are* cruel.
- ¹¹ He who tills his land will have
an abundance of bread,
but he who follows vain *things*
lacks understanding.
- ¹² The wicked desires the plunder
of evil *men*, but the root
of the righteous yields *fruit*.
- ¹³ The wicked is ensnared by
the transgression of *his* lips,
but the just will come out of trouble.
- ¹⁴ A man will be satisfied with good
by the fruit of *his* mouth,
and the reward of a man's hands
will be given to him.
- ¹⁵ The way of a fool *is* right
in his own eyes,
but he who listens to counsel *is* wise.

11:28 "Fall"— Ps 52:5-7; 62:10; Jer 9:23; Luke 16:19,22,23; Jam 5:1-3.

"Flourish"— Ps 1:3; 52:8; 92:12-14.

11:30 "Tree of life"— 3:18; Gen 2:9; 3:24; Rev 2:7. Through the efforts of God's righteous people others are brought to God and receive eternal life through Christ.

"Wise"— Dan 12:3; Jam 5:20. Here is a part of wisdom of which many seem to be ignorant.

11:31 Jer 25:29; 1 Pet 4:18.

12:1 "Correction"— 6:23; 10:17; Ps 119:67,71. By God's training we learn more of Him, more of ourselves, more of the proper way to behave.

"Stupid"— 1:7; 5:11-14; 15:5,10,12,32. He is stupid because he is rejecting the way to the knowledge he needs most.

12:3 See 10:25.

12:4 31:10-12.

12:5-6 So we can tell the difference between the righteous and wicked by their words and plans. We should never take the advice of a wicked person (Ps 1:1-2).

12:10 27:23; Deut 25:4. A good man will be kind to man or beast; a wicked person doesn't even know what true kindness is and there will be a mixture of evil in even his best acts.

12:13 1:18; 18:7; 29:6; Ps 59:12.

12:14 Everything a righteous man does will be rewarded— 14:14; Ps 1:3; Matt 10:42.

12:15 "Right"— 14:12; 16:2,25. This is a tragedy. Fools do not think they need God's light or wisdom or advice. They are separated from God by their proud ignorance (Eph 4:18). How things would change if only they would earnestly pray David's prayer in Ps 25:4-5!

- 16 A fool's wrath becomes known at once,
but a prudent *man* conceals dishonour.
- 17 *He who* speaks truth declares what is right,
but a false witness deceit.
- 18 There is speaking that pierces like a sword,
but the tongue of the wise *brings* health.
- 19 The truthful lip will be established forever,
but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.
- 20 Deceit *is* in the heart of those who plan evil,
but joy *is* in the counsellors of peace.
- 21 No harm happens to the just,
but the wicked will be filled with trouble.
- 22 Lying lips *are* detestable to the LORD,
but they who deal truly *are* his delight.
- 23 A prudent man conceals knowledge,
but the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.
- 24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
but the lazy will be under forced labour.
- 25 Anxiety in the heart of man weighs it down,
but a good word makes it glad.
- 26 The righteous finds *the best way for* his neighbour,
but the way of the wicked seduces them.

- 27 The lazy *man* does not roast what he gets in hunting,
but the possessions of a diligent man *are* precious.
- 28 In the way of righteousness *is* life,
and in *its* pathway *there is* no death.

- 13** A wise son *listens to* his father's instruction,
but a scorner does not listen to rebuke.
- 2 A man will enjoy good by the fruit of *his* mouth,
but the soul of transgressors *feeds* on violence.
- 3 He who keeps his mouth keeps his life,
but he who opens wide his lips will come to ruin.
- 4 The soul of the lazy man desires but *has* nothing,
but the soul of the diligent will prosper.
- 5 A righteous *man* hates lying,
but a wicked *man* is loathsome and comes to shame.
- 6 Righteousness keeps *him who is* upright in the way,
but wickedness overthrows the sinner.
- 7 There is one who pretends to be rich,
yet who *has* nothing;
there is one who pretends to be poor,
yet who *has* great riches.
- 8 A man's riches *may be* the ransom for his life,
but the poor hears no threat.
- 9 The light of the righteous rejoices,

12:16 The quality praised here is self-control – 29:11.

12:18 “*Sword*”– Ps 55:21; 57:4; 59:7; 64:3.

“*Health*”– the wise can speak the comforting, healing Word of God to those with wounded hearts.

12:19 God is a God of truth (Ps 31:5). He will see to it that truth will prevail. Lovers of God's truth will dwell with God forever (Ps 15:1-2). Liars will have their part in the lake of fire (Rev 21:8).

12:21 “*Harm*”– 1:33; Ps 91:9-12; 121:7-8; Rom 8:28; Gen 50:20.

12:22 “*Abomination*”– 6:16-17. There can be few things the God of truth hates more than lying. Mark it down. Write it on the tablets of your heart. Above all things get truth implanted in your inner man (Ps 51:6), and speak it from the heart (Ps 15:2; Eph 4:15).

12:24 Note at 6:6-11.

12:25 15:13; Ps 94:19; Phil 4:6-7.

12:27 “*Roast*”– the meaning of the Hebrew word here is uncertain.

12:28 10:2; Deut 30:15. Eternal life and justification (God's counting men righteous when they believe Him) are intimately connected (Rom 5:18).

13:1 1:8,22; 4:1; 9:7-8; 12:1.

13:2 12:14.

13:3 10:6; 18:7,20,21; 21:23; Matt 12:36-37.

13:4 Note at 6:6-11.

13:7 Either sort of pretense, indeed all deception whatever the kind, is wrong and foolish.

13:8 If the rich get into troubles and dangers, sometimes they can save themselves by paying money.

13:9 “*Light*”– Matt 5:14-16; Eph 5:8.

- but the lamp of the wicked will be put out.
- ¹⁰ Only by pride comes strife, but with the well-advised *is* wisdom.
- ¹¹ Wealth *gotten* by dishonesty will dwindle away, but he who gathers by labour will increase.
- ¹² Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but the desire fulfilled *is* a tree of life.
- ¹³ Whoever despises the word will be destroyed, but he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.
- ¹⁴ The teaching of the wise *is* a fountain of life, turning *people* aside from the snares of death.
- ¹⁵ Good understanding gains favour, but the way of the transgressor *is* hard.
- ¹⁶ Every prudent *man* deals with knowledge, but a fool exposes *his* folly.
- ¹⁷ A wicked messenger falls into trouble, but a faithful ambassador *brings* health.
- ¹⁸ Poverty and shame *will be to* him who refuses instruction, but he who has regard for correction will be honoured.
- ¹⁹ The desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, but departing from evil *is* an abomination to fools.
- ²⁰ He who walks with wise *men* will become wise, but a companion of fools will be destroyed.
- ²¹ Trouble pursues sinners, but good will be the reward of the righteous.
- ²² A good *man* leaves an inheritance to his children's children, and the wealth of the sinner *is* stored up for the just.
- ²³ Abundant food *is in* the plowed land of the poor, but lack of justice sweeps it away.
- ²⁴ He who does not use his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him carefully.
- ²⁵ The righteous eats to his heart's satisfaction, but the stomach of the wicked will be in want.
- 14** Every wise woman builds her house, but the foolish pulls it down with her hands.
- ² He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, but *he who is* perverse in his ways despises him.
- ³ In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride,

"Lamp"— 20:20; 24:20.

13:10 *"Strife"*— how much division among brethren, how many church disputes are caused by nothing but pride.

13:12 *"Life"*— v 19. He means a proper, righteous desire. The fulfillment of it brings a revival of hope and strength.

13:13 *"Despises"*— v 18; 1:29-31; Num 15:31-36. *"Rewarded"*— Ps 19:11.

13:14 10:11; 14:27. Such teaching will guide others to God Himself the Giver of eternal life, and will produce the fear of the Lord.

13:15 The last sentence of this verse may also be translated "but the unfaithful does not endure". See note on the Hebrew language at Ps 14:7.

13:19 Evil is all that fools know or desire. It is their life. Leaving it is the hardest thing they can imagine. Notes on fools at 1:7; Ps 14:1.

13:20 How careful, then, we should be in the choice of friends (1:10; 2:12,20; 12:26; 16:29; 22:24-25; 1 Cor 15:33).

13:21 *"Pursues"*— Gen 4:7; Num 32:23; Ps 7:14-16.

13:22 *"For the just"*— Esther 8:2; Eccl 2:26.

13:24 Without discipline and correction children often grow up to be spoiled, foolish, self-centered, and ignorant of God's ways of dealing with men. Withholding discipline is the same as hating one's children and wanting them to turn out badly. Those who neglect giving discipline to their children love themselves, not their children. Real love always gives discipline— 3:11-12; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15,17; Heb 12:6.

14:1 *"Wise"*— 24:3; 31:10-31. Her work edifies the family, builds character in her children, and stability in the home.

"Foolish"— the foolish woman is one who does not know the Lord and has no fear of God. She will contribute to the destruction of the character of her family, though she may vainly imagine she is doing good to it.

14:2 *"Fears"*— 1:7; Gen 20:11; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10.

"Despises"— devious and deceitful people may not be conscious of this, but it is still a fact (Rom 8:7).

- but the lips of the wise will preserve them.
- ⁴ Where there *are* no oxen
the manger *is* clean,
but much increase *comes*
by the strength of the ox.
- ⁵ A faithful witness will not lie,
but a false witness will utter lies.
- ⁶ A scorner seeks wisdom
but *does not find it*,
but knowledge *is* easy to him
who has understanding.
- ⁷ Leave the presence of a foolish man,
when you do not see the lips
of knowledge *in him*.
- ⁸ The wisdom of the prudent *is*
to understand his way,
but the folly of fools *is* deceit.
- ⁹ Fools make a mock at sin,
but among the righteous *there is*
good will.
- ¹⁰ The heart knows its own bitterness,
and a stranger does not share its joy.
- ¹¹ The house of the wicked will be
overthrown,
but the tent of the upright will
flourish.
- ¹² There is a way which seems right
to a man,
but its end *is* the way of death.
- ¹³ Even in laughter the heart *may be*
sorrowful,
- and the end of that joy *may be* grief.
- ¹⁴ The backslider in heart will be filled
with his own ways,
and a good man *will find satisfaction*
with his.
- ¹⁵ The simple believes every word,
but the prudent *man* considers
his steps.
- ¹⁶ A wise *person* fears and
departs from evil,
but the fool confidently rushes ahead.
- ¹⁷ *He who becomes angry*
quickly deals foolishly,
and a man who devises evil is hated.
- ¹⁸ The simple inherit folly,
but the prudent are crowned
with knowledge.
- ¹⁹ The evil will bow before the good,
and the wicked at the gates
of the righteous.
- ²⁰ The poor is hated even
by his own neighbour,
but the rich *has* many friends.
- ²¹ He who despises his neighbour sins,
but happy *is* he who has mercy
on the poor.
- ²² Do those who devise evil not go
astray?
But those who plan good *will find*
mercy and truth.
- ²³ In all labour there is profit,
but the talk of the lips *results*

14:5 “Lies”– 12:17; Ps 12:2. A stream of lies is all that comes from some people.

14:6 “Scorner”– 1:22. He will never find wisdom because he refuses the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom.

14:8 “Deceit”– the fool thinks himself clever and wise to be able to deceive others, little knowing that such behavior is his folly and his ruin.

14:9 “Mock”– in nothing do they show their foolishness more than in this.

14:10 1 Sam 1:7-10; 1 Kings 8:38; Matt 26:38,75; Rom 9:2-3.

14:12 12:15; 16:25; Matt 7:13-14,22,23. There is only one way which leads to eternal life and heaven. There are many ways that lead to death and hell. Each of those ways may seem right to the people taking them, because Satan has deceived them, and they are ignorant of the true way (John 12:35; 2 Cor 4:3-4; 1 John 2:11; Rev 12:9). Did Solomon have one particular false way in mind? If so, it was probably the way of the fool who rejects the fear of the Lord and has no heart to walk in God’s way. For this is the way that is the basis of all false ways.

14:14 1:31; Rev 22:12 – a principle found

everywhere in the Bible.

14:15 If people do not have the wisdom the Bible teaches they are easily deceived. This accounts for the fact of so much false religion in the world.

14:16 8:13; Gen 20:11. This is the highest kind of wisdom.

14:19 This could mean that evil, wicked men will come to ruin and will need to come to the righteous for help. Or it could mean that God will eventually cause this to happen as in Rev 3:9.

14:20 19:4. But how false are those friends who are attracted only by money!

14:21 “Neighbour”– 11:12; Lev 19:17; 1 John 2:9,11; 3:10,15,16.

“Poor”– v 31; 11:25; 19:17; 22:9; Ex 23:11; Lev 19:10; Ps 41:1. Kindness to the poor is a great virtue in God’s sight.

14:22 “Evil”– 3:29; 6:14,18; Micah 2:1.

“Find”– certainly from God, often from men too. The meaning here might be “show” love and faithfulness. There is no verb at all here in Hebrew.

14:23 Eccl 9:10; 11:6; 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:10-12. In the church also there are far too many talkers, too few workers.

- only in poverty.
- ²⁴ The crown of the wise *is* their riches, but the foolishness of fools *is* folly.
- ²⁵ A true witness rescues souls, but a deceitful *witness* speaks lies.
- ²⁶ In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence, and his children will have a place of refuge.
- ²⁷ The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, turning *people* aside from the snares of death.
- ²⁸ A large population *is* the king's glory, but a lack of people *is* the ruin of the prince.
- ²⁹ *He who is* slow to get angry has great understanding, but *he who is* quick-tempered exalts folly.
- ³⁰ A sound heart *is* the life of the body, but envy the rottenness of the bones.
- ³¹ He who oppresses the poor insults his Maker, but he who honours him has mercy on the needy.
- ³² The wicked is overthrown by his wickedness, but the righteous has hope in his death.
- ³³ Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, but the heart of fools becomes known.

- ³⁴ Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin *is* a reproach to any people.
- ³⁵ The king *shows* favour to a wise servant, but his wrath is *against* him who causes shame.

- 15** A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger.
- ² The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours out foolishness.
- ³ The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, seeing the evil and the good.
- ⁴ A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life, but crookedness in it crushes the spirit.
- ⁵ A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who has regard for correction is prudent.
- ⁶ In the house of the righteous *is* much treasure, but in the income of the wicked is trouble.
- ⁷ The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish *is* not so.
- ⁸ The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

14:25 This is most abundantly true regarding spiritual matters. A witness to God's truth saves people from eternal death.

14:26 He who fears God does not need to fear anything or anyone else.

14:27 It is a fountain of life because by it a person turns from evil deeds and false paths.

14:29 "*Slow to get angry*"— 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; Jam 1:19.

14:30 Our state of mind and desires affect the health of the body.

14:31 Verse 21. God is the Maker of both poor and rich – 22:2; Jam 3:9. He who oppresses the poor oppresses a part of God's creation and thus shows contempt for the Creator.

14:34 11:11. Israel was exalted when it stood for justice and right. It fell to ruin when it abandoned them.

14:35 True too of the King of heaven – Matt 25:21,26; Luke 19:17,22.

15:1 Verse 18. Examples at Josh 22:9-30; Jud 8:1-3; 1 Kings 12:1-19. Excellent marriage advice.

15:3 5:21; 2 Chron 16:9; Ps 94:9; Jer 16:17; 32:19; Heb 4:13.

15:4 3:18; 10:11; 12:18; 18:21.

15:5 The fool, unlike the wise, does not understand that discipline and correction are only for his good.

15:6 Not all righteous people are rich in material things, but the house of every one of them will contain spiritual treasures not found anywhere else on earth.

15:8 "*Wicked*"— Ps 51:17; Isa 1:13; Jer 6:20-21; Micah 6:6-8. Nothing the wicked does, and certainly not his religious acts can please God (Rom 8:8). God detests their sacrifices, their thoughts (v 26), and their prayers (28:9). However, this will not keep them from offering them.

"*Prayer of the upright*"— v 29; Ps 145:18; John 9:31. God commands His people to pray because prayer is one way He has chosen to bless them and work in and through them. He wants to hear them and commune with them. So He is delighted when His people, who are living uprightly, pray to Him.

- ⁹ The way of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD, but he loves him who follows righteousness.
- ¹⁰ Correction *is* grievous to him who forsakes the way, and he who hates discipline will die.
- ¹¹ Hell and destruction *lie open* before the LORD; how much more then the hearts of the children of men?
- ¹² A scorner does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise.
- ¹³ A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but sorrow of heart crushes the spirit.
- ¹⁴ The heart of the one who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.
- ¹⁵ All the days of the afflicted *are* bad, but he who has a merry heart *has* a continual feast.
- ¹⁶ Better *is* little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it.
- ¹⁷ Better a dinner of vegetables where there is love than a fattened ox and hatred with it.
- ¹⁸ An angry man stirs up strife, but *he who is* slow to get angry calms strife.
- ¹⁹ The way of the lazy *person* is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright *is* made plain.
- ²⁰ A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother.
- ²¹ Folly *is* joy to *him who is* destitute of wisdom, but a man of understanding walks uprightly.
- ²² Without counsel plans meet with disappointment, but with many counsellors they are fulfilled.
- ²³ A man has joy by the *proper* answer of his mouth, and how good *is* a timely word!
- ²⁴ The way of life *leads* upward for the wise, that he may keep from the realm of the dead below.
- ²⁵ The LORD will destroy the house of the proud, but he will establish the boundary of the widow.
- ²⁶ The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure *are* pleasing to *him*.
- ²⁷ He who is greedy for profit troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live.
- ²⁸ The heart of the righteous studies to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

15:9 "Way"—Ps 1:1,6.

"Righteousness"—11:20; Deut 7:12-13.

15:10 Verses 5,12; 1:31-32; 5:23; 12:1.

15:11 1 Sam 2:3; 16:7; 2 Chron 6:30; Ps 44:21; 139:8; Jer 17:9-10; Heb 4:13; Rev 2:23.

"Hell and destruction"—in Hebrew "Sheol" and "Abaddon".

15:15 "Feast"—the food of happiness, contentment, satisfaction with God's plan, and peace of mind.

15:16 16:8; 17:1; Ps 37:16. The person who truly fears the Lord has the beginning of wisdom, has eternal life, has an inheritance in heaven, has the LORD Himself—far, far better than any material wealth. When will we all thoroughly learn this?

15:17 "Love"—most true when the love is God's love.

15:19 Everything seems too difficult to the lazy person and he can accomplish nothing. The upright can always make progress toward the goal. Observe that here the contrast is between the lazy and the upright—signifying that the lazy are not upright and the upright are not lazy.

15:23 "Word"—24:26; 25:11; Isa 50:4.

15:24 Verses 19,21.

"Realm of the dead"—in Hebrew "Sheol"—Gen 37:35.

15:25 2:22; 12:7; 14:11; Ps 37:35-38; 127:1; Matt 7:26-27.

15:26 "Abomination"—everything about wicked persons is detestable to God, though He loves them in the sense that He desires their highest good and would save them and make them His own dear children if they would repent and trust in Christ.

"Pleasing"—the sacrifices, prayers, and thoughts of the righteous are pleasing to God (v 8; Rom 12:1; Heb 13:12-13). The God of the Bible, the only God there is, loves righteousness and hates wickedness.

15:27 "Greedy"—1:19; Josh 7:24-26; Col 3:5-6; 1 Tim 6:9-10.

"Bribes"—bribes corrupt people and pervert justice—Deut 16:19; 1 Sam 12:3; Ps 26:10; Eccl 7:7; Isa 33:17. See note at Amos 5:12.

- ²⁹ The LORD *is* far from the wicked,
but he hears the prayer of the
righteous.
- ³⁰ The light of the eyes rejoices the
heart,
and good news brings fat to the bones.
- ³¹ The ear that listens to the correction
of life abides among the wise.
- ³² He who refuses instruction despises
his own soul,
but he who heeds correction gets
understanding.
- ³³ The fear of the LORD *is*
the instruction of wisdom,
and before honour *is* humility.

16 The plans of the heart *belong* to
man,
but the answer of the tongue *is*
from the LORD.

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

³ Commit your works to the LORD,
and your thoughts will be established.

- ⁴ The LORD has made all *things*
to answer *for his purpose*; yes,
even the wicked for the day of
disaster.
- ⁵ Everyone *who has* a proud heart
is an abomination to the LORD;
though hand join in hand,
he will not be unpunished.
- ⁶ By mercy and truth wickedness *is*
atoned for, and by the fear
of the LORD *people* depart
from evil.
- ⁷ When a man's ways please
the LORD,
he makes even his enemies to be
at peace with him.
- ⁸ Better *is* a little with righteousness
than great income without
righteousness.
- ⁹ A man's heart plans his way,
but the LORD directs his steps.
- ¹⁰ A divine sentence *is*
in the lips of the king;
his mouth must not transgress in
judgment.

15:29 "*Hears*"—v 8; Ps 66:2; 145:18-19; Isa 59:1-2; Jer 33:3; John 9:31.

15:30 14:30; 25:25.

15:31 1:23; 6:23; 9:7-9; 12:1.

15:32 "*Despises his own soul*"—8:36. Rejecting the way to correct and save oneself from ruin is the same as hating oneself.

15:33 "*Fear*"—1:7. There is no other way to learn wisdom. This is why the unbeliever, the wicked person will never gain it, no matter how much education and learning he may gain. The first sentence of this verse may also be translated "Wisdom teaches the fear of the LORD".

"*Humility*"—18:12; 22:4; 25:6-7; 29:23; Isa 66:2; Matt 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14; 1 Pet 5:6. This is true of the honor God gives – which is the only honor worth having.

16:1 Verse 9; 19:21; 20:24; Jer 10:23. A person plans what he wants to do but without God's working he cannot even utter those plans, let alone fulfill them.

16:2 "*Clean*"—12:15; 14:12; 30:12; Jer 17:9. This is one reason why it is so difficult to turn people from false ways.

"*Spirits*"— God sees the inward intentions and desires of a man which are the source of his actions (20:27; 2 Chron 6:30; 21:2; Jer 17:10; Luke 16:15; 1 Cor 4:4-5).

16:3 3:5-6; 2 Chron 20:20; Ps 1:3; 20:4; 37:5-6; 90:17. Only God can give true and lasting success, and bring about the fulfillment of our plans and hopes. This verse makes it clear what we must do to see this.

16:4 There is no purposeless activity with God. He infallibly fulfills His plans including the eventual punishment of the wicked.

"*To answer to his purpose*"— in Hebrew there is just one word here, meaning answer.

16:5 6:16; 11:20-21; Ps 40:4. Then surely anything that humbles us is for our good.

16:6 "*Atoned*"—notes at Ex 25:17; 29:33. By mercy and truth God provided a way for guilty men to be forgiven. And mercy and truth are the qualities which will enable us to lead others to God for this forgiveness.

"*Fear*"— notes at Gen 20:11; Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14; 111:10.

16:7 3:17; Gen 39:21; 2 Chron 14:6-7; 17:10; Rom 12:18; Heb 12:14. Such a person will be seeking peace with others and will find it. But with some kinds of enemies this will not be easy (compare Matt 10:21-22, 34-36; John 15:18-21).

16:8 10:2; 15:16; 17:1; Ps 37:16; Eccl 4:6. There are things far more important than prosperity and wealth – things such as honesty, integrity, purity, just and wise behavior, and the fear of God.

16:9 God can and does control the activities of men to fulfill His will. The freedom of individuals and whole nations is only within the bounds of God's purposes.

16:10 Rulers are appointed by God, and in some measure are His representatives (Rom 13:1-5). They should be very careful in giving judgments that affect the people (17:7).

"*Divine sentence*"— or "oracle", that is, a pronouncement from God.

- ¹¹ A just weight and balance *are* the LORD's;
all the weights in the bag *are* his business.
- ¹² *It is* an abomination for kings to commit wickedness,
for the throne is established by righteousness.
- ¹³ Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings,
and they love him who speaks the right thing.
- ¹⁴ The wrath of a king *is like* 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* like a cloud of spring rain.
- ¹⁶ How much better *it is* to get wisdom than gold!
And to get understanding *is* to be chosen rather than silver!
- ¹⁷ The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil;
he who keeps his way preserves his soul.
- ¹⁸ Pride *appears* before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
- ¹⁹ *It is* better to *have* a humble spirit with the lowly,
than to divide the plunder with the proud.
- ²⁰ He who handles a matter wisely will find good,
and happy *is* the one who trusts in the LORD.
- ²¹ The wise in heart will be called discerning,
and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.
- ²² Understanding *is* a fountain of life to him who has it,
but the instruction of fools *is* folly.
- ²³ The heart of the wise teaches his mouth,
and adds learning to his lips.
- ²⁴ Pleasant words *are like* a honeycomb, sweet to the soul,
and health to the bones.
- ²⁵ There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end *is* the ways of death.
- ²⁶ A labourer's appetite works for him,
for his hunger urges him on.
- ²⁷ An ungodly man digs up evil,
and his lips *are like* a burning fire.
- ²⁸ A perverse man sows strife,
and a talebearer separates chief friends.
- ²⁹ A violent man entices his neighbour
and leads him into a way *that is* not good.
- ³⁰ He shuts his eyes to plot perverse things;
moving his lips he causes evil to take place.
- ³¹ The gray head is a crown of glory,
if it is found in the way of righteousness.
- ³² *He who is* slow to get angry is better than the mighty,
and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.
- ³³ The lot is cast into the lap,
but each one of its decisions *is* from the LORD.

16:11 11:1; Deut 25:15; Ezek 45:10; Amos 8:4-6.

16:12 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne – Ps 97:2. He will bring down any throne based on unrighteousness and injustice. History shows this again and again.

16:13 "*The right thing*" – certainly the King of heaven values such a man (Ps 15:1-3; 51:6).

16:14 19:12; 19:12; 20:2; Matt 22:7; Luke 19:27.

16:16 3:13-14; 8:10; Ps 19:10; 49:20; 119:72.

16:17 15:19; 19:16; 22:5.

16:18 11:2; 1 Sam 17:41-42,48,49; 2 Chron 26:16; 32:25; Jam 4:6.

16:19 "*Better*" – why? Because God is with the lowly and will eventually bless and exalt him (3:34; Isa 57:15; Matt 5:3). He is against the proud and will destroy him (v 18). Both the humble circumstances of the one and the ill-gotten gain of the other are only temporary.

16:20 "*Happy*" – 3:3-5; Ps 1:1-2; 2:12.

16:22-24 24:13-14; Ps 19:10. Certain types of instruction should be given in a pleasant manner rather than in a stern, forbidding one.

16:25 14:12.

16:27 Jam 3:6.

16:28 6:14; 11:13; 14:9.

16:30 6:13.

16:31 3:1-2,16; Lev 19:32.

16:32 "*Slow to get angry*" – 14:29; 15:18; 19:11.

"*Rules*" – conquering oneself is the most difficult of all things and far more rewarding than conquering cities.

16:33 "*Lot*" – in Old Testament days the lot was often used to make decisions, and nothing is said against it anywhere in the Bible (18:18; Num 26:53,55; Josh 13:6; 1 Sam 14:41-42; 1 Chron 26:13; Neh 11:1; Ps 22:18; Jonah 1:7; Acts 1:26). God had no problem in causing the right decision to be made by that method.

- 17** Better *is* a dry crust,
and quietness with it,
than a house full of *feasting from*
sacrifices *with* strife.
- ² A wise servant will rule a son
who causes shame,
and will have part of the inheritance
among the brothers.
- ³ The refining pot *is* for silver
and the furnace for gold,
but the LORD tests the hearts.
- ⁴ An evildoer pays heed to false lips,
and a liar listens to a slandering
tongue.
- ⁵ Whoever mocks the poor insults
his Maker,
and he who is glad at calamities
will not be unpunished.
- ⁶ Children's children *are* the crown
of old men,
and the glory of children *is* their
fathers.
- ⁷ Fine talk is not fitting for a fool;
much less are lying lips for a prince.
- ⁸ A bribe *is like* a charm in the eyes
of the one who has it;
wherever he turns, he succeeds.
- ⁹ He who conceals a transgression
seeks love,
but he who repeats a matter separates
close friends.
- ¹⁰ A rebuke goes more deeply into
a wise man
- than a hundred lashes into
a fool.
- ¹¹ An evil *person* seeks only rebellion;
therefore a cruel messenger will be
sent against him.
- ¹² Let a man meet a bear robbed
of her cubs
rather than a fool in his folly.
- ¹³ Whoever repays evil for good,
evil will not depart from his house.
- ¹⁴ The beginning of strife *is like*
letting out water;
therefore break off before the quarrel
begins.
- ¹⁵ He who justifies the wicked and he
who condemns the righteous,
both of these *are* an abomination
to the LORD.
- ¹⁶ Why *is there* a price in the hand
of a fool to get wisdom,
since *he has* no heart *for it*?
- ¹⁷ A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for adversity.
- ¹⁸ A man lacking understanding strikes
hands *in pledge*, *and* puts up
security in the presence of his
friend.
- ¹⁹ He who loves quarreling loves
transgression,
and he who exalts his gate
seeks destruction.
- ²⁰ He who has a crooked heart
finds no good,

17:1 15:16-17; 16:8.

"Sacrifices"—probably indicates an abundance of meat after animals had been sacrificed.

17:2 11:29.

17:3 Note at Ps 66:10-12. God's purpose toward us is to make us pure, and His testing can be like fire (Isa 1:25; Mal 3:2-4).

17:5 "Maker"—14:31.

"Not be unpunished"—24:17; Ezek 25:6-7; Ps 35:26. To be happy at another's sorrow, to rejoice when the poor meet disaster, shows one of the qualities of Satan.

17:7 "Prince"—16:10; 12:22.

17:8 "Bribe"—this is not a recommendation for bribery, but only a statement of how things are in this fallen sinful world. Everywhere the Bible condemns taking or giving bribes with a view to pervert justice and truth. Note at 15:27.

17:9 "Conceals"—this does not mean covering one's own offense, but keeping quiet about someone else's offense instead of spreading the news of it to others. Compare 28:13.

"Love"—10:12; 1 Cor 13:4-7; Jam 5:19-20;

1 Pet 4:8.

"Separates"—16:28.

17:10 9:8-9; Ps 141:5.

17:12 A fool is more dangerous than an enraged bear. A bear can only hurt people physically, but a fool can injure them in many ways.

17:13 1 Sam 19:4; Ps 35:12; 38:20; 109:5; Jer 18:20. Repaying evil for good is devilish. Repaying good for evil is divine and the only proper behavior for a Christian (Luke 6:27-31, 35, 36; Rom 12:21). So we know which of these wise people will practice.

17:14 Matt 5:25-26. Quarrels are much easier to start than to stop.

17:15 18:5; 24:23-25; Ex 23:6-7; Ps 94:21; Isa 5:23; Matt 12:7.

17:16 No matter how much money a fool has he is still a fool, so his money will be spent foolishly.

17:17 John 15:13-15; Heb 2:11-12.

17:18 6:1-5.

17:19 "Transgression"—quarreling is sin in itself and will lead to other sins (1 Cor 3:3; Gal 5:20).

"His gate"—indicates pride (compare Gen 11:4, 8; Dan 4:28-32. See Isa 2:12-18).

- and he who has a perverse tongue
falls into trouble.
- ²¹ He who begets a fool *does so*
to his sorrow,
and the father of a fool has no joy.
- ²² A merry heart does good *like*
a medicine;
but a crushed spirit dries up the
bones.
- ²³ A wicked *person* accepts a bribe
from the bosom to pervert the ways
of justice.
- ²⁴ He who has understanding *has*
wisdom before him,
but the eyes of a fool *are* on the ends
of the earth.
- ²⁵ A foolish son *is* a grief to his father,
and bitterness to her who gave him
birth.
- ²⁶ *It is* also not good to punish
the righteous,
or to strike princes for *their* integrity.
- ²⁷ He who has knowledge is sparing
with his words,
and a man of understanding has
a rare spirit.
- ²⁸ Even a fool is considered wise
if he keeps quiet;
and he who keeps his lips shut *is*
regarded as a man of
understanding.
- 18** A man who separates himself seeks
to fulfil his own *desire*;
he bursts out against all wisdom.
- ² A fool has no delight in
understanding,
but only in displaying his *own* heart.
- ³ When the wicked comes,
contempt also comes,
and with disgrace *comes* reproach.
- ⁴ The words of a man's mouth *are*
deep waters,
and the fountain of wisdom *is*
a flowing brook.
- ⁵ *It is* not good to show favoritism
to the wicked,
to deprive the righteous of justice.
- ⁶ A fool's lips bring contention,
and his mouth invites blows.
- ⁷ A fool's mouth *is* his ruin,
and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.
- ⁸ The words of a talebearer *are*
like wounds,
and they go down into the inmost
parts of the body.
- ⁹ He who is lazy in his work is a
brother to him
who is a great waster.
- ¹⁰ The name of the LORD *is*
a strong tower;
the righteous runs into it, and is safe.
- ¹¹ The rich man's wealth *is* his
stronghold and like a high wall,
in his own imagination.
- ¹² Before destruction the heart
of man is haughty,
and before honour *is* humility.
- ¹³ He who answers a matter before
he hears *it*,
it is folly and shame to him.
- ¹⁴ The spirit of a man will sustain
his infirmity,
but a wounded spirit who can bear?
- ¹⁵ The heart of the prudent gets
knowledge,
and the ear of the wise seeks
knowledge.

17:22 14:30; 15:13,30; 18:14; Ps 32:3-4; 51:8.

17:23 Verse 8; 15:27 (note).

17:24 "*Ends of the earth*"— the grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence. The fool is not willing to face reality and get on with the job at hand.

17:27-28 10:19; 14:29; 16:32; Job 13:5.

18:1 A man who is interested only in his own advantage will not be likely to form true and close friendships.

18:4 20:5. Who can tell what strange things may lurk in the unseen depths of men's sinful hearts? On the other hand, true wisdom is always springing up with new sparkling clean water, becoming a flowing stream, producing life wherever it flows.

18:5 17:15,26.

18:7 10:14; 12:13; 13:3; Ps 64:7-8.

18:8 26:22. Gossip becomes a part of those who hear and believe it.

18:9 See 6:6-11; Eccl 9:10. This is true in the things of this world, and true also in the Lord's service.

18:10 The name means the person.

"*Tower*"— Ps 61:3; 144:2.

"*Safe*"— 14:26; 29:25; Ps 18:2; 20:1; 27:5; 32:7; 2 Tim 4:18. In the Lord Himself is the only safe place in the entire universe. There is no security anywhere else either for time or for eternity, but there is perfect security there.

18:11 So they think they do not need the Lord. But see 17:19.

18:12 11:2; 15:33; 16:18.

18:14 15:13; 17:22.

- 16 A man's gift makes room for him,
and brings him before great men.
- 17 The first one *to present* his case
seems right,
until another comes forward
and examines him.
- 18 *Casting* the lot ends disputes,
and decides between the mighty.
- 19 A brother offended *is harder to win*
than a strong city,
and disputes *are* like the bars
of a castle.
- 20 A man's stomach will be satisfied
with the fruit of his mouth,
and with the harvest of his lips
he will be filled.
- 21 Death and life *are* in the power
of the tongue,
and they who love it will eat its fruit.
- 22 *He who* finds a wife finds good,
and obtains favour from the LORD.
- 23 The poor man uses entreaties,
but the rich man answers roughly.
- 24 A man *who has* friends
may be broken,
but there is a friend *who* sticks closer
than a brother.
- 19 Better *is* the poor man who walks
in his integrity than *he who is*
perverse in speech and is a fool.
- 2 Also *it is* not good for the soul
to be without knowledge,
and he who makes haste with *his*
feet misses the way.
- 3 The foolishness of a man perverts
his way,
and his heart frets against the LORD.
- 4 Wealth makes many friends,
but the poor man is separated from
his neighbour.
- 5 A false witness will not be
unpunished,
and *he who* speaks lies will not
escape.
- 6 Many will beg favours from the
prince,
and every man *is* a friend
to the one who gives gifts.
- 7 All the brothers of the poor man
hate him;
how much more do his friends keep
their distance from him!
He pursues *them with* words,
but they are not there *for him*.
- 8 He who gets wisdom loves his
own soul;
he who has regard for understanding
will find good.
- 9 A false witness will not be
unpunished,
and *he who* speaks lies will perish.
- 10 Luxury *is* not fitting for a fool;
much less for a servant to
rule princes.
- 11 A man's discretion makes him slow
to get angry,
and *it is* his glory to overlook a
transgression.
- 12 The king's wrath *is* like
the roaring of a lion,
but his favour *is* like dew on the grass.
- 13 A foolish son *is* the calamity
of his father,
and the quarrels of a wife *are*
a continual dripping.

18:16 Gen 32:13; 43:11; 1 Kings 10:1-2.

18:18 Note at 16:33.

18:20 12:14.

18:21 "*Death and life*"— we must be careful what we say. Words can kill reputations, can stir up quarrels which result in fighting and killing, can pronounce death sentences, and false words about God and salvation can cause eternal death (separation from God). Other kinds of words can reverse the effect of killing words, can result in life, even eternal life (10:11; 13:14; 15:4). In the end, God will judge us all by the words we have spoken (Matt 12:37).

18:22 "*Good*"— (12:4; 19:14; 31:10; Gen 2:18), but not best in every time and in every case (Jer 16:1-2; 1 Cor 7:1-2,8,38).

18:24 "*Closer*"— Jesus does. John 15:15.

19:1 28:6; 16:8; 15:16. Blamelessness will receive

an eternal reward. Everything of this world is passing away – 1 John 2:17.

19:3 In other words, he blames God for what he has brought on himself by his own folly or wickedness. This is the tendency of human nature since the fall of Adam (Gen 3:12; 4:5; Isa 8:19-21; Rev 16:10-11).

19:5 Verse 9; 21:28; Deut 19:19; Isa 29:20-21; Rev 21:8.

19:7 The meaning of the Hebrew for the last sentence of this verse is uncertain.

19:8 "*Loves*"— such a person has sought the most valuable thing for himself. Contrast with 8:36; 15:32.

19:11 "*Slow to get angry*"— 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; Eccl 7:9.

"*Overlook*"— Gen 45:4-7; 50:19-21; 2 Sam 1:17-19; 16:5-7,11,12; Matt 5:39-41; 1 Cor 13:5.

- ¹⁴ House and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers, and an understanding wife *is* from the LORD.
- ¹⁵ Laziness casts into a deep sleep, and an idle soul will suffer hunger.
- ¹⁶ He who keeps the commandment keeps his own soul, *but* he who despises his ways will die.
- ¹⁷ He who is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him what he has given.
- ¹⁸ Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not let your soul remove it because of his crying.
- ¹⁹ A man of great anger will pay the penalty; for if you rescue *him*, yet you must do it again.
- ²⁰ Listen to advice and receive instruction, so that you may be wise in the end of your *days*.
- ²¹ *There are* many plans in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD *is* what will stand.
- ²² What is desirable in a man *is* his kindness, and a poor man *is* better than a liar.
- ²³ The fear of the LORD *leads* to life, and *he who has* it will rest satisfied, untouched by evil.
- ²⁴ A lazy *man* buries his hand in the dish, and will not so much as bring it back to his mouth.
- ²⁵ Strike a scorner and the simple will beware, and rebuke one who has understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.
- ²⁶ He who despoils *his* father *and* chases *his* mother away *is* a son who causes shame and brings disgrace.
- ²⁷ My son, stop listening to the instruction *that causes* one to stray from the words of knowledge.
- ²⁸ An ungodly witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked feeds on evil.
- ²⁹ Judgments are prepared for scorners, and blows for the back of fools.

19:14 Verse 13; 12:4; 18:22.

19:15 6:6-11.

19:16 13:13; 15:10; 16:17.

19:17 14:21,31; Deut 24:19-22; Ps 41:1. We may be sure that God will pay his "debts", and with good interest! And those who give to the poor will be laying up treasures in heaven (Matt 6:19-20. Note and references on giving at 2 Cor 9:15).

19:18 13:24; 23:13-14. Discipline is one means of keeping children from evil ways which lead to death. So refusing to discipline children is the same as agreeing to their destruction.

"*Crying*"—the Hebrew word means "to die" and the meaning seems to be "Do not be responsible for your son's premature death by refusing to discipline him".

19:19 Inability to control anger will get men into trouble again and again.

19:20 4:1; 9:8-9.

19:21 16:1,9; Ps 33:11; Isa 8:10; 14:24,27; 46:10; 55:11. God is working His purposes out on earth no matter what men may plan to do. To accomplish His will He uses men's plans, or overturns them as He wishes.

19:22 "*Kindness*"— or the Hebrew could also be translated "What a man desires is unfailing love" — or even "a man's greed is his shame". But is it possible that the same Hebrew words can give such widely different meanings? In this case,

the answer is, yes. The Hebrew word translated here "kindness" also means love, goodness, and faithfulness. But it also means reproach or shame. So it could be translated "greedily desires" or "lusts" or "greed" (what a person greedily desires or lusts after may be called his greed). See the note on some of the difficulties encountered in translation at Ps 14:6-7.

"*A poor man is better than a liar*"— 15:16; 16:8; 28:6 — a thousand times better! A liar sins against God, is doing something God hates, and is in danger of terrible punishment (Rev 21:8). The poverty of a poor man who trusts in Christ is only temporary, and at death he will enter into an eternal rich inheritance with God. Many are placed in positions where this choice between poverty and lying must be made. Alas that then so many start practicing lying and deception to get money. We should tremble for the future of such persons.

19:23 "*Fear*"— 1:7; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:27.

"*Satisfied*"— 1:33; Phil 4:11; 1 Tim 6:6-8; Heb 13:5. How much better this is than lying and deceiving to get uncertain gain.

19:24 6:6-11.

"*Dish*"— the KJV has "bosom", which is an unlikely translation of the Hebrew.

19:25 9:9; 21:11; Ps 141:5.

19:26 Ex 20:12.

- 20** Wine is a mocker, strong drink rages,
and whoever is deceived by it is not wise.
- ² The fear of a king *is like* the roaring of a lion;
whoever provokes him to anger wrongs his own soul.
- ³ *It is* an honour for a man to avoid strife,
but every fool will quarrel.
- ⁴ The lazy man will not plow because of the cold;
therefore he will beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.
- ⁵ Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water,
but a man of understanding will draw it out.
- ⁶ Most men will proclaim each his own goodness,
but a faithful man who can find?
- ⁷ The just *man* walks in his integrity;
his children *are* blessed after him.
- ⁸ A king who sits on the throne of judgment dispels all evil with his eyes.
- ⁹ Who can say, “I have made my heart clean,
I am pure from my sin?”
- ¹⁰ Varying weights *and* varying measures,
both of them alike *are* an abomination to the LORD.
- ¹¹ Even a child is known by his actions,
whether his deeds *are* pure and right.
- ¹² The hearing ear, and the seeing eye,
the LORD has made both of them.
- ¹³ Do not love sleep,
so that you do not come to poverty;
open your eyes, *and* you will have *enough* food to be satisfied.
- ¹⁴ “*It is* nothing, *it is* nothing!”
says the buyer,
but when he has gone his way,
then he boasts.
- ¹⁵ There is gold, and an abundance of rubies,
but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.
- ¹⁶ Take the garment of the one who puts up security *for* a stranger,
and take a pledge from him for a strange woman.
- ¹⁷ Bread *obtained* by deceit *is* sweet to a man,
but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel.
- ¹⁸ Prepare plans by *getting* counsel,
and make war through good advice.
- ¹⁹ He who goes around as a talebearer reveals secrets;
therefore have nothing to do with him who flatters with his lips.
- ²⁰ Whoever curses his father or his mother,
his lamp will be put out in deep darkness.
- ²¹ An inheritance *may be* quickly obtained in the beginning,
but in the end it will not be blessed.

20:1 “Mocker”, “rages”—the Bible frequently speaks about over-indulgence in alcoholic beverages. It leads to folly, wickedness, and punishment (23:20-21,29,30; 31:4-5; Gen 9:21; Ps 69:12; Isa 28:7; Hab 2:5; Rom 13:13; 1 Cor 5:11; 6:10; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:18). Far better not to touch them at all than to run the risks involved in indulging.

20:3 6:14; 17:14,19; 18:6.

20:4 6:6-11.

20:5 16:1-2; 18:4.

20:6 Ps 12:1; Eccl 7:28-29; Micah 7:2. There is One who is eternally faithful—Deut 7:9; Ps 36:5; 89:1; 92:2; Isa 11:5; 25:1; Lam 3:23; 1 Cor 1:9; 10:13; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 2:17; 1 Pet 4:19; 1 John 1:9; Rev 19:11. And God can and does make His people faithful—Num 12:7; Neh 7:2; Matt 25:21; Luke 16:10; 1 Cor 4:2; 7:25; Eph 1:1; Col 1:2,7; 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 2:2; Rev 2:10; 17:14.

20:7 13:22; 14:26; Ps 26:1; 37:25-26; 112:2.

20:9 The Lord Jesus alone of all whoever

lived on earth could truthfully claim to be sinless (John 8:46; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 2:22,24; 1 John 3:5). All the rest of us are born with a sinful nature and have sinned (Job 14:4; Ps 14:2-3; 51:5; Rom 3:9,23). But God can cleanse us from sin and make us pure in His sight (Ps 51:2,7,10; Isa 1:18; Zech 13:1; Titus 2:11-14; Heb 9:14; 1 John 1:9), and can enable us to live the blameless life mentioned in v 7. See notes on Psalms 14 and 15.

20:10 Verse 23; 11:1; 16:11.

20:11 Matt 7:16; 12:33-35; Luke 6:43-45; 1 John 2:3-6; 3:10.

20:12 Ps 94:9; 14:1.

20:15 3:14-15; 8:10-11.

20:16 6:1-4; Deut 24:10-13.

20:17 The pleasures of sin are only for a little while.

20:19 11:13.

20:20 19:26; 30:11,17; Ex 20:12; 21:17; Lev 20:9.

20:21 Compare Luke 15:11-16.

- ²² Do not say, “I will repay evil”, *but* wait on the LORD, and he will save you.
- ²³ Varying weights *are* an abomination to the LORD, and a false balance *is* not good.
- ²⁴ Man’s steps *are directed* by the LORD; how then can a man understand his own way?
- ²⁵ *It is* a snare for a man to rashly dedicate *what is* holy, and after vows to reconsider.
- ²⁶ A wise king winnows the wicked, and drives the *threshing* wheel over them.
- ²⁷ The spirit of man *is* the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inmost being.
- ²⁸ Mercy and truth preserve the king, and his throne is upheld by mercy.
- ²⁹ The glory of young men *is* their strength, and the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.
- ³⁰ Blows that wound cleanse away evil; *just so* beatings *cleanse* the inmost being.

21 The king’s heart *is* in the hand of the LORD; like streams of water, he turns it wherever he will.

² Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes,

- but the LORD weighs the hearts.
- ³ Doing what is right and just *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.
- ⁴ A haughty look and a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked, *are* sin.
- ⁵ The plans of the diligent surely *lead* to profit, but *those of* everyone *who is* hasty surely *leads* to poverty.
- ⁶ Getting treasures by a lying tongue *is* a fleeing vapour, *pursued* by those who seek death.
- ⁷ The violence of the wicked will destroy them, because they refuse to act justly.
- ⁸ The way of the perverse man *is* devious; but *as for* the pure, his behaviour *is* upright.
- ⁹ *It is* better to live in a corner of the housetop, than in a house with a quarrelsome woman.
- ¹⁰ The soul of the wicked desires evil; his neighbour finds no favour in his eyes.
- ¹¹ When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise; and when the wise is instructed, he gains knowledge.
- ¹² The righteous *person* wisely considers the house of the wicked, *but* God overthrows the wicked for

20:22 Deut 32:35,43; Ps 94:1; Rom 12:19; Heb 10:30.

20:23 Verse 10.

20:24 16:9; 21:1; Jer 10:23. God’s ways are beyond tracing out (Rom 11:33). He makes man’s way also past tracing out. No man understands very much of what he really is and why he does what he does, and what the whole meaning of his life is, and how it is all interwoven with God’s purposes. But God understands it all (Jer 17:9-10).

20:25 Perhaps a translation just as good as, or possibly better than this would be “It is a snare for a man to say rashly This is dedicated and after vows to reconsider it”.

20:26 See notes on Ps 101.

20:27 1 Cor 2:11. The Lord uses this “lamp” to search men and make them conscious of what goes on in their inner being.

20:29 16:31.

20:30 A hearty welcome to all blows that produce such good results! See Ps 141:5; 66:10-12.

21:1 16:1; 19:21; 20:24. Kings are no more difficult for God to direct than anyone else. Bible history shows that He often worked in the hearts of kings to fulfill His purposes (kings of Egypt – Gen 41:1,14,15,41; Ex 7:3-5; 9:16; kings of Babylon – 2 Chron 36:17; Dan 2:1,25,26,48; kings of Persia – 2 Chron 36:22; Isa 45:1-3. See also 1 Kings 11:14,23; 1 Chron 5:26; 2 Chron 21:16; Rev 17:12,17). God does the same thing now.

21:2 Notes at 14:12; 16:2.

21:3 1 Sam 15:22; Isa 1:11-17; Hos 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Matt 9:13.

21:6 10:2; 19:22; Ps 37:16; 39:6; 49:5-9. Many there are who lie and deceive to gain money. In the end will such wealth be worth what they will have to pay for it?

21:8 2:15. They use crooked ways to gain their object, and then must use other crooked ways to cover up these first crooked ways. Like this they are caught in a downward spiral.

21:9 19:1; 12:4.

21:12 10:25; 12:7; 14:11; Matt 7:26-27.

- their* wickedness.
- ¹³ Whoever shuts his ears at the cry of the poor, will also cry out himself, but will not be heard.
- ¹⁴ A gift in secret pacifies anger, and a bribe in the bosom strong wrath.
- ¹⁵ Justice done is a joy to the righteous, but *like* destruction to evildoers.
- ¹⁶ The man who wanders out of the way of understanding will settle down in the company of the dead.
- ¹⁷ He who loves pleasure *will become* a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not become rich.
- ¹⁸ The wicked *will be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.
- ¹⁹ *It is* better to live in the wilderness, than with a quarrelsome and angry woman.
- ²⁰ *There is* precious treasure and oil in the home of the wise, but a foolish man consumes it.
- ²¹ He who follows righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honour.
- ²² A wise *man* scales *the wall of* the city of the mighty, and casts down the stronghold in which they trust.
- ²³ Whoever guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles.
- ²⁴ Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who acts with arrogant pride.
- ²⁵ The desire of the lazy kills him, for his hands refuse to work.
- ²⁶ He greedily covets all day long, but the righteous gives unsparingly.
- ²⁷ The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination; how much more *when* he brings it with a wicked mind?
- ²⁸ A false witness will perish, but the man who listens speaks to the end.
- ²⁹ A wicked man puts on a bold face, but *as for* the upright, he directs his way.
- ³⁰ *There is* no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD.
- ³¹ The horse *is* prepared for the day of battle, but safety *is* from the LORD.
- 22** A good name *is* more to be desired than great riches, *and* loving favour rather than silver and gold.
- ² The rich and poor have this in common: the LORD *is* the maker of them all.
- ³ An understanding *man* foresees disaster and hides himself,

21:13 See Ex 1:14; 2:23 with its results in Ex 11:6; 12:30. Note at Ps 41:1; Prov 1:25-28; 14:21; 28:27.

21:14 Notes at 15:27; 17:8.

21:15 There is going to be great joy for some, great terror for others, for justice is exactly what is going to be done to the world and to every individual (Ps 89:14; 98:9; Acts 17:31; Rom 2:2,5-11; 2 Thess 1:6-7; Rev 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 20:11-12; 22:12).

21:16 2:18; 5:23; 8:36; 9:18; Deut 30:15,19; Ezek 18:30-32.

21:18 See Isa 43:3-6. Persia showed kindness to the people of Israel and let them return to their own land (Ezra 1:1-4). In return God enabled Persia to conquer Egypt, Cush, and Seba. Perhaps there is an important principle here in God's dealings with nations.

21:21 15:9; Matt 5:6; 6:33; John 12:26; Rom 2:7,10.

21:22 This is true in the spiritual realm also. God's wisdom enables His servants to demolish the refuge of false philosophies and religious ideas in which others trust. See 2 Cor 10:4.

21:23 10:19; 12:13; 13:3; 18:21; Ps 39:1; 141:3; Matt 12:37.

21:24 1:22. Scorning God's word is the result of pride and ignorance (Matt 27:27-29,41; 2 Pet 3:3-5; Jude 10).

21:25 6:6; 13:4.

21:26 Lev 25:35; Deut 15:8; Ps 37:21,26; 112:9; Luke 6:35; 2 Cor 9:7.

21:27 Note at 15:8.

21:28 References at 19:5. The Hebrew of the second phrase is difficult and this is only one of possible translations. It may mean "but the words of an obedient man (one who listens) will live on". Or "the obedient man will always speak the truth" (the words "the truth" being added).

21:29 14:8; Lam 3:40; Hag 1:5,7; 2:15.

21:30 Ah. 2 Chron 13:12; Job 5:13; Prov 16:4,9; 19:21; Isa 8:10; 1 Cor 1:25; 3:19-20.

21:31 1 Sam 17:47; Ps 3:8; 20:7; 33:16-19; Hos 1:7; Zech 4:6.

22:1 3:4; 10:7; Eccl 7:1.

22:2 29:13; Job 31:15.

- but the simple pass on, and are punished.
- ⁴ By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches and honour and life.
- ⁵ Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them.
- ⁶ Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
- ⁷ The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower *is* a servant to the lender.
- ⁸ He who sows wickedness will reap trouble, and the rod of his anger will fail.
- ⁹ He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives of his food to the poor.
- ¹⁰ Drive out the scorner, and contention will go out, yes, strife and insult will cease.
- ¹¹ He who loves purity of heart *and* whose speech is gracious, *will have* the king as his friend.
- ¹² The eyes of the LORD see that knowledge is preserved, and he overturns the words of the transgressor.
- ¹³ The lazy *person* says, "There is a lion outside; I will be killed in the streets".
- ¹⁴ The mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit; he who is abhorred by the LORD will fall into it.
- ¹⁵ Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child, *but* the rod of correction will drive it far from him.
- ¹⁶ He who oppresses the poor to increase his *riches*, *and* he who gives to the rich, *will surely come* to poverty.
- ¹⁷ Turn your ear and listen to the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge.
- ¹⁸ For *it will be* pleasant if you keep them within you *so that* they are ready for your lips.
- ¹⁹ So that your trust may be in the LORD, I have taught you today, even you.
- ²⁰ Have I not written to you excellent things, words of counsel and knowledge,
- ²¹ So that I might cause you to know the certainty of the words of truth, that you might give truthful words in answer to those who send to you?
- ²² Do not rob the poor because he *is* poor, nor oppress the afflicted in the gate,
- ²³ For the LORD will plead their cause, and plunder the soul of those

"Fear"— 1:7; Gen 20:11; Ps 34:11-14.

22:4 "Riches"— 3:2; Ps 1:3.

22:5 Verse 8; Ps 9:16; 69:22. Thorns and snares here signify evils and difficulties which will hurt them and capture them.

22:6 A great encouragement in the training of children. But parents themselves must know the right way (Gen 18:19; Deut 4:9-10; 6:7; Josh 24:15; Eph 6:4).

22:7 Debt is a great burden and difficulty in a person's life. Therefore Rom 13:8.

22:9 11:25; Deut 14:29; 15:10; Ps 37:26; Luke 6:38. Notes and references on giving at 2 Cor 9:15.

22:10 21:24.

22:11 The King of heaven will also be his friend — Ps 24:3-4; Matt 5:8.

22:12 19:21; 21:30.

22:13 6:6-11. The lazy man will seek any excuse not to work.

22:14 5:3-5; 23:27.

22:15 Alas, we all come into the world with a nature that is bent toward sin and foolishness

(note at Ps 51:5). And every child needs much discipline and correction. 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18. Compare 1 Kings 1:6.

22:16 The oppression of the poor is everywhere condemned in the Bible (v 22; 14:31; 17:5; Deut 24:14; Ps 10:2,8,9; 12:5; 35:10; 37:14; 109:16; Isa 3:14).

22:17-21 These verses are an introduction to a new section of the book which ends at 24:22. This section can be divided into thirty sayings — six of them are of one verse; eighteen are of two verses; four are of 3 verses; one is of 4 verses; and one is of 7 verses. These sayings were probably collected by Solomon. Their purpose is to encourage trust in God (v 19), and to equip us with wise words and ready answers (vs 18,21). The New Testament also speaks of being ready to give answers to others (Col 4:6; 1 Pet 3:15).

22:22-23 Verse 16. The God of the Bible, the only God there is, is always on the side of the oppressed poor, and He will pay back oppressors in their own coin.

- who plunder them.
²⁴ Make no friendship with an angry man,
 and do not go with a hot-tempered man,
²⁵ So that you do not learn his ways,
 and get a snare to your soul.
²⁶ Do not be *one* of those
 who strike hands *in pledge*,
 or who put up security for debts.
²⁷ If you have nothing *with which*
 to pay,
 why should he take away your bed
 from under you?
²⁸ Do not remove the ancient boundary
 stone which your fathers have set.
²⁹ Do you see a man diligent
 in his work?
 He will stand before kings;
 he will not stand before obscure *men*.

23 When you sit down to eat
 with a ruler,
 carefully consider what *is* before you,
² And put a knife to your throat,
 if you *are* a man given to appetite.
³ Do not desire his delicacies,
 for it *is* deceptive food.
⁴ Do not wear yourself out
 to get rich.
 Cease from your own wisdom.
⁵ Will you set your eyes on it?
 It is no longer there,
 for surely *riches* make wings
 for themselves;
 they fly away like an eagle in the sky.
⁶ Do not eat the food of *him whose*
 eye *is* evil,
 or desire his delicacies.

22:24-25 1 Cor 15:33.

22:26-27 6:1-5; 11:15; 17:18.

22:28 Deut 19:14; 27:17.

22:29 See examples of this in Gen 39:3-4; 1 Sam 16:21-23; 1 Kings 7:14; 11:28. God the King also looks for those who will do their work well.

23:1-3 He means, perhaps, that if a ruler asks us to dine with him he may be planning to use us for his own purposes and those purposes may be deceptive and evil.

23:1 “*What*”– or “*who*”.

23:4-5 28:20; 1 Tim 6:9-10,17; Heb 13:5.

23:5 “*Fly away*”– Jer 17:11; Luke 12:20-21.

23:6-8 Seeing insincerity and hypocrisy makes an honest man sick.

23:7 The first phrase might possibly be translated

- ⁷ For as he thinks in his heart,
 so *is* he. “Eat and drink”,
 he says to you,
 but his heart *is* not with you.
⁸ The morsel you have eaten
 you will vomit up,
 and waste your compliments.
⁹ Do not speak in the ears of a fool,
 for he will despise the wisdom
 of your words.
¹⁰ Do not remove the ancient
 boundary stone and encroach
 on the fields of the fatherless,
¹¹ For their redeemer *is* mighty.
 He will plead their cause
 with you.
¹² Apply your heart to instruction,
 and your ears to the words of
 knowledge.
¹³ Do not withhold correction
 from the child; for *if* you beat him
 with the rod, he will not die.
¹⁴ You beat him with the rod,
 and rescue his soul from hell.
¹⁵ My son, if your heart is wise,
 my own heart too will rejoice.
¹⁶ Yes, my inmost being will rejoice
 when your lips speak right things.
¹⁷ Do not let your heart envy sinners,
 but *be* in the fear of the LORD
 all day long.
¹⁸ For surely there is a future,
 and your hope will not be cut off.
¹⁹ Listen, my son, and be wise,
 and guide your heart in the way.
²⁰ Do not be with those
 who drink too much wine,
 with those who are gluttons in eating
 meat,

“for as he puts on a feast, so he is”.

23:9 1:7,22; 9:7; 12:1.

23:10-11 22:23,28. Redeemer here is a translation of the Hebrew word “goel”. See notes at Ruth 2:20; Ps 78:35.

23:12 2:2; 22:17.

23:13-14 3:12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:18; 2 Sam 7:14.

23:15-16 Verse 24; 27:11; 29:3. So God the Father rejoices in His children if they are wise and honest – Ps 15:1-2; 147:11; 149:4; Zeph 3:17.

23:17 “*Envy*”– 24:1,19; Ps 37:1; 73:3.

“*Fear*”– note at 1:7.

23:19-21 Wisdom should guide us in what we eat and drink and how much. Drunkenness and gluttony are condemned in the Bible and will face God’s anger and punishment – 23:2; 28:7; Rom 13:13-14; 1 Cor 6:10; Gal 5:21.

- 21 For the drunkard and the glutton
will come to poverty,
and drowsiness will clothe
a person with rags.
- 22 Listen to your father who begot you,
and do not despise your mother
when she is old.
- 23 Buy the truth and do not sell *it*,
also wisdom and instruction
and understanding.
- 24 The father of the righteous
will greatly rejoice,
and he who begets a wise *child*
will have joy in him.
- 25 Your father and your mother
will be glad,
and she who gave you birth will
rejoice.
- 26 My son, give me your heart,
and keep your eyes on my ways.
- 27 For a prostitute *is* a deep ditch,
and an adulteress *is* a narrow pit.
- 28 She also lies in wait like a robber,
and increases the transgressors
among men.
- 29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?
Who has strife? Who has babbling?
Who has wounds without cause?
Who has redness of eyes?
- 30 Those who linger long at the wine,
those who go in search of mixed
wine.
- 31 Do not look at the wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup,
when it goes down smoothly.
- 32 At last it will bite like a serpent,
and sting like a viper.
- 33 Your eyes will see strange things
and your mind will utter perverse
things.
- 34 Yes, you will be like one lying down
in the middle of the sea,

or like one who lies down on the top
of a mast.

- 35 “They hit me”, *you will say*,
“*but* I am not hurt!
They have beaten me,
but I didn’t feel *it*!
When will I wake up?
I will look for another *drink*”.

- 24 Do not be envious of evil men,
or desire to be with them.
- 2 For their heart plots violence,
and their lips talk of trouble.
- 3 Through wisdom a house is built,
and by understanding it is
established,
- 4 And by knowledge its rooms
will be filled with all precious
and pleasant treasures.
- 5 A wise man *is* strong;
yes, a man of knowledge
increases strength.
- 6 For by wise counsel you should
wage war,
and in many counsellors *there is*
safety.
- 7 Wisdom *is* too high for a fool.
He does not open his mouth
in the gate.
- 8 He who plots to do evil
will be called a schemer.
- 9 The thought of foolishness *is* sin,
and the scorner *is*
an abomination to men.
- 10 *If* you faint in the day
of adversity,
your strength *is* small.
- 11 *If* you refrain from rescuing *those*
who are being led away to death
and *those who are* about to be
killed,
- 12 *If* you say, “Look,

23:22-25 Verse 15,16; 4:5,7; Ezek 35:15; Oba 1:12.

23:26 “Give me your heart”— what any real father desires from his son. But he should be worthy of such a gift. This is what God the Father desires from His children. He will be satisfied with nothing less. And He is wonderfully worthy of this gift. A heart not given where it should be given will go after the attractions of the world and may fall prey to sexual immorality.

23:29-35 A striking warning against drunkenness. Strong drink may seem pleasant at first (v 31), but it is poison (v 32), and has very bitter fruits. One of these is that the drunkard when he recovers a little wants to indulge again and again in the

same thing that is ruining his life.

24:1-2 Verses 19,20; 23:17-18; Ps 37:1; 73:3.

24:3-4 9:1; 14:1. To establish a family as God wants it established requires wisdom which God alone can give.

24:5-6 21:22; 20:18; 11:14; Luke 14:31.

24:7 Judges and city officials met for business at the main gates of cities (Gen 19:1; 23:10; Deut 22:15; Josh 20:4; Ruth 4:11).

24:8-9 In Proverbs foolishness is not lack of sense, it is lack of moral sense; everything that flows from it is sinful.

24:10 Jer 12:5; Isa 40:31.

24:11-12 Ps 82:4; Isa 58:6-7. For men to profess

- we didn't know it", does not he
 who weighs the heart consider *it*?
 And he who keeps your soul,
 does he *not* know *it*?
 And will he *not* repay every
 man in accordance with his deeds?
- ¹³ My son, eat honey,
 because *it is* good,
 and the honeycomb,
 which *is* sweet to your taste;
- ¹⁴ So *will* the knowledge of wisdom
 be to your soul.
 When you have found *it*,
 then there will be a reward,
 and your hope will not be cut off.
- ¹⁵ Do not lie in wait, O wicked *man*,
 at the house of the righteous;
 do not plunder his resting place;
- ¹⁶ For a righteous *person* falls
 seven times and rises again,
 but the wicked will fall into trouble.
- ¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls,
 and do let not your heart be glad
 when he stumbles,
- ¹⁸ Or the LORD will see *it*,
 and it will displease him,
 and he will turn his wrath away
 from him.
- ¹⁹ Do not fret because of evil *people*
 or be envious of the wicked,
- ²⁰ For there will be no future for
 the evil *person*;
 the lamp of the wicked will be
 put out.
- ²¹ My son, fear the LORD and the king,
 and do not associate with those
 who are changeable,
- ²² For their calamity will rise suddenly;
 and who knows the ruin of both
 of them?
- ²³ These also *are sayings* of the wise:
It is not good to show partiality
 in judgment.
- ²⁴ He who says to the wicked,
 "You *are* righteous",
 him the people will curse,
 him nations will abhor;
- ²⁵ But to those who rebuke *him*
 will be delight,
 and a good blessing will come
 on them.
- ²⁶ Giving a right answer *is like* a kiss
 on the lips.
- ²⁷ Prepare your outside work,
 and make it ready for yourself in
 the field,
 and after that build your house.
- ²⁸ Do not be a witness against your
 neighbour without cause,
 and do *not* deceive with your lips.
- ²⁹ Do not say, "I will do the same to him
 as he has done to me.
 I will repay the man in accordance
 with his deed".
- ³⁰ I went by the field of the lazy,
 and by the vineyard of the man
 lacking understanding,
- ³¹ And, look, it was all overgrown
 with thorns,
 and nettles had covered its surface,
 and its stone wall was broken down.
- ³² Then I gazed *and* considered *it* well;
 I looked at *it and* received instruction:
- ³³ Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,

ignorance of injustice and oppression will not work with God. Nor is it enough merely to feel compassion for those in trouble, the poor, the needy, or the innocent falsely condemned. God will judge us, not according to what we feel, but according to what we actually do or do not do (Matt 25:31-46; Rom 2:6; Jam 4:17).

24:13-14 16:24; Ps 119:103. The sweetness of honey remains in the mouth but a moment, but the sweetness of true wisdom will remain in the mind forever.

24:15-16 Though a righteous person may fall seven times, God enables him to rise again (see notes at Ps 34:19; 37:24; Rom 8:37). The case of the wicked is quite different – 6:15; 11:3,5.

24:17-18 17:5 (note); Ezek 35:15; Oba 1:12.

24:19-20 Verses 1,2. This is often repeated in the Bible because envy is a great danger to the spiritual life (Ps 73:2-3). In any case, how foolish

to envy those who have no future hope!

24:21-22 Eccl 8:2-5; Rom 13:1-5; 1 Pet 2:17.

24:23-34 An addition of five sayings to the thirty sayings in the previous section. There is no reason to think Solomon did not collect these.

24:23-25 17:15; 18:5; 28:21; 31:8-9; Lev 19:15; Ps 72:2.

24:26 16:13. To speak the truth to people is to show them love. Lips which flatter and deceive are hateful.

24:27 In other words, put first things first and plan carefully.

24:28-29 3:30; 6:19; 20:22; Matt 5:38-41; Rom 12:17. It is not our business to seek revenge on others for what they have done. God will see to that in His own time and way.

24:30-34 Note at 6:6-11. Laziness or carelessness in spiritual things too has disastrous consequences (Matt 25:14-15,24-26,30).

a little folding of the hands to sleep,
 34 Just so your poverty will come *like*
 a highway robber,
 and your scarcity like an armed man.

25 These also *are* proverbs
 of Solomon,
 copied by the men of Hezekiah,
 king of Judah:
 2 *It is* the glory of God to conceal
 a matter,
 but the honour of kings *is* to search
 out a matter.
 3 The heavens for height,
 and the earth for depth;
 and the heart of kings *is* unsearchable.
 4 Take away the dross from the silver,
 and out comes a vessel from the
 silversmith.
 5 Take away the wicked *from*
 the king's presence,
 and his throne will be established
 in righteousness.
 6 Do not put yourself forward
 in the presence of the king,
 and do not stand in the place of
 great *men*;
 7 For *it is* better that it be said to you,
 "Come up here",
 than that you should be put lower in
 the presence of the prince whom
 your eyes have seen.
 8 Do not go out hastily to argue,
 or *you may not know*
 what to do in the end,
 when your neighbor puts you to
 shame.
 9 Debate your case with your neighbor
himself, and do not reveal
 the secret of another,
 10 Or he who hears *it* may put

you to shame,
 and your bad reputation not pass
 away.
 11 A word fitly spoken *is like*
 apples of gold in pictures of silver.
 12 Like an earring of gold and an
 ornament of fine gold,
is a wise reprov-er to an obedient ear.
 13 Like the cold of snow in the time
 of harvest,
 is a faithful messenger to those who
 send him,
 for he refreshes the soul of his
 masters.
 14 Whoever boasts of his gifts falsely
is like clouds and wind
 without rain.
 15 Through patience a ruler is
 persuaded,
 and a soft tongue breaks the bone.
 16 Have you found honey?
 Eat *only* what is sufficient for you,
 lest you be filled with it, and vomit it.
 17 Let not your foot be too often in
 your neighbour's house,
 or he may tire of you and hate you.
 18 A man who bears false witness
 against his neighbour *is* a club
 and a sword and a sharp arrow.
 19 Confidence in an unfaithful man
 in time of trouble *is like*
 a broken tooth,
 and a sprained foot.
 20 Like one who takes away a garment
 in cold weather,
and like vinegar on soda,
is one who sings songs to a sad heart.
 21 If your enemy is hungry, give him
 food to eat,
 and if he is thirsty, give him water to
 drink;

25:1 1:1; 10:1. King Hezekiah reigned more than two hundred years after Solomon and brought a revival of true religion to Judah (see 2 Chronicles chapters 29–31).

25:2 2:4; Deut 29:29; Isa 55:8-9; Rom 11:33-36; Matt 13:44. Men get honor from discovering the truth.

25:3 This is true to some extent of all men. We are mysteries to ourselves and to others (20:24). But God searches and knows all things (Jer 17:9-10; John 2:24-25; Heb 4:13).

25:4-5 This truth was at the heart of David's resolutions in Ps 101. God is always at work refining His people (Ps 66:10-12) and the King of heaven, when He comes again, will do a

complete work of establishing a righteous reign (Isa 11:1-5).

25:6-7 Luke 14:7-11.

25:8-10 Better to end a dispute before it gets to court (Matt 5:25-26).

25:11 15:23. See what wisdom says in 8:19.

25:12 15:31; Ps 141:5.

25:13 10:26; 13:17.

25:14 In other words, big words, no action.

25:15 Patience and gentleness often can accomplish far more than haste and roughness.

25:16-17 That is, honey and visits from neighbors have one thing in common – too much is too much.

25:18 12:18; Ps 5:9.

25:21-22 Matt 5:44; Rom 12:20.

- 22 For you will be heaping coals of fire
on his head,
and the LORD will reward you.
- 23 The north wind drives away rain;
so *does* an angry countenance
a backbiting tongue.
- 24 *It is* better to live in the corner
of the housetop,
than share a house with a
quarrelsome woman.
- 25 As cold water to a thirsty soul,
so *is* good news from a far country.
- 26 A righteous man giving way to the
wicked *is like* a muddied spring,
and a polluted well.
- 27 *It is* not good to eat
too much honey;
so *for people* to look out for their
own glory *is not* glory.
- 28 He who does not rule his own spirit
is like a city *that is* broken down
and without walls.

- 26** Like snow in summer and like
rain in harvest,
so honour is not fitting for a fool.
- ² Like the flitting bird,
like the flying swallow,
so the curse does not come without
cause.
- ³ A whip for the horse, a bridle for the
donkey,
and a rod for the fool's back.
- ⁴ Do not answer a fool according to
his folly,

- lest you also become like him.
- ⁵ Answer a fool according to his folly,
lest he be wise in his own eyes.
- ⁶ He who sends a message by the hand
of a fool is cutting off the feet,
and drinking damage.
- ⁷ The legs of the lame are not equal,
like a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- ⁸ Like one who ties up a stone
in a sling,
is he who gives honour to a fool.
- ⁹ *Like* a thorn piercing the hand
of a drunkard, *is* a proverb
in the mouth of fools.
- ¹⁰ The great *God* who formed
all *things* both pays the fool,
and gives transgressors their
wages.
- ¹¹ As a dog returns to his vomit,
so a fool returns to his folly.
- ¹² Do you see a man wise in his
own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool
than for him.
- ¹³ The lazy *person* says,
“*There is* a lion in the road!
A lion *is* in the streets!”
- ¹⁴ As the door turns on its hinges,
so the lazy one *turns* on his bed.
- ¹⁵ The lazy *person* buries his hand
in the dish;
it is a weariness to him to bring it
back to his mouth.
- ¹⁶ The lazy *person* *is* wiser
in his own eyes than seven men

25:24 19:12; 21:9,19.

25:25 15:30.

25:26 Evil can taint all the springs of action
and pollute that which should be clean, clear,
and life-giving.

25:27 27:2; Matt 23:12.

25:28 Into a city with broken down walls may
easily enter any unclean animal, any cruel beast,
any evil man, any invading army. So the evils
of the world, the influences of Satan enter the
unguarded, undisciplined, unwatchful human
heart.

26:2 If we live righteously and honestly before
God we need fear no curse or anything that men
may say or do against us.

26:3-12 These proverbs are all concerned with
fools – that is, with those who are moral
delinquents lacking the wisdom that comes from
God (see note at 1:7).

26:4-5 Sometimes it is better not to try to answer
fools at all. Sometimes they must be answered

to reveal their foolishness, but this must be done
wisely and carefully.

26:10 The Hebrew of this sentence is very difficult
and obscure and many translations have been
offered. Literally it is, “The Great One (the word
‘God’ is not here in Hebrew) who has brought
forth everything hires the fool and hires the
transgressor”. The possible meaning is, God
uses them for His own purposes.

26:11 2 Pet 2:22; Ps 85:8. The fool returns to folly
because it is more appealing to him than wisdom
and righteousness. A sinful nature is attracted
to sinful things.

26:12 Verse 5. Being wise in one's own eyes is
to be in a worse condition than a fool. It is the
error that the lazy man (v 5) and the rich (28:11)
have in common. We are warned against it in 3:7
because such a conceit shuts out the fear of the
Lord which is the only way to wisdom.

26:13 22:13; 6:6-11.

26:15 19:24.

- who can give a reason.
- ¹⁷ He who is passing by *and* meddles with strife that does not *pertain* to him,
is like one who takes a dog by the ears.
- ¹⁸ Like a madman who hurls fire brands, arrows, and death,
- ¹⁹ *Is* the man *who* deceives his neighbor and says, "I was just joking!"
- ²⁰ Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; so where *there is* no talebearer, the strife ceases.
- ²¹ As charcoal is to burning embers and wood to fire, so *is* a quarrelsome man to kindle strife.
- ²² The words of a talebearer *are* like wounds, and they go down into the inmost parts of the body.
- ²³ Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* an earthen pot covered with silver dross.
- ²⁴ He who hates, disguises *this* with his lips, and stores up deceit within him;
- ²⁵ When he speaks graciously, do not believe him; for *there are* seven abominations in his heart.
- ²⁶ The wickedness of the one *whose* hatred is covered by deceit will be revealed before the *whole* congregation.
- ²⁷ Whoever digs a pit will fall in it, and the one who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.
- ²⁸ A lying tongue hates *those* it harms, and a flattering mouth works ruin.
- 27** Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.
- ² Let another man praise you and not your own mouth, a stranger and not your own lips.
- ³ A stone *is* heavy and the sand weighty, but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than both of them.
- ⁴ Wrath *is* cruel and anger *is* overwhelming, but who *is* able to stand before envy?
- ⁵ Open rebuke *is* better than love concealed.
- ⁶ Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.
- ⁷ The full soul loathes a honeycomb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.
- ⁸ As a bird that wanders from her nest, so *is* a man who wanders from his place.
- ⁹ Oil and perfume rejoice the heart; so *does* the sweetness of a man's friend through hearty counsel.
- ¹⁰ Do not forsake your own friend and your father's friend, or go into your brother's house on the day of your calamity. *For* better *is* a neighbour *who is* near than a brother far off.
- ¹¹ My son, be wise and make my heart glad, that I may answer him who insults me.
- ¹² A prudent *man* sees disaster *coming and* hides himself, *but* the simple go on *and* pay the penalty.
- ¹³ Take the garment of the one who puts up security for a stranger, and take a pledge from him for a strange woman.
- ¹⁴ He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, early in the morning, it will be regarded as a curse to him.

26:20 One of the evils of gossip. See also 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; Lev 19:16.

26:23-26 Ps 28:3; 55:21; Jer 9:8; Matt 26:47-49. The hypocrite has a full number of abominations in his heart (6:16-19). See the abominations in the hearts of the hypocrites living when Jesus was on earth (Matthew chapter 23).

26:27 Ps 7:15; 35:7-8; 141:10. Attempts to harm others will eventually bring harm to oneself. This is a law of God strikingly displayed in the case

of Haman (Esther 3:5-6; 5:14; 7:9-10).

27:1 16:9; Jam 4:13-16.

27:2 25:27.

27:4 Matt 27:18. Envy is one of the worst and most destructive passions that can possess men.

27:5-6 Let us, like David (Ps 141:5), understand the value of rebukes. Far better to be pierced by a friend than petted by a foe.

27:11 10:1; 23:15-16.

27:13 20:16.

- ¹⁵ A continual dripping on a very rainy day and a quarrelsome woman are alike.
- ¹⁶ Whoever restrains her *can* restrain the wind and grasp oil with his right hand!
- ¹⁷ Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.
- ¹⁸ Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit; so he who waits on his master will be honoured.
- ¹⁹ As in water face *reflects* face, so the heart of man *reflects* man.
- ²⁰ Hell and destruction are never full, so the eyes of man are never satisfied.
- ²¹ The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man *tested* by the praise he *receives*.
- ²² Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with wheat, *still* his foolishness will not leave him.
- ²³ Be careful to know the state of your flocks, and look after your herds well.
- ²⁴ For riches *are* not forever, *and* the crown does *not last* to every generation.
- ²⁵ The hay appears, and the tender grass shows itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered in.
- ²⁶ The lambs *are* for your clothing,

and the goats *are* the price for the field.

- ²⁷ And *you will have* goats' milk enough for your food, for the food of your household, and *for* the maintenance of your maidens.

- 28** The wicked flee when no man pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.
- ² Because of the transgression of a land, it *has* many rulers, but by a man of understanding *and* knowledge *it* will endure.
- ³ A poor man who oppresses the poor *is like* a driving rain which leaves no food.
- ⁴ They who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law oppose them.
- ⁵ Evil men do not understand justice, but they who seek the LORD understand all *things*.
- ⁶ Better *is* the poor who walks in his integrity, than *he who is* rich but perverse *in his ways*.
- ⁷ Whoever keeps the law *is* a wise son, but he who is a companion of gluttons shames his father.
- ⁸ He who increases his possessions by usury and dishonest gain will gather it for him who has pity on the poor.

27:15-16 12:4; 18:22; 19:13-14; 21:9,19.

27:17 Our contacts with others, especially with those who are close to us, can help shape our character and make us better instruments in God's service.

27:18 Matt 25:21; Luke 12:42-44; John 12:26.

27:19 A man is what he is inwardly, not what he seems to be outwardly.

27:20 1 John 2:16. It is the nature of fallen man always to want more than he has, never to be satisfied.

"*Hell and Destruction*"— in Hebrew "Sheol and Abaddon".

27:21 Praise tests whether a man is proud, or hungry for praise, or foolish enough to accept flattery, or humble, or desirous of seeing only God praised.

27:23-27 Jesus' instruction not to worry about the future (Matt 6:25-34) does not mean that care and thought should not be taken to provide for

one's household.

28:1 Lev 26:7-8,14,17,36; Deut 32:30; Ps 3:6; 18:33-40; 138:3; Acts 4:13,31.

28:3 14:21,31.

28:4 Will anyone praise the wicked? See Rom 1:32. Such is the fallen world in which we live. Those who follow the teachings of the God of holiness and truth must stand against evil. Examples – Ex 32:26-29; Ps 101; Eph 5:11; 6:11.

28:5 God's justice is one of the very great themes of the Bible (Deut 32:4; Ps 89:14; 97:2; Rom 3:25-26; Rev 15:3). It is understood and appreciated only by those who seek God, fear God, and so receive the wisdom that comes from God (2:9; Ps 14:2; 82:5; 92:6; 119:97-104; Dan 12:10; Hos 14:9).

28:6 See 15:16; 16:8; 19:1,22; Ps 37:16.

28:7 Verse 4; 23:19-21; 1 Cor 15:33.

28:8 "*Usury*"— Ex 22:25; Lev 25:35-37; Deut 23:19-20.

"*For him*"— 13:22; Job 27:13,16,17.

- ⁹ As for the one who turns his ear away from hearing the law, even his prayer will be an abomination.
- ¹⁰ Whoever causes the righteous to go astray in an evil way will himself fall into his own pit, but the upright will have a good inheritance.
- ¹¹ The rich man is wise in his own eyes, but the poor who has understanding sees through him.
- ¹² When righteous people rejoice, there is great honour, but when the wicked rise up, a man hides himself.
- ¹³ He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.
- ¹⁴ Happy is the man who always fears the LORD, but he who hardens his heart will fall into trouble.
- ¹⁵ Like a roaring lion and a charging bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people.
- ¹⁶ The ruler who lacks understanding is also a great oppressor, but he who hates covetousness will prolong his days.
- ¹⁷ A man who does violence to the blood of any person is fleeing to the pit. Let no one support him.
- ¹⁸ Whoever walks uprightly will be rescued, but he who is perverse in his ways will fall at once.
- ¹⁹ He who tills his land will have plenty of food, but he who follows vain persons will have poverty enough.
- ²⁰ A faithful man will have abundant blessings, but he who makes haste to be rich will not be innocent.
- ²¹ To show favoritism is not good, because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.
- ²² He whose eye is evil hastens to be rich, and does not consider that poverty will come on him.
- ²³ He who rebukes a man will find more favour afterwards than he who flatters with the tongue.
- ²⁴ Whoever robs his father or his mother, and says, "It is not wrong", that person is a companion of one who destroys.
- ²⁵ He who has a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who puts his trust in the LORD will prosper.
- ²⁶ He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be rescued.

28:9 15:8; 21:27; Ps 66:18; 109:7; Isa 1:13-17; 59:1-2. A wicked man will not listen to God, so all his religion, his worship, and all he does is hateful to God.

28:10 26:27.

28:11 26:5; 26:16; Luke 12:16-21.

28:12 Verse 28; 11:10; 29:2; 1 Kings 18:13; 2 Kings 11:2-3,20.

28:13 Gen 3:8; Josh 7:11-12,20,21,25,26; Ps 32:1-5; Isa 55:6-7; Hos 14:1-2; 1 John 1:9. All of men's sins will eventually be revealed (Ps 90:8; Matt 10:26; 1 Cor 4:5; 2 Cor 5:10; Heb 4:12-13; Rev 20:12). It is impossible to hide them from God. How foolish to try, when by confessing and forsaking them they can be forgiven and blotted out forever. Observe that forsaking one's sins is as important as confessing them. Compare Ex 9:27.

28:14 "Happy"—note at Ps 1:1-2.

"Fears"—1:7; 9:10; 15:33; 23:17; Gen 20:11; Ps 34:11-14; 112:1.

"Hardens"—Ex 7:13; Ps 95:8; Rom 2:5; Heb 3:13,15.

28:15 Some rulers have been (and some still are) as bad as cruel, ravenous beasts. The final world ruler will be the most awful example of this (Rev 13:1-8).

28:17 Gen 4:14.

28:18 10:9; 11:5. There is no real, no permanent security except in the true God Himself.

28:19 27:23-27.

28:20 "Blessings"—Ps 1:1-3.

"Rich"—v 22; 20:21; 23:4; 1 Tim 6:9-10; Jam 5:1-5.

28:21 It is better to die of starvation than to do wrong.

28:23 27:5-6.

28:24 19:26; Ex 20:12; Matt 15:4-6.

28:25 29:25; Ps 2:12; 37:40; 40:4; 125:1.

28:26 These two verses (vs 25,26) reveal a choice that will have profound results in all aspects of our life on earth and into eternity. The wise man trusts in God, the fool trusts himself, his own opinions, his intellect, his reasoning power, etc.

- ²⁷ He who gives to the poor will not lack,
but he who hides his eyes *from them*
will have many a curse.
- ²⁸ When the wicked rise up,
men hide themselves, but when they
perish,
the righteous increase.

- 29** He who shows himself stubborn
after many rebukes will suddenly
be destroyed,
and that without remedy.
- ² When the righteous are in authority
the people rejoice,
but when the wicked rule,
the people mourn.
- ³ Whoever loves wisdom brings joy
to his father,
but he who associates with prostitutes
squanders *his* wealth.
- ⁴ The king gives stability to the land by
justice,
but he who accepts bribes overthrows
it.
- ⁵ A man who flatters his neighbour
is spreading a net for his feet.
- ⁶ In the transgression of an evil man
there is a snare,
but the righteous sing and rejoice.
- ⁷ The righteous are concerned
with the cause of the poor,

- but* the wicked do not consider it.
- ⁸ Scornful men bring a city into a
snare,
but wise *men* turn away wrath.
- ⁹ If a wise man argues with a foolish
man,
whether he rages or laughs,
there is no rest.
- ¹⁰ The bloodthirsty hate the upright,
but the righteous seek to make his
soul *secure*.
- ¹¹ A fool utters everything in his mind,
but a wise *person* holds it back until
later.
- ¹² If a ruler listens to lies,
all his servants *become* wicked.
- ¹³ The poor and the oppressor have
this in common:
the LORD gives light to the eyes of
both.
- ¹⁴ As *for* the king who judges
the poor with truth,
his throne will be established forever.
- ¹⁵ The rod and correction give wisdom,
but a child left *to himself*
brings his mother to shame.
- ¹⁶ When the wicked are multiplied,
transgression increases,
but the righteous will see their fall.
- ¹⁷ Correct your son and he will give
you comfort, yes,
he will give delight to your soul.

28:27 14:21; 22:9; Deut 24:19; Ps 41:1; Matt 25:42. Again the importance of helping the poor is emphasized. God sees the poor and He sees what we do or do not do to help them.

29:1 6:15; 24:22; Lev 26:14-17,23-25; Deut 28:15,20; 2 Chron 36:15-17; Ps 64:7; Isa 47:11; Jer 19:15; 36:31; 1 Thess 5:3; Heb 2:2-3; 12:25.

29:3 10:1; 23:15-16.

29:4 15:27 (note); 16:12.

29:5 26:28; Ps 55:21. A person who flatters another is out to accomplish some selfish purpose of his own.

29:6 "*A snare*"— 1:18; 5:22; 22:5; 26:27; Gen 4:7; Num 32:23; John 8:34.

"*Rejoice*"— Ps 4:7; 32:11; 64:10; 97:11; Isa 35:10.

29:7 28:27; 31:8-9; Ps 41:1; 82:2-4.

29:8 16:14; Jam 3:17-18; Num 16:46-48; 25:3,7,10-13. Jesus, Who is the wisdom of God, sacrificed Himself and turned away the holy anger of God from sinful men who put their trust in Him.

29:10 Verse 27; Gen 4:8; 1 Sam 18:10; Esther 3:8-9; Ps 11:2; 57:4; 64:2-4; Dan 3:19-20; John 15:18-19;

1 John 3:12. The world is a battlefield where the righteous and the wicked are involved in a very important conflict. It has been such from the days of Cain and Abel, and will be to the end of this age. The righteous God and His righteous people are at war with wickedness, and the wicked are at war with righteousness. In this struggle there is no such thing as non-alignment or neutrality. See Jud 5:23.

29:11 16:32.

29:12 If a leader does not want the truth he will surround himself with wicked people who tell him pleasant lies (see 1 Kings 22:1-8).

29:14 See 16:12; 28:27; Ps 72:1-5; Isa 9:7.

29:15 See 13:24 (note).

29:16 10:25; 14:11; 21:12. The righteous will eventually see the downfall of the whole evil world system and all its wickedness. This will be the final result of the struggle mentioned in vs 10,27. See Ps 1:6.

29:17 Discipline will help to form character and train children in the way they should go. This is the reason God Himself disciplines His children — Heb 12:6-11.

- ¹⁸ Where *there is* no vision,
the people perish, but he who keeps
the law, happy *is* he.
- ¹⁹ A servant will not be corrected by
mere words,
for though he understands he will not
respond.
- ²⁰ Do you see a man *who is*
hasty in his words?
There is more hope for a fool
than for him.
- ²¹ He who pampers his servant from
childhood at length will have him
become *his* son.
- ²² An angry man stirs up strife,
and a furious man commits many
transgressions.
- ²³ A man's pride will bring him low,
but the humble in spirit will obtain
honour.
- ²⁴ Whoever is partner with a thief hates
his own soul;
he hears the oath but tells nothing.
- ²⁵ The fear of man brings a snare,
but whoever puts his trust in the
LORD will be safe.
- ²⁶ Many seek the ruler's favour,
but a man's justice *comes*
from the LORD.
- ²⁷ An unjust man *is* an abomination
to the just,
and *he who is* upright in the way

is an abomination to the wicked.

- 30** The words of Agur the son of
Jakeh, the oracle.
The man spoke to Ithiel,
yes, to Ithiel and Ucal:
- ² Surely I *am* more stupid than
any man,
and do not have the understanding
of a man.
- ³ I have not learned wisdom,
nor do I have the knowledge
of the holy.
- ⁴ Who has ascended into heaven,
or descended?
Who has gathered the wind in his
fists?
Who has wrapped up the waters in a
garment?
Who has established all the ends of
the earth?
What *is* his name,
and what *is* his son's name,
if you can tell?
- ⁵ Every word of God *is* pure.
He *is* a shield to those who
put their trust in him.
- ⁶ Do not add to his words,
lest he rebuke you,
and you are found to be a liar.
- ⁷ Two *things* I have asked of you,
LORD;

29:18 Vision here means revelations from God given in visions, which was one way God revealed His truth in those times (note at Gen 15:1). Without God's revelation of truth people will do as they please (Jud 21:25; 1 Sam 3:1; Lam 2:9).

"Perish" – the literal meaning of the Hebrew word is "unrestrained", "wild".

"Happy" or "blessed" – 8:32; 28:14; Deut 28:1-2; Ps 1:1-2; 119:1-2.

29:20 26:12; Jam 1:19.

29:22 15:18; Ps 4:4; Eph 4:26.

29:23 15:33; 16:18; 18:12.

29:24 Lev 5:1.

29:25 "Fear of man" – 1 Sam 15:24; Isa 5:12-13; John 12:42-43. Fear of man may keep people from doing what they know is right to do. Such fear need have no place in those who trust in the Lord. They are safe forever (Ps 23:4; 27:1; 34:7; 49:5; 56:4; Matt 10:26,28).

29:26 If we get any justice in this world it will be God Who causes it to happen.

29:27 Verse 10; Ps 97:10; 119:104; 139:21-22 (note).

30:1 We know nothing of Agur or Ithiel or Ucal except what we have in this chapter. They are not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. The

word "oracle" usually denotes a revelation given through a prophet (Isa 13:1; Nahum 1:1; Hab 1:1; Zech 9:1; Mal 1:1).

30:2-3 The way to wisdom is to know one's ignorance. God does not reveal His wisdom to those proud of their knowledge (1 Kings 4:7; Jer 1:6; 1 Cor 1:19-21; 8:2; Jam 4:6). What wisdom Agur had was not his own; it was given from heaven – an oracle.

30:4 Agur here uses questions such as God asked Job (Job chapter 38) to show man's ignorance. We now know from the revelation in the New Testament who has gone up to heaven and come down and who the "son" is (John 3:13; Eph 4:7-10; Rom 1:2-4; Rev 19:12,16).

30:5 Ps 12:6; 18:30; Gen 15:1.

30:6 Deut 4:2; 12:32; Rev 22:18-19.

30:7-9 See the importance Agur gives to honesty and integrity. All those whom God used to write the Bible had the same view. Here is a searching question – if we had only two requests to make to God what would they be? Compare 2 Chron 1:7-12; Ps 27:4. No wise man would ask for wealth or power or position in this world, unless his only motive was to serve God with them.

- do not refuse *them* to me before I die:
⁸ Keep falsehood and lies far from me;
 give me neither poverty nor riches,
 but feed me with my allotted portion
 of food,
⁹ Or I may become full, and deny *you*,
 and say, “Who *is* the LORD?”,
 or if I am poor *I may* steal and
 bring dishonour to the name
 of my God.
¹⁰ Do not accuse a servant to his master,
 lest he curse you, and you be found
 guilty.
¹¹ *There is* a generation *that*
 curses its father,
 and does not bless its mother.
¹² *There is* a generation *that is*
 pure in its own eyes,
 and yet is not washed from its
 filthiness.
¹³ *There is* a generation – oh,
 how haughty are their eyes!
 And their eyelids are raised *in*
disdain.
¹⁴ *There is* a generation whose teeth
 are like swords,
 and whose jaw teeth are like knives,
 to devour the poor from the earth,
 and the needy from *among* men.
¹⁵ The leech has two daughters,
 crying, “Give, give”.
 There are three *things that* are never
 satisfied,
 yes, four *things* never say, “Enough”:
¹⁶ The grave, and the barren womb,
 the earth *that is* not filled with
 water,
 and the fire *that* does not say,
 “Enough”.
¹⁷ The eye *of him who* mocks
 at *his* father,
 and scorns obedience to *his* mother,
 will be plucked out by the ravens of
 the valley,
 and the young eagles will eat it.
¹⁸ There are three *things which*
 are too wonderful for me,
 yes, four which I do not understand:
¹⁹ The way of an eagle in the air,
 the way of a serpent on a rock,
 the way of a ship in the middle of
 the sea,
 and the way of a man with a maiden.
²⁰ This *is* the way of an adulterous
 woman:
 she eats, and wipes her mouth,
 and says,
 “I have done nothing wrong!”
²¹ Under three *things* the earth shakes,
 and under *these* four it cannot
 hold up:
²² Under a servant when he reigns,
 and a fool when he is filled with food,
²³ Under an unloved *woman*
 when she is married,
 and a maidservant who supplants her
 mistress.
²⁴ There are four *things which* are
 little on the earth,
 but they are exceedingly wise:
²⁵ The ants are not a strong folk,
 yet they prepare their food in
 summer;
²⁶ The conies, are *only* a feeble folk,
 yet they make their houses in the
 rocks;
²⁷ The locusts have no king,
 yet they all go out in ranks;
²⁸ The spider takes hold with its hands,
 and is in kings’ palaces.
²⁹ There are three *things* which
 go at a stately pace, yes,
 four are stately when they move:
³⁰ A lion *which is* mighty among beasts
 and does not turn aside for
 anything;

30:8 Matt 6:11; 1 Tim 6:6,8; Heb 13:5.

30:11 20:20; Ex 20:12; 21:17; Lev 20:9.

30:12 12:15; 16:2; Jer 2:35; Luke 18:11;
 1 John 1:8-10.

30:13 6:17; Ps 10:4-5; 18:27; 101:5; Isa 13:11.

30:14 Ps 3:7; 14:4; 57:4; Amos 8:4; Micah 2:2;
 3:2-3.

30:16 Isa 5:14; Hab 2:5.

“Grave” – in Hebrew “Sheol”.

“Barren” – Gen 30:1; 1 Sam 1:6,10,11.

30:17 Verse 11.

30:20 Verse 12.

30:23 Gen 16:1-6; 29:31-32.

30:24-28 Practical lessons can be learned
 and spiritual applications can be made from
 observing animals. Here are four lessons gained
 from four weak and insignificant creatures
 – providing for the future (6:6-8; 27:23-27;
 Matt 6:19-20), finding refuge (Ps 2:12; 7:1; 11:1;
 Heb 6:18), united effort (Acts 4:32; 1 Cor 1:10;
 Eph 4:3), and finding a home in the king’s
 palace (John 14:2-6; Rev 3:12).

30:26 “Conies” – probably the creatures known
 as rock badgers.

- ³¹ A strutting rooster; also a he-goat; and a king, against whom *there is* no rebellion.
- ³² If you have done foolishly in exalting yourself, or if you have plotted evil, lay your hand on your mouth.
- ³³ Surely the churning of milk produces butter, and the wringing of the nose brings out blood; so the churning of wrath produces strife.

31 The words of King Lemuel, the oracle that his mother taught him.

- ² “What, my son? And what, the son of my womb? And what, the son of my vows?”
- ³ Do not give your strength to women, or your ways to that which destroys kings.
- ⁴ *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine,*

- or for rulers *to imbibe* strong drink,
- ⁵ Or they may drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of some of the afflicted.
- ⁶ Give strong drink to him who is about to perish, and wine to those who have heavy hearts.
- ⁷ Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.
- ⁸ Open your mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all *who are* facing destruction.
- ⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy”.
- ¹⁰ Who can find a virtuous woman? For her worth *is* far above rubies.
- ¹¹ The heart of her husband safely trusts her, so that he will have no need of plunder.
- ¹² She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.
- ¹³ She looks for wool and flax,

30:31 The last sentence of this verse could also be translated “and a king secure against revolt”.

“*Rooster*”— the exact meaning of the obscure Hebrew word is not known. The literal meaning is “one that girds the hips”. Some versions have “greyhound”.

30:32 “*Mouth*”— Job 40:4; Rom 3:19. If we have sinned let us repent and not make any effort to defend ourselves.

30:33 6:14; 15:1; 29:22.

31:1 Lemuel was never king in Israel, so he was of some other nation or city. He is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. His name means belonging to God or devoted to God.

“*Oracle*”— note at 30:1.

“*Mother*”— who can estimate the value of a godly mother who dedicates her children to God and teaches them the truth of God? See Deut 6:6-7; 1 Sam 1:21-28; 2 Tim 1:5; 3:15.

31:2 1 Sam 1:11.

31:3 5:1-14; Deut 17:17; 1 Kings 11:3.

31:4-5 20:1; Eccl 10:16-17; Isa 5:22. Drunkenness causes men to forget righteousness and brings them under the power of their sinful natures.

31:6-7 Ps 104:15; Matt 27:34; 1 Tim 5:23. Wine should not be misused but used very wisely, if used at all.

31:8-9 16:10; 24:23; 28:27; 29:7; Ps 82:3; Isa 1:17.

31:8 “*Who are facing destruction*”— literally, “sons of destruction”.

31:10 In other words, such women, though rare, are well worth searching for diligently. Her

good qualities are far more valuable than any dowry that could be offered. They will be great blessings in both practical and spiritual ways to their husbands and children. Such a woman is what she is because she fears the Lord (v 30). Without the fear of the Lord there is no truly noble character, no real spirituality, no wisdom worthy of the name.

“*Virtuous*”— the Hebrew word literally means “strong” or “able” or “efficient”.

31:11-12 12:4.

31:13-27 She is hard-working (vs 13,15,17,27), Shows good business sense (vs 16,18,24), Has compassion on the poor (v 20), Plans for the changing seasons (v 21,22,25), Is an honor to her husband (v 23), Has strength of character (v 25), Has the wisdom to instruct her children and to advise others (v 26),

And can well manage the affairs of her household (v 27).

If it is God’s will for you to marry, search for such an one! Do not consider lesser things. If one like this is found, all your efforts will be well rewarded. How sad it is that when looking for a wife so many people (including many Christians) think mainly of how much the (illegal) dowry will be, or what her caste is, or what her job qualifications or degrees, or some other such consideration which means nothing in God’s eyes and should mean nothing in ours.

- and works willingly with her hands.
¹⁴ She is like the merchants' ships;
 she brings her food from a distance.
¹⁵ She also rises while it is yet night,
 and gives food to her household,
 and a portion to her maidens.
¹⁶ She considers a field, and buys it;
 from the produce of her hands
 she plants a vineyard.
¹⁷ She goes to work with vigor,
 and strengthens her arms.
¹⁸ She sees that her business *is* good;
 her lamp does not go out at night.
¹⁹ She puts her hands to the spindle,
 and her hands hold the distaff.
²⁰ She stretches out her hand to
help the poor; yes,
 she extends her hands to the needy.
²¹ She is not afraid for her household
when the snow *falls*,
 for all her household *are* clothed
 with scarlet.
²² She makes for herself coverings
 of tapestry;
 her clothing *is* silk and purple.
²³ Her husband is known in the gates,
 when he sits among the elders
 of the land.
²⁴ She makes fine linen and sells *it*,
 and delivers sashes to the
 merchant.
²⁵ Strength and honour *are*
 her clothing,
 and she rejoices in the future.
²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom,
 and in her tongue *is* the law
 of kindness.
²⁷ She looks well to the ways of her
 household,
 and does not eat the bread of
 idleness.
²⁸ Her children rise up and call her
 blessed;
 her husband *also*, and he praises her.
²⁹ Many daughters have done
 virtuously,
 but you excel them all.
³⁰ Charm *is* deceitful and beauty
is vain, *but* the woman *who* fears
 the LORD,
 she will be praised.
³¹ Give her the product of her hands,
 and let her own works praise her
 in the gates.

31:28 Such a wife is blessed by God and a source of blessing to others.

31:29 Women who have big careers, who accomplish much in society or government or some field of science or art may gain praise and fame, but in God's eyes such are not the equal of this kind of woman, unless they have her qualities. Let us learn to look at matters as God sees them. "*Virtuously*"— see v 10.

31:30 1 Pet 3:3-5. If only young women would give up vain pursuits and seek the really important things, the noble character described in the preceding verses could become theirs. Proverbs closes as it opens with emphasis on the fear of the LORD (1:7).

31:31 She has earned the reward of respect and praise. They who fear the Lord should be honored by men, and will certainly be honored by God.

