

Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 4 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 18–20

The Speech of Fools versus the Speech of the Wise

- 18:1 One who has isolated himself seeks his own desires;
he rejects all sound judgment.
- 2 A fool takes no pleasure in understanding
but only in disclosing what is on his mind.
- 3 When a wicked person arrives, contempt shows up with him,
and with shame comes a reproach.
- 4 The words of a person's mouth are like deep waters,
and the fountain of wisdom is like a flowing brook.
- 5 It is terrible to show partiality to the wicked,
by depriving a righteous man of justice.
- 6 The lips of a fool enter into strife,
and his mouth invites a flogging.
- 7 The mouth of a fool is his ruin,
and his lips are a snare for his life.
- 8 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels;
they go down into the person's innermost being.
- 9 The one who is slack in his work
is a brother to one who destroys.
- 10 The name of the LORD is like a strong tower;
the righteous person runs to it and is set safely on high.
- 11 The wealth of a rich person is like a strong city,
and it is like a high wall in his imagination.
- 12 Before destruction the heart of a person is proud,
but humility comes before honor.
- 13 The one who gives an answer before he listens—
that is his folly and his shame.
- 14 A person's spirit sustains him through sickness—
but who can bear a crushed spirit?
- 15 The discerning person acquires knowledge,
and the wise person seeks knowledge.
- 16 A person's gift makes room for him,
and leads him before important people.
- 17 The first to state his case seems right,
until his opponent begins to cross-examine him.
- 18 A toss of a coin ends disputes,
and settles the issue between strong opponents.
- 19 A relative offended is harder to reach than a strong city,
and disputes are like the barred gates of a fortified citadel.
- 20 From the fruit of a person's mouth his stomach is satisfied,
with the product of his lips is he satisfied.
- 21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
and those who love its use will eat its fruit.

Wealth and Wisdom in the Court and in the Home

- 22 The one who finds a wife finds what is enjoyable,
and receives a pleasurable gift from the LORD.
- 23 A poor person makes supplications,
but a rich man answers harshly.
- 24 A person who has friends may be harmed by them,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
- 19:1 Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity
than one who is perverse in his speech and is a fool.
- 2 It is dangerous to have zeal without knowledge,
and the one who acts hastily makes poor choices.
- 3 A person's folly subverts his way,

- and his heart rages against the LORD.
- 4 Wealth adds many friends,
but a poor person is separated from his friend.
- 5 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and the one who spouts out lies will not escape punishment.
- 6 Many people entreat the favor of a generous person,
and everyone is the friend of the person who gives gifts.
- 7 All the relatives of a poor person hate him;
how much more do his friends avoid him—
he pursues them with words, but they do not respond.
- 8 The one who acquires wisdom loves himself;
the one who preserves understanding will prosper.
- 9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and the one who spouts out lies will perish.
- 10 Luxury is not appropriate for a fool;
how much less for a servant to rule over princes!
- 11 A person's wisdom makes him slow to anger,
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.
- 12 A king's wrath is like the roar of a lion,
but his favor is like dew on the grass.
- 13 A foolish child is the ruin of his father,
and a contentious wife is like a constant dripping.
- 14 A house and wealth are inherited from parents,
but a prudent wife is from the LORD.
- 15 Laziness brings on a deep sleep,
and the idle person will go hungry.
- 16 The one who obeys commandments guards his life;
the one who despises his ways will die.
- 17 The one who is gracious to the poor lends to the LORD,
and the LORD will repay him for his good deed.
- 18 Discipline your child, for there is hope;
[do not be a willing party to his death (NIV)]
- 19 A person with great anger bears the penalty,
but if you deliver him from it once, you will have to do it again.
- 20 Listen to advice and receive discipline,
that you may become wise by the end of your life.
- 21 There are many plans in a person's mind,
but it is the counsel of the LORD which will stand.
- 22 What is desirable for a person is to show loyal love,
and a poor person is better than a liar.

The Pedagogue and Punishment of Fools

- 23 Fearing the LORD leads to life,
and one who does so will live satisfied; he will not be afflicted by calamity.
- 24 The sluggard plunges his hand in the dish,
and he will not even bring it back to his mouth!
- 25 Flog a scorner, and as a result the simpleton will learn prudence;
correct a discerning person, and as a result he will understand knowledge.
- 26 The one who robs his father and chases away his mother
is a son who brings shame and disgrace.
- 27 If you stop listening to instruction, my child,
you will stray from the words of knowledge.
- 28 A crooked witness scorns justice,
and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.
- 29 Judgments are prepared for scorners,
and floggings for the backs of fools.
- 20:1 Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler;
whoever goes astray by them is not wise.

- 2 The king's terrifying anger is like the roar of a lion;
whoever provokes him sins against himself.
- 3 It is an honor for a person to cease from strife,
but every fool quarrels.
- 4 The sluggard will not plow during the planting season,
so at harvest time he looks for the crop but has nothing.
- 5 Counsel in a person's heart is like deep water,
but an understanding person draws it out.
- 6 Many people profess their loyalty,
but a faithful person—who can find?
- 7 The righteous person behaves in integrity;
blessed are his children after him.
- 8 A king sitting on the throne to judge
separates out all evil with his eyes.
- 9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart clean;
I am pure from my sin"?
- 10 Diverse weights and diverse measures—
the LORD abhors both of them.
- 11 Even a young man is known by his actions,
whether his activity is pure and whether it is right.

Speech and Commerce

- 12 The ear that hears and the eye that sees—
the LORD has made them both.
- 13 Do not love sleep, lest you become impoverished;
open your eyes so that you might be satisfied with food.
- 14 "It's worthless! It's worthless!" says the buyer,
but when he goes on his way, he boasts.
- 15 There is gold, and an abundance of rubies,
but words of knowledge are like a precious jewel.
- 16 Take a man's garment when he has given security for a stranger,
and when he gives surety for strangers, hold him in pledge.
- 17 Bread gained by deceit tastes sweet to a person,
but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.
- 18 Plans are established by counsel,
so make war with guidance.
- 19 The one who goes about gossiping reveals secrets;
therefore do not associate with someone who is always opening his mouth.

Honoring Parents

- 20 The one who curses his father and his mother,
his lamp will be extinguished in the blackest darkness.
- 21 An inheritance gained easily in the beginning
will not be blessed in the end.

Trust God to Avenge Wrong

- 22 Do not say, "I will pay back evil!"
Wait for the LORD, so that he may vindicate you.
- 23 The LORD abhors differing weights,
and dishonest scales are wicked.
- 24 The steps of a person are ordained by the LORD—
so how can anyone understand his own way?
- 25 It is a snare for a person to rashly cry, "Holy!"
and only afterward to consider what he has vowed.

A Wise King

- 26 A wise king separates out the wicked;
he turns the threshing wheel over them.

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| 27 | The human spirit is like the lamp of the LORD,
searching all his innermost parts. |
| 28 | Loyal love and truth preserve a king,
and his throne is upheld by loyal love. |
| 29 | The glory of young men is their strength,
and the splendor of old men is gray hair. |
| 30 | Beatings and wounds cleanse away evil,
and floggings cleanse the innermost being. |

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