

CHAPTER 25

Proverbs 25:1 These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

Here is a reminder we are studying the Proverbs of Solomon. We have the personal counsel of a king, whom the LORD inspired with His wisdom. And the Proverbs we have were selected from many by the careful work of men appointed by Hezekiah the king.

There is value in this verse of Scripture, or the LORD would not have given it to us.

There are two intermissions in the book of Proverbs: one at chapter 10:1 and one here at chapter 25:1.

The Lord, is giving us a break, to consider again what special Words we are reading. Let us consider it closely, and we will see, that here also is wisdom for our learning.

God gave Solomon, son of David and king of Israel, much wisdom and a large heart (***1Kings 3:10-15***).

Solomon immediately demonstrated to Israel his great sense of judgment by dealing with two harlots in a wonderful way (***1Kings 3:16-28***).

Solomon was wiser than all men, in his day, and wise men and kings came from all nations to hear him speak on any subject (***1Kings 4:29-34***).

God also gave Solomon, the other things necessary, for a full experimentation of human life, in discovering the purpose and pleasure it.

Solomon was a very attractive man (***1Samuel 16:12; 2Samuel 11:2***).

Solomon had unlimited capital (***Ecclesiastes 2:10***).

Solomon had no wars or kingdom disturbances (***1Kings 4:24-25***).

Solomon was an absolute ruler, at the height of the power, of the Israelite nation (***1Kings 4:20-21***)!

Consider this, Solomon was incredibly skilled and desirable socially.

Solomon could afford anything he wanted; he had no opposition or wars to distract him; and everyone would do exactly what he wanted.

Solomon's laboratory for experimenting about life purpose and pleasure, was exceptional. No man or group of men, before or since, can even approach his

research opportunities or ability in analyzing and summarizing the results.

Solomon committed his life to discovering man's purpose and pleasure (***Ecclesiastes 1:3, 12-13***).

Solomon tried it all, and then some. He had wealth: Silver was as common as gravel (***1Kings 10:14-29***)!

Women? He had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, many of whom he loved with his extra large heart (***1Kings 11:1-3***)!

Entertainment? He tried everything there was to try, in staggering excess (***Ecclesiastes 2:1-10***)!

Prestige? The wise men and kings of the earth came with presents annually to hear him talk (***1Kings 10:1-25***)!

At the end of his grand and glorious experiment of life, Solomon carefully, sought out good words to teach his people, the truth about what he had learned.

Solomon carefully summarized his vast learning in 3000 meticulously devised and Holy Spirit accepted Proverbs, that were short, substantial, and powerful sayings of truth and wisdom for the people to learn knowledge (***Ecclesiastes 12:9-10***).

And the Proverbs were further refined by divine inspiration (***Ecclesiastes 12:11***)!

Can you hear from heaven, "*These are the true sayings of God*" (***Revelation 19:9***)?

So where does Hezekiah fit in? He was a glorious king in his own right, a descendant of David and Solomon (***2Chronicles 32:27-30***).

Hezekiah was exceptionally wise and zealous in the reformation and revival of true worship in Israel, like in the days of David and Solomon (***2Chronicles 29:2; 30:21-27; 31:1-21***).

He appointed men, under the direct guidance of God, to select the Proverbs used from this point, to the end of the book of Proverbs.

What an incredible gift! Can you believe it? You have a book of several hundred, of the choicest Proverbs of Solomon's learning, revised to perfection by God.

Now, reader, what will you do with these short, pithy statements of wisdom called Proverbs?

Will you read them as quaint sayings of ancient religious literature?

Will you marvel at their brevity and variety? Will you humble yourself before them with a trembling heart and

beg the Lord to teach you in your soul all the wisdom each contains?

All the wisdom of all authors, even with our information and learning explosion, cannot compare to one of the Lord's Proverbs (*2Timothy 3:7*).

Why read some scholarly book on anthropology of a God-hating, marijuana-smoking, same-sex-loving professor who teaches classes about deviant sexual behavior of one-legged penguins in Madagascar?

The verse does have value! It serves as the second intermission, after *Proverbs 10:1*, for us to realize once again that we are reading the most glorious Words in the universe (along with the rest of Scripture). See the comments on *Proverbs 1:1*.

Reader, you are very blessed! What will you do with this book? How can you put it down, and replace it for anything else?

Can you see the Lord Jesus Christ in this verse? You must, for all of Scripture testifies of Him, especially those parts written by another son of David! (*John 5:39*)

The Holy Spirit designed the verse to further whet our appetite for Solomon's Proverbs, but with the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ we must say, "*A greater than Solomon is here!*"

Proverbs 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

God Has Infinite Wisdom Of All Things!

God acts without revealing His purpose, seeking counsel, or exposing matters to public scrutiny.

Kings are much different. Since they understand very little in comparison, they should act only after diligent examination and deliberate consideration.

It would be folly for any leader to act in an arbitrary way, pretending to be wise as God. And all human rulers should follow their prudent example.

The world moves according to God's secret will, of which we know little (*Deuteronomy 29:29*).

God does not seek counsel or reveal these matters, to just anyone (*Job 26:14; Romans 11:33*).

There is more, than is comprehensible to us, and many more such things with Him (*Job 23:14; Psalm 139:17-18*).

Only by revelation of Scripture and passage of time do we learn of His righteous will. We have been given God's revealed will, in the Word of God, by which we are to govern our lives and verify all decisions (*Deuteronomy 29:29*).

It Is Absolute Folly To Ignore The Word Of God!

The LORD deals privately with men, in their souls, and only rarely exposes them to the judgment of others. God often afflicts men in their beds and chastens them in their thoughts (*Job 33:14-33*).

God told Abimelech during the night not to touch Sarah (*Genesis 20:3*)!

God told Laban to be gentle with Jacob (*Genesis 31:24*).

David knew to use these private times with the Lord (*Psalms 4:4; 42:8; 63:6; 77:6; 119:147-148; 139:17-18*).

God forgives us daily, of sins large and small, without exposing them. For this we should be very thankful, and we should also see His great glory in such gracious concealment.

When we have opportunity, to overlook and conceal personal offences against us, it is also our glory to do so (*Proverbs 17:9; 19:11*).

But it also is our duty, with the authority God may have given us, in a particular role, to search out matters and deal with them according to the wisdom of Scripture.

A noble king must gather all the facts, call wise counselors, examine witnesses, review precedents, consider consequences, and deliberate before drawing a conclusion and making a judgment.

Solomon did very wisely in dealing with the two harlots (*1Kings 3:9-28*).

Ahasuerus did so regarding Vashti's rebellion (*Esther 1:12-21*).

But Ahasuerus failed in hastily approving Haman's personal vendetta against the Jews (*Esther 3:8-15*).

God told Moses how authority should deal with hearsay (*Deuteronomy 13:12-18*): They should inquire about it, make search, and ask diligently. **If** their investigation showed the matter to be true and certain, then they were to execute the appropriate judgment.

The same procedure was to be followed in matters of conflicting testimony (*Deuteronomy 19:15-21*).

Job, the perfect and righteous man that he was, followed this godly procedure (*Job 29:16*).

Every responsible authority should copy the noble procedure. Parents should search out matters regarding their children. Children do not have rights in the family; they have responsibilities and privileges. They should be learning to live righteously.

If there is reason to be suspicious, or even if there is not, wise parents will make diligent inquisition and search to confirm or convict. A sin nipped in the bud, before it is a full grown poisonous plant, is much easier to correct for both parent and child.

The father who does not search out things, but hides his head in the sand, is no father worthy of the name. And He will be brought to shame (*Proverbs 29:15, 17*).

The father who believes all that he hears without careful investigation exalts simpleness (*Proverbs 14:15*).

Let every father reading this Proverb be a responsible interrogator. David foolishly let Adonijah go so far in rebellion without questioning him that it cost him his life (*1Kings 1:6; 2:10-25*).

The purpose and wisdom of human rulers is to examine all matters carefully, in order to properly rule and protect their subjects.

God never intended careless overbearing rule when He ordained the five spheres of human authority. Rule was not given just for the pleasure of the one reigning, but for the protection and perfection of those under the rule.

Job even considered the contentions of his servants (*Job 31:13-15*).

It is this honorable aspect of Christian authority that every magistrate, master, father, husband, and pastor should also include in the discharge of their office.

While the degree of service to those under authority varies from position to position, it is an important part of using God-given authority. For example, masters (employers) rule in employment situations for the profit of the company and themselves; but they are also bound, to use that rule equitably and fairly (*Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1*).

Our Lord Jesus operates at a level we cannot explain or even define. He divides between the joints and the marrow, and between the soul and the spirit (*Hebrews 4:12-14*).

All things are naked and opened to Him, but He Himself dwells in a light, that no man can approach unto (*1Timothy 6:16*).

Our Lord Jesus searches our reins and hearts (*Revelation 2:23*).

Rather than have Him discover our secret sins while trying to hide them, be open, in our hearts before Him and beg Him to make merciful examination (*Job 34:31-32; Psalms 26:2; 139:23-24*).

Proverbs 25:3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

Heaven is higher than you can know, and the earth deeper than you can explore. Neither can you know and explore a true king's heart.

A ruler has in his heart, classified information, burdens, plans, threats, knowledge, and wisdom you cannot discover. It is folly and presumption to judge him based on your very limited perspective of national matters.

Solomon was a king, and the son of a king. He was the wisest politician in earth's history. Having exalted a king's honor to search out matters (*Proverbs 25:2*).

Solomon contrasted the inability of citizens to search out and understand their king's decisions or actions.

Here is wisdom from God to teach you respect for civil authority (*Exodus 22:28; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1*).

How high is high? How high is the sky? How far to the edge of the universe? How deep is deep? What is in the center of the earth? These are questions men only speculate about. They cannot truly know or understand them.

This inspired comparison shows man's inferiority in various matters, specifically here, the questioning of civil rulers (*Psalms 103:11; Isaiah 55:9*).

Many gasped in Solomon's court, when he asked for a sword to cut an infant in two. They were outraged! Kill a baby? Give half to each woman? What callousness? Why was he so impulsive? Why not ask more questions? Solve a death by another death? Why not select a jury of peers? Why not pay for a public defender and take six months to learn nothing? Why not pay for jail time? The king had wisdom in his heart that no man understood (*1Kings 3:16-28*)!

Solomon broke a strong promise, to his mother, when she asked for Abishag on behalf of Adonijah (*1Kings 2:12-25*).

A promise to his mother was nothing. It might look like a lie and murder to you, but the king's heart was unsearchable! And he killed his brother for even asking! Solomon protected his God-given rule from a usurper (*1Kings 1:5-7*).

Some of the harshest language of the New Testament is for those who criticize civil rulers (**2Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10**).

God ridiculed their ignorance of government and declared they ought to be destroyed like brute beasts.

God revealed that even angels do not speak disrespectfully against rulers. He condemned them as presumptuous and self-willed. Those wielding disrespect, are guilty of one of the sins He hates most, disrespecting those in authority.

Your president deals daily with more information than you and your ten smartest friends could analyze in a month! He faces enormous pressure from many directions for every decision. It is truly folly and self-willed presumption, to criticize his actions, when you do not have a clue about what is happening.

While true, of kings and presidents, the wisdom of this Proverb applies to all authority. Fathers make decisions for families that children do not understand. Business owners do things that employees cannot understand, for they have duties and knowledge, in their hearts, greater than coffee breaks and punching a time clock. Pastors oversee the flock of God with burdens, convictions, knowledge, and goals unknown to most of the members.

If you criticize leaders for things you cannot even learn, it is only fair and right that those under your authority rise up in rebellion and reject your decisions. It is only fair and right they disrespect you. It is only fair and right things do not work out in your life, because you accused or criticized a God-appointed ruler knowing more than you could be taught.

How can you apply the Proverb? Honor leaders, even in your thoughts, even when their decisions look terrible (**Ecclesiastes 10:20; 1Kings 12:1-4; 1Peter 2:13-17**)!

Honor your parents by respecting their rules and desires, even in facial expressions (**Proverbs 30:17; Deuteronomy 27:16; Ephesians 6:1-3**).

Serve your masters as serving Christ, even when they are unfair (**Ephesians 6:5-8; 1Peter 2:18-23**).

Obey your pastor as one who has a deep, holy duty for your soul (**Hebrews 13:7, 17**).

If you are concerned about the decisions being made and the future of your nation, then pray for your rulers! Don't berate or criticize them! Pray for them! This is the will of God for you, even when the rulers are oppressive pagans (**1Timothy 2:1-3; Jeremiah 29:4-7; Ezra 6:10**).

What difference does it really make, since God is totally in charge (**Daniel 2:20-22**)!

There is one King you will never search out! He is the King of kings! "*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*" (**Daniel 4:35**)

Reader, do you honor this King? Do you trust Him? Do you obey His every request, even when you do not understand them?

You will never search this King out, but He will search out every detail of your soul. You will give a complete account of your life to Him, right down to every idle word (**Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:10-12; 2Corinthians 5:9-11**)!

Everything, you have thought, said, and done, is written in His books, which will be opened to examine your life (**Revelation 20:11-15**).

If you are one of God's, He will declare you as His own child to the whole universe and give you an unspeakable eternal inheritance. You will be accepted into heaven's bliss, while the wicked drop down into hell!

As a born again child of God, the righteousness you possess, He provided, which is Jesus Christ righteousness. The king's heart is unsearchable!

Paul wrote of Him in light of salvation, "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen*" (**Romans 11:33-36**).

Proverbs 25:4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

Silver is mined from the earth with other metals and isolated by refining processes.

Silver must be refined numerous times in order to remove all the dross, scum or foreign matter, that corrupts the purity of the metal (**Proverbs 17:3; Psalm 12:6**).

After all the dross has been removed, the pure silver can be formed into a fine vessel of beauty with the right characteristics.

Here is a wonderful Proverb, an obscure and pithy saying, carrying a valuable lesson of human experience or wisdom.

The Proverb, does not intend to teach or warn metallurgists or refiners, but instead borrows a lesson from their work to apply to civil government in particular, and all units of society in general. See the immediate context (*Proverbs 25:5*).

What is the specific lesson? Refining scum and foreign material, that corrupt silver and make it unfit for forming a beautiful vessel. So also the scum and foreign matter of wicked persons corrupt a government.

For a king to have a glorious and prosperous reign, for the benefit of his people, he must purge away all the dross of ambitious, evil, and foolish men (*Proverbs 25:5*).

A king or other civil ruler must choose noble and wise counselors for his cabinet.

Once a covetous, dishonest, or wicked person is detected, at any level of government, he must be quickly put out.

By this holy example to the nation, which preserves the government's integrity, the nation can be a beautiful and righteous thing (*Proverbs 14:34*).

The power and riches of civil government attract sycophants, covetous men, lazy fools, seditious men, traitors, and unprincipled tyrants.

If they are allowed to remain in office, the trustworthiness of the ruler and his delegated authority is compromised. What God intended for the safety and prosperity of men becomes their enemy and destroyer.

The rule applies to all parts of society. For a marriage to have love and peace, odious women must be rebuked (*Proverbs 27:15-16; 30:21-23*).

For a family to have unity, the scorner should be dealt with (*Proverbs 22:10; Deuteronomy 21:18-21*).

For a church to please God and benefit its members, hypocrites must be known (*Psalms 144:11-15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13*).

If this refining process is neglected, the resulting entity will never fulfill its potential.

Jethro gave Moses excellent qualifications for rulers under him (*Exodus 18:21*).

Jehoshaphat strictly charged the judges in his day (*2 Chronicles 19:5-11*).

Both administrations were beautiful things, and the nation prospered in both cases.

It is the duty of every leader, from a husband, father, to a president, to maintain the peace and righteousness of

both family and nation by dealing with scornful or seditious elements.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a perfect King and Refiner! He loves righteousness and hates iniquity (*Psalms 45:6-7; Hebrews 1:8-9*).

The Lord Jesus Christ will not allow the foolish in His sight (*Psalms 5:5; Matthew 7:21-23*).

The Lord Jesus Christ has purified all the saints by His blood to be kings and Priests unto God and offer perfect sacrifices (*Malachi 3:1-5; Revelation 1:5-6*).

The day is coming in which He will purge the universe of all offending persons (*Matthew 13:37-52; 25:31-46*). Reader, repent today!

Proverbs 25:5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

Wise rulers have counselors to assist in decisions. They cannot know all the details of every part of the kingdom or nation, so rulers rely on counselors for help.

If these advisors are wicked, a good ruler will be corrupted by evil influence and deceit. These evil men must be removed, so the kingdom or nation can prosper in righteousness. The context adds further weight to our Proverb (*Proverbs 25:4*).

A good ruler is silver, and wicked advisors are the dross. **If** the dross is taken away, the purified administration, will be able to prosper.

Righteousness exalts a nation, therefore wickedness must be removed, to obtain God's blessing (*Proverbs 14:34; 20:26*).

Dross is a good term for the scum, that gathers in high places, to siphon a living from legitimate rulers. But a great leader will drive them away with the refiner's fire (*Proverbs 20:8*).

Wise and faithful counselors are crucial for successful government. The longevity of a ruler is dependent on righteousness (*Proverbs 16:12; 29:14*).

Concern Facing Every Leader Is Finding Wise Faithful Counselors.

King David, rejected evil men, from his service and company (*Psalms 101:3-8; 119:63*).

David gave deathbed instructions, for Solomon to remove two of them, even though one was his nephew and had served as general of the army his entire reign (*1 Kings 2:5-10*).

Asa removed his mother from being queen in a national revival of righteousness (**1Kings 15:13**).

Jethro told Moses, "*Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them*" (**Exodus 18:21**).

Jehoshaphat charged the judges in his day, "*Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts*" (**2Chronicles 19:6-7**).

What wisdom! In addition to making us wise unto salvation, the Bible, is also a political manual of great dimensions. Read the following examples of bad and good counselors, and then consider our nation's plight.

Rehoboam followed his father, Solomon, as king of Israel. Because Solomon had heavily taxed the nation, the people offered to serve Rehoboam forever, if he would ease their burden a little. Instead of listening to the wise advice of his father's counselors and reducing taxes, he followed the advice of his young friends and harshly threatened the nation with higher taxes.

Ten tribes revolted and left Rehoboam only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained (**1Kings 12:1-19**).

Rehoboam never ruled his father's expansive nation a single day, for wicked counselors cost him most of it.

Haman was a wicked counselor of King Ahasuerus of the Persian Empire. Hating the Jews, because of Mordecai's lack of publically worship him, he slandered them to the king and enticed the King to authorize their extermination.

It was only, by the intervention of Esther the queen that she, Mordecai, and the rest of her people were saved.

Haman was hanged with his sons at Esther's request. A whole book of the Bible is written to describe this wicked intrigue and God's protection of His people, in spite of a wicked counselor who had the ear of the king.

Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was tetrarch of Galilee from 4 BC - AD 39. He married his brother Philip's wife, Herodias, contrary to the law, for which John the Baptist rebuked him.

Herod feared John, because knew he was just and holy, and heard him gladly. But Herodias used a subtle ploy, to trap Herod into beheading him against his will, for she hated John for his criticism of her marriage (**Mark 6:17-29**).

Pharaoh needed a man to oversee the largest food storage and distribution plan in the history of the world,

where embezzlement and fraud could have been rife, he chose Joseph.

He said to his servants regarding him, "*.....Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?*"(**Genesis 41:38**).

And he made him the highest ruler in Egypt because "*.....there is none so discreet and wise as thou art.*"(**Genesis 41:39**).

Daniel, a Jewish captive, served Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, Cyrus the Persian, and several other kings over a period of seventy-five years.

It was often customary to kill previous counselors for concern of loyalty when an empire changed hands. So Daniel's tenure is phenomenal. How and why did it occur? Because, Daniel, was a faithful righteous counselor, and by God's great blessings (**Daniel 1:19-21; 2:48-49; 5:11; 6:25-28**).

When Daniel was intensely scrutinized and investigated by jealous peers, "*they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him*" (**Daniel 6:4**).

The lesson is simple. Paul taught it as well. "*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners*" (**1Corinthians 15:33**).

False Information Wicked Influence Destroys Truth And Justice.

Men of evil character must be avoided or removed. The consequences of breaking this rule, are much greater, for a ruler than for an ordinary citizen. A whole nation can suffer greatly, if wicked men, corrupt a ruler with wicked advice and deceit.

Our great nation, is cursed with a Legion of men and women, who are not fit to counsel a daycare, and yet our highest rulers, are often subject to their subtle and dangerous influence.

They include lobbyists, news analysts, public relations specialists, speechwriters, pollsters, interns, special interest groups, party donors, aides, and other sycophants, who prey on the legitimate work of qualified men. This bureaucratic bloat is a national judgment for our sins (**Proverbs 28:2**).

Saints must pray for God to deliver our elected and appointed rulers from them (**1Timothy 2:1-2**).

Every man, must keep his righteous rule as husband, father, employer, or pastor, pure from corruption.

The only perfect counsel, for these offices, is found in the Word of God, which is superior to the opinions of all men, and able to make the man of God perfect (**Psalms 119:98-100; 2Timothy 3:16-17**).

Let every man beware of, false teachers who creep into houses and lead captive silly women through family radio and seminar notebooks (**2Timothy 3:6-7**).

Let every employer, examine the character of his assistants; and let every pastor, carefully measure all church elders.

There is one King for Whom we need not worry. There are no evil advisors in His presence. The wicked shall not stand in His sight! He hates all workers of iniquity (**Psalms 5:5**).

No one without a perfectly sanctified character, shall ever enter His kingdom (**Revelation 21:27**).

There are no angels, princes, popes, priests, or pastors to reign with him, for He reigns alone without assistance (**Isaiah 59:16-21; 63:1-6; 1Timothy 6:15; Revelation 12:5-9**).

God has ordained His throne forever, and of the increase of his government there shall be no end (**Psalms 45:6; 89:4, 29, 36; Isaiah 9:7; Hebrews 1:8**).

His throne is established in perfect righteousness (**Psalms 45:6-7; Hebrews 1:8-9**).

This is the throne and kingdom of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. You may trust His reign absolutely! Trust and serve Him today!

Proverbs 25:6 Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men:

Here is wisdom to advance in approval with God and men!

Wisdom includes discretion. Discretion includes humility. Humility includes reservation. Reservation is holding yourself back from speaking or interacting with important people.

A wise man will never put himself forward in the presence of other persons unless it is absolutely necessary.

The Proverb continues, "*For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen*" (**Proverbs 25:7**).

It is better, to let others ask you to speak or sit with them, than to be told to shut up or turned out from their company. Leave it to others to invite or praise you (**Proverbs 25:27; 27:2**).

Jesus also taught this rule, by saying, "*When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.*" (**Luke 14:8-10**)

**A Wise Man Is Never Shamed
By Presuming On The Affection
Or Acceptance Of Others.**

A wise man knows, that silence, often leaves a better impression than speaking, remaining detached and distant better than flaunting oneself (**Proverbs 17:27-28**).

A wise man knows, that thinking too highly of himself, is foolish self-deception and offensive vainglory (**Romans 12:3; Philippians 2:3-4**).

A wise man knows, that even when a group of persons do not, tell him to shut up or leave, they may be thinking those very things!

A wise man would rather, have those same persons earnestly desiring his presence or counsel, rather than wishing he would go elsewhere.

A wise man knows, it is the great shame of many men and women, that they presume others are infatuated, with their presence or mesmerized by their stories and words.

Diotrophes, a presumptuous man, who loved the preeminence in a church, proved he was not of God (**3John 1:9-11**).

Such a spirit and conduct cannot be tolerated in a ministerial candidate, for he must be a servant, not a lord (**Luke 22:24-27; 1Timothy 3:6; 1Peter 5:1-4**).

If you would be wise, you must hold yourself back, from intruding into group discussions or activities where you were not invited, especially when the persons in the group are your superiors in any measure.

If you have any value to them, they will soon request your presence or advice. Until then, it is better to be withdrawn and silent, safe from shame.

Proverbs 25:7 For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

Humility Wins Favor With God And Men.

Humility is crucial to be a great Christian, a successful leader, a gracious person, or a man with friends.

True Humility Never Presumes Upon The Activities Or Presence Of Others.

It is far better, to be invited than to invite yourself.

You may and could be rejected, on the basis of your own presumption! Let others make you important rather than trying to do so yourself (*Proverbs 25:27; 27:2*).

Only half of the Proverb is here. These Words are the explanation and reward for taking a humble approach in public gatherings. The first half declares, "*Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men...*" (*Proverbs 25:6*).

Solomon taught humility by explaining good manners in public assemblies. It is better to take a back seat and be invited forward than to take a front seat and be asked to move back before those present.

The Lord Jesus Christ used the same illustration for humility, when He saw proud guests at a meal choosing the better seats (*Luke 14:7-10*).

With greater detail than Solomon, as a parable is more detailed than a Proverb, Jesus described the public shame of being asked to move lower versus the public honor of being asked to move higher! He concluded by declaring that

The Lord Jesus Christ will reward humility and punish pride. *Luke 14:11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

While the shame of public dishonor and rejection makes the Proverb potent and valuable: The pride of your soul is what must be identified and eliminated.

The proud actions that offend others are merely the symptoms of an arrogant spirit and haughty heart.

True humility begins in the soul, where you admit your worthlessness before God and commit yourself to serving others, rather than expecting and demanding them to honor and serve you.

How are you in group discussions? Can you calmly and patiently listen to others speak, or are you agitated with the need to talk?

What about one-on-one conversations? Must you respond to every statement with one of your own?

Why is it crucial for you to speak? Why do you feel the need? You are violating the principle of humility taught

by this Proverb. You should remain silent in most cases until your opinion is specifically sought.

Future Success Requires Humility.

God Himself will surely put you in your place, if you do not hate your pride and arrogance (*Proverbs 8:13; 15:25; 16:5; Job 40:9-14*).

If you exhibit pride and arrogance, men will reject you for friendship or business, for most men resent such a haughty spirit (*Proverbs 13:10; 26:12, 16; 28:11*).

You will sooner or later, make costly mistakes, for pride is blinding and deceitful to all (*Proverbs 11:2; 16:18; 29:23*).

Proverbs 25:8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

Slow Down! Haste Makes Waste! Haste Can Put You To Shame!

Slow down! If you are in a conflict with another person, do not react hastily. Do not rush to any action. Calm down; sit down; slow down. Think through every angle carefully, or you will miss the obvious and could be put to shame.

Conflict and strife are regular parts of life in a sinful world. They evoke strong passions, which cause men to rush to action.

Most men want to rectify the situation immediately, but such haste in a conflict can easily leave a man exposed to a wiser reaction of his opponent. The human heart and its demand for haste must be ruled (*Proverbs 16:32*).

A passionate response is usually a poor one. It is better to let passions cool before planning any action.

The mind is usually not fully engaged, when the heart is pounding and the emotions are raging. Cool off first, before you do anything or even plan anything. "*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*" (*James 1:19-20*).

A multitude of counselors makes for safety in war (*Proverbs 20:18; 24:6*)!

What wisdom! They cannot be just any counselors; they must be wise, experienced, and sober.

A multitude of counselors, should be uninvolved third parties, who can think objectively and wisely.

A multitude of counselors, should have experience in battle, and they do not need, to be close friends. Friendship blinds eyes and stops ears, so seek counselors, who will not become inflamed with you.

Unless you are very careful, small conflicts will escalate quickly into much larger battles (**Proverbs 17:14**).

Responding foolishly, without due deliberation, is the mark of a fool, and such a reaction usually ends with folly (**Proverbs 18:6**).

Forcing wrath will bring forth more strife, just as surely as the churning of milk brings forth butter (**Proverbs 30:33**). Slow down and think!

Kings go to battle slowly. Jesus said, *"Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace"* (**Luke 14:31-32**).

If you have ever slept on a conflict, with a mind toward fearing God and loving wisdom, you woke in the morning with a very different perspective than what you went to bed with. This is wisdom!

By allowing some time to pass, your passions cooled, your mind had time to clear foolish emotions, and the Holy Spirit could direct you.

Proverbs 25:9 Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:

Private And Personal Matters Should Stay Private And Personal.

If you have an issue with a person, take care of it with them. No one else needs to know, and telling anyone else about it becomes the sins of backbiting, whispering, and talebearing.

Not only should you keep this rule of wisdom yourself, you should strictly help others keep it also (**Proverbs 25:23**).

Here is rich wisdom. Here is plain condemnation of a very popular sin. Most men and women, are so selfish and hateful, that they would rather, broadcast their controversies with others, rather than deal with them in direct kindness.

Much of the dissension and strife, among men. is caused by the frequent violation of this simple Proverb (**Proverbs 26:20**).

Exposing private information about a person is to rape their reputation. It is a serious offence. It is summarized in the Ten Commandments by the sixth article, *"Thou shalt not kill,"* for any hateful activity toward another breaks this law (**Matthew 5:21-22**).

Only foolish or wicked people have no regard for the character or reputations of others.

The quantity and severity of warnings against this sin, in the Bible, prove how much God hates it. It is addressed in both testaments numerous times (**Leviticus 19:16; Psalm 15:3; Romans 1:29-30**).

Solomon frequently condemned, exposing private information, about a person in many Proverbs (**Proverbs 11:13; 20:19; 26:22**).

There are two ways, of an offence, being caused with your neighbor. Either they have offended you by an action of theirs, or you have offended them by your action.

In either case, the rule is the same: settle the matter directly with them. Do not spread any knowledge of the issue to anyone else. Both kindness and wisdom, will keep the matter secret between you.

Jesus expanded this Proverb beautifully. He taught very clearly your course of action when someone has offended you. He said, *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother"* (**Matthew 18:15**).

Note the Lord's careful Wording that keeps the matter private.

The Lord also taught very clearly your course of action when you have offended someone. He said, *"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift"* (**Matthew 5:23-24**).

If you do not have the ability, to overlook the personal offences of others, at least show a little righteousness by keeping their offences between you and them (**Proverbs 17:9; 19:11**).

Proverbs 25:10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

Gossip Is Easy To Do.

If you are a gossip, wise men will know and will rebuke you, and it may cause you, to be disgraced and shamed.

The lesson is simple: do not talk critically or negatively about others, do not spread news or rumors, and do not slander anyone.

Gossip is a heinous sin, and it will permanently stain your reputation.

This is half of a Proverb. The first half reads, "*Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another*" (**Proverbs 25:9**).

Good men only discuss differences or offences with the party involved, not with others.

If you tell others about a controversy you have with someone, then others will know you are hateful, malicious, and wicked.

Jesus Christ taught the same rule of godliness and wisdom. He said, "*Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone*" (**Matthew 18:15**).

If you cannot ignore the offence of another, go tell him his fault. Instead of telling others about the problem, tell him alone. The rule is clear and definite.

When you have a problem with someone, it is cruel and malicious to tell others about it. You only do so in order to defame and injure the other party and obtain sympathy for your cause.

You are seeking, to hurt another person's reputation and exalt your own. You should know that God considers such intentions and actions to be murder (**Matthew 5:21-26**).

If you tell others about them, it is called gossip. You should keep controversies and offences between you and your adversary.

In the Bible, it was called backbiting, talebearing, tattling, and whispering, even if you told the truth. These are terrible sins that God hates. If you lied about the matter, then it was called slander.

It does not matter, that these sins are popular today and no longer preached against: they are atrocious in God's sight.

Godly men despise this evil treatment of others, and they will despise the person doing it. They should angrily rebuke those who gossip about others.

It is a duty to do so. Solomon wrote, "*The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue*" (**Proverbs 25:23**).

It is painful, that more wise men do not put backbiters, talebearers, whisperers, slanderers, and gossips to shame, through angry rebukes (**Leviticus 19:17; 1Thessalonians 5:14**).

If you have a problem with someone, and you cannot overlook it, go to him alone and settle it with Christian love.

Put a guard on your heart, and do not even think about telling others.

Only say complimentary and kind things about other people. Let your reputation be gracious and always edifying others (**Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6**).

Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

How beautiful is your speech? Would your hearers compare it to a beautiful painting or sculpture?

Solomon praises good speech here by comparing it to an exquisite scene. In most cities, are many paintings or sculptures of fruit in bowls and other settings, and apples, are commonly used. Fine homes are decorated with such art.

Here is a simple simile, a figure of speech of comparison. It is known by the Word "*like*." Apples, gold, pictures, or silver are not the subject. They only have comparative value taken together. Proper speech is commended by likening it to their combined beauty.

But some think it proves an important rule of hermeneutics, (Bible interpretation), single words are more important than their context.

The Holy Spirit never imagined hermeneutics here. They imagine, a single word is like gold, and its context like silver. Since gold has always been worth more than silver, then a single word is more important than its context. Incredible logic! Such wisdom is too high for me (**Psalms 131:1**).

What are "*pictures*", especially before the invention of photography? Since the other uses do not define the word very well (**Numbers 33:52; Isaiah 2:16**).

Let's use a dictionary summary of this English word. Picture: A painting, drawing, sculpture, statue or other symbolic representation of something, as a work of art.

Can you visualize apples of gold in a painting or sculpture of silver? As in a silver basket or bowl? What a beautiful combination of color and images! So are words well spoken!

As the next verse shows, the Holy Spirit is using similes, to praise good speech. There he uses "as" to indicate the simile. Still using gold, he compares it to fine jewelry. (*Proverbs 25:12*)

**Right Words Used Right
At The Right Time Are A Blessing!**

Right Words deserve a kiss on the lips (*Proverbs 24:26*)!

Right Words are wonderful (*Proverbs 15:23, 26; 16:13, 24; 22:11; Ecclesiastes 12:10; Colossians 4:6*)!

A single word is not the point! What did Paul say when giving a Word of exhortation (*Acts 13:15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*)?

Why did Paul call Hebrews a "word" (*Hebrews 13:22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.*)?

Solomon also use "Word" this way, as something that is said all the time (*Proverbs 12:25; 13:13; 14:15; 15:23; Ecclesiastes 8:4*).

How did our Lord speak? Most beautifully! The assembly at Nazareth couldn't believe it (*Luke 4:22*).

Mary couldn't get enough of it (*Luke 10:39*).

The Lord's enemies praised it (*John 7:46*).

The Lord's beautiful tongue and choice of Words were foretold long before (*Isaiah 50:4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.*).

Cross-references: *Proverbs 10:20 Proverbs 10:32 Proverbs 12:25*

Proverbs 25:12 As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprov-er upon an obedient ear.

It takes two to fight! It takes two to tango! Human relationships require at least two people.

If neither will forfeit or forgive, there will be strife.

If neither is bitter or selfish, there will be love.

If a wise man reproves corrects and instructs a submissive hearer, a beautiful combination occurs, with the certain growth, in wisdom. Are you both of these?

A simile compares two similar things by using "as" or "like." A wise man reproves, giving correction to a submissive hearer, is like a beautiful gold earring on an attractive ear or like a piece of decorative jewelry made from fine gold.

Gold earrings are beautiful, and so are creative works of jewelry done in fine gold. Likewise, a careful speaker, reproves faithfully and kindly to an obedient hearer, is similarly a beautiful thing.

A wise man reproves and knows how to rebuke and warn those out of the way of righteousness. He is discreet and prudent. He chooses the occasion and his words carefully. He is neither too harsh nor too lenient.

A wise man reproves does not enforce personal preferences, but he does apply and defend the Word of God.

A wise man reproves approaches, an encounter with humility and affection. Truly desiring the best for the other (*Leviticus 19:17; Galatians 6:1-3; 1Thessalonians 5:14; 2Timothy 2:24-26*).

"An obedient ear" is a submissive and ready hearer. An "ear" being synecdoche, for a person who hears obediently with their ears.

As the noble Bereans, obedient hearers, willingly received reproof and instruction with ready minds (*Acts 17:11*).

As Cornelius, obedient hearers want to know what they can do differently, to please God and men (*Acts 10:33*).

Obedient hearers are exceptional persons, in that they appreciate the value of wise rebukes and teaching (*Proverbs 9:9; 27:5-6; Psalm 141:5*).

Nathan the prophet and David the king were beautiful! David was guilty of aggravated adultery and murder. Nathan, as an inspired wise man, came discreetly with a sad and provoking story of cruel oppression by a rich man over a poor man.

David, *an obedient ear*, was righteously indignant at the oppression in Nathan's story and ultimately confessed his sin, when he was the man (*2Samuel 12:1-14*).

The Day of Pentecost was beautiful! Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, was wise in reproving, as he rebuked the Jews for crucifying the Lord and Christ of Israel (*Acts 2:14-36*)!

Three thousand hearers, were pricked in their hearts by Peter's message, and were obedient ears indeed, as they

immediately wanted to know how to repent (*Acts 2:37-41*)!

When wise reprove, they are often frustrated by disobedient ears! There is no beauty when haughty, stubborn, or rebellious hearers reject wise and skilled reproving.

Though a wise man approaches the offender with care and love, they are rebuffed and hated for daring to correct them (*Proverbs 9:7-8; 23:9; 29:1; Matthew 7:6*).

Our Lord, the wise reprover, was rejected by His hometown, in spite of being overwhelmingly gracious (*Luke 4:14-30*).

Obedient ears are often frustrated by foolish and lazy reproof. Sometimes the reproof is poorly given, so the hearers are offended (*1 Kings 12:1-19*).

Other times the reproof is not given at all, so the needy hearers, craving correction and instruction in righteousness, go their way without help (*Jeremiah 23:22; Ezekiel 33:7-9; Matthew 9:37-38*).

Faithful pastors, have labored hard with little fruit, due to stubborn and rebellious hearers, disobedient ears that refuse to obey. The blood of the hearers will be on their own heads. (*Jeremiah 25:4; 29:19; Ezekiel 33:30-33*)

Submissive hearers, have been starved due to foolish and lazy pastors. The hearers' blood will be on the pastors' heads! (*Jeremiah 23:25-32; 1 Timothy 4:16*)

Are you both a wise reprover and a submissive hearer? You must be both to be wise.

Wisdom is first and foremost measured by your ability to receive a rebuke and warning and learn from them (*Proverbs 1:5; 8:33-36; 2:1; 15:5, 31-32*).

Wisdom is also measured by your ability to carefully give a reproof to those needing it (*Proverbs 24:26; 25:11; Romans 15:1; Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:29*).

Are you a piece of fine gold in God's sight? Are you a great stench in God's nostrils?

Let every man take heed how he hears and speaks! You will give an account for every word of reproof you have heard and every word of reproof you have been given!

Proverbs 25:13 As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

**Are You A Breath Of Fresh Air
To All Who Trust You?**

Do you refresh the spirits of those who depend on you like a cool drink on a hot day? Are you especially a source of joy to your employer? Faithfulness is a great thing, but it is a rare thing today.

There are people trusting you and depending on you, and you are a relief and pleasure to them based on the degree of your faithfulness. The lesson of the Proverb is the joy created by a faithful man.

Harvest occurred in the fall in Israel. Then the hard work of bringing a harvest, into the barns and granaries by the reapers, threshers, the workers were obviously parched and weary.

The arrival of cool weather was a wonderful relief, after a hot summer, and so was a drink cooled by snow preserved from nearby mountains in the fall (*Proverbs 25:25*).

Snow itself in harvest was not good; it was the cool weather or cooling effect of snow that was good. Solomon used this refreshing effect of cool weather or a cool drink for his simile.

Solomon used a "messenger", or ambassador, for the lesson, though it applies to all jobs and duties.

Rather than working under constant supervision, a messenger would be sent with news, covenants, or ultimatums to other places.

It would be easy for a messenger to delay departure, linger on the way, get sidetracked, forget details of the message, present it in the wrong way, say more than needed, misperceive the response, or fail in other ways (*Proverbs 13:17*).

Faithfulness, is a great measure, of a man's character (*Proverbs 11:13; 14:5; 27:6; 28:20*).

Most men claim to be faithful! Just read their resumes or listen to them talk! But there are only a very few truly faithful men in any generation (*Proverbs 20:6*).

A faithful man meticulously fulfills every duty, to equal or exceed the expectations, of those trusting or depending on him.

How faithful are you? Are you early to work and appointments? Are you known for punctuality?

How faithful are you? Do you pace yourself on projects? Do you procrastinate? Do you always hit deadlines? Are you easily sidetracked? Are you distracted quickly? Do you always finish projects?

How faithful are you? Do you get the details others need? Are you a great communicator so that all parties know all that is needed? Are your quality and quantity greater than expected?

Faithful Men Are Rare!

You can separate yourself from the crowd by faithfulness in your assignments (**Proverbs 22:29; Luke 2:52**).

Do your duties, in such a way, that those trusting you and depending on you, are filled with excitement at your outstanding performance. This applies, from the President of the United States, to being a good student in kindergarten!

God's Messengers Should Be The Most Faithful Men.

Only very faithful men tested, by real duties, should ever be ordained (**1Timothy 3:1-7**).

A messenger of God, should be the most diligent and faithful man in the church. Faithfully focused on his God-given duties without distraction (**Philippians 2:19-22; 1Timothy 4:12-16; 2Timothy 2:3-4; Titus 1:5-11**).

It is a disgusting shame when the ministry is referred to as a "nonprofit profession" due to the dereliction of duty of most ministers.

The rest of your life begins now! Who is trusting you and depending on you, that needs a refreshing drink of cool water, or the relief of a cool breeze? Get to your duties and fulfill each one better than expected!

Child, make your bed and clean your room perfectly!

Wife, have a real meal for your family tonight!

Husband, do not relax or sleep tonight, without family devotions and training your family!

Proverbs 25:14 Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.

Does your giving exceed your talking? Or does your talking exceed your giving? Have you kept all your promises to give? Or have you disappointed some by not performing?

It is much easier to talk about helping than to actually do it. It is much easier to boast of generosity than to actually be generous.

If You Opened Your Mouth It Is Time To Pay!

In a dry location like Israel, where Solomon lived, clouds and wind brought great hope of rain for a people dependent on agriculture for their survival (**Proverbs 3:20; 16:15; Leviticus 26:3-5; Deuteronomy 11:10-15**;

1Kings 18:41-46; Job 36:26-28; Psalms 68:9; 147:8; Jeremiah 5:24; Zechariah 10:1).

The joy would have been great at the sight of clouds on the horizon and the feeling of wind! But it was a terrible disappointment when the clouds and wind did not produce any rain!

This Proverb is a simile, where the comparison drives the interpretation. You must, identify the boaster and the false gift, to understand the lesson.

Is the false gift a bribe, and the boaster the giver or receiver of it?

Is the false gift a worthless trinket, and the boaster the giver or receiver of it?

Is the false gift, a token of insincere love, and the boaster the giver or receiver of it?

No, in all three cases! The comparison shows it is a promised gift that is never given, and the boaster is the pompous man pretending to be a benefactor.

Clouds and wind brought the expectation of rain, which caused gladness and hope in those needing it.

When the clouds and wind, did not produce the desired and needed rain, there was great disappointment and grief. A man promising, to give without performing, is just as disappointing and frustrating.

The lesson? Keep your commitments of helping others! **Never** let your offers or promises of giving exceed your actual performance.

Job's righteousness, included his great care, of the expectations of the needy (**Job 29:13; 31:16**).

When Pharaoh's butler was released from prison and restored to his job, on Pharaoh's birthday, he fervently agreed with Joseph, that he would put in a good word to Pharaoh to seek his release as well.

But the butler, forgot all about the agreement, for two long years (**Genesis 40:1-23**)!

Can you imagine Joseph's disappointment, as days and weeks went by without a word from the butler or Pharaoh? The clouds and wind had brought no rain!

Most men love to talk the talk, they will tell you with little prompting about how kind and generous they are; but it is hard to find a faithful man that walks the talk (**Proverbs 20:6**).

The Law of Moses called it defrauding to hold back day wages even one day (**Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14-15**).

Solomon had condemned both holding back help from your neighbor and promising to help him but

postponing the actual giving of help (*Proverbs 3:27-28*).

These talkers, promise the moon or more, because it is easy and effective, to buy the praise of men this way. But these liars either, do not intend to perform, are unable to perform, or forget about the commitment, when other matters take their attention.

In all these cases, the promised expectation becomes a vain lie. Those that boast about such lies are dreadful! Righteous men never mislead where the expectations and hopes of the needy are at stake.

Consider politicians! Solomon wrote this Proverb in the midst of several about kings and governing (*Proverbs 25:2-7, 15*).

Rulers, desperately want to be popular rulers, so they are sorely tempted, to offer incredible favors to secure their popularity. It is so easy, to promise special benefits to each group of constituents.

In democracies and republics, where leaders are elected by the masses, the un-kept promises are Legion! If you are a leader of any sort, make sure that, you fulfill all your promises without fail.

Consider the devil! He promised our first mother she would become as a god, if she were to eat the forbidden fruit (*Genesis 3:1-7*).

Rather than become as a god, she damned herself, her husband, and all her children to death and an eternity in hell. The devil has been lying ever since.

When you sin, you are betting on Satan's lying promise to make you happy in spite of God's condemnation of that sin!

Satan is a deceiver and destroyer of men by lying about the pleasures of sin, just ask Amnon or Judas (*2Samuel 13:1-29; Acts 1:18*)!

Consider ministers! Many are liars for the devil, promising blessings that will not come (*1Kings 22:19-23; John 8:44; 2Corinthians 11:1-4, 13-15; 1Timothy 4:1-3*).

Many ministers, promise fantastic miracles and riches for tax-deductible donations!

The gospel of compromise, of seeker sensitive ministers that promises liberty without repentance and holiness, is a false gift (*2Peter 2:14-19*)!

Measure these imposters by their fruits, not their promises (*Matthew 7:15-20*)!

Consider men! How often have they seduced women by promising things they could not or would not do?

Consider husbands! How often have wives had expectations dashed by husbands that did not perform their word?

Consider fathers! How often have children been disappointed and discouraged by fathers that did not keep their promises?

Many of these liars boasted of their generosity, based only on promises! There is only one Father that always gives as much as promised (*Romans 8:32; 1Corinthians 2:9; Ephesians 3:20; 1Peter 4:19*)!

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the only pure truth on earth! This pure truth strongly condemns those, that talk about, helping the poor but do not keep their commitments (*James 2:15-16; 1John 3:16-19*).

The real measure of charity and generosity is performance, not words or promises! Paul wrote the Church at Corinth and told them to make sure they performed what they had committed to give to the poor saints in Jerusalem (*2Corinthians 8:1-15*).

Have you ever said, "Don't worry, I'll take care of it," but then failed to keep your obligation?

Have you ever said, "I'll be checking on you to see if you need anything else," but forgot your commitment?

Have you ever told a group, "Don't give it another thought, for I have already promised to take care of that," but knew you were stretching your ability to perform?

The Proverb condemns this kind of pompous lying about gifts. It is your duty to restrain your words and expand your giving, lest any be disappointed!

Proverbs 25:15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

Wisdom includes ability to persuade those in authority, which is very useful knowledge.

The five main God ordained authorities in life:

1. Parents,
2. Husbands,
3. Employers,
4. Government,
5. Pastors.

Authorities are moved more by patient reverence than by bold debate. Though your cause might be important and right, wisdom calls for careful and respectful appeals.

Here is great wisdom for dealing with authority. You will need to persuade an authority of your cause or dissuade one from punishing your offences.

Our Proverb here deals with persuasion, but the same wisdom serves in dissuasion as well (*Ecclesiastes 10:4*).

This rule, learned and remembered, will give great and peaceful skill for dealing with authority. Our society teaches the opposite of this wisdom, and the results are horrible. Demanding your rights and expecting an authority to cater to your needs and opinions is prideful rebellion and creates anarchy.

Rather than moving the one in authority toward your cause, it will force him to solidify his position and punish your insolent insubordination.

Human nature is proud, rebellious, and selfish. Human nature assumes all men are created equal and possessing great rights. But the Bible rejects such ignorant thinking.

No two men are created equal, and they are put in the five offices already listed that give them power over other men.

God created the offices of authority, and exalting them makes a society great. Disrespect of authority, is a widespread problem, in our profane and rebellious nation.

Solomon wrote as a monarch, where a king and his princes had great authority. They had the power of life and death, and there was no threat of a hung jury or other limitation to their ruling.

The example in our Proverb is a prince. Solomon gives divine wisdom, to help you persuade, a powerful authority, to consider your person and cause.

"Forbearing," is putting up with disagreement or poor treatment. It is patient longsuffering in the face of adversity. It is used here to describe a patient approach with authority.

If you seek to persuade an authority to change, you must wait for them to consider your cause. Impatiently demanding their change, will totally work against you.

"A soft tongue" is a metonym denotes one thing but refers to a related thing for gentle and respectful speech (*Proverbs 15:1*).

"A soft tongue" is so effective that it is described as having the power to break the bones of a prince!

Rather than arguing or debating your case, a meek and reverent appeal works far better.

Aggressive and harsh words ignore their important office and attack the integrity of their authority. Instead

of soberly considering your cause, they will defend their position and rank by rejecting you.

The lower you go in humility, and the higher you lift their person and rank, the greater leverage you have with them. To the degree you protect yourself and dilute this reverent, gentle, and patient approach, you give up leverage. Wisdom is profitable to direct!

David skillfully used this wisdom appealing to King Saul for mercy (*1Samuel 24:1-22; 26:1-25*).

Abigail, a beautiful woman with great understanding, used humility to persuade David against revenge, when he was passionately angry against her husband. Read these three chapters and focus on the choice of Words of David and Abigail. (*1Samuel 25:1-42*)

Child, a respectful and kind letter to parents will work far better than arguing or pouting.

Arguing or pouting, actions indicate you are a spoiled brat and deserve nothing. Thank your parents for their goodness to you, and declare your love and obedience to them. Humbly state your request. Remember, to patiently wait for their answer! They do not owe you!

Wife, a reverent and submissive appeal to your husband, carefully chosen for timing and location, will work far better than haughty demands, presumed rights, or sexual deprivation.

Remember, he owes you nothing on the spot. Patiently wait for him to consider your request. Sarah and Bathsheba called their husbands lord, and they obtained great requests from powerful men. Godly women give up their "rights" to gain freedom!

Employers and government should be treated the same way. A grievance, for working conditions or an assignment, is received much better, when made with respect and patience, than with demands, insubordination, or threats.

Everyone knows, state troopers respond better, to respectful and submissive answers, than arrogant and disgusted ones!

The godly application of this wisdom, will bring peace and prosperity, into your life, and it will exalt godly authority in the earth, by its careful and patient respect for their offices.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of princes, be given all the honor due unto Him!

Proverbs 25:16 Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

The LORD created honey as a sweet gift to our taste, and it is healthful for our bodies. Yet too much of it overwhelms our senses and makes us sick.

The same is true for all pleasant things. When we find something pleasant, it is wise to use it moderately and prudently for its intended purpose, lest it becomes a snare, to our souls and we end up despising it.

Every man's honey is something different, and it is our duty, to identify those pleasures and be temperate with them (*1Corinthians 9:25*).

Honey and honeycomb are good and pleasant (*Proverbs 16:24; 24:13*). See the comments on *Proverbs 16:24*.

Honey is a gift from God. Let us be thankful for it. But too much is not being temperate (*Proverbs 25:27*).

How then, can something so good make you vomit? By excess. Thus, proving the definition of "excess," which is too much of anything.

This shows that good things have limited uses. The lesson is to use something good, only sufficiently, to their intended purpose, and not beyond.

The Lord gave us richly all things to enjoy, but all of them should be used in moderation (*Philippians 4:5; 1Timothy 6:17*).

God is not watching from a distance. He is as near as our breath. God sees how we treat His gifts. God made man upright and gave him numerous gifts, but he has sought out many inventions (*Ecclesiastes 7:29*).

And one of these inventions, is our excess of use!

We live in a generation given to excess, it is one of their idols. They are proud of being X-treme!

Wise men will be careful to avoid excessiveness, in everything. God's innocent gifts, of food and drink have been corrupted to the destruction of men's souls. Over indulgence, gluttony, and drunkenness are destructive activities to bodies, but also to hearts (*Luke 21:34*).

Young men gorge until they vomit; drunkards do the same and then sleep in it.

The wisdom in our Proverb, is primarily moral and spiritual, yet it contains a nutritional hint. Honey and other simple or refined carbohydrates, are a principal cause, of obesity and other sicknesses affecting us.

With our prosperity supplying an endless variety and amount of sugar and carbohydrates, an excessive society can gorge often!

Consider other pleasant gifts of God to grasp the lesson. God gave bread to make hearts strong. But overeating

bread, cereal, pasta, cookies, cake, chips, crackers, and other grain products destroys the heart. (*Psalms 104:15*)

God gave wine to make our hearts glad: but drinking fermented wine leads to drunkenness and sin, which causes horrible heartache and grief (*Psalms 104:15; Ephesians 5:18*).

Solomon commends eating and drinking for strength, rather than pleasure. There is pleasure in eating, but it cannot dominate. And he commends a nation with policies and examples of temperance (*Ecclesiastes 10:16-17*).

Our all-you-can-eat buffets are a wonderful blessing for variety, but they are a curse for the man given to appetite. We should eat to satisfy hunger and promote health. "Enough should be as good as a feast"?

What about hobbies and entertainment? They can be pleasant diversions, but too much emphasis and they bring poverty (*Proverbs 21:17*).

What about bodily exercise? It has a little profit, but extremes will cost you your soul (*1Timothy 4:8*).

What about righteousness and wisdom? Can you have too much? Yes, indeed! Our Preacher warns against haughty excesses of either, like the Pharisees of old (*Ecclesiastes 7:16*).

Consider sex. It is one of life's sweetest pleasures, tasted and enjoyed in marriage only. But if it is emphasized out of place, it will consume the single person, and it will distort a marriage into painful practices. The expression of love can become a ritual of bitterness.

Our text may also be applied to friends, as *Proverbs 25:17* teaches. **If** we are obsessive in relationships, we will lose friends. The good gift of friendship pressed to excess will turn to hatred, and then we have ruined another precious blessing by our excessiveness.

Consider also that excessive indulgence in any pleasure dulls the appetite and enjoyment of that thing, so that you need increasingly greater amounts to give you the same original pleasure.

The more fine food you eat, the less you enjoy that special dinner out.

The more you travel for business, the less you enjoy the getaway with your wife.

It is a simple lesson of experience that too much of anything steals much of its pleasure (*Proverbs 27:7*).

Viewing women other than your wife, which is a sin, will reduce pleasure from your wife. It will not enhance it.

It continues to work on you. And you will need greater stimulation to get the pleasure you once had. You have dulled your senses and enjoyment by sinful excess.

Reader, what is the honey in your life. In moderation it is good; in excess it is sinful. Is it eating, family, working, marriage, hobbies, exercise, sex, or something else? What is it?

We will have the greatest temptations, to be excessive, with the sweet and pleasant things of life. What is your honey?

Once you find your honey, how far should you indulge your pleasure? Consume or enjoy it until you become sick? Oh no, you have gone too far. We should practice godly temperance and moderation by avoiding the excess, so we must stay safely back from the sinful line.

There is honey for the spiritual person that has no limits; and it is free (*Isaiah 55:1-5*)!

Lady wisdom offers bread, wine, and a furnished table, and there you will not be sick or disappointed by eating as much as you can. (*Proverbs 9:1-5*)

We should also seek to be filled with all the fullness of God, in which there is great blessing (*Ephesians 3:14-19*).

Here you can in good conscience consume all you can and yet covet more (*1Corinthians 12:31*)!

Lord, fill me with your Spirit until I am filled to overflowing, and then give me a little more; please, Lord!

Proverbs 25:17 Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.

Friendliness Includes Visits And Communication.

But too much of either can be a burden and spoil friendships, like too much honey can make you vomit (*Proverbs 25:16*).

Excess will lead to contempt and hatred, so Solomon urges temperance and moderation even with friends.

Common Courtesy Is Not As Common As We Wish!

But common courtesy, should be for Christians, who must be without offence, to all men, especially other saints (*1Corinthians 10:32*).

Our nation has two versions of this Proverb, one negative and one positive. We say, "familiarity breeds

contempt," to warn against excessive time with friends; and we say, "absence makes the heart grow fonder," to point out the value of space for friends. Do you practice them?

It is easy to overstay a visit, visit too frequently, call too often, talk too long, or email too much.

These intrusions can be a burden and lead to deepening resentment. What you would never do to a stranger, you might easily do to a friend. Examine yourself honestly. Are you ever guilty of these offences? Our Proverb is a Word to the wise.

The Scriptures surely make us wise unto salvation, but they also teach us wonderful practical wisdom. (*2Timothy 3:15*)

Here is precious advice to help all grow in favor with men, as did our Lord Jesus (*Luke 2:52*).

Instead of worrying about who discovered Bolivia in school, there should be a class on social ethics and practical wisdom from Proverbs. This book, from the finger of God, is the treasure of His Saints. Learn it, be very thankful, and rejoice that you have it!

The wisdom in these few Words equals Solomon's solution of dividing a baby in two! What great advice in plain Words! (*1Kings 3:25*)

The fool thinks his frequent calls and many words are friendship, but wonders why he has few friends. Here is an answer! The man mumbles through life with vague generalities, but Solomon calls the offence a weariness and a legitimate cause of hatred!

Ease of transportation and communication make this Proverb more needful than ever. A three-mile walk to your neighbor's farm discouraged excessive visitation.

But with cars, phones, email, and more leisure time, those limiting factors have been removed. Today, people in their cars with a cell phone assume everyone else is waiting to hear from them!

Do not deceive yourself. You are no exception to this rule, though your heart thinks so. Your calls and visits are no more precious than those of others, and to grasp this firmly is to save yourself from a lot of intense dislike!

You will increase your friends! Be wise and err on the side of restraint, rather than run the risk of incurring their contempt!

Is there greater pain than, to invite guests for supper and have them stay too late, without regard for your need to clean up and get an early start the next day?

What can you do as a guest? Simply suggest you should leave while the night is young, and let your host dictate

how long you stay. **If** they agree with your request, leave and know you are wise. **If** they beg you to stay, do so and graciously try it again an hour later!

True friends remember that time is precious. They are very conscious of possible time constraints on the other party.

Just because you are bored with nothing to do does not mean everyone else is sitting around waiting for the phone to ring! Wisdom requires you to maintain great consciousness of others and their time limitations. Do not presume!

True friends keep a sense of urgency. Life is short, and there are never enough hours in a day. To get everything done that we should get done takes a sense of urgency. A five-minute phone call once a week is a precious reminder of friendship.

An hour phone call twice a week is a burden no man can bear graciously. Keep the conversation moving, and get off the line quickly. Be a true friend, and preserve your friends' love for the future!

Two are better than one, and friendship is a great blessing. Hearty counsel from a friend rejoices the heart like ointment and perfume; and friends should be preserved with great care (*Proverbs 27:9-10*).

Our Proverb neither constrains nor minimizes such friendship, but rather perfects and protects it!

There is no condemnation of warm and friendly discourse, but the abuse of time by presumptuous and unconscious friends!

If you are filled with the urge to communicate, get down on your knees and pray. The LORD has a multi-tasking switchboard open just for you, but your mere mortal friends do not! And walking and talking with the LORD will do you much more good as well.

There is no need for caution or reserve, in coming boldly to the throne of grace, the LORD ever lives as your High Priest.

God requests your importunity ^{urgency!} And though you may not raise your friend from his bed, you can bring the Power of Heaven to your disposal!

God is never weary of your coming, and He will draw ever close, to you with much coming! There is no better time than now, to approach His seat, for He neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Go to your eternal Friend, reader, and there be comforted forever.

Proverbs 25:18 A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Are you a smashing, slashing, and piercing person?

Do you crush others? Cut and wound them? Pierce them deeply from a distance?

If you ever exaggerate, lie, or remain silent to put a person in a bad light, you are guilty. You are like a maul (a large and heavy hammer). You are like a sword. You are like a sharp arrow. You hurt others painfully.

Similes and metaphors are figures of speech that make a comparison between things to explain or illustrate one of them.

1. A simile admits the comparison by using comparative words "like" or "as."
2. A metaphor assumes the comparison without identifying it.
3. This Proverb is a metaphor. **If** it were a simile, it would read, "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is LIKE a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow."

Noble and righteous men always tell the truth, especially when a reputation or life is at stake.

When the noble are witnesses in any matter, they are careful to say all they should, as accurately as they can recall it.

The noble do not remain silent, when their word would shed light on a situation. This matter is important enough to God that the ninth commandment reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (*Exodus 20:16*).

This is no light matter. When God writes a nation's laws, perjury in court will get you the same punishment as the crime being tried, even if it is death (*Deuteronomy 19:16-21*)!

Such a wise law would help witnesses tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth! Memories would improve and consciences would be much more active!

God hates all lying, but especially when another party is at risk (*Proverbs 6:16-19; 19:5, 9; Exodus 23:1-9; Leviticus 5:1; 19:11-18*).

You can smash a person's hopes, reputation, or life, **If** you testify falsely against him or do not tell the whole truth.

You can cut a person deeply, as with a sword, **If** you fail to deliver him from trouble, when you know the truth about a matter.

You can fatally wound a person from a distance, **If** you were a witness to some event, but you withhold the truth from those adjudicating the crime. A false witness is a hateful and terrible enemy to men.

You would never lie in court? Good. Would you tell the whole truth, nothing but the truth, without exaggeration or bias, about everyone you know. Great!

Just remember that stretching the facts or remaining silent when you know more is also being a false witness!

What is your reputation? Is it always and only to tell the truth about others? Are you known for never backbiting, never slandering, never talebearing, and never whispering? Do you always put the actions of others in the best light possible? **If** not, start today!

Proverbs 25:19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

A broken tooth or a foot out of joint is painful, dysfunctional, and irritating. You cannot chew or walk as you should. Running is out of the question!

Trusting an unfaithful person when you really need them is just as painful, dysfunctional, and irritating.

Do you have faithful friends? Are you a faithful friend? Do you know how to identify and keep them?

Here is a Proverb with hidden lessons. The simile, a stated comparison by the word "like," compares the pain and trouble of an unfaithful person, to a broken tooth or a foot out of joint.

The lessons are implied, without being expressly declared. Proverbs are dark sayings of the wise needing interpretation (***Proverbs 1:8; John 16:29***).

Faithful men are hard to find, though many will tell you they are faithful (***Proverbs 20:6; Psalm 12:1***).

Fair weather friends and men with little integrity, fearful hearts, and selfish interests.

True friends are born for adversity, and they will never disappoint you in time of trouble, but they are very hard to find and keep (***Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:10***).

There are three issues in this Proverb that lead to seven lessons. There are unfaithful men, who do not fulfill their duties.

There are times of trouble, when all men have their character put to the test.

There are those who without discretion, put their confidence in an unfaithful man. This combination, results in disappointment, failure, and trouble.

What are the seven lessons?

1. The unfaithful individual, cause pain and trouble.
2. The unfaithful individual, cause ruined efforts and reputations of those trusting them.
3. The unfaithful individual, should be avoided as much as possible.
4. In times of trouble, the unfaithful individual, proves whether they are faithful or not.
5. Wise men only put their confidence in faithful men.
6. Faithful men are identified by the fear of the Lord.
7. Consider if you are a faithful man, fearing the Lord and worthy of the confidence of others?

The fear of the Lord is the criterion by which to find faithful men. These are the kind of men God told Moses and David would make good rulers (***Exodus 18:21; 2Samuel 23:3***).

Jehoshaphat appointed such men to be judges (***2Chronicles 19:5-10***).

A man that fears God will do what is right, without regard for popularity, payoffs, or personal advantage.

The Bible describes unfaithful men.

Job's three friends, were miserable comforters, and his wife was worse (***Job 2:9; 16:1-5***).

David could not trust, his nephew Joab or his sons.

Jesus was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all His disciples.

Aaron, compromised horribly, while Moses was in the mount of God (***Exodus 32:1-6,21-28***).

John Mark deserted Paul on an evangelistic trip (***Acts 13:13; 15:36-41***).

True friends are a great blessing, and they fulfill their role in times of trouble (***Proverbs 17:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12***).

Society Of Men Is Only As Great As Its Weakest Link.

Confidence of a group, should never be put in an unfaithful man. Only the very qualified should ever be made leaders, teachers, or rulers (***1Timothy 3:1-13***).

The greatness, of a man or of a society of men, depends on avoiding confidence in unfaithful men.

Wise men study the book of Proverbs and learn discernment, to identify faithful men, fools, scorners, and enemies.

Wise men take efforts, to avoid fools that will cause them grief, and let them down in time of trouble (*Proverbs 9:6; 13:20; 14:7; Psalm 101:3-8*).

Wise men choose as friends only those that fear God and keep His commandments (*Psalms 101:6; 119:63, 79, 115; Titus 1:8*).

Are you a faithful man yourself? Do you keep all your commitments? Are you always early to appointments?

Do you avoid exaggeration? Fulfill your duties no matter how hard or expensive they might be? Is your word as good as gold? Do you finish tasks, even when you lose focus and pleasure in them?

Are you there to help, when a friend needs you, even if they do not ask? Do you shy away from problems that will take work? Do you do every job the right way and finish it?

Do you pay bills on time? Do you communicate as soon as you know you cannot keep an obligation?

Do you remember the little things you agreed to do?

Do you make notes, if you have a weak memory or busy life? Is faithfulness, more important to you, than friendliness?

If you are a talker, do you restrain yourself from promises you cannot or will not keep?

The Church of Jesus Christ should provide your most faithful friends, for there you find those who fear the Lord, keep His commandments, and make choices by the Spirit. The bond is not mere friendship or family, but the blood of Christ.

In this Church, you find those you can trust, and who will serve your best interests (*Ephesians 4:16; 1Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 3:12-13*).

There is only one truly faithful friend for any man or woman, the Lord Himself! He is a very present help in trouble (*Psalm 46:1*).

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up" (Psalm 27:10).

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8).

Proverbs 25:20 As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

Here is inspired wisdom for caring for the discouraged.

It does not matter what your mother taught you or what you read in a psychology book. Here is advice from God for loving hurting people.

You may think your cheerful approach, should lift their spirits, but you might as well steal their coat in cold weather or ruin nitre with vinegar. You are a miserable comforter, and your poor friend would be far better off without you.

If you love figures of speech, there are four in this Proverb. There are two similes, one metaphor, and a metonym to be analyzed.

The Words "*heavy heart*" are a metonym, which are substituted for a discouraged and troubled person.

There is more than just a heart involved, for the Proverb, is dealing with a grieving person. The substitution of "*heavy heart*" for the grieving person, shortens the sentence but magnifies the point.

"*Singing songs*" is a metaphor, which is used, to condemn any light or frivolous approach, to a discouraged person.

The man with a heavy heart does not need someone singing songs to him. Such insensitive treatment, is like a sword in his bones.

Nor does he need superficialities, pleasantries, jokes, stories, trivial comments, or a lighthearted manner in his presence. In fact, these approaches are demeaning, irritating, and counterproductive.

Then we have similes, as indicated by the adverb "*as.*" These approaches are as demeaning, irritating, and counterproductive as taking away a man's coat in cold weather.

Instead of helping him get warm, you steal the little protection he had and leave him worse than he was!

What cruelty! A light and frivolous approach is also as contrary and counterproductive as ruining sodium carbonate with vinegar, which otherwise was useful for washing.

Your thoughts, about loving hurting people, are worthless. Neither God nor men care that you are light and jovial when facing doom and gloom. Neither God nor men care that you are sanguine ^{confidently optimistic} and cheerful when others are fearful and worried.

One day you may regret it all (*Ecclesiastes 7:1-6; 12:13-14*).

Here is inspired wisdom, you should sympathize with those that are discouraged or grieving. You should weep with those that weep and suffer with those that suffer (*Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 12:26*).

When you lightly converse with fearful, grieving, or suffering persons, they become deeply wounded that their pain means nothing to you.

Your foolish chatter tells them that you do not understand, do not care, and will forget them the minute you leave the room.

They cannot believe you are so calloused, immature, insensitive, and rude in their greatest hour of need.

Instead of appreciating your presence, they cannot wait for you to leave, so they can find some solace from their real friends or even from the quiet of loneliness! Above all others, the ministers of Christ should have a compassionate and caring manner, with those suffering (*Hebrews 5:2*).

Though burdened, with many duties and time constraints, a pastor cannot treat the afflictions of others in a business-like or formal way.

Pastors must, take the time, to get down with the discouraged, feel the pain of the suffering, feel the loss of the grieving, grasp the dread of the fearful, or imagine the grief of the guilty.

It is of little value to efficiently visit the heavy hearted with quick prayers and casual conversation.

True compassion, joins the hurting person, and takes on the fear, pain, or worry that they are feeling (*Hebrews 13:3*).

Empathetic sympathy, is the action of projecting yourself into another's situation, and feeling the circumstances affecting them. This is true Christian love (*1 Corinthians 13:4-7; 12:25-26*).

Any other approach, from avoiding those in pain, to lightly dealing with their troubles, shows a selfish spirit that does not know the love of Christ.

You are socially dysfunctional, as defined by the Spirit of God and His wisdom.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the only perfect Man the world will ever know, had great compassion, on those with heavy hearts (*Matthew 14:14; 20:34; Luke 7:13; John 20:15*).

The Lord Jesus Christ, never sang songs to them.

The Lord Jesus Christ, took their griefs upon Himself and comforted them (*Isaiah 53:4; Matthew 8:17; John 8:11*).

The Lord Jesus Christ, sympathizes with your temptations and trials in the deepest way, and you should be willing and able to do so for others (*Psalms 103:13-14; Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16*).

Proverbs 25:21 If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

Let God's Children Stand Up. Here Is Your Test.

Do you love your enemies? Do you treat your enemies well, when they have needs. Your sinful nature, revolts at such selfless thoughts, but the wisdom from the Lord teaches better.

This is, a lofty and noble standard, Solomon sets forth here! What pagan religion, or so called holy book, can match this definition of love?

The natural man, wants to limit love, to those who love him, and limit service to those who will return the favor (*Luke 6:32-34*).

This is why, the Pharisees perverted God's Word and taught that we should hate our enemies (*Matthew 5:43*).

Jesus repeated this Proverb, when He said, "*Love your enemies.*" He rebuked our sinful instincts, and taught that God, sends rain and sunshine on both enemies and friends (*Matthew 5:43-48*).

Therefore, for us to be like our Heavenly Father, we must do the same. We must love our enemies by treating them well. Paul also taught this lesson (*Romans 12:17-21*).

Many think Jesus taught a new standard of righteousness, but Solomon taught the same truth 900 years earlier, in our Proverb.

And Moses taught it 1500 years before Jesus (*Exodus 23:4-5*).

So much, for those who think, Jesus preached a new gospel of love: truth and wisdom and righteousness do not change. God and His children always treated enemies kindly. The "*new commandment*" is new only in principle and example (*John 13:34-35; 1 John 2:7-11*).

Under the Old Testament, the national enemies of Israel were to be exterminated. Under the New Testament, nations must protect themselves, by fighting enemies (*Luke 3:14; Romans 13:4-5*).

Civil governments still wage war to protect their citizens, and they still put capital offenders to death by civil laws.

This rule does not modify authority or punishment at all. Parents still discipline children without regard for this Proverb, for it does not apply to them. The object of the Proverb is how each man treats his personal enemies.

The commandment to love our neighbors, includes our enemies. Jesus said the whole law hung on the first two commandments, and He was right.

When asked to define a man's neighbor, Jesus told of the Good Samaritan helping the wounded Jew, which was a profound answer, for the Jews and Samaritans were enemies (**Luke 10:25-37; John 4:9**).

Does the LORD allow grudges and bitterness in our hearts, when we cannot touch our enemies due to circumstances? Not at all (**Leviticus 19:18; James 5:9**)! Solomon even teaches elsewhere that we must not rejoice when our personal enemies experience trouble (**Proverbs 24:17**).

Do you sorrow, when your enemies are troubled? Do you rejoice, when your enemies are blessed? David practiced this rule well. (**Psalms 35:11-16**)

Is the lesson, a mere prohibition, of retaliation toward enemies? Is it merely, a reminder to desire our enemies' good? No, on both counts!

It goes beyond these; it teaches positive performance! Praying for an enemy is one thing; entertaining him is another!

How can we ever do such a thing? Though the lesson is noble and benevolent, who can overturn his heart's lust for revenge and feed his enemy? We might as well try to create a new earth! But the Lord's grace and strength are sufficient (**2Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:13**).

Why should we do something so strange or unnatural? To be the children of our Father in Heaven (**Matthew 5:43-48**).

To either melt or grieve our enemies' hearts by our kindness (**Proverbs 25:22; Romans 12:20**).

To overcome their evil with our good by the Spirit (**Romans 12:21**).

To secure the reward of the LORD (**Proverbs 25:22**).

What else should we desire? The blessing of the LORD is upon those who will return blessing for railing (**1Peter 3:8-11**)!

Reader, can you be thankful for enemies? **If** you had no enemies, how could you possibly show the character and grace of your Father and win the blessings of the previous paragraph?

Paul learned this lesson and took pleasure in the reproaches and persecutions he endured and conquered by God's grace (**2Corinthians 12:10**).

The perverseness of our enemies is our blessing, for it gives us opportunity to step ever closer to the Lord.

Examine yourself and identify those who are your personal enemies, those who hate you, spitefully use you, curse you, and persecute you.

Forgive them, pray for them, and purpose and plan to go to their aid in some area of need. You can do it by His grace.

Can you hear our Savior say, "*Friend, wherefore art thou come?*" to the enemy who had sold him for a few pieces of silver (**Matthew 26:50**)?

Jesus further sought forgiveness for the soldiers who crucified Him (**Luke 23:34**).

The deacon Stephen followed our Lord's example by praying for those who stoned him to death (**Acts 7:60**).

Our Lord has done far more than these acts of supernatural kindness, He died for us when we were His avowed enemies (**Romans 5:6-10**)!

Reader, if you believe yourself a son of God, follow your Master's example and show it by the positive loving of your enemies.

Proverbs 25:22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

Doing good to personal enemies is right and wise (**Proverbs 23:21**).

It proves you are a child of God. You show His kindness, even to those who hate and mistreat you. It is the best way to treat enemies, for it either melts their hatred or hardens their wickedness.

But regardless of their response to your kindness, the LORD will bless you for the deeds. God's law to Israel by Moses included kindness to personal enemies (**Exodus 23:4-5**).

The Pharisees, taught that men should love their neighbors, their friends, and hate their enemies. But the Lord Jesus Christ defied their humanistic thinking and taught perfect godliness. (**Matthew 5:43**)

He said, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (*Matthew 5:44*).

God shows kindness daily to His enemies, and such actions prove we are the children of God (*Matthew 5:45*).

Loving only your friends is proof of nothing, for all sinners do the same (*Matthew 5:46-47*).

Perfect men will love their enemies (*Matthew 5:48*).

When natural men, with wicked hearts from Adam, have personal enemies, they can only think of revenge. But God condemns such thoughts (*Romans 12:17-19; 1Thessalonians 5:15*).

God commands you to treat your enemies well (*Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:20-21*).

This has always been the character of wise godly men (*Job 31:29-30; Psalm 35:11-14*).

The Good Samaritan showed great kindness to a racial enemy, a Jew (*Luke 10:25-37; John 4:9; 8:48*).

Two things happen from such a noble action to enemies. ¹You heap coals of fire on their heads. This metaphor refers to the ancient practice of smelting ore for precious metals.

Applying heat to ore would cause the desired metals to melt and run free from the slag and dross. While ore was always put over fire for obtaining the precious contents, blazing coals were sometimes poured over the ore to increase the heat even more.

Genuine and sincere kindness, unnatural and unexpected, may melt a personal enemy (*Proverbs 15:1*).

²It also may draw forth the precious metals of guilt, shame, and repentance. It may cause him to reconsider his hard treatment of you, feel the hot pains of remorse, and ultimately forgiveness.

David's kindness to Saul melted his hard heart on two occasions (*1Samuel 24:1-22; 26:1-25*).

Gideon's flattery of Ephraim calmed their anger (*Judges 8:1-3*).

Graciousness and kindness toward an enemy may also harden his heart in wickedness, if there is not any natural mercy there. The smelter's fire often reveals the total absence of precious metals.

As the high heat hardens the slag and burns up the dross, so the gentle benevolence of good men may harden the profanely wicked.

The very gracious Words of Jesus did not melt hearts in Nazareth (*Luke 4:16-30*).

His healing of an Malchus ear in Gethsemane did not prevent the Jew's evil plans there (*Luke 22:51; John 17:10*).

Whether the coals of fire, melt an oppressor's heart or harden it, the LORD will reward, the wise man who treats his personal enemies with kindness.

God sends his sunshine and rain on both His friends and enemies, and He is pleased when His saints do the same. Though an enemy's persecution is painful, the LORD will bless you.

Proverbs 25:23 The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

Anger is good, and an angry face is good, when you hear someone detracting, slandering, or speaking ill about a person not present. Tell the person to stop running others down! Tell the person to take up their attack with the party directly. Tell them, if they cannot say something good, then not to say anything at all!

Solomon knew about weather. In Palestine, the north wind was cool and fair, the south wind warm, the west moist, and the east dry. (*Ecclesiastes 1:5-7*)

Most commentators pervert these Words of God, much like the serpent in Eden, by making the first clause read: "The north wind brings forth rain." But even a child can know they are wrong, by a simple comparison with the parallelism of the second clause! Does an angry countenance bring forth backbiting, or drive it away?

For entertainment, consider the NIV, "As a north wind brings rain, so a sly tongue brings angry looks." What about the NASB? "The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue, an angry countenance."

How about the name-stealing New King James? "The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue an angry countenance." If a backbiting tongue causes an angry countenance, what is the lesson?

Poor John Darby was the most confused of all. He guessed, "The north wind bringeth forth rain, and the angry countenance a backbiting tongue." How in the world does the angry countenance cause backbiting?

Wise Reader, *Let God be true!* He has demolished the arrogance of these textual critics by manifesting their folly to all men (*1Corinthians 1:19-20; 3:19-20*)!

Backbiting is detracting, slandering, or speaking ill about a person not present. God hates it, and He condemns it, in several places (*Psalm 15:3; Romans 1:30; 2Corinthians 12:20*).

Backbiting is usually described under the synonyms of slandering, talebearing, and whispering (*Proverbs 6:19; 10:18; 11:13; 16:28; 17:9; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-22; Leviticus 19:16; Psalm 50:20; Romans 1:29; 2Corinthians 12:20*).

Men fault others in their absence to flatter themselves directly or indirectly. If they can destroy everyone else's character, eventually they will be the only one left with character, though only in their wicked minds!

Furthermore, backbiting is not justified, just because the disclosed facts may be true, for truth can also hurt a reputation, which is the essence of the crime. We should protect and enhance every man's reputation as far as possible.

Wise righteous men will not allow backbiting in their presence. They hate the sin in themselves, and they hate it in others. They must correct wrongdoing, and they want to protect the character of all men.

If wise righteous men hear backbiting, they will end it with an angry look of disapproval; for it is a duty of saints to warn the unruly (*1Thessalonians 5:14*).

If the guilty party is under their authority, they will correct it (*Psalm 101:4-6*).

Not all accusations or relating of facts about others is backbiting. Informing authorities for the sake of truth, exposing dangerous individuals, protecting the innocent, helping an offender, righteously recording history, prudent illustrative examples, or witnessing in court are justified actions of reporting the faults of others (*Leviticus 5:1; Deuteronomy 13:12-18; Matthew 18:16; Acts 15:36-41; 1Corinthians 1:11; Galatians 2:11; 1Timothy 1:20; 2Timothy 4:10, 14; 3John 1:9*).

If wise and righteous men fulfilled the rule of this Proverb, there would be less detracting and slandering of reputations.

Good men would have spotless names, and evil men would be exposed as their obvious inferior names.

Every conscientious reader, will make sure that he has a preserving effect in this world, by shutting down backbiting tongues.

Proverbs 25:24 *It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.*

The lonely life of a single man is better than marriage to an odious woman. This nagging creature sucks the life out of a man's soul and leaves his heart numb with pain and rage.

There are few things that men cannot bear and that destroy the earth's peace, and this kind of a woman is one of them.

Of course, she acts almost civil when dating; but once the wedding is over, her poor victim wakes up to marital hell on earth (*Proverbs 30:21-23*).

Solomon was a man, and he laid it out to his son. He often warned about odious and whorish women. Both kinds destroy men. He had observed, odious women destroy men's lives (*Proverbs 11:22; 12:4; 14:1; 19:13; 21:9, 19; 27:15-16*).

Solomon had also, observed whorish women destroy men's lives (*Proverbs 2:16-19; 5:3-23; 6:24-35; 7:6-27; 9:13-18; 22:14; 23:27-28; Ecclesiastes 7:25-29*).

God used a queen mother, to write about the perfect woman (*Proverbs 31:1, 10-31*).

Solomon knew God had created the woman to strengthen and support the man and family (*Genesis 2:18; 1Corinthians 11:3,7-9*).

The calamity occurs when the woman ordained to comfort and encourage him becomes his worst enemy and nightmare, one he cannot escape, for she lives in his house, breaks his heart, consumes his living, confounds his soul!

What is the housetop in this Proverb? Houses in that day, had flat and useful roofs, which could be used for solitude, but which exposed a person to all types of weather. The sun could bake you, the wind torment, the rain soak, and the cold chill you.

But huddled in a corner of such a housetop, is a better living choice than being down below with an arguing woman, no matter how spacious and comfortable the living quarters might be!

What is a brawling woman? It is not a woman who boxes professionally, starts fistfights with neighbors, or attacks her husband with teeth, clubs, or knives! It is a nagging wife who: cannot allow a matter to rest, cannot stop giving her opinions, cannot submit to her husband's decisions, cannot stop questioning everything he does, cannot stop correcting irrelevant details when he speaks, and otherwise hounds him mercilessly.

When writing other Proverbs about this woman, Solomon used angry (*Proverbs 21:19*), contentious (*Proverbs 19:13; 21:19; 27:15*), and continual dropping (*Proverbs 19:13; 27:15*) to describe her.

A wife that gets upset easily, argues and contests anything her husband says or does, and constantly nags. She talks a lot, talks loud, is opinionated, questions everything, corrects her husband and children, worries about details, argues quickly, gets defensive easily, remembers past offences, seldom apologizes, or self-righteously turns away when bested.

You have heard and seen this woman. You are surely related to one. Hopefully, she is a third cousin, rather than a wife, mother, sister, aunt, or grandmother. Her problem cannot be hid (*Proverbs 27:15-16*)!

No amount of beauty can cover her issues (*Proverbs 11:22*)!

The family knows she is odious and her husband is a victim of one of life's greatest curses (*Proverbs 30:21-23*).

God put her in your family for you to teach your sons what kind of woman she is, and it would be better to die single!

Unmarried man! Do not resent being single! It is far better than marriage to this irritating and obnoxious creature! Why are many men workaholics or obsessed with foolish hobbies? Because doing anything, anywhere is better than being at home with her!

Your loneliness is nothing compared to the pain of fifty years in marital hell! Rejoice! Your meals are peaceful, your wallet growing, your home quiet, and your bed pleasant!

Unmarried man! What can you do? Test any woman well before even thinking marriage. Your life depends on it.

If you doubt this wisdom, spend a night on your rooftop, which is not as bad as a bad woman! Examine every prospect's mother for the odious odor! Test every prospect often! Her irritation now can save you a crushed spirit and ruined life later. Get her around married men, because their sense of smell is better than yours.

Unmarried man! Trust your godly father! He has been married longer than you have been alive! His experience is worth millions! He has your best interests at heart.

Your wise father, thinks with a longer time perspective. He has no emotions clouding his judgment. His testosterone has abated from your blinding levels. His peer pressure is to help you marry wisely, not quickly. Trust your godly mother also! She also can detect signs that could ruin a son's life.

Unmarried man! Do not even consider a woman for marriage unless she fears the LORD more than anything else (*Proverbs 31:30*).

Great fear and love of God are the only motives strong enough to overcome a woman's temptation to argue, contend, irritate, nag, question, and resist you.

Find a woman that trembles before God and loves Jesus Christ, and join a church where Proverbs like this are taught often. You can guarantee marital happiness!

Unmarried woman! Humble yourself before the wisdom of God and commit in your heart to never be like this woman.

Prepare your mind and practice every day to be cheerful, cooperative, forgiving, gracious, loving, quiet, peaceful, and submissive to your parents, your teachers, and your employers.

Hate the evil actions of the woman of this Proverb! Hate the sins that make her so obnoxious to others! Grieve for the victims she has married and ruined!

Married man! What can you do? **If** you married foolishly and are tormented by this contentious brawler, take her to a church, where such things are taught. Pray she has an ounce of conscience left to convict her about her spirit! **If** you married a gentle, tender, and virtuous woman, take her out tonight, and thank God for her!

Married woman! Examine yourself in the mirror of this Proverb. Do not walk away (*James 1:21-25*).

Your opinion about yourself is deceptive and wrong. Every odious woman thinks she is gracious, which is why she is odious!

What do others think about you? Do you have many friends? Are young suitors seeking your daughters, because they hope to get a woman like you? Let truth and reality drive you to repentance or renewed effort!

Reader! Give God the glory for such advice and marvelous wisdom. Every word of God is pure, and this inspired knowledge can save young men from marital grief.

The Bible is as relevant today as ever, regardless of what skeptics and enemies of truth say. The important issue is whether young men will heed the warning, young women avoid the conduct, and married women beg God and their husbands for forgiveness.

Can the Proverb be applied spiritually? Yes, let every believer in Jesus Christ make sure he is a gentle, tender, and virtuous bride for the Lord, without contending, questioning, or whining against Him, His Word, or His Ministers.

Proverbs 25:25 As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

Are you a good communicator? Do you keep others informed of good things?

Are you an information facilitator? Do you consider those, who might be out of the loop and miss a good report?

Are you a consistent correspondent with those desiring to hear from you? Do you remember those who love you and would rejoice to have a good word from you?

The Proverb is a simple analogy and simile. A thirsty person is encouraged, preserved, refreshed, revived, and sustained by a cold drink of water. You should be able to see his happy face and feel his thankful heart!

A good report from a distant friend or business project has the same invigorating effect on those who hear it. Good news is a great gift, and it is cheap! Why not communicate more? What a simple way to refresh others!

Most commentators limit this Proverb to a New Testament spiritual application. They make, the good news, the Gospel of Christ, and they make the far country heaven.

By using well-known verses about the Gospel, they make an attractive case for their interpretation. **If** this verse were in Romans 10, we might agree with them. But it is not.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is very good news, and heaven is a far country; and hearing them preached is refreshing to the soul. But the Holy Spirit, taught practical lessons of wisdom, as he made clear in the book's introduction (**Proverbs 1:1-9**).

There is no reference to the Gospel in the Proverb before or after this one (**Proverbs 25:24, 26**).

If we also remember that Proverbs are often obscure sayings with a hidden sense, we must look deeper for its lesson (**Proverbs 1:6**).

Is there a practical and valuable lesson of wisdom in these words? Yes! Is it an obscure suggestion for the invention of the telephone and email? No!

Good news from distant persons or situations is encouraging and profitable, so wise men are good communicators to please and profit those depending on them (**Proverbs 25:13**).

We have witty inventions for communicating. There is no excuse not to be a good communicator!

How did hearing from Joseph affect Jacob? He did not care about the food or gold in his sons' sacks compared to that wonderful news from a far country! The spirit of Jacob revived, and he purposed to go see his son. Who is waiting to hear from you? (**Genesis 45:27-28**)

Are there any fainting from troubles that would revive with a good word from you? Most men are too selfish to communicate. Others are too busy, some have silent temperaments, or were never trained.

Some do not see the purpose or value of it. It is commonly heard, "Out of sight, out of mind." Wise men do not think that way.

Seeking to grow in favor with God and men, wise men are consistent and thorough communicators. They know that, a good thought not expressed, is worthless.

Who wants to hear from you? Do superiors know your progress on a project? Do inferiors know what you expect of them and if you are pleased? Do your parents know you are well? Do your children know what you want them to do? Do you encourage distant friends in Christ? How about a church member that may be outside the communication loop?

Solomon had already taught in the context that a faithful messenger refreshes his master, but here his emphasis is on the message. (**Proverbs 25:13**)

What good news can you communicate today to lift spirits and profit others? A good report makes the bones fat, it prospers the lives of men (**Proverbs 15:30**)!

Waiting too long, can make a person sick! You could be a tree of life for others just by communicating right now! Pick someone! Do it! (**Proverbs 13:12**)

Lest any reader think the Gospel of Christ is not the greatest news ever communicated on earth, consider this text: "*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*" (**Isaiah 52:7**).

So exceedingly wonderful is this message that the God once ripped the skies open over Judea with a multitude of angels from the army of heaven to convey the news to lonely shepherds. "*Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ... Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*" *Read the whole account* (**Luke 2:8-20**)!

Quench your thirst! Let it rejoice your own heart!

Proverbs 25:26 *A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.*

Stand up and be counted! Resist the wicked by a holy life and solid principles. Do not compromise in lifestyle or influence. Contend with the wicked by keeping God's commandments (**Proverbs 28:4**).

Deliver the oppressed by opposing the wicked (*Proverbs 24:11-12; 31:8-9*).

Fulfill your role by being salt in the earth, as a purging and preservative agent (*Matthew 5:13*).

Fountains and springs in the Middle East were important. The lack of rain in certain locations made them very important (*Genesis 26:18-22; Judges 1:15*).

A troubled fountain, was one that inconsistently gave water. A corrupt spring, was one that gave impure water. Such fountains or springs, lost their value, as assets and were a frustrating disappointment.

Righteous men, or wise men, are to be fountains of life and trees of life to those around them (*Proverbs 10:11, 21; 11:30; 12:18; 15:4, 26; 16:24; 18:4*).

If righteous or wise men, compromise their conduct or their influence, they are as disappointing and frustrating as an inconsistent fountain or an impure spring to the people needing water (*Proverbs 15:4; 17:7; 25:19; Ecclesiastes 10:1*).

The righteous fall down, when they do not maintain a holy lifestyle, before the wicked and when they do not stand up, against the wickedness of the wicked.

Aspects of this falling of a righteous man provide another example of this Proverb, which demonstrates God's commandments to be exceeding broad (*Psalms 119:96; Matthew 5:21-32*).

Paul taught Timothy this same double rule. A righteous man, a minister of Jesus Christ, is duty bound to carefully guard both his personal life and what he teaches. He is to live a holy life, and he is to stand immovable on the Word of God. (*1 Timothy 4:16*)

It is by diligent zeal in both matters that a minister saves his own life and his hearers' from shipwreck.

If a wise man is foolish even in a small way, it is like having dead flies in your perfume, which causes it to stink instead (*Ecclesiastes 10:1*).

Of course, the wicked rejoice to see a righteous man fall. They overlook all the sins of the ungodly, but they will spread a single sin of the righteous far and wide.

David's adultery, though a common sin among the wicked, gave cause for the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme (*2 Samuel 12:14*).

If A Righteous Man In A Position Of Authority Does Not Resist The Wicked Then Who Will?

A righteous man is bound by God's blessings of wisdom and leadership to use his influence for godliness and

against evil (*Proverbs 17:15; 18:5; 24:11-12, 23-24; 28:21; 31:8-9*).

Job, David, and others were examples of this virtuous role in society. There is no excuse for falling down before the wicked. (*Proverbs 12:6; Job 29:17; Psalm 82:4; Isaiah 58:6*)

Stand Up And Be Counted As A Son Of God!

Proverbs 25:27 It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.

A little honey goes a long way! Its sweetness exceeds most foods, so that a small amount can satisfy your taste and appetite. Indulging in more than a little, could bring nausea and sickness (*Proverbs 25:16*).

In the very same way, desiring or seeking praise from men, in order to bring yourself more glory, is not glory. It is disgusting, nauseating, and shameful!

Here is a great Proverb with a valuable lesson. As in many Proverbs, human conduct is compared to natural facts.

The Holy Spirit used, the universal knowledge of honey's sweetness to condemn the ambition and desire of men to seek their own praise. Stated in a pithy way, these few Words are helpful, intriguing, and powerful for learning divine wisdom.

In Our Artificial Society Many Are Ignorant About Honey.

Many in our society are addicted to dextrose, fructose, glucose, lactose, maltose, sucrose, corn syrup, and other popular sweeteners, which stimulate rather than satisfy appetite.

When did you last eat some honey? But to the informed, honey is a luxurious food God created for our benefit (*Proverbs 24:13*).

The LORD described Canaan, Israel's land of promise, as a land flowing with milk and honey (*Exodus 3:8; Deuteronomy 8:7-9*).

Even the manna God gave Israel for forty years tasted like wafers made with honey (*Exodus 16:31*).

No one will deny that honey is sweet. It is twice as sweet as sugar! In recipes calling for sugar, only one-half the amount of honey will work.

Seeking compliments, praise, or glory is as foolish as gorging on honey, it quickly becomes revolting! Wise

men avoid praise, even though most today are obsessed with it (*2Timothy 3:1-5*).

Trying to increase your glory and popularity will be disgusting to others watching you. What you thought was sweet will become nauseating. Any honor you must seek is not truly honor, for it is not real or sincere, and those giving it are offended by it.

Moses was one of Israel's greatest leaders, but he was the meekest man on earth, he did not want glory (*Numbers 12:3*).

God defended this humble man by severely punishing any who accused him of pride (*Numbers 12:1-15; 16:1-40*).

Wise men and holy women will both seek to be meek, as did Paul in following Jesus Christ (*Matthew 5:5; 2Corinthians 10:1; James 3:13; 1Peter 3:4*).

Paul, only gloried when forced to do so for the profit of others (*2Corinthians 12:11*).

Have you ever heard a backdoor compliment, when a person thanks God for making him so gifted?

Have you ever given yourself one? Shame! Can you restrain yourself in a group and not speak unless others ask you?

The apostolic rule is to reject the vanity of glory for yourself and make others and their things more important than you (*Philippians 2:3-4*).

If you crave praise and glory, then wait for others to give you some, so you can know it is sincere and deserved (*Proverbs 25:6-7; 27:2*).

If you have to wait a long time, then be assured you did not deserve any!

Why do you even want praise? Praise someone else! It is more blessed to give than to receive, especially in this matter!

When a person tells you about an event in their life, is it your typical response to raise a similar event or connection from your life, and overlook the precious point being made by the person?

Shame! You are gorging on honey, and you do not even know it! Shame! Shut up about yourself! They do not want to know about you, or they would have asked!

The only real approval that matters is God's approval! Reject the praise of men for the praise of God, and it will keep you from a horrible snare (*John 5:44; 12:43*).

Diotrephes could not reject man's honor, so the apostle John severely censured him (*3John 1:9-11*).

Remember that anything highly esteemed by men is an abomination to God (*Luke 16:15*).

If you examine yourself in the mirror of Scripture, you will see enough blemishes and deformities to keep you humble and avoiding glory from men (*James 1:21-25*).

Humble yourself under God's mighty hand, and He will exalt you at the right time (*1Peter 5:6-7*).

Proverbs 25:28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

A Man's Spirit Is His Inner Self Which Seeks To Control His Actions.

When this spirit is not ruled by the mind, it leaves him exposed and vulnerable to all sorts of folly and trouble.

Like a defenseless city without walls in former times of marauding armies, so is this man, who does not rule his own spirit, and keep it in the path of wisdom and holiness.

The Spirit Of A Man Is His Affections Appetites, And Passions.

A wise and noble man rules his spirit by his conscience and mind.

A wise and noble man binds it with chains of self-denial to keep ambition, anger, lust, pride, or revenge from breaking forth.

A wise and noble man guides it by a mental commitment to hold fast, honor, humility, righteousness, and virtue.

A wise and noble man has the rule of his thoughts, his desires, his inclinations, his resentments, and keeps them all in good order.

A foolish man lets his spirit control his actions! This man does not resist his spirit; he lets it direct him; he forfeits the fight of character and godliness.

A foolish man cannot do what he should; and he cannot resist what he should not.

A foolish man is insanely angry, idiotically foolish, destructively depressed, or perpetually procrastinating, among other faults and sins.

A foolish man never grows up, for he is always controlled by childish passions of a depraved heart.

In Solomon's time, a city depended on strong fortifications and gates, with great walls surrounding it,

to repel incursions by ravaging bands of guerillas fighters or foreign armies.

If the bulwarks, gates, or towers were broken down and the walls taken away, a city was totally exposed to the incursions of any enemy, who wished to plunder, pillage, or conquer it.

A man without rule of his spirit is exposed and vulnerable like a defenseless city.

A man without rule, is a man whose spirit is ready to sin, with very little provocation, and he cannot marshal power for good.

A man is helplessly, hopelessly, perpetually at the mercy of his enemies, foolishness, lust, and sin, which show no quarter, but regularly ravage his life!
But the man, who rules his spirit, is greater than a man taking a city single-handedly (*Proverbs 16:32*).

Man, what tempts your spirit? Are you quick to anger, a sure mark of a fool?

An Incessantly Wagging Tongue Is A Mark Of A Fool

Regarding money, are you an impulsive spender? Or a hoarding miser? Do you justify imprudent haste as optimism? Or do you call melancholy ^{feeling sadness} drawing back in self-reflection? Which spirit do you have? Do you rule it?

Do you talk too much? Or are you depressed and silent? Do you pursue financial choices imprudently? Or do you criticize everyone? Do you jest and joke often? Does complaining come easily?

Do you eat more than you should? Do you fail to read and pray daily? Do you let being cast down destroy you? Does fear keep you from your duties?

Your life will be plundered and wasted, unless you take control and raise a defense. You will make shipwreck, for an unruly spirit does not work the righteousness of God (**James 1:28; 4:5**).

An un-ruled spirit will plunge you into sins of commission or omission.

The Greatest Battle Any Man Will Fight Is The One Against His Own Spirit!

Your worst enemy, is the depraved and selfish man within! It causes the most damage and keeps you from successful living.

The most shameful loss, is to live and die the victim of your own unruly spirit. And the most noble and rewarding victory is the one over your own spirit.

Saul did not rule his jealous spirit, which viciously sought to kill his own son (*1Samuel 20:27-34*).

David had not bridled his lustful spirit, which blindly led to adultery and murder (*2Samuel 11:1-27*).

Samson, the strongest man ever, was helpless before his un-ruled passion for beautiful Delilah (*Judges 16:4-21*).

Man, young man, do not let these heinous crimes bolster your self-righteousness, for many lesser sins can also ruin a life!

Identify your spirit weakness, every man has one or more. Confess its folly to the Lord. Confess its folly to your family or friends. Ask them to tell you when they see a breach in a wall.

Take charge of your spirit, and crush whatever folly it seeks, and **Do**, whatever wisdom to avoid it! Now!

At the first sign of a bulwark or tower crumbling, pray for the needed strength from the Lord.

Do not trust your own strength; you need the Lord's! You cannot relax, for it will take control unless you rule it.

By the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ you can rule it, why wait one minute longer? Go to Him now! Raise the walls of a well-ruled and holy city!

Our Lord ruled His spirit and submitted to His Father's will, in spite of being sore amazed and very heavy at the prospect of His crucifixion (*Mark 14:33*).

But not only that, our Lord Jesus Christ, will provide grace and strength, for those who ask (*2Corinthians 12:9-10; Philippians 4:13*).