

**AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF****THE PROVERBS**

The subject of this book may be thus stated by an enlargement on the opening verses.

- 1.** The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.
- 2.** Which treat of the knowledge of wisdom, of piety towards God, of instruction and moral discipline, of the understanding wise and prudent counsels.
- 3.** Which treat of the attainment of instruction in wisdom, which wisdom is to be shown in the conduct of life, and consists in righteousness with regard to our fellow-creatures.
- 4.** Which treat of the giving to the simple sagacity to discover what is right, by supplying them with just principles, and correct views of virtue and vice; and to the young man knowledge, so that he need not err through ignorance; and discretion, so that by pondering well these precepts, he may not err through obstinacy.

Take the proverbs of other nations, and we shall find great numbers founded upon selfishness, cunning, pride, injustice, national contempt, and animosities. The principles of the Proverbs of Solomon are piety, charity, justice, benevolence, and true prudence. Their universal purity proves that they are the word of God.

## CHAPTER 1

*The use of the Proverbs. (1-6) Exhortations to fear God and obey parents. (7-9) To avoid the enticings of sinners. (10-19) The address of Wisdom to sinners. (20-33)*

### **Proverbs 1:1**

**Vs. 1-6:** The lessons here given are plain, and likely to benefit those who feel their own ignorance, and their need to be taught. If young people take heed to their ways, according to Solomon's Proverbs, they will gain knowledge and discretion. Solomon speaks of the most important points of truth, and a greater than Solomon is here. Christ speaks by his word and by his Spirit. Christ is the Word and the Wisdom of God, and he is made to us wisdom.

### **Proverbs 1:7**

**Vs. 7-9:** Fools are persons who have no true wisdom, who follow their own devices, without regard to reason, or reverence for God. Children are reasonable creatures, and when we tell them what they must do, we must tell them why. But they are corrupt and willful, therefore with the instruction there is need of a law. Let Divine truths and commands be to us most honorable; let us value them, and then they shall be so to us.

### **Proverbs 1:10**

**Vs. 10-19:** Wicked people are zealous in seducing others into the paths of the destroyer: sinners love company in sin. But they have so much the more to answer for. How cautious young people should be! "Consent thou not." Do not say as they say, nor do as they do, or would have thee to do; have no fellowship with them. Who could think that it should be a pleasure to one man to destroy another! See their idea of worldly wealth; but it is neither substance, nor precious. It is the ruinous mistake of thousands, that they overvalue the wealth of this world. Men promise themselves in vain that sin will turn to their advantage. The way of sin is down-hill; men cannot stop themselves. Would young people shun temporal and eternal ruin, let them refuse to take one step in these destructive paths. Men's greediness of gain hurries them upon practices

which will not suffer them or others to live out half their days. What is a man profited, though he gain the world, if he lose his life? much less if he lose his soul?

### **Proverbs 1:20**

**Vs. 20-33:** Solomon, having showed how dangerous it is to hearken to the temptations of Satan, here declares how dangerous it is not to hearken to the calls of God. Christ himself is Wisdom, is Wisdoms. Three sorts of persons are here called by Him:

- 1.** Simple ones. Sinners are fond of their simple notions of good and evil, their simple prejudices against the ways of God, and flatter themselves in their wickedness.
- 2.** Scorners. Proud, jovial people, that make a jest of every thing. Scoffers at religion, that run down everything sacred and serious.
- 3.** Fools. Those are the worst of fools that hate to be taught, and have a rooted dislike to serious godliness. The precept is plain; Turn you at my reproof. We do not make a right use of reproofs, if we do not turn from evil to that which is good.

The promises are very encouraging. Men cannot turn by any power of their own; but God answers, Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. Special grace is needful to sincere conversion. But that grace shall never be denied to any who seek it. The love of Christ, and the promises mingled with his reproofs, surely should have the attention of every one. It may well be asked, how long men mean to proceed in such a perilous path, when the uncertainty of life and the consequences of dying without Christ are considered? Now sinners live at ease, and set sorrow at defiance; but their calamity will come. Now God is ready to hear their prayers; but then they shall cry in vain. Are we yet despisers of wisdom? Let us hearken diligently, and obey the Lord Jesus, that we may enjoy peace of conscience and confidence in God; be free from evil, in life, in death, and for ever.

## CHAPTER 2

*Promises to those who seek wisdom. (1-9) The advantages of wisdom. (10-22)*

### **Proverbs 2:1**

**Vs. 1-9:** Those who earnestly seek heavenly wisdom, will never complain that they have lost their labor; and the freeness of the gift does not do away the necessity of our diligence, <sup><R167></sup>John 6:27. Let them seek, and they shall find it; let them ask, and it shall be given them. Observe who are thus favored. They are the righteous, on whom the image of God is renewed, which consists in righteousness. If we depend upon God, and seek to him for wisdom, he will enable us to keep the paths of judgment.

### **Proverbs 2:10**

**Vs. 10-22:** If we are truly wise, we shall be careful to avoid all evil company and evil practices. When wisdom has dominion over us, then it not only fills the head, but enters into the heart, and will preserve, both against corruptions within and temptations without. The ways of sin are ways of darkness, uncomfortable and unsafe: what fools are those who leave the plain, pleasant, lightsome paths of uprightness, to walk in such ways! They take pleasure in sin; both in committing it, and in seeing others commit it. Every wise man will shun such company. True wisdom will also preserve from those who lead to fleshly lusts, which defile the body, that living temple, and war against the soul. These are evils which excite the sorrow of every serious mind, and cause every reflecting parent to look upon his children with anxiety, lest they should be entangled in such fatal snares. Let the sufferings of others be our warnings. Our Lord Jesus deters from sinful pleasures, by the everlasting torments which follow them. It is very rare that any who are caught in this snare of the devil, recover themselves; so much is the heart hardened, and the mind blinded, by the deceitfulness of this sin. Many think that this caution, besides the literal sense, is to be understood as a caution against idolatry, and subjecting the soul to the body, by seeking any forbidden object. The righteous must leave the earth as well as the wicked; but the earth is a very different thing to them. To the wicked it is all the heaven they ever shall

have; to the righteous it is the place of preparation for heaven. And is it all one to us, whether we share with the wicked in the miseries of their latter end, or share those everlasting joys that shall crown believers?

## CHAPTER 3

*Exhortations to obedience and faith. (1-6) To piety, and to improve afflictions. (7-12) To gain wisdom. (13-20) Guidance of Wisdom. (21-26) The wicked and the upright. (27-35)*

### Proverbs 3:1

**Vs. 1-6:** In the way of believing obedience to God's commandments health and peace may commonly be enjoyed; and though our days may not be long upon earth, we shall live for ever in heaven. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; God's mercy in promising, and his truth in performing: live up to them, keep up thine interest in them, and take the comfort of them. We must trust in the Lord with all our hearts, believing he is able and wise to do what is best. Those who know themselves, find their own understandings a broken reed, which, if they lean upon, will fail. Do not design any thing but what is lawful, and beg God to direct thee in every case, though it may seem quite plain. In all our ways that prove pleasant, in which we gain our point, we must acknowledge God with thankfulness. In all our ways that prove uncomfortable, and that are hedged up with thorns, we must acknowledge him with submission. It is promised, He shall direct thy paths; so that thy way shall be safe and good, and happy at last.

### Proverbs 3:7

**Vs. 7-12:** The prudence and sobriety which religion teaches, tend not only to the health of the soul, but to the health of the body. Worldly wealth is but poor substance, yet, such as it is, we must honor God with it; and those that do good with what they have, shall have more to do more good with. Should the Lord visit us with trials and sickness, let us not forget that the exhortation speaks to us as to children, for our good. We must not faint under an affliction, be it ever so heavy and long, not be driven to despair, or use wrong means for relief. The father corrects the son whom he loves, because he loves him, and desires that he may be wise and good. Afflictions are so far from doing God's children any hurt, that, by the grace of God, they promote their holiness.

### **Proverbs 3:13**

**Vs. 13-20:** No precious jewels or earthly treasures are worthy to be compared with true wisdom, whether the concerns of time or eternity be considered. We must make wisdom our business; we must venture all in it, and be willing to part with all for it. This Wisdom is the Lord Jesus Christ and his salvation, sought and obtained by faith and prayer. Were it not for unbelief, remaining sinfulness, and carelessness, we should find all our ways pleasantness, and our paths peace, for his are so; but we too often step aside from them, to our own hurt and grief. Christ is that Wisdom, by whom the worlds were made, and still are in being; happy are those to whom he is made of God wisdom. He has wherewithal to make good all his promises.

### **Proverbs 3:21**

**Vs. 21-26:** Let us not suffer Christ's words to depart from us, but keep sound wisdom and discretion; then shall we walk safely in his ways. The natural life, and all that belongs to it, shall be under the protection of God's providence; the spiritual life, and all its interests, under the protection of his grace, so that we shall be kept from falling into sin or trouble.

### **Proverbs 3:27**

**Vs. 27-35:** Our business is to observe the precepts of Christ, and to copy his example; to do justice, to love mercy, and to beware of covetousness; to be ready for every good work, avoiding needless strife, and bearing evils, if possible, rather than seeking redress by law. It will be found there is little got by striving. Let us not envy prosperous oppressors; far be it from the disciples of Christ to choose any of their ways. These truths may be despised by the covetous and luxurious, but everlasting contempt will be the portion of such scorers, while Divine favor is shown to the humble believer.

## CHAPTER 4

*Exhortation to the study of wisdom. (1-13) Cautions against bad company. Exhortation to faith and holiness. (14-27)*

### **Proverbs 4:1**

**Vs. 1-13:** We must look upon our teachers as our fathers: though instruction carry in it reproof and correction, bid it welcome. Solomon's parents loved him, therefore taught him. Wise and godly men, in every age of the world, and rank in society, agree that true wisdom consists in obedience, and is united to happiness. Get wisdom, take pains for it. Get the rule over thy corruptions; take more pains to get this than the wealth of this world. An interest in Christ's salvation is necessary. This wisdom is the one thing needful. A soul without true wisdom and grace is a dead soul. How poor, contemptible, and wretched are those, who, with all their wealth and power, die without getting understanding, without Christ, without hope, and without God! Let us give heed to the sayings of Him who has the words of eternal life. Thus our path will be plain before us: by taking, and keeping fast hold of instruction, we shall avoid being straitened or stumbling.

### **Proverbs 4:14**

**Vs. 14-27:** The way of evil men may seem pleasant, and the nearest way to compass some end; but it is an evil way, and will end ill; if thou love thy God and thy soul, avoid it. It is not said, Keep at a due distance, but at a great distance; never think you can get far enough from it. The way of the righteous is light; Christ is their Way, and he is the Light. The saints will not be perfect till they reach heaven, but there they shall shine as the sun in his strength. The way of sin is as darkness. The way of the wicked is dark, therefore dangerous; they fall into sin, but know not how to avoid it. They fall into trouble, but never seek to know wherefore God contends with them, nor what will be in the end of it. This is the way we are bid to shun. Attentive hearing the word of God, is a good sign of a work of grace begun in the heart, and a good means of carrying it on. There is in the word of God a proper remedy for all diseases of the soul. Keep thy heart with all diligence. We must set a strict guard upon our souls; keep our hearts



from doing hurt, and getting hurt. A good reason is given; because out of it are the issues of life. Above all, we should seek from the Lord Jesus that living water, the sanctifying Spirit, issuing forth unto everlasting life. Thus we shall be enabled to put away a forward mouth and perverse lips; our eyes will be turned from beholding vanity, looking straight forward, and walking by the rule of God's word, treading in the steps of our Lord and Master. Lord, forgive the past, and enable us to follow thee more closely for the time to come.

## CHAPTER 5

*Exhortations to wisdom. The evils of licentiousness. (1-14)  
Remedies against licentiousness, The miserable end of the wicked.  
(15-23)*

### Proverbs 5:1

**Vs. 1-14:** Solomon cautions all young men, as his children, to abstain from fleshly lusts. Some, by the adulterous woman, here understand idolatry, false doctrine, which tends to lead astray men's minds and manners; but the direct view is to warn against seventh-commandment sins. Often these have been, and still are, Satan's method of drawing men from the worship of God into false religion. Consider how fatal the consequences; how bitter the fruit! Take it any way, it wounds. It leads to the torments of hell. The direct tendency of this sin is to the destruction of body and soul. We must carefully avoid every thing which may be a step towards it. Those who would be kept from harm, must keep out of harm's way. If we thrust ourselves into temptation we mock God when we pray, Lead us not into temptation. How many mischiefs attend this sin! It blasts the reputation; it wastes time; it ruins the estate; it is destructive to health; it will fill the mind with horror. Though thou art merry now, yet sooner or later it will bring sorrow. The convinced sinner reproaches himself, and makes no excuse for his folly. By the frequent acts of sin, the habits of it become rooted and confirmed. By a miracle of mercy true repentance may prevent the dreadful consequences of such sins; but this is not often; far more die as they have lived. What can express the case of the self-ruined sinner in the eternal world, enduring the remorse of his conscience!

### Proverbs 5:15

**Vs. 15-23:** Lawful marriage is a means God has appointed to keep from these destructive vices. But we are not properly united, except as we attend to God's word, seeking his direction and blessing, and acting with affection. Ever remember, that though secret sins may escape the eyes of our fellow-creatures, yet a man's ways are before the eyes of the Lord, who not only sees, but ponders all his goings. Those who are so foolish as

to choose the way of sin, are justly left of God to themselves, to go on in the way to destruction.

## CHAPTER 6

*Cautions against rash suretiship. (1-5) A rebuke to slothfulness. (6-11) Seven things hateful to God. (12-19) Exhortations to walk according to God's commandments. (20-35)*

### Proverbs 6:1

**Vs. 1-5:** If we live as directed by the word of God, we shall find it profitable even in this present world. We are stewards of our worldly substance, and have to answer to the Lord for our disposal of it; to waste it in rash schemes, or such plans as may entangle us in difficulties and temptations, is wrong. A man ought never to be surety for more than he is able and willing to pay, and can afford to pay, without wronging his family; he ought to look upon every sum he is engaged for, as his own debt. If we must take all this care to get our debts to men forgiven, much more to obtain forgiveness with God. Humble thyself to him, make sure of Christ as thy Friend, to plead for thee; pray earnestly that thy sins may be pardoned, and that thou mayest be kept from going down to the pit.

### Proverbs 6:6

**Vs. 6-11:** Diligence in business is every man's wisdom and duty; not so much that he may attain worldly wealth, as that he may not be a burden to others, or a scandal to the church. The ants are more diligent than slothful men. We may learn wisdom from the meanest insects, and be shamed by them. Habits of indolence and indulgence grow upon people. Thus life runs to waste; and poverty, though at first at a distance, gradually draws near, like a traveler; and when it arrives, is like an armed man, too strong to be resisted. All this may be applied to the concerns of our souls. How many love their sleep of sin, and their dreams of worldly happiness! Shall we not seek to awaken such? Shall we not give diligence to secure our own salvation?

### Proverbs 6:12

**Vs. 12-19:** If the slothful are to be condemned, who do nothing, much more those that do all the ill they can. Observe how such a man is

described. He says and does every thing artfully, and with design. His ruin shall come without warning, and without relief. Here is a list of things hateful to God. Those sins are in a special manner provoking to God, which are hurtful to the comfort of human life. These things which God hates, we must hate in ourselves; it is nothing to hate them in others. Let us shun all such practices, and watch and pray against them; and avoid, with marked disapproval, all who are guilty of them, whatever may be their rank.

 **Proverbs 6:20**

**Vs. 20-35:** The word of God has something to say to us upon all occasions. Let not faithful reproofs ever make us uneasy. When we consider how much this sin abounds, how heinous adultery is in its own nature, of what evil consequence it is, and how certainly it destroys the spiritual life in the soul, we shall not wonder that the cautions against it are so often repeated. Let us notice the subjects of this chapter. Let us remember Him who willingly became our Surety, when we were strangers and enemies. And shall Christians, who have such prospects, motives, and examples, be slothful and careless? Shall we neglect what is pleasing to God, and what he will graciously reward? May we closely watch every sense by which poison can enter our minds or affection.

## CHAPTER 7

*Invitations to learn wisdom. (1-5) The arts of seducers, with warnings against them. (6-27)*

### **Proverbs 7:1**

**Vs. 1-5:** We must lay up God's commandments safely. Not only, Keep them, and you shall live; but, Keep them as those that cannot live without them. Those that blame strict and careful walking as needless and too precise, consider not that the law is to be kept as the apple of the eye; indeed the law in the heart is the eye of the soul. Let the word of God dwell in us, and so be written where it will be always at hand to be read. Thus we shall be kept from the fatal effects of our own passions, and the snares of Satan. Let God's word confirm our dread of sin, and resolutions against it.

### **Proverbs 7:6**

**Vs. 6-27:** Here is an affecting example of the danger of youthful lusts. It is a history or a parable of the most instructive kind. Will any one dare to venture on temptations that lead to impurity, after Solomon has set before his eyes in so lively and plain a manner, the danger of even going near them? Then is he as the man who would dance on the edge of a lofty rock, when he has just seen another fall headlong from the same place. The misery of self-ruined sinners began in disregard to God's blessed commands. We ought daily to pray that we may be kept from running into temptation, else we invite the enemies of our souls to spread snares for us. Ever avoid the neighborhood of vice. Beware of sins which are said to be pleasant sins. They are the more dangerous, because they most easily gain the heart, and close it against repentance. Do nothing till thou hast well considered the end of it. Were a man to live as long as Methuselah, and to spend all his days in the highest delights sin can offer, one hour of the anguish and tribulation that must follow, would far outweigh them.

## CHAPTER 8

*Christ, as Wisdom, calls to the sons of men. (1-11) The nature and riches of Wisdom. (12-21) Christ one with the Father, in the creation of the world, and rejoicing in his work for the salvation of man. (22-31) Exhortations to hear Christ's word. (32-36)*

### **Proverbs 8:1**

**Vs. 1-11:** The will of God is made known by the works of creation, and by the consciences of men, but more clearly by Moses and the prophets. The chief difficulty is to get men to attend to instruction. Yet attention to the words of Christ, will guide the most ignorant into saving knowledge of the truth. Where there is an understanding heart, and willingness to receive the truth in love, wisdom is valued above silver and gold.

### **Proverbs 8:12**

**Vs. 12-21:** Wisdom, here is Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; it is Christ in the word, and Christ in the heart; not only Christ revealed to us, but Christ revealed in us. All prudence and skill are from the Lord. Through the redemption of Christ's precious blood, the riches of his grace abound in all wisdom and prudence. Man found out many inventions for ruin; God found one for our recovery. He hates pride and arrogance, evil ways and forward conversation; these render men unwilling to hear his humbling, awakening, holy instructions. True religion gives men the best counsel in all difficult cases, and helps to make their way plain. His wisdom makes all truly happy who receive it in the love of Christ Jesus. Seek him early, seek him earnestly, seek him before any thing else. Christ never said, Seek in vain. Those who love Christ, are such as have seen his loveliness, and have had his love shed abroad in their hearts; therefore they are happy. They shall be happy in this world, or in that which is beyond compare better. Wealth gotten by vanity will soon be diminished, but that which is well got, will wear well; and that which is well spent upon works of piety and charity, will be lasting. If they have not riches and honor in this world, they shall have that which is infinitely better. They shall be happy in the grace of God. Christ, by his Spirit, guides believers into all truth, and so leads them in the way

of righteousness; and they walk after the Spirit. Also, they shall be happy in the glory of God hereafter. In Wisdom's promises, believers have goods laid up, not for days and years, but for eternity; her fruit therefore is better than gold.

**Proverbs 8:22**

**Vs. 22-31:** The Son of God declares himself to have been engaged in the creation of the world. How able, how fit is the Son of God to be the Savior of the world, who was the Creator of it! The Son of God was ordained, before the world, to that great work. Does he delight in saving wretched sinners, and shall not we delight in his salvation?

**Proverbs 8:32**

**Vs. 32-36:** Surely we should hearken to Christ's voice with the readiness of children. Let us all be wise, and not refuse such mercy. Blessed are those who hear the Saviors voice, and wait on him with daily reading, meditation, and prayer. The children of the world find time for vain amusements, without neglecting what they deem the one thing needful. Does it not show contempt of Wisdom's instructions, when people professing godliness, seek excuses for neglecting the means of grace? Christ is Wisdom, and he is Life to all believers; nor can we obtain God's favor, unless we find Christ, and are found in him. Those who offend Christ deceive themselves; sin is a wrong to the soul. Sinners die because they will die, which justifies God when he judges.



## CHAPTER 9

*The invitations of Wisdom. (1-12) The invitations of folly. (13-18)*

### **Proverbs 9:1**

**Vs. 1-12:** Christ has prepared ordinances to which his people are admitted, and by which nourishment is given here to those that believe in him, as well as mansions in heaven hereafter. The ministers of the gospel go forth to invite the guests. The call is general, and shuts out none that do not shut out themselves. Our Savior came, not to call the righteous, but sinners; not the wise in their own eyes, who say they see. We must keep from the company and foolish pleasures of the ungodly, or we never can enjoy the pleasures of a holy life. It is vain to seek the company of wicked men in the hope of doing them good; we are far more likely to be corrupted by them. It is not enough to forsake the foolish, we must join those that walk in wisdom. There is no true wisdom but in the way of religion, no true life but in the end of that way. Here is the happiness of those that embrace it. A man cannot be profitable to God; it is for our own good. Observe the shame and ruin of those who slight it. God is not the Author of sin: and Satan can only tempt, he cannot force. Thou shalt bear the loss of that which thou scornest: it will add to thy condemnation.

### **Proverbs 9:13**

**Vs. 13-18:** How diligent the tempter is, to seduce unwary souls into sin! Carnal, sensual pleasure, stupefies conscience, and puts out the sparks of conviction. This tempter has no solid reason to offer; and where she gets dominion in a soul, all knowledge of holy things is lost and forgotten. She is very violent and pressing. We need to seek and pray for true wisdom, for Satan has many ways to withdraw our souls from Christ. Not only worldly lusts and abandoned seducers prove fatal to the souls of men; but false teachers, with doctrines that flatter pride and give liberty to lusts, destroy thousands. They especially draw off such as have received only partial serious impressions. The depths of Satan are depths of hell; and sin, without remorse, is ruin, ruin without remedy. Solomon shows the hook; those that believe him, will not meddle with the bait. Behold the wretched, empty, unsatisfying, deceitful, and stolen pleasure sin proposes;

and may our souls be so desirous of the everlasting enjoyment of Christ, that on earth we may live to him, daily, by faith, and ere long be with him in glory.

## CHAPTER 10

Through the whole of the Proverbs, we are to look for somewhat beyond the first sense the passage may imply, and this we shall find to be Christ. He is the Wisdom so often spoken of in this book.

### **Proverbs 10:1**

**Vs. 1:** he comfort of parents much depends on their children; and this suggests to both, motives to their duties.

**vs. 2,3:** Though the righteous may be poor, the Lord will not suffer him to want what is needful for spiritual life.

**vs. 4:** Those who are fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, are likely to be rich in faith, and rich in good works.

**vs. 5:** Here is just blame of those who trifle away opportunities, both for here and for hereafter.

**vs. 6:** Abundance of blessings shall abide on good men; real blessings.

**vs. 7:** Both the just and the wicked must die; but between their souls there is a vast difference.

**vs. 8:** The wise in heart puts his knowledge in practice.

**vs. 9:** Dissemblers, after all their shuffling, will be exposed.

**vs. 10:** Trick and artifice will be no excuse for iniquity.

**vs. 11:** The good man's mouth is always open to teach, comfort, and correct others.

**vs. 12:** Where there is hatred, every thing stirs up strife. By bearing with each other, peace and harmony are preserved.

**vs. 13:** Those that foolishly go on in wicked ways, prepare rods for themselves.

**vs. 14:** Whatever knowledge may be useful, we must lay it up, that it may not be to seek when we want it. The wise gain this wisdom by reading, by

hearing the word, by meditation, by prayer, by faith in Christ, who is made of God unto us wisdom.

**vs. 15:** This refers to the common mistakes both of rich and poor, as to their outward condition. Rich people's wealth exposes them to many dangers; while a poor man may live comfortably, if he is content, keeps a good conscience, and lives by faith.

**vs. 16:** Perhaps a righteous man has no more than what he works hard for, but that labor tends to life.

**vs. 17:** The traveler that has missed his way, and cannot bear to be told of it, and to be shown the right way, must err still.

**vs. 18:** He is especially a fool who thinks to hide anything from God; and malice is no better.

**vs. 19:** Those that speak much, speak much amiss. He that checks himself is a wise man, and therein consults his own peace.

**vs. 20,21:** The tongue of the just is sincere, freed from the dross of guile and evil design. Pious discourse is spiritual food to the needy. Fools die for want of a heart, so the word is; for want of thought.

**vs. 22:** That wealth which is truly desirable, has no vexation of spirit in the enjoyment; no grief for the loss; no guilt by the abuse of it. What comes from the love of God, has the grace of God for its companion.

**vs. 23:** Only foolish and wicked men divert themselves with doing harm to others, or tempting to sin.

**vs. 24:** The largest desire of eternal blessings the righteous can form, will be granted.

**vs. 25:** The course of prosperous sinners is like a whirlwind, which soon spends itself, and is gone.

**vs. 26:** As vinegar sets the teeth on edge, and as the smoke causes the eyes to smart, so the sluggard vexes his employer.

**vs. 27,28:** What man is he that loves life? Let him fear God, and that will secure to him life enough in this world, and eternal life in the other.

**vs. 29:** The believer grows stronger in faith, and obeys with increased delight.

**vs. 30:** The wicked would be glad to have this earth their home for ever, but it cannot be so. They must die and leave all their idols behind.

**vs. 31,32:** A good man discourses wisely for the benefit of others. But it is the sin, and will be the ruin of a wicked man, that he speaks what is displeasing to God, and provoking to those he converses with. The righteous is kept by the power of God; and nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

## CHAPTER 11

### Proverbs 11:1

**Vs. 1:** However men may make light of giving short weight or measure, and however common such crimes may be, they are an abomination to the Lord.

**vs. 2:** Considering how safe, and quiet, and easy the humble are, we see that with the lowly is wisdom.

**vs. 3:** An honest man's principles are fixed, therefore his way is plain.

**vs. 4:** Riches will stand men in no stead in the day of death.

**vs. 5,6:** The ways of wickedness are dangerous. And sin will be its own punishment.

**vs. 7:** When a godly man dies, all his fears vanish; but when a wicked man dies, his hopes vanish.

**vs. 8:** The righteous are often wonderfully kept from going into dangerous situations, and the ungodly go in their stead.

**vs. 9:** Hypocrites delude men into error and sin by artful objections against the truths of God's word.

**vs. 10,11:** Nations prosper when wicked men are cast down.

**vs. 12:** A man of understanding does not judge of others by their success.

**vs. 13:** A faithful man will not disclose what he is trusted with, unless the honor of God and the real good of society require it.

**vs. 14:** We shall often find it to our advantage to advise with others.

**vs. 15:** The welfare of our families, our own peace, and our ability to pay just debts, must not be brought into danger. But here especially let us consider the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in becoming Surety even for enemies.

**vs. 16:** A pious and discreet woman will keep esteem and respect, as strong men keep possession of wealth.

**vs. 17:** A cruel, forward, ill-natured man, is vexatious to those that are, and should be to him as his own flesh, and punishes himself.

**vs. 18:** He that makes it his business to do good, shall have a reward, as sure to him as eternal truth can make it.

**vs. 19:** True holiness is true happiness. The more violent a man is in sinful pursuits, the more he hastens his own destruction.

**vs. 20:** Nothing is more hateful to God, than hypocrisy and double dealing, which are here signified. God delights in such as aim and act with uprightness.

**vs. 21:** Joining together in sin shall not protect the sinners.

**vs. 22:** Beauty is abused by those who have not discretion or modesty with it. This is true of all bodily endowments.

**vs. 23:** The wicked desire mischief to others, but it shall return upon themselves.

**vs. 24:** A man may grow poor by not paying just debts, not relieving the poor, not allowing needful expenses. Let men be ever so saving of what they have, if God appoints, it comes to nothing.

**vs. 25:** Both in temporal and spiritual things, God commonly deals with his people according to the measure by which they deal with their brethren.

**vs. 26:** We must not hoard up the gifts of God's bounty, merely for our own advantage.

**vs. 27:** Seeking mischief is here set against seeking good; for those that are not doing good are doing hurt, even to themselves.

**vs. 28:** The true believer is a branch of the living Vine. When those that take root in the world wither, those who are grafted into Christ shall be fruitful.

**vs. 29:** He that brings trouble upon himself and his family, by carelessness, or by wickedness, shall be unable to keep and enjoy what he gets, as a man is unable to hold the wind, or to satisfy himself with it.

**vs. 30:** The righteous are as trees of life; and their influence upon earth, like the fruits of that tree, support and nourish the spiritual life in many.

**vs. 31:** Even the righteous, when they offend on earth, shall meet with sharp corrections; much more will the wicked meet the due reward of their sins. Let us then seek those blessings which our Surety purchased by his sufferings and death; let us seek to copy his example, and to keep his commandments.



## CHAPTER 12

### Proverbs 12:1

**Vs. 1:** Those who have grace, will delight in the instructions given them. Those that stifle their convictions, are like brutes.

**vs. 2:** The man who covers selfish and vicious designs under a profession of religion or friendship, will be condemned.

**vs. 3:** Though men may advance themselves by sinful arts, they cannot settle and secure themselves. But those who by faith are rooted in Christ, are firmly fixed.

**vs. 4:** A wife who is pious, prudent, and looks well to the ways of her household, who makes conscience of her duty, and can bear crosses; such a one is an honor and comfort to her husband. She that is the reverse of this, preys upon him, and consumes him.

**vs. 5:** Thoughts are not free; they are under the Divine knowledge, therefore under the Divine command. It is a man's shame to act with deceit, with trick and design.

**vs. 6:** Wicked people speak mischief to their neighbors. A man may sometimes do a good work with one good word.

**vs. 7:** God's blessing is often continued to the families of godly men, while the wicked are overthrown.

**vs. 8:** The apostles showed wisdom by glorying in shame for the name of Christ.

**vs. 9:** He that lives in a humble state, who has no one to wait upon him, but gets bread by his own labor, is happier than he that glories in high birth or gay attire, and wants necessaries.

**vs. 10:** A godly man would not put even an animal to needless pain. But the wicked often speak of others as well used, when they would not endure like treatment for a single day.

**vs. 11:** It is men's wisdom to mind their business, and follow an honest calling. But it is folly to neglect business; and the grace of God teaches men to disdain nothing but sin.

**vs. 12:** When the ungodly see others prosper by sin, they wish they could act in the same way. But the root of Divine grace, in the heart of the righteous, produces other desires and purposes.

**vs. 13:** Many a man has paid dear in this world for the transgression of his lips.

**vs. 14:** When men use their tongues aright, to teach and comfort others, they enjoy acceptance through Christ Jesus; and the testimony of their conscience, that they in some measure answer the end of their being.

**vs. 15:** A fool, in the sense of Scripture, means a wicked man, one who acts contrary to the wisdom that is from above. His rule is, to do what is right in his own eyes.

**vs. 16:** A foolish man is soon angry, and is hasty in expressing it; he is ever in trouble and running into mischief. It is kindness to ourselves to make light of injuries and affronts, instead of making the worst of them.

**vs. 17:** It is good for all to dread and detest the sin of lying, and to be governed by honesty.

**vs. 18:** Whisperings and evil surmises, like a sword, separate those that have been dear to each other. The tongue of the wise is health, making all whole.

**vs. 19:** If truth be spoken, it will hold good; whoever may be disobliged, still it will keep its ground.

**vs. 20:** Deceit and falsehood bring terrors and perplexities. But those who consult the peace and happiness of others have joy in their own minds.

**vs. 21:** If men are sincerely righteous, the righteous God has engaged that no evil shall happen to them. But they that delight in mischief shall have enough of it.

**vs. 22:** Make conscience of truth, not only in words, but in actions.

**vs. 23:** Foolish men proclaim to all the folly and emptiness of their minds.

**vs. 24:** Those who will not take pains in an honest calling, living by tricks and dishonesty, are paltry and beggarly.

**vs. 25:** Care, fear, and sorrow, upon the spirits, deprive men of vigor in what is to be done, or courage in what is to be born. A good word from God, applied by faith, makes the heart glad.

**vs. 26:** The righteous is abundant; though not in this world's goods, yet in the graces and comforts of the Spirit, which are the true riches. Evil men vainly flatter themselves that their ways are not wrong.

**vs. 27:** The slothful man makes no good use of the advantages Providence puts in his way, and has no comfort in them. The substance of a diligent man, though not great, does good to him and his family. He sees that God gives it to him in answer to prayer.

**vs. 28:** The way of religion is a straight, plain way; it is the way of righteousness. There is not only life at the end, but life in the way; all true comfort.

## CHAPTER 13

### Proverbs 13:1

**Vs. 1:** There is great hope of those that reverence their parents. There is little hope of any who will not hear those that deal faithfully with them.

**vs. 2:** By our words we must be justified or condemned, <sup><1125</sup>Matthew 12:37.

**vs. 3:** He that thinks before he speaks, that suppresses evil if he have thought it, keeps his soul from a great deal both of guilt and grief. Many a one is ruined by an ungoverned tongue.

**vs. 4:** The slothful desire the gains the diligent get, but hate the pains the diligent take; therefore they have nothing. This is especially true as to the soul.

**vs. 5:** Where sin reigns, the man is loathsome. If his conscience were awake, he would abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes.

**vs. 6:** An honest desire to do right, preserves a man from fatal mistakes, better than a thousand fine-drawn distinctions.

**vs. 7:** Some who are really poor, trade and spend as if they were rich: this is sin, and will be shame, and it will end accordingly. Some that are really rich, would be thought to be poor: in this there is want of gratitude to God, want of justice and charity to others. There are many hypocrites, empty of grace, who will not be convinced of their poverty. There are many fearing Christians, who are spiritually rich, yet think themselves poor; by their doubts, and complaints, and griefs, they make themselves poor.

**vs. 8:** Great riches often tempt to violence against those that possess them; but the poor are free from such perils.

**vs. 9:** The light of the righteous is as that of the sun, which may be eclipsed and clouded, but will continue: the Spirit is their Light, he gives a fullness of joy: that of the wicked is as a lamp of their own kindling, easily put out.

**vs. 10:** All contentions, whether between private persons, families, churches, or nations, are begun and carried forward by pride. Disputes would be easily prevented or ended, if it were not for pride.

**vs. 11:** Wealth gotten by dishonesty or vice, has a secret curse, which will speedily waste it.

**vs. 12:** The delay of what is anxiously hoped for, is very painful to the mind; obtaining it is very pleasant. But spiritual blessings are chiefly intended.

**vs. 13:** He that stands in awe of God, and reverences his word, shall escape destruction, and be rewarded for his godly fear.

**vs. 14:** The rule by which the wise regulate their conduct, is a fountain yielding life and happiness.

**vs. 15:** The way of sinners is hard upon others, and hard to the sinner himself. The service of sin is slavery; the road to hell is strewed with the thorns and thistles that followed the curse.

**vs. 16:** It is folly to talk of things of which we know nothing, and to undertake what we are no way fit for.

**vs. 17:** Those that are wicked, and false to Christ and to the souls of men, do mischief, and fall into mischief; but those that are faithful, find sound words healing to others and to themselves.

**vs. 18:** He that scorns to be taught, will certainly be brought down.

**vs. 19:** There are in man strong desires after happiness; but never let those expect any thing truly sweet to their souls, who will not be persuaded to leave their sins.

**vs. 20:** Multitudes are brought to ruin by bad company. And all that make themselves wicked will be destroyed.

**vs. 21:** When God pursues sinners he is sure to overtake them; and he will reward the righteous.

**vs. 22:** The servant of God who is not anxious about riches, takes the best method of providing for his children.

**vs. 23:** The poor, yet industrious, thrive, though in a homely manner, while those who have great riches are often brought to poverty for want of judgment.

**vs. 24:** He acts as if he hated his child, who, by false indulgence, permits sinful habits to gather strength, which will bring sorrow here, and misery hereafter.

**vs. 25:** It is the misery of the wicked, that even their sensual appetites are always craving. The righteous feeds on the word and ordinances, to the satisfying of his soul with the promises of the gospel, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Bread of life.

## CHAPTER 14

### **Proverbs 14:1**

**Vs. 1:** A woman who has no fear of God, who is willful and wasteful, and indulges her ease, will as certainly ruin her family, as if she plucked her house down.

**vs. 2:** Here are grace and sin in their true colors. Those that despise God's precepts and promises, despise God and all his power and mercy.

**vs. 3:** Pride grows from that root of bitterness which is in the heart. The root must be plucked up, or we cannot conquer this branch. The prudent words of wise men get them out of difficulties.

**vs. 4:** There can be no advantage without something which, though of little moment, will affright the indolent.

**vs. 5:** A conscientious witness will not dare to represent anything otherwise than according to his knowledge.

**vs. 6:** A scorner treats Divine things with contempt. He that feels his ignorance and unworthiness will search the Scriptures in a humble spirit.

**vs. 7:** We discover a wicked man if there is no savor of piety in his discourse.

**vs. 8:** We are travelers, whose concern is, not to spy out wonders, but to get to their journey's end; to understand the rules we are to walk by, also the ends we are to walk toward. The bad man cheats himself, and goes on in his mistake.

**vs. 9:** Foolish and profane men consider sin a mere trifle, to be made light of rather than mourned over. Fools mock at the sin-offering; but those that make light of sin, make light of Christ.

**vs. 10:** We do not know what stings of conscience, or consuming passions, torment the prosperous sinner. Nor does the world know the peace of mind a serious Christian enjoys, even in poverty and sickness.

**vs. 11:** Sin ruins many great families; whilst righteousness often raises and strengthens even mean families.

**vs. 12:** The ways of carelessness, of worldliness, and of sensuality, seem right to those that walk in them; but self-deceivers prove self-destroyers. See the vanity of carnal mirth.

**vs. 14:** Of all sinners backsliders will have the most terror when they reflect on their own ways.

**vs. 15:** Eager readiness to believe what others say, has ever proved mischievous. The whole world was thus ruined at first. The man who is spiritually wise, depends on the Savior alone for acceptance. He is watchful against the enemies of his salvation, by taking heed to God's word.

**vs. 16:** Holy fear guards against every thing unholy.

**vs. 17:** An angry man is to be pitied as well as blamed; but the revengeful is more hateful.

**vs. 18:** Sin is the shame of sinners; but wisdom is the honor of the wise.

**vs. 19:** Even bad men acknowledge the excellencies of God's people.

**vs. 20:** Friendship in the world is governed by self-interest. It is good to have God our Friend; he will not desert us.

**vs. 21:** To despise a man for his employment or appearance is a sin.

**vs. 22:** How wisely those consult their own interest, who not only do good, but devise it!

**vs. 23:** Labor of the head, or of the hand, will turn to some good account. But if men's religion runs all out in talk and noise, they will come to nothing.

**vs. 24:** The riches of men of wisdom and piety enlarge their usefulness.

**vs. 25:** An upright man will venture the displeasure of the greatest, to bring truth to light.



**vs. 26,27:** Those who fear the Lord so as to obey and serve him, have a strong ground of confidence, and will be preserved. Let us seek to this Fountain of life, that we may escape the snares of death.

**vs. 28:** Let all that wish well to the kingdom of Christ, do what they can, that many may be added to his church.

**vs. 29:** A mild, patient man is one that learns of Christ, who is Wisdom itself. Unbridled passion is folly made known.

**vs. 30:** An upright, contented, and benevolent mind, tends to health.

**vs. 31:** To oppress the poor is to reproach our Creator.

**vs. 32:** The wicked man has his soul forced from him; he dies in his sins, under the guilt and power of them. But godly men, though they have pain and some dread of death, have the blessed hope, which God, who cannot lie, has given them.

**vs. 33:** Wisdom possesses the heart, and thus regulates the affection and tempers.

**vs. 34:** Piety and holiness always promote industry, sobriety, and honesty.

**vs. 35:** The great King who reigns over heaven and earth, will reward faithful servants who honor his gospel by the proper discharge of the duties of their stations: he despises not the services of the lowest.

## CHAPTER 15

### Proverbs 15:1

**Vs. 1:** A right cause will be better pleaded with meekness than with passion. Nothing stirs up anger like grievous words.

**vs. 2:** He that has knowledge, is to use it aright, for the good of others.

**vs. 3:** Secret sins, services, and sorrows, are under God's eye. This speaks comfort to saints, and terror to sinners.

**vs. 4:** A good tongue is healing to wounded consciences, by comforting them; to sin-sick souls, by convincing them; and it reconciles parties at variance.

**vs. 5:** If instruction is despised, reprove men rather than suffer them to go on undisturbed in the way to ruin.

**vs. 6:** The wealth of worldly men increases their fears and suspicions, adds strength to their passions, and renders the fear of death more distressing.

**vs. 7:** We use knowledge aright when we disperse it; but the heart of the foolish has nothing to disperse that is good.

**vs. 8, 9:** The wicked put other things in the stead of Christ's atonement, or in the place of holy obedience. Praying graces are his gift, and the work of his Spirit, with which he is well pleased.

**vs. 10:** He that hates reproof shall perish in his sins, since he would not be parted from them.

**vs. 11:** There is nothing that can be hid from the eyes of God, not even man's thoughts.

**vs. 12:** A scorner cannot bear to reflect seriously within his own heart.

**vs. 13:** A gloomy, impatient, unthankful spirit, springing from pride and undue attachment to worldly objects, renders a man uneasy to himself and others.

**vs. 14:** A wise man seeks to gain more wisdom, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. But a carnal mind rests contented, flattering itself.

**vs. 15:** Some are much in affliction, and of a sorrowful spirit. Such are to be pitied, prayed for, and comforted. And others serve God with gladness of heart, and it prompts their obedience, yet they should rejoice with trembling.

**vs. 16,17:** Believers often have enough when worldly eyes see little; the Lord is with them, without the cares, troubles, and temptations which are with the wealth of the wicked.

**vs. 18:** He that is slow to anger, not only prevents strife, but appeases it, if kindled.

**vs. 19:** Those who have no heart to their work, pretend that they cannot do their work without hardship and danger. And thus many live always in doubt about their state, because always in neglect of some duty.

**vs. 20:** Those who treat an aged mother or a father with contempt or neglect, show their own folly.

**vs. 21:** Such as are truly wise, study that their thoughts, words, and actions should be regular, sincere, and holy.

**vs. 22:** If men will not take time and pains to deliberate, they are not likely to bring any thing to pass.

**vs. 23:** Wisdom is needed to suit our discourse to the occasions.

**vs. 24:** A good man sets his affection on things above; his way leads directly thither.

**vs. 25:** Pride is the ruin of multitudes. But those who are in affliction God will support.

**vs. 26:** The thoughts of wicked men offend Him who knows the heart.

**vs. 27:** The covetous man lets none of his family have rest or enjoyment. And greediness of gain often tempts to projects that bring ruin.

**vs. 28:** A good man is proved to be a wise man by this; he governs his tongue well.

- vs. 29:** God sets himself at a distance from those who set him at defiance.
- vs. 30:** How delightful to the humbled soul to hear the good report of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ!
- vs. 31:** Faithful, friendly reproofs help spiritual life, and lead to eternal life.
- vs. 32:** Sinners undervalue their own souls; therefore they prefer the body before the soul, and wrong the soul to please the body.
- vs. 33:** The fear of the Lord will dispose us to search the Scriptures with reverence; and it will cause us to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit. While we humbly place all our dependence on the grace of God, we are exalted in the righteousness of Christ.

## CHAPTER 16

### Proverbs 16:1

- Vs. 1:** The renewing grace of God alone prepares the heart for every good work. This teaches us that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think or speak any thing wise and good.
- vs. 2:** Ignorance, pride, and self-flattery render us partial judges respecting our own conduct.
- vs. 3:** Roll the burden of thy care upon God, and leave it with him, by faith and dependence on him.
- vs. 4:** God makes use of the wicked to execute righteous vengeance on each other; and he will be glorified by their destruction at last.
- vs. 5:** Though sinners strengthen themselves and one another, they shall not escape God's judgments.
- vs. 6:** By the mercy and truth of God in Christ Jesus, the sins of believers are taken away, and the power of sin is broken.
- vs. 7:** He that has all hearts in his hand, can make a man's enemies to be at peace with him.
- vs. 8:** A small estate, honestly come by, will turn to better account than a great estate ill-gotten.
- vs. 9:** If men make God's glory their end, and his will their rule, he will direct their steps by his Spirit and grace. 10. Let kings and judges of the earth be just, and rule in the fear of God.
- vs. 11:** To observe justice in dealings between man and man is God's appointment.
- vs. 12:** The ruler that uses his power aright, will find that to be his best security.
- vs. 13:** Put those in power who know how to speak to the purpose.

**vs. 14, 15:** Those are fools, who, to obtain the favor of an earthly prince, throw themselves out of God's favor.

**vs. 16:** There is joy and satisfaction of spirit, only in getting wisdom.

**vs. 17:** A sincerely religious man keeps at a distance from every appearance of evil. Happy is the man that walks in Christ, and is led by the Spirit of Christ.

**vs. 18:** When men defy God's judgments, and think themselves far from them, it is a sign they are at the door. Let us not fear the pride of others, but fear pride in ourselves.

**vs. 19:** Humility, though it exposes to contempt in the world, is much better than high-spiritedness, which makes God an enemy. He that understands God's word shall find good.

**vs. 21:** The man whose wisdom dwells in his heart, will be found more truly prudent than many who possess shining talents.

**vs. 22:** As waters to a thirsty land, so is a wise man to his friends and neighbors.

**vs. 23:** The wise man's self-knowledge, always suggests something proper to be spoken to others.

**vs. 24:** The word of God cures the diseases that weaken our souls.

**vs. 25:** This is caution to all, to take heed of deceiving themselves as to their souls.

**vs. 26:** We must labor for the meat which endureth to everlasting life, or we must perish.

**vs. 27,28:** Ungodly men bestow more pains to do mischief than would be needful to do good. The whisperer separates friends: what a hateful, but how common a character!

**vs. 29,30:** Some do all the mischief they can by force and violence, and are blind to the result.

**vs. 31:** Old people especially should be found in the way of religion and godliness.

**vs. 32:** To overcome our own passions, requires more steady management, than obtaining victory over an enemy.

**vs. 33:** All the disposal of Providence concerning our affairs, we must look upon to be the determining what we referred to God; and we must be reconciled to them accordingly. Blessed are those that give themselves up to the will of God; for he knows what is good for them.

## CHAPTER 17

### Proverbs 17:1

- Vs. 1:** These words recommend family love and peace, as needful for the comfort of human life.
- vs. 2:** The wise servant is more deserving, and more likely to appear one of the family, than a profligate son.
- vs. 3:** God tries the heart by affliction. He thus has often shown the sin remaining in the heart of the believer.
- vs. 4:** Flatterers, especially false teachers, are welcome to those that live in sin.
- vs. 5:** Those that laugh at poverty, treat God's providence and precepts with contempt.
- vs. 6:** It is an honor to children to have wise and godly parents continued to them, even after they are grown up and settled in the world.
- vs. 7:** A fool, in Solomon's Proverbs, signifies a wicked man, whom excellencies speech does not become, because his conversation contradicts it.
- vs. 8:** Those who set their hearts upon money, will do any thing for it. What influence should the gifts of God have on our hearts!
- vs. 9:** The way to preserve peace is to make the best of every thing; not to notice what has been said or done against ourselves.
- vs. 10:** A gentle reproof will enter, not only into the head, but into the heart of a wise man.
- vs. 11:** Satan, and the messengers of Satan, shall be let loose upon an evil man.
- vs. 12:** Let us watch over our own passions, and avoid the company of furious men.



- vs. 13:** To render evil for good is devilish. He that does so, brings a curse upon his family.
- vs. 14:** What danger there is in the beginning of strife! Resist its earliest display; and leave it off, if it were possible, before you begin.
- vs. 15:** It is an offense to God to acquit the guilty, or to condemn those who are not guilty.
- vs. 16:** Man's neglect of God's favor and his own interest is very absurd.
- vs. 17:** No change of outward circumstances should abate our affection for our friends or relatives. But no friend, except Christ, deserves unlimited confidence. In Him this text did receive, and still receives its most glorious fulfillment.
- vs. 18:** Let not any wrong their families. Yet Christ's becoming Surety for men, was a glorious display of Divine wisdom; for he was able to discharge the bond.
- vs. 19:** If we would keep a clear conscience and a quiet mind, we must shun all excitements to anger. And a man who affects a style of living above his means, goes the way to ruin.
- vs. 20:** There is nothing got by ill designs. And many have paid dear for an unbridled tongue.
- vs. 21:** This speaks very plainly what many wise and good men feel very strongly, how grievous it is to have a foolish, wicked child.
- vs. 22:** It is great mercy that God gives us leave to be cheerful, and cause to be cheerful, if by his grace he gives us hearts to be cheerful.
- vs. 23:** The wicked are ready to part with their money, though loved, that they may not suffer for their crimes.
- vs. 24:** The prudent man keeps the word of God continually in view. But the foolish man cannot fix his thoughts, nor pursue any purpose with steadiness.
- vs. 25:** Wicked children despise the authority of their father, and the tenderness of their mother.

**vs. 26:** It is very wrong to find fault for doing what is duty.

**vs. 27,28:** A man may show himself to be a wise man, by the good temper of his mind, and by the good government of his tongue. He is careful when he does speak, to speak to the purpose. God knows his heart, and the folly that is bound there; therefore he cannot be deceived in his judgment as men may be.

## CHAPTER 18

### **Proverbs 18:1**

**Vs. 1:** 1 If we would get knowledge and grace, we must try all methods of improving ourselves.

**vs. 2:** Those make nothing to purpose, of learning or religion, whose only design is to have something to make a show with.

**vs. 3:** As soon as sin entered, shame followed.

**vs. 4:** The well-spring of wisdom in the heart of a believer, continually supplies words of wisdom.

**vs. 5:** The merits of a cause must be looked to, not the person.

**vs. 6, 7:** What mischief bad men do to themselves by their ungoverned tongues!

**vs. 8:** How base are those that sow contention! and what fatal effects may be expected from small beginnings of jealousy!

**vs. 9:** Omissions of duty, and in duty, are fatal to the soul, as well as commissions of sin.

**vs. 10, 11:** The Divine power, made known in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, forms a strong tower for the believer, who relies on the Lord. How deceitful the defense of the rich man, who has his portion and treasure in this world! It is a strong city and a high wall only in his own conceit; for it will fail when most in need. They will be exposed to the just wrath of that Judge whom they despised as a Savior.

**vs. 12:** After the heart has been lifted up with pride, a fall comes. But honor shall be the reward of humility.

**vs. 13:** Eagerness, with self-conceit, will expose to shame.

**vs. 14:** Firmness of mind supports under many pains and trials. But when the conscience is tortured with remorse, no human fortitude can bear the misery; what then will hell be?

**vs. 15:** We must get knowledge, not only into our heads, but into our hearts.

**vs. 16:** Blessed be the Lord, who makes us welcome to come to his throne, without money and without price. May his gifts make room for him in our souls.

**vs. 17:** It is well to listen to our enemies, that we may form a better judgment of ourselves.

**vs. 18:** It was customary sometimes to refer matters to God, by casting lots, with solemn prayer. The profaning the lot, by using it in matters of diversion, or coveting what belongs to others, forms an objection to this now.

**vs. 19:** Great care must be taken to prevent quarrels among relations and those under obligations to each other. Wisdom and grace make it easy to forgive; but corruption makes it difficult.

**vs. 20:** The belly is here put for the heart, as elsewhere; and what that is filled with, our satisfaction will be accordingly, and our inward peace.

**vs. 21:** Many a one has caused his own death, or the death of others, by a false or injurious tongue.

**vs. 22:** A good wife is a great blessing to a man, and it is a token of Divine favor.

**vs. 23:** Poverty tells men they must not order or demand. And at the throne of God's grace we are all poor, and must use entreaties.

**vs. 24:** Christ Jesus never will forsake those who trust in and love him. May we be such friends to others, for our Master's sake. Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end; and we are his friends if we do whatever he commands us, <sup>ALISH</sup> John 15:14.

## CHAPTER 19

### **Proverbs 19:1**

- Vs. 1:** A poor man who fears God, is more honorable and happy, than a man without wisdom and grace, however rich or advanced in rank.
- vs. 2:** What good can the soul do, if without knowledge? And he sins who will not take time to ponder the path of his feet.
- vs. 3:** Men run into troubles by their own folly, and then fret at the appointments of God.
- vs. 4:** Here we may see how strong is men's love of money.
- vs. 5:** Those that tell lies in discourse, are in a fair way to be guilty of bearing false-witness.
- vs. 6:** We are without excuse if we do not love God with all our hearts. His gifts to us are past number, and all the gifts of men to us are fruits of his bounty.
- vs. 7:** Christ was left by all his disciples; but the Father was with him. It encourages our faith that he had so large an experience of the sorrows of poverty.
- vs. 8:** Those only love their souls aright that get true wisdom.
- vs. 9:** Lying is a damning, destroying sin.
- vs. 10:** A man that has not wisdom and grace, has no right or title to true joy. It is very unseemly for one who is a servant to sin, to oppress God's free-men.
- vs. 11:** He attains the most true glory who endeavors most steadily to overcome evil with good.
- vs. 12:** Christ is a King, whose wrath against his enemies will be as the roaring of a lion, and his favor to his people as the refreshing dew.
- vs. 13:** It shows the vanity of the world, that we are liable to the greatest griefs where we promise ourselves the greatest comfort.

- vs. 14:** A discreet and virtuous wife is more valuable than house and riches.
- vs. 15:** A sluggish, slothful disposition makes men poor; it brings them to want. And this applies both to the present life and that which is to come.
- vs. 16:** If we keep God's word, God's word will keep us from every thing really hurtful. We abuse the doctrine of free grace, if we think that it does away the necessity and advantage of obedience. Those that live at random must die. This truth is clearly taught in words enough to alarm the stoutest sinner.
- vs. 17:** God has chosen the poor of this world, to be rich in faith, and heirs of his kingdom.
- vs. 18:** When parents keep under foolish tenderness, they do their best to render children a comfort to them, and happy in themselves.
- vs. 19:** The spared and spoiled child is likely to become a man of great wrath.
- vs. 20:** Those that would be wise in their latter end, must be taught and ruled when young.
- vs. 21:** What should we desire, but that all our purposes may agree with God's holy will?
- vs. 22:** It is far better to have a heart to do good, and want ability for it, than to have ability for it, and want a heart to it.
- vs. 23:** Those that live in the fear of God, shall get safety, satisfaction, and true and complete happiness.
- vs. 24:** Indolence, when indulged, so grows upon people, that they have no heart to do the most needful things for themselves.
- vs. 25:** A gentle rebuke goes farthest with a man of understanding.
- vs. 26:** The young man who wastes his father's substance, or makes his aged mother destitute, is hateful, and will come to disgrace.
- vs. 27:** It is the wisdom of young men to dread hearing such talk as puts loose and evil principles into the mind.

**vs. 28:** Those are the worst of sinners, who are glad of an opportunity to sin.

**vs. 29:** The unbelief of man shall not make God's threatenings of no effect. Christ himself, when bearing sins not his own, was not spared. Justice and judgment took hold of our blessed Surety; and will God spare obstinate sinners?

## CHAPTER 20

### Proverbs 20:1

**Vs. 1:** It seems hard to believe that men of the greatest abilities, as well as the ignorant, should render themselves fools and madmen, merely for the taste or excitement produced by strong liquors.

**vs. 2:** How formidable kings are to those who provoke them! how much more foolish then is it to provoke the King of kings!

**vs. 3:** To engage in quarrels is the greatest folly that can be. Yield, and even give up just demands, for peace' sake.

**vs. 4:** He who labors and endures hardship in his seed-time for eternity, will be properly diligent as to his earthly business.

**vs. 5:** Though many capable of giving wise counsel are silent, yet something may be drawn from them, which will reward those who obtain it.

**vs. 6:** It is hard to find those that have done, and will do more good than they speak, or care to hear spoken of.

**vs. 7:** A good man is not liable to uneasiness in contriving what he shall do, or in reflecting on what he has done, as those who walk in deceit. And his family fare better for his sake.

**vs. 8:** If great men are good men, they may do much good, and prevent very much evil.

**vs. 9:** Some can say, Through grace, we are cleaner than we have been; but it was the work of the Holy Spirit.

**vs. 10:** See the various deceits men use, of which the love of money is the root. The Lord will not bless what is thus gotten.

**vs. 11:** Parents should observe their children, that they may manage them accordingly.



**vs. 12:** All our powers and faculties are from God, and are to be employed for him.

**vs. 13:** Those that indulge themselves, may expect to want necessaries, which should have been gotten by honest labor.

**vs. 14:** Men use arts to get a good bargain, and to buy cheap; whereas a man ought to be ashamed of a fraud and a lie.

**vs. 15:** He that prefers true knowledge to riches, follows the ways of religion and happiness. If we really believed this truth, the word of God would be valued as it deserves, and the world would lose its tempting influence.

**vs. 16:** Those ruin themselves who entangle themselves in rash suretiship. Also those who are in league with abandoned women. Place no confidence in either.

**vs. 17:** Wealth gotten by fraud may be sweet, for the carnal mind takes pleasure in the success of wicked devices; but it will be bitter in the reflection.

**vs. 18:** Especially we need advice in spiritual warfare. The word and Spirit of God are the best counselors in every point.

**vs. 19:** Those dearly buy their own praise, who put confidence in a man because he speaks fairly.

**vs. 20:** An undutiful child will become very miserable. Never let him expect any peace or comfort.

**vs. 21:** An estate suddenly raised, is often as suddenly ruined.

**vs. 22:** Wait on the Lord, attend his pleasure, and he will protect thee.

**vs. 23:** A bargain made by fraud will prove a losing bargain in the end.

**vs. 24:** How can we form plans, and conduct business, independently of the Lord?

**vs. 25:** The evasions men often use with their own consciences show how false and deceitful man is.

**vs. 26:** Justice should crush the wicked, and separate them from the virtuous.

**vs. 27:** The rational soul and conscience are as a lamp within us, which should be used in examining our dispositions and motives with the revealed will of God.

**vs. 28:** Mercy and truth are the glories of God's throne.

**vs. 29:** Both young and old have their advantages; and let neither despise or envy the other.

**vs. 30:** Severe rebukes sometimes do a great deal of good. But such is the corruption of nature, that men are loath to be rebuked for their sins. If God uses severe afflictions, to purify our hearts and fit us for his service, we have cause to be very thankful.

## CHAPTER 21

### Proverbs 21:1

**Vs. 1:** 1 The believer, perceiving that the Lord rules every heart as he sees fit, like the husbandman who turns the water through his grounds as he pleases, seeks to have his own heart, and the hearts of others, directed in his faith, fear, and love.

**vs. 2:** We are partial in judging ourselves and our actions.

**vs. 3:** Many deceive themselves with a conceit that outward devotions will excuse unrighteousness.

**vs. 4:** Sin is the pride, the ambition, the glory, the joy, and the business of wicked men.

**vs. 5:** The really diligent employ foresight as well as labor.

**vs. 6:** While men seek wealth by unlawful practices, they seek death.

**vs. 7:** Injustice will return upon the sinner, and will destroy him here and for ever.

**vs. 8:** The way of mankind by nature is forward and strange.

**vs. 9:** It is best to shun bitter contention by pouring out the heart before God. For by prudence and patience, with constant prayer, the cross may be removed.

**vs. 10:** The evil desires of a wicked man's heart, lead to baseness in his conduct.

**vs. 11:** The simple may be made wise by punishments on the wicked, and by instructions to those who are willing to be taught.

**vs. 12:** Good men envy not the prosperity of evil-doers; they see there is a curse on them.

**vs. 13:** Such as oppress the poor by beating down wages, such as will not relieve according to their ability those in distress, and those in authority

who neglect to do justice, stop their ears at the cry of the poor. But doubtless care is to be used in the exercise of charity.

**vs. 14:** If money can conquer the fury of the passions, shall reason, the fear of God, and the command of Christ, be too weak to bridle them?

**vs. 15:** There is true pleasure only in the practice of religion.

**vs. 16:** Of all wanderers in the ways of sin, those are in the most dangerous condition who turn aside into the ways of darkness. Yet there is hope even for them in the all-sufficient Savior; but let them flee to him without delay.

**vs. 17:** A life of worldly pleasure brings ruin on men.

**vs. 18:** The righteous is often delivered out of trouble, and the wicked comes in his stead, and so seems as a ransom for him.

**vs. 19:** Unbridled passions spoil the comfort of all relations.

**vs. 20:** The plenty obtained by prudence, industry, and frugality, is desirable. But the foolish misspend what they have upon their lusts.

**vs. 21:** True repentance and faith will lead him that relies on the mercy of God in Christ, to follow after righteousness and mercy in his own conduct.

**vs. 22:** Those that have wisdom, often do great things, even against those confident of their strength.

**vs. 23:** It is our great concern to keep our souls from being entangled and disquieted.

**vs. 24:** Pride and haughtiness make men passionate; such continually deal in wrath, as if it were their trade to be angry.

**vs. 25, 26:** Here is the misery of the slothful; their hands refuse to labor in an honest calling, by which they might get an honest livelihood; yet their hearts cease not to covet riches, pleasures, and honors, which cannot be obtained without labor. But the righteous and industrious have their desires satisfied.

**vs. 27:** When holiness is pretended, but wickedness intended, that especially is an abomination.

**vs. 28:** The doom of a false witness is certain.

**vs. 29:** A wicked man bids defiance to the terrors of the law and the rebukes of Providence. But a good man asks, What does God require of me?

**vs. 30, 31:** Means are to be used, but, after all, our safety and salvation are only of the Lord. In our spiritual warfare we must arm ourselves with the whole armor of God; but our strength must be in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

## CHAPTER 22

### Proverbs 22:1

**Vs. 1:** We should be more careful to do that by which we may get and keep a good name, than to raise or add unto a great estate.

**vs. 2:** Divine Providence has so ordered it, that some are rich, and others poor, but all are guilty before God; and at the throne of God's grace the poor are as welcome as the rich.

**vs. 3:** Faith foresees the evil coming upon sinners, and looks to Jesus Christ as the sure refuge from the storm.

**vs. 4:** Where the fear of God is, there will be humility. And much is to be enjoyed by it; spiritual riches, and eternal life at last.

**vs. 5:** The way of sin is vexatious and dangerous. But the way of duty is safe and easy.

**vs. 6:** Train children, not in the way they would go, that of their corrupt hearts, but in the way they should go; in which, if you love them, you would have them go. As soon as possible every child should be led to the knowledge of the Savior.

**vs. 7:** This shows how important it is for every man to keep out of debt. As to the things of this life, there is a difference between the rich and the poor; but let the poor remember, it is the Lord that made the difference.

**vs. 8:** The power which many abuse, will soon fail them.

**vs. 9:** He that seeks to relieve the wants and miseries of others shall be blessed.

**vs. 10:** Profane scoffers and revilers disturb the peace.

**vs. 11:** God will be the Friend of a man in whose spirit there is no guile; this honor have all the saints.

**vs. 12:** God turns the counsels and designs of treacherous men to their own confusion.

**vs. 13:** The slothful man talks of a lion without, but considers not his real danger from the devil, that roaring lion within, and from his own slothfulness, which kills him.

**vs. 14:** The vile sin of licentiousness commonly besots the mind beyond recovery.

**vs. 15:** Sin is foolishness, it is in the heart, there is an inward unequaled to sin: children bring it into the world with them; and it cleaves close to the soul. We all need to be corrected by our heavenly Father.

**vs. 16:** We are but stewards, and must distribute what God entrusts to our care, according to his will.

**vs. 17-21:** To these words, to this knowledge, the ear must be bowed down, and the heart applied by faith and love. To live a life of delight in God and dependence on him, is the foundation of all practical religion. The way to know the certainty of the word of truth, is to make conscience of our duty.

**vs. 22, 23:** He that robs and oppresses the poor, does so at his peril. And if men will not appear for them, God will.

**vs. 24, 25:** Our corrupt hearts have so much tinder in them, that it is dangerous to have to do with those that throw about the sparks of their passion.

**vs. 26, 27:** Every man ought to be just to himself, and his family; those are not so, who, by folly or other carelessness, waste what they have.

**vs. 28:** We are taught not to trespass on another man's right. And it is hard to find a truly industrious man. Such a man will rise. Seest thou a man diligent in the business of religion? He is likely to excellencies. Let us then be diligent in God's work.

## CHAPTER 23

### **Proverbs 23:1**

**Vs. 1-3:** God's restraints of the appetite only say, Do thyself no harm.

**vs. 4,5:** Be not of those that will be rich. The things of this world are not happiness and a portion for a soul; those that hold them ever so fast, cannot hold them always, cannot hold them long.

**vs. 6-8:** Do not make thyself burdensome to any, especially those not sincere. When we are called by God to his feast, and to let our souls delight themselves, <sup>2376</sup>Isaiah 25:6; <sup>2377</sup>55:2, we may safely partake of the Bread of life.

**vs. 9:** It is our duty to take all fit occasions to speak of Divine things; but if what a wise man says will not be heard, let him hold his peace.

**vs. 10,11:** The fatherless are taken under God's special protection. He is their Redeemer, who will take their part; and he is mighty, almighty.

### **Proverbs 23:12**

**Vs. 12-16:** Here is a parent instructing his child to give his mind to the Scriptures. Here is a parent correcting his child: accompanied with prayer, and blessed of God, it may prove a means of preventing his destruction. Here is a parent encouraging his child, telling him what would be for his good. And what a comfort it would be, if herein he answered his expectation!

**vs. 17,18:** The believer's expectation shall not be disappointed; the end of his trials, and of the sinner's prosperity, is at hand.

### **Proverbs 23:19**

**Vs. 19-28:** The gracious Savior who purchased pardon and peace for his people, with all the affection of a tender parent, counsels us to hear and be wise, and is ready to guide our hearts in his way. Here we have an earnest call to young people, to attend to the advice of their godly parents. If the heart be guided, the steps will be guided. Buy the truth, and sell it not; be



willing to part with any thing for it. Do not part with it for pleasures, honors, riches, or any thing in this world. The heart is what the great God requires. We must not think to divide the heart between God and the world; he will have all or none. Look to the rule of God's word, the conduct of his providence, and the good examples of his people. Particular cautions are given against sins most destructive to wisdom and grace in the soul. It is really a shame to make a God of the belly. Drunkenness stupefies men, and then all goes to ruin. Licentiousness takes away the heart that should be given to God. Take heed of any approaches toward this sin, it is very hard to retreat from it. It bewitches men to their ruin.

### Proverbs 23:29

**Vs. 29-35:** Solomon warns against drunkenness. Those that would be kept from sin, must keep from all the beginnings of it, and fear coming within reach of its allurements. Foresee the punishment, what it will at last end in, if repentance prevent not. It makes men quarrel. Drunkards willfully make woe and sorrow for themselves. It makes men impure and insolent. The tongue grows unruly; the heart utters things contrary to reason, religion, and common civility. It stupefies and besots men. They are in danger of death, of damnation; as much exposed as if they slept upon the top of a mast, yet feel secure. They fear no peril when the terrors of the Lord are before them; they feel no pain when the judgments of God are actually upon them. So lost is a drunkard to virtue and honor, so wretchedly is his conscience seared, that he is not ashamed to say, I will seek it again. With good reason we were bid to stop before the beginning. Who that has common sense would contract a habit, or sell himself to a sin, which tends to such guilt and misery, and exposes a man every day to the danger of dying insensible, and awaking in hell? Wisdom seems in these chapters to take up the discourse as at the beginning of the book. They must be considered as the words of Christ to the sinner.

## CHAPTER 24

### **Proverbs 24:1**

**Vs. 1, 2:** Envy not sinners. And let not a desire ever come into thy mind, Oh that I could shake off restraints!

**vs. 3-6:** Piety and prudence in outward affairs, both go together to complete a wise man. By knowledge the soul is filled with the graces and comforts of the spirit, those precious and pleasant riches. The spirit is strengthened for the spiritual work and the spiritual warfare, by true wisdom.

**vs. 7-9:** A weak man thinks wisdom is too high for him, therefore he will take no pains for it. It is bad to do evil, but worse to devise it. Even the first risings of sin in the heart are sin, and must be repented of. Those that strive to make others hateful, make themselves so.

**vs. 10:** Under troubles we are apt to despair of relief. But be of good courage, and God shall strengthen thy heart.

**vs. 11, 12:** If a man know that his neighbor is in danger by any unjust proceeding, he is bound to do all in his power to deliver him. And what is it to suffer immortal souls to perish, when our persuasions and example may be the means of preventing it?

**vs. 13, 14:** We are quickened to the study of wisdom by considering both the pleasure and the profit of it. All men relish things that are sweet to the palate; but many have no relish for the things that are sweet to the purified soul, and that make us wise unto salvation.

**vs. 15, 16:** The sincere soul falls as a traveler may do, by stumbling at some stone in his path; but gets up, and goes on his way with more care and speed. This is rather to be understood of falls into affliction, than falls into actual sin.

**vs. 17, 18:** The pleasure we are apt to take in the troubles of an enemy is forbidden.

**vs. 19, 20:** Envy not the wicked their prosperity; be sure there is no true happiness in it.

**vs. 21, 22:** The godly in the land, will be quiet in the land. There may be cause to change for the better, but have nothing to do with them that are given change.

**vs. 23-26:** The wisdom God giveth, renders a man fit for his station. Every one who finds the benefit of the right answer, will be attached to him that gave it.

**vs. 27:** We must prefer necessaries before conveniences, and not go in debt.

**vs. 28, 29:** There are three defaults in a witness pointed out.

**vs. 30-34:** See what a blessing the husbandman's calling is, and what a wilderness this earth would be without it. See what great difference there is in the management even of worldly affairs. Sloth and self-indulgence are the bane of all good. When we see fields overgrown with thorns and thistles, and the fences broken down, we see an emblem of the far more deplorable state of many souls. Every vile affection grows in men's hearts; yet they compose themselves to sleep. Let us show wisdom by doubling our diligence in every good thing.

## CHAPTER 25

### Proverbs 25:1

**Vs. 1-3:** God needs not search into any thing; nothing can be hid from him. But it is the honor of rulers to search out matters, to bring to light hidden works of darkness.

**vs. 4, 5:** For a prince to suppress vice, and reform his people, is the best way to support his government.

**vs. 6, 7:** Religion teaches us humility and self-denial. He who has seen the glory of the Lord in Christ Jesus, will feel his own unworthiness.

**vs. 8-10:** To be hasty in beginning strife, will bring into difficulties. War must at length end, and might better be prevented. It is so in private quarrels; do all thou canst to settle the matter.

**vs. 11, 12:** A word of counsel, or reproof, rightly spoken, is especially beautiful, as fine fruit becomes still more beautiful in silver baskets.

**vs. 13:** See what ought to be the aim of him that is trusted with any business; to be faithful. A faithful minister, Christ's messenger, should be thus acceptable to us.

**vs. 14:** He who pretends to have received or given that which he never had, is like the morning cloud, that disappoints those who look for rain.

**vs. 15:** Be patient to bear a present hurt. Be mild to speak without passion; for persuasive language is the most effectual to prevail over the hardened mind.

**vs. 16:** God has given us leave to use grateful things, but we are cautioned against excess.

**vs. 17:** We cannot be upon good terms with our neighbors, without discretion as well as sincerity. How much better a Friend is God than any other friend! The oftener we come to him, the more welcome.

**vs. 18:** A false testimony is dangerous in every thing.

**vs. 19:** Confidence in an unfaithful man is painful and vexatious; when we put any stress on him, he not only fails, but makes us feel for it.

**vs. 20:** We take a wrong course if we think to relieve those in sorrow by endeavoring to make them merry.

**vs. 21, 22:** The precept to love even our enemies is an Old Testament commandment. Our Savior has shown his own great example in loving us when we were enemies.

**vs. 23:** Slanders would not be so readily spoken, if they were not readily heard. Sin, if it receives any check, becomes cowardly.

**vs. 24:** It is better to be alone, than to be joined to one who is a hindrance to the comfort of life.

**vs. 25:** Heaven is a country afar off; how refreshing is good news from thence, in the everlasting gospel, which signifies glad tidings, and in the witness of the Spirit with our spirits that we are God's children!

**vs. 26:** When the righteous are led into sin, it is as hurtful as if the public fountains were poisoned.

**vs. 27:** We must be, through grace, dead to the pleasures of sense, and also to the praises of men.

**vs. 28:** The man who has no command over his anger, is easily robbed of peace. Let us give up ourselves to the Lord, and pray him to put his Spirit within us, and cause us to walk in his statutes.

## CHAPTER 26

### **Proverbs 26:1**

**Vs. 1:** Honor is out of season to those unworthy and unfit for it.

**vs. 2:** He that is cursed without cause, the curse shall do him no more harm than the bird that flies over his head.

**vs. 3:** Every creature must be dealt with according to its nature, but careless and profligate sinners never will be ruled by reason and persuasion. Man indeed is born like the wild ass's colt; but some, by the grace of God, are changed.

**vs. 4, 5:** We are to fit our remarks to the man, and address them to his conscience, so as may best end the debate.

**vs. 6-9:** Fools are not fit to be trusted, nor to have any honor. Wise sayings, as a foolish man delivers and applies them, lose their usefulness.

**vs. 10:** This verse may either declare how the Lord, the Creator of all men, will deal with sinners according to their guilt, or, how the powerful among men should disgrace and punish the wicked.

**vs. 11:** The dog is a loathsome emblem of those sinners who return to their vices, <sup>122</sup>2 Peter 2:22.

**vs. 12:** We see many a one who has some little sense, but is proud of it. This describes those who think their spiritual state to be good, when really it is very bad.

**vs. 13:** The slothful man hates every thing that requires care and labor. But it is foolish to frighten ourselves from real duties by fancied difficulties. This may be applied to a man slothful in the duties of religion.

**vs. 14:** Having seen the slothful man in fear of his work, here we find him in love with his ease. Bodily ease is the sad occasion of many spiritual diseases. He does not care to get forward with his business. Slothful professors turn thus. The world and the flesh are hinges on which they are

hung; and though they move in a course of outward services, yet they are not the nearer to heaven.

**vs. 15:** The sluggard is now out of his bed, but he might have lain there, for any thing he is likely to bring to pass in his work. It is common for men who will not do their duty, to pretend they cannot. Those that are slothful in religion, will not be at the pains to feed their souls with the bread of life, nor to fetch in promised blessings by prayer.

**vs. 16:** He that takes pains in religion, knows he is working for a good Master, and that his labor shall not be in vain.

**vs. 17:** To make ourselves busy in other men's matters, is to thrust ourselves into temptation.

**vs. 18, 19:** He that sins in jest, must repent in earnest, or his sin will be his ruin.

**vs. 20-22:** Contention heats the spirit, and puts families and societies into a flame. And that fire is commonly kindled and kept burning by whisperers and backbiters.

**vs. 23:** A wicked heart disguising itself, is like a potsherd covered with the dross of silver.

**vs. 24-26:** Always distrust when a man speaks fair unless you know him well. Satan, in his temptations, speaks fair, as he did to Eve; but it is madness to give credit to him.

**vs. 27:** What pains men take to do mischief to others! but it is digging a pit, it is rolling a stone, hard work; and they prepare mischief to themselves.

**vs. 28:** There are two sorts of lies equally detestable. A slandering lie, the mischief of this every body sees. A flattering lie, which secretly works ruin. A wise man will be more afraid of a flatterer than of a slanderer.

## CHAPTER 27

### Proverbs 27:1

**Vs. 1:** We know not what a day may bring forth. This does not forbid preparing for tomorrow, but presuming upon tomorrow. We must not put off the great work of conversion, that one thing needful.

**vs. 2:** There may be occasion for us to justify ourselves, but not to praise ourselves.

**vs. 3, 4:** Those who have no command of their passions, sink under the load.

**vs. 5, 6:** Plain and faithful rebukes are better, not only than secret hatred, but than love which compliments in sin, to the hurt of the soul.

**vs. 7:** The poor have a better relish of their enjoyments, and are often more thankful for them, than the rich. In like manner the proud and self-sufficient disdain the gospel; but those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, find comfort from the meanest book or sermon that testifies of Christ Jesus.

**vs. 8:** Every man has his proper place in society, where he may be safe and comfortable.

**vs. 9, 10:** Depend not for relief upon a kinsman, merely for kindred's sake; apply to those who are at hand, and will help in need. But there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and let us place entire confidence in him.

**vs. 11:** An affection parent urges his son to prudent conduct that should gladden his heart. The good conduct of Christians is the best answer to all who find fault with the gospel.

**vs. 12:** Where there is temptation, if we thrust ourselves into it, there will be sin, and punishment will follow.

**vs. 13:** An honest man may be made a beggar, but he is not honest that makes himself one.



**vs. 14:** It is folly to be fond of being praised; it is a temptation to pride.

**vs. 15, 16:** The contentions of a neighbor may be like a sharp shower, troublesome for a time; the contentions of a wife are like constant rain.

**vs. 17:** We are cautioned to take heed whom we converse with. And directed to have in view, in conversation, to make one another wiser and better.

**vs. 18:** Though a calling be laborious and despised, yet those who keep to it, will find there is something to be got by it. God is a Master who has engaged to honor those who serve him faithfully.

**vs. 19:** One corrupt heart is like another; so are sanctified hearts: the former bear the same image of the earthly, the latter the same image of the heavenly. Let us carefully watch our own hearts, comparing them with the word of God.

**vs. 20:** Two things are here said to be never satisfied, death and sin. The appetites of the carnal mind for profit or pleasure are always desiring more. Those whose eyes are ever toward the Lord, are satisfied in him, and shall for ever be so.

**vs. 21:** Silver and gold are tried by putting them into the furnace and fining-pot; so is a man tried by praising him.

**vs. 22:** Some are so bad, that even severe methods do not answer the end; what remains but that they should be rejected? The new-creating power of God's grace alone is able to make a change.

**vs. 23-27:** We ought to have some business to do in this world, and not to live in idleness, and not to meddle with what we do not understand. We must be diligent and take pains. Let us do what we can, still the world cannot be secured to us, therefore we must choose a more lasting portion; but by the blessing of God upon our honest labors, we may expect to enjoy as much of earthly blessings as is good for us.

## CHAPTER 28

### Proverbs 28:1

- Vs. 1:** Sin makes men cowards. Whatever difficulties the righteous meet in the way of duty, they are not daunted.
- vs. 2:** National sins disturb the public repose.
- vs. 3:** If needy persons get opportunities of oppressing, their extortion will be more severe than that of the more wealthy.
- vs. 4:** Wicked people strengthen one another in wicked ways.
- vs. 5:** If a man seeks the Lord, it is a good sign that he understands much, and it is a good means of understanding more.
- vs. 6:** An honest, godly, poor man, is better than a wicked, ungodly, rich man; has more comfort in himself, and is a greater blessing to the world.
- vs. 7:** Companions of riotous men not only grieve their parents, but shame them.
- vs. 8:** That which is ill got, though it may increase much, will not last long. Thus the poor are repaid, and God is glorified.
- vs. 9:** The sinner at whose prayers God is angry, is one who obstinately refuses to obey God's commands.
- vs. 10:** The success of ungodly men is their own misery.
- vs. 11:** Rich men are so flattered, that they think themselves superior to others.
- vs. 12:** There is glory in the land when the righteous have liberty.
- vs. 13:** It is folly to indulge sin, and excuse it. He who covers his sins, shall not have any true peace. He who humbly confesses his sins, with true repentance and faith, shall find mercy from God. The Son of God is our great atonement. Under a deep sense of our guilt and danger, we may claim salvation from that mercy which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

- vs. 14:** There is a fear which causes happiness. Faith and love will deliver from the fear of eternal misery; but we should always fear offending God, and fear sinning against him.
- vs. 15:** A wicked ruler, whatever we may call him, this scripture calls a roaring lion, and a ranging bear.
- vs. 16:** Oppressors want understanding; they do not consult their own honor, ease, and safety.
- vs. 17:** The murderer shall be haunted with terrors. None shall desire to save him from deserved punishment, nor pity him.
- vs. 18:** Uprightness will give men holy security in the worst times; but the false and dishonest are never safe.
- vs. 19:** Those who are diligent, take the way to live comfortably.
- vs. 20:** The true way to be happy, is to be holy and honest; not to raise an estate suddenly, without regard to right or wrong.
- vs. 21:** Judgment is perverted, when any thing but pure right is considered.
- vs. 22:** He that hastens to be rich, never seriously thinks how quickly God may take his wealth from him, and leave him in poverty.
- vs. 23:** Upon reflection, most will have a better opinion of a faithful reprover than of a soothing flatterer.
- vs. 24:** Here is the wickedness of those who think it no sin to rob their parents, by wheedling them or threatening them, or by wasting what they have, and running into debt.
- vs. 25:** Those make themselves always easy, that live in continual dependence upon God and his grace, and live by faith.
- vs. 26:** A fool trusts to his own strength, merit, and righteousness. And trusts to his own heart, which is not only deceitful above all things, but which has often deceived him.
- vs. 27:** A selfish man not only will not look out for objects of compassion, but will look off from those that call for his attention.

**vs. 28:** When power is put into the hands of the wicked, wise men decline public business. If the reader will go diligently over this and the other chapters, in many places where at first he may suppose there is least of Christ, still he will find what will lead to him.

## CHAPTER 29

### Proverbs 29:1

**Vs. 1:** If God wounds, who can heal? The word of God warns all to flee from the wrath to come, to the hope set before us in Jesus Christ.

**vs. 2:** The people have cause to rejoice or mourn, as their rulers are righteous or wicked.

**vs. 3:** Divine wisdom best keeps us from ruinous lusts.

**vs. 4:** The Lord Jesus is the King who will minister true judgment to the people.

**vs. 5:** Flatterers put men off their guard, which betrays them into foolish conduct.

**vs. 6:** Transgressions always end in vexations. Righteous men walk at liberty, and walk in safety.

**vs. 7:** This verse is applicable to compassion for the distress of the poor, and the unfeeling disregard shown by the wicked.

**vs. 8:** The scornful mock at things sacred and serious. Men who promote religion, which is true wisdom, turn away the wrath of God.

**vs. 9:** If a wise man dispute with a conceited wrangler, he will be treated with anger or ridicule; and no good is done.

**vs. 10:** Christ told his disciples that they should be hated of all men. The just, whom the blood-thirsty hate, gladly do any thing for their salvation.

**vs. 11:** He is a fool who tells every thing he knows, and can keep no counsel.

**vs. 12:** One who loves flatterers, and hearkens to slanderers, causes his servants to become liars and false accusers.

**vs. 13:** Some are poor, others have a great deal of deceitful riches. They meet in the business of this world; the Lord gives to both the comforts of this life. To some of both sorts he gives his grace.

**vs. 14:** The rich will look to themselves, but the poor and needy the prince must defend and plead for.

**vs. 15:** Parents must consider the benefit of due correction, and the mischief of undue indulgence.

**vs. 16:** Let not the righteous have their faith and hope shocked by the increase of sin and sinners, but let them wait with patience.

**vs. 17:** Children must not be suffered to go without rebuke when they do amiss.

**vs. 18:** How bare does a place look without Bibles and ministers! and what an easy prey is it to the enemy of souls! That gospel is an open vision, which holds forth Christ, which humbles the sinner and exalts the Savior, which promotes holiness in the life and conversation: and these are precious truths to keep the soul alive, and prevent it from perishing.

**vs. 19:** Here is an unprofitable, slothful, wicked servant; one that serves not from conscience, or love, but from fear.

**vs. 20:** When a man is self-conceited, rash, and given to wrangling, there is more hope of the ignorant and profligate.

**vs. 21:** Good usage to a servant does not mean indulgence, which would ruin even a child. The body is a servant to the soul; those that humor it, and are over-tender of it, will find it forget its place.

**vs. 22:** An angry, passionate disposition makes men provoking to one another, and provoking to God.

**vs. 23:** Only those who humble themselves shall be exalted and established.

**vs. 24:** The receiver is as bad as the thief.

**vs. 25:** Many are ashamed to own Christ now; and he will not own them in the day of judgment. But he that trusts in the Lord will be saved from this snare.

**vs. 26:** The wisest course is, to look to God, and seek the favor of the Ruler of rulers; for every creature is that to us which God makes it to be.

**vs. 27:** The just man abhors the sins of the wicked, and shuns their company. Christ exposed the wickedness of men, yet prayed for the wicked when they were crucifying him. Hatred to sin in ourselves and others, is a needful branch of the Christian temper. But all that are unholy, have rooted hatred to godliness.

## CHAPTER 30

### **Proverbs 30:1**

**Vs. 1-6:** Agur speaks of himself as wanting a righteousness, and having done very foolishly. And it becomes us all to have low thoughts of ourselves. He speaks of himself as wanting revelation to guide him in the ways of truth and wisdom. The more enlightened people are, the more they lament their ignorance; the more they pray for clearer, still clearer discoveries of God, and his rich grace in Christ Jesus. In ver.

**vs. 4:** there is a prophetic notice of Him who came down from heaven to be our Instructor and Savior, and then ascended into heaven to be our Advocate. The Messiah is here spoken of as a Person distinct from the Father, but his name as yet secret. The great Redeemer, in the glories of his providence and grace, cannot be found out to perfection. Had it not been for Christ, the foundations of the earth had sunk under the load of the curse upon the ground, for man's sin. Who, and what is the mighty One that doeth all this? There is not the least ground to suspect anything wanting in the word of God; adding to his words opens the way to errors and corruptions.

### **Proverbs 30:7**

**Vs. 7-9:** Agur wisely prayed for a middle state, that he might be kept at a distance from temptations; he asked daily bread suited to his station, his family, and his real good. There is a remarkable similarity between this prayer and several clauses of the Lord's prayer. If we are removed from vanity and lies; if we are interested in the pardoning love of Christ, and have him for our portion; if we walk with God, then we shall have all we can ask or think, as to spiritual things. When we consider how those who have abundance are prone to abuse the gift, and what it is to suffer want, Agur's prayer will ever be found a wise one, though seldom offered. Food convenient; what is so for one, may not be so for another; but we may be sure that our heavenly Father will supply all our need, and not suffer us to want anything good for us; and why should we wish for more?



## Proverbs 30:10

**Vs. 10.** Slander not a servant to his master, accuse him not in small matters, to make mischief.

**vs. 11-14:** In every age there are monsters of ingratitude who ill-treat their parents. Many persuade themselves they are holy persons, whose hearts are full of sin, and who practice secret wickedness. There are others whose lofty pride is manifest. There have also been cruel monsters in every age.

**vs. 15-17:** Cruelty and covetousness are two daughters of the horseleech, that still cry, “Give, give,” and they are continually uneasy to themselves. Four things never are satisfied, to which these devours are compared. Those are never rich that are always coveting. And many who have come to a bad end, have owned that their wicked courses began by despising their parents’ authority.

**vs. 18-20:** Four things cannot be fully known. The kingdom of nature is full of marvels. The fourth is a mystery of iniquity; the cursed arts by which a vile seducer gains the affection of a female; and the arts which a vile woman uses to conceal her wickedness.

**vs. 21-23** Four sorts of persons are very troublesome. Men of low origin and base spirit, who, getting authority, become tyrants. Foolish and violent men indulging in excesses. A woman of a contentious spirit and vicious habits. A servant who has obtained undue influence. Let those whom Providence has advanced from low beginnings, carefully watch against that sin which most easily besets them.

**vs. 24-28:** Four things that are little, are yet to be admired. There are those who are poor in the world, and of small account, yet wise for their souls and another world.

**vs. 29-33:** We may learn from animals to go well; also to keep our temper under all provocations. We must keep the evil thought in our minds from breaking out into evil speeches. We must not stir up the passions of others. Let nothing be said or done with violence, but every thing with softness and calmness. Alas, how often have we done foolishly in rising up against the Lord our King! Let us humble ourselves before him. And having found peace with Him, let us follow peace with all men.

## CHAPTER 31

*An exhortation to king Lemuel to take heed of sin, and to do duties.*

**(1-9) *The description of a virtuous woman. (10-31)***

### **Proverbs 31:1**

**Vs. 1-9:** When children are under the mother's eye, she has an opportunity of fashioning their minds aright. Those who are grown up, should often call to mind the good teaching they received when children. The many awful instances of promising characters who have been ruined by vile women, and love of wine, should warn every one to avoid these evils. Wine is to be used for want or medicine. Every creature of God is good, and wine, though abused, has its use. By the same rule, due praise and consolation should be used as cordials to the dejected and tempted, not administered to the confident and self-sufficient. All in authority should be more carefully temperate even than other men; and should be protectors of those who are unable or afraid to plead their own cause. Our blessed Lord did not decline the bitterest dregs of the cup of sorrow put into his hands; but he puts the cup of consolation into the hands of his people, and causes those to rejoice who are in the deepest distress.

### **Proverbs 31:10**

**Vs. 10-31:** This is the description of a virtuous woman of those days, but the general outlines equally suit every age and nation. She is very careful to recommend herself to her husband's esteem and affection, to know his mind, and is willing that he rule over her.

- 1.** She can be trusted, and he will leave such a wife to manage for him. He is happy in her. And she makes it her constant business to do him good.
- 2.** She is one that takes pains in her duties, and takes pleasure in them. She is careful to fill up time, that none be lost. She rises early. She applies herself to the business proper for her, to women's business. She does what she does, with all her power, and trifles not.

- 3.** She makes what she does turn to good account by prudent management. Many undo themselves by buying, without considering whether they can afford it. She provides well for her house. She lays up for hereafter.
- 4.** She looks well to the ways of her household, that she may oblige all to do their duty to God and one another, as well as to her.
- 5.** She is intent upon giving as upon getting, and does it freely and cheerfully.
- 6.** She is discreet and obliging; every word she says, shows she governs herself by the rules of wisdom. She not only takes prudent measures herself, but gives prudent advice to others. The law of love and kindness is written in the heart, and shows itself in the tongue. Her heart is full of another world, even when her hands are most busy about this world.
- 7.** Above all, she fears the Lord. Beauty recommends none to God, nor is it any proof of wisdom and goodness, but it has deceived many a man who made his choice of a wife by it. But the fear of God reigning in the heart, is the beauty of the soul; it lasts for ever.
- 8.** She has firmness to bear up under crosses and disappointments. She shall reflect with comfort when she comes to be old, that she was not idle or useless when young. She shall rejoice in a world to come. She is a great blessing to her relations. If the fruit be good, the tree must have our good word. But she leaves it to her own works to praise her.

Every one ought to desire this honor that cometh from God; and according to this standard we all ought to regulate our judgments. This description let all women daily study, who desire to be truly beloved and respected, useful and honorable. This passage is to be applied to individuals, but may it not also be applied to the church of God, which is described as a virtuous spouse? God by his grace has formed from among sinful men a church of true believers, to possess all the excellencies here described.