### PROVERBS

### Proverbs 1

The Message (MSG)

**Wise Sayings of Solomon**

**A Manual for Living**

1 1-6 These are the wise sayings of Solomon,   
   David’s son, Israel’s king—   
Written down so we’ll know how to live well and right,   
   to understand what life means and where it’s going;   
A manual for living,   
   for learning what’s right and just and fair;   
To teach the inexperienced the ropes   
   and give our young people a grasp on reality.   
There’s something here also for seasoned men and women,   
   still a thing or two for the experienced to learn—   
Fresh wisdom to probe and penetrate,   
   the rhymes and reasons of wise men and women.

**Start with God**

7 Start with GOD—the first step in learning is bowing down to GOD;   
   only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom and learning.

8-19 Pay close attention, friend, to what your father tells you;   
   never forget what you learned at your mother’s knee.   
Wear their counsel like flowers in your hair,   
   like rings on your fingers.   
Dear friend, if bad companions tempt you,   
   don’t go along with them.   
If they say—“Let’s go out and raise some hell.   
   Let’s beat up some old man, mug some old woman.   
Let’s pick them clean   
   and get them ready for their funerals.   
We’ll load up on top-quality loot.   
   We’ll haul it home by the truckload.   
Join us for the time of your life!   
   With us, it’s share and share alike!”—   
Oh, friend, don’t give them a second look;   
   don’t listen to them for a minute.   
They’re racing to a very bad end,   
   hurrying to ruin everything they lay hands on.   
Nobody robs a bank   
   with everyone watching,   
Yet that’s what these people are doing—   
   they’re doing themselves in.   
When you grab all you can get, that’s what happens:   
   the more you get, the less you are.

**Lady Wisdom**

20-21 Lady Wisdom goes out in the street and shouts.   
   At the town center she makes her speech.   
In the middle of the traffic she takes her stand.   
   At the busiest corner she calls out:

22-24 “Simpletons! How long will you wallow in ignorance?   
   Cynics! How long will you feed your cynicism?   
Idiots! How long will you refuse to learn?   
   About face! I can revise your life.   
Look, I’m ready to pour out my spirit on you;   
   I’m ready to tell you all I know.   
As it is, I’ve called, but you’ve turned a deaf ear;   
   I’ve reached out to you, but you’ve ignored me.

25-28 “Since you laugh at my counsel   
   and make a joke of my advice,   
How can I take you seriously?   
   I’ll turn the tables and joke about *your*troubles!   
What if the roof falls in,   
   and your whole life goes to pieces?   
What if catastrophe strikes and there’s nothing   
   to show for your life but rubble and ashes?   
You’ll need me then. You’ll call for me, but don’t expect   
      an answer.   
   No matter how hard you look, you won’t find me.

29-33 “Because you hated Knowledge   
   and had nothing to do with the Fear-of-GOD,   
Because you wouldn’t take my advice   
   and brushed aside all my offers to train you,   
Well, you’ve made your bed—now lie in it;   
   you wanted your own way—now, how do you like it?   
Don’t you see what happens, you simpletons, you idiots?   
   Carelessness kills; complacency is murder.   
First pay attention to me, and then relax.   
   Now you can take it easy—you’re in good hands.”

### Proverbs 2

The Message (MSG)

**Make Insight Your Priority**

1 1-5 Good friend, take to heart what I’m telling you;   
   collect my counsels and guard them with your life.   
Tune your ears to the world of Wisdom;   
   set your heart on a life of Understanding.   
That’s right—if you make Insight your priority,   
   and won’t take no for an answer,   
Searching for it like a prospector panning for gold,   
   like an adventurer on a treasure hunt,   
Believe me, before you know it Fear-of-GOD will be yours;   
   you’ll have come upon the Knowledge of God.

6-8 And here’s why: GOD gives out Wisdom free,   
   is plainspoken in Knowledge and Understanding.   
He’s a rich mine of Common Sense for those who live well,   
   a personal bodyguard to the candid and sincere.   
He keeps his eye on all who live honestly,   
   and pays special attention to his loyally committed ones.

9-15 So now you can pick out what’s true and fair,   
   find all the good trails!   
Lady Wisdom will be your close friend,   
   and Brother Knowledge your pleasant companion.   
Good Sense will scout ahead for danger,   
   Insight will keep an eye out for you.   
They’ll keep you from making wrong turns,   
   or following the bad directions   
Of those who are lost themselves   
   and can’t tell a trail from a tumbleweed,   
These losers who make a game of evil   
   and throw parties to celebrate perversity,   
Traveling paths that go nowhere,   
   wandering in a maze of detours and dead ends.

16-19 Wise friends will rescue you from the Temptress—   
   that smooth-talking Seductress   
Who’s faithless to the husband she married years ago,   
   never gave a second thought to her promises before God.   
Her whole way of life is doomed;   
   every step she takes brings her closer to hell.   
No one who joins her company ever comes back,   
   ever sets foot on the path to real living.

20-22 So—join the company of good men and women,   
   keep your feet on the tried-and-true paths.   
It’s the men who walk straight who will settle this land,   
   the women with integrity who will last here.   
The corrupt will lose their lives;   
   the dishonest will be gone for good.

### Proverbs 3

The Message (MSG)

##### Don’t Assume You Know It All

1 1-2 Good friend, don’t forget all I’ve taught you;   
   take to heart my commands.   
They’ll help you live a long, long time,   
   a long life lived full and well.

3-4 Don’t lose your grip on Love and Loyalty.   
   Tie them around your neck; carve their initials on your heart.   
Earn a reputation for living well   
   in God’s eyes and the eyes of the people.

5-12 Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart;   
   don’t try to figure out everything on your own.   
Listen for GOD’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;   
   he’s the one who will keep you on track.   
Don’t assume that you know it all.   
   Run to GOD! Run from evil!   
Your body will glow with health,   
   your very bones will vibrate with life!   
Honor GOD with everything you own;   
   give him the first and the best.   
Your barns will burst,   
   your wine vats will brim over.   
But don’t, dear friend, resent GOD’s discipline;   
   don’t sulk under his loving correction.   
It’s the child he loves that GOD corrects;   
   a father’s delight is behind all this.

##### The Very Tree of Life

13-18 You’re blessed when you meet Lady Wisdom,   
   when you make friends with Madame Insight.   
She’s worth far more than money in the bank;   
   her friendship is better than a big salary.   
Her value exceeds all the trappings of wealth;   
   nothing you could wish for holds a candle to her.   
With one hand she gives long life,   
   with the other she confers recognition.   
Her manner is beautiful,   
   her life wonderfully complete.   
She’s the very Tree of Life to those who embrace her.   
   Hold her tight—and be blessed!

19-20 With Lady Wisdom, GOD formed Earth;   
   with Madame Insight, he raised Heaven.   
They knew when to signal rivers and springs to the surface,   
   and dew to descend from the night skies.

##### Never Walk Away

21-26 Dear friend, guard Clear Thinking and Common Sense with your life;   
   don’t for a minute lose sight of them.   
They’ll keep your soul alive and well,   
   they’ll keep you fit and attractive.   
You’ll travel safely,   
   you’ll neither tire nor trip.   
You’ll take afternoon naps without a worry,   
   you’ll enjoy a good night’s sleep.   
No need to panic over alarms or surprises,   
   or predictions that doomsday’s just around the corner,   
Because GOD will be right there with you;   
   he’ll keep you safe and sound.

27-29 Never walk away from someone who deserves help;   
   your hand is *God’s* hand for that person.   
Don’t tell your neighbor “Maybe some other time”   
   or “Try me tomorrow”   
   when the money’s right there in your pocket.   
Don’t figure ways of taking advantage of your neighbor   
   when he’s sitting there trusting and unsuspecting.

30-32 Don’t walk around with a chip on your shoulder,   
   always spoiling for a fight.   
Don’t try to be like those who shoulder their way through life.   
   Why be a bully?   
“Why not?” you say. Because GOD can’t stand twisted souls.   
   It’s the straightforward who get his respect.

33-35 GOD’s curse blights the house of the wicked,   
   but he blesses the home of the righteous.   
He gives proud skeptics a cold shoulder,   
   but if you’re down on your luck, he’s right there to help.   
Wise living gets rewarded with honor;   
   stupid living gets the booby prize.

### Proverbs 4

New International Version (NIV)

##### Get Wisdom at Any Cost

1 Listen, my sons, to a father’s instruction;   
   pay attention and gain understanding.   
2 I give you sound learning,   
   so do not forsake my teaching.   
3 For I too was a son to my father,   
   still tender, and cherished by my mother.   
4 Then he taught me, and he said to me,   
   “Take hold of my words with all your heart;   
   keep my commands, and you will live.   
5 Get wisdom, get understanding;   
   do not forget my words or turn away from them.   
6 Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you;   
   love her, and she will watch over you.   
7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get[[a](http://www.biblica.com/bibles/chapter/?version=niv&verse=Proverbs+4#fen-NIV-16498a)] wisdom.   
   Though it cost all you have,[[b](http://www.biblica.com/bibles/chapter/?version=niv&verse=Proverbs+4" \l "fen-NIV-16498b" \o "Go to)] get understanding.   
8 Cherish her, and she will exalt you;   
   embrace her, and she will honor you.   
9 She will give you a garland to grace your head   
   and present you with a glorious crown.”

10 Listen, my son, accept what I say,   
   and the years of your life will be many.   
11 I instruct you in the way of wisdom   
   and lead you along straight paths.   
12 When you walk, your steps will not be hampered;   
   when you run, you will not stumble.   
13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go;   
   guard it well, for it is your life.   
14 Do not set foot on the path of the wicked   
   or walk in the way of evildoers.   
15 Avoid it, do not travel on it;   
   turn from it and go on your way.   
16 For they cannot rest until they do evil;   
   they are robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble.   
17 They eat the bread of wickedness   
   and drink the wine of violence.

18 The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,   
   shining ever brighter till the full light of day.   
19 But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness;   
   they do not know what makes them stumble.

20 My son, pay attention to what I say;   
   turn your ear to my words.   
21 Do not let them out of your sight,   
   keep them within your heart;   
22 for they are life to those who find them   
   and health to one’s whole body.   
23 Above all else, guard your heart,   
   for everything you do flows from it.   
24 Keep your mouth free of perversity;   
   keep corrupt talk far from your lips.   
25 Let your eyes look straight ahead;   
   fix your gaze directly before you.   
26 Give careful thought to the[[c](http://www.biblica.com/bibles/chapter/?version=niv&verse=Proverbs+4#fen-NIV-16517c)] paths for your feet   
   and be steadfast in all your ways.   
27 Do not turn to the right or the left;   
   keep your foot from evil.

### Proverbs 5

New International Version (NIV)

##### Warning Against Adultery

1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom,   
   turn your ear to my words of insight,   
2 that you may maintain discretion   
   and your lips may preserve knowledge.   
3 For the lips of the adulterous woman drip honey,   
   and her speech is smoother than oil;   
4 but in the end she is bitter as gall,   
   sharp as a double-edged sword.   
5 Her feet go down to death;   
   her steps lead straight to the grave.   
6 She gives no thought to the way of life;   
   her paths wander aimlessly, but she does not know it.

7 Now then, my sons, listen to me;   
   do not turn aside from what I say.   
8 Keep to a path far from her,   
   do not go near the door of her house,   
9 lest you lose your honor to others   
   and your dignity[[a](http://www.biblica.com/bibles/chapter/?version=niv&verse=Proverbs+5#fen-NIV-16527a)] to one who is cruel,   
10 lest strangers feast on your wealth   
   and your toil enrich the house of another.   
11 At the end of your life you will groan,   
   when your flesh and body are spent.   
12 You will say, “How I hated discipline!   
   How my heart spurned correction!   
13 I would not obey my teachers   
   or turn my ear to my instructors.   
14 And I was soon in serious trouble   
   in the assembly of God’s people.”

15 Drink water from your own cistern,   
   running water from your own well.   
16 Should your springs overflow in the streets,   
   your streams of water in the public squares?   
17 Let them be yours alone,   
   never to be shared with strangers.   
18 May your fountain be blessed,   
   and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.   
19 A loving doe, a graceful deer—   
   may her breasts satisfy you always,   
   may you ever be intoxicated with her love.   
20 Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man’s wife?   
   Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman?

21 For your ways are in full view of the LORD,   
   and he examines all your paths.   
22 The evil deeds of the wicked ensnare them;   
   the cords of their sins hold them fast.   
23 For lack of discipline they will die,   
   led astray by their own great folly.

### Proverbs 6

### New International Version (NIV)

**Warnings Against Folly**

1 My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor,   
   if you have shaken hands in pledge for a stranger,   
2 you have been trapped by what you said,   
   ensnared by the words of your mouth.   
3 So do this, my son, to free yourself,   
   since you have fallen into your neighbor’s hands:   
Go—to the point of exhaustion—[[a](http://www.biblica.com/bibles/chapter/?verse=Proverbs+6&version=niv#fen-NIV-16544a)]   
   and give your neighbor no rest!   
4 Allow no sleep to your eyes,   
   no slumber to your eyelids.   
5 Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter,   
   like a bird from the snare of the fowler.

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard;   
   consider its ways and be wise!   
7 It has no commander,   
   no overseer or ruler,   
8 yet it stores its provisions in summer   
   and gathers its food at harvest.

9 How long will you lie there, you sluggard?   
   When will you get up from your sleep?   
10 A little sleep, a little slumber,   
   a little folding of the hands to rest—   
11 and poverty will come on you like a thief   
   and scarcity like an armed man.

12 A troublemaker and a villain,   
   who goes about with a corrupt mouth,   
   13 who winks maliciously with his eye,   
   signals with his feet   
   and motions with his fingers,   
   14 who plots evil with deceit in his heart—   
   he always stirs up conflict.   
15 Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant;   
   he will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.

16 There are six things the LORD hates,   
   seven that are detestable to him:   
      17 haughty eyes,   
      a lying tongue,   
      hands that shed innocent blood,   
      18 a heart that devises wicked schemes,   
      feet that are quick to rush into evil,   
      19 a false witness who pours out lies   
      and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

##### Warning Against Adultery

20 My son, keep your father’s command   
   and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.   
21 Bind them always on your heart;   
   fasten them around your neck.   
22 When you walk, they will guide you;   
   when you sleep, they will watch over you;   
   when you awake, they will speak to you.   
23 For this command is a lamp,   
   this teaching is a light,   
and correction and instruction   
   are the way to life,   
24 keeping you from your neighbor’s wife,   
   from the smooth talk of a wayward woman.

25 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty   
   or let her captivate you with her eyes.

26 For a prostitute can be had for a loaf of bread,   
   but another man’s wife preys on your very life.   
27 Can a man scoop fire into his lap   
   without his clothes being burned?   
28 Can a man walk on hot coals   
   without his feet being scorched?   
29 So is he who sleeps with another man’s wife;   
   no one who touches her will go unpunished.

30 People do not despise a thief if he steals   
   to satisfy his hunger when he is starving.   
31 Yet if he is caught, he must pay sevenfold,   
   though it costs him all the wealth of his house.   
32 But a man who commits adultery has no sense;   
   whoever does so destroys himself.   
33 Blows and disgrace are his lot,   
   and his shame will never be wiped away.

34 For jealousy arouses a husband’s fury,   
   and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge.   
35 He will not accept any compensation;   
   he will refuse a bribe, however great it is.

### Proverbs 7

The Message (MSG)

**Dressed to Seduce**

1 1-5 Dear friend, do what I tell you;   
   treasure my careful instructions.   
Do what I say and you’ll live well.   
   My teaching is as precious as your eyesight—guard it!   
Write it out on the back of your hands;   
   etch it on the chambers of your heart.   
Talk to Wisdom as to a sister.   
   Treat Insight as your companion.   
They’ll be with you to fend off the Temptress—   
   that smooth-talking, honey-tongued Seductress.

6-12 As I stood at the window of my house   
   looking out through the shutters,   
Watching the mindless crowd stroll by,   
   I spotted a young man without any sense   
Arriving at the corner of the street where she lived,   
   then turning up the path to her house.   
It was dusk, the evening coming on,   
   the darkness thickening into night.   
Just then, a woman met him—   
   she’d been lying in wait for him, dressed to seduce him.   
Brazen and brash she was,   
   restless and roaming, never at home,   
Walking the streets, loitering in the mall,   
   hanging out at every corner in town.

13-20 She threw her arms around him and kissed him,   
   boldly took his arm and said,   
“I’ve got all the makings for a feast—   
   today I made my offerings, my vows are all paid,   
So now I’ve come to find you,   
   hoping to catch sight of your face—and here you are!   
I’ve spread fresh, clean sheets on my bed,   
   colorful imported linens.   
My bed is aromatic with spices   
   and exotic fragrances.   
Come, let’s make love all night,   
   spend the night in ecstatic lovemaking!   
My husband’s not home; he’s away on business,   
   and he won’t be back for a month.”

21-23 Soon she has him eating out of her hand,   
   bewitched by her honeyed speech.   
Before you know it, he’s trotting behind her,   
   like a calf led to the butcher shop,   
Like a stag lured into ambush   
   and then shot with an arrow,   
Like a bird flying into a net   
   not knowing that its flying life is over.

24-27 So, friends, listen to me,   
   take these words of mine most seriously.   
Don’t fool around with a woman like that;   
   don’t even stroll through her neighborhood.   
Countless victims come under her spell;   
   she’s the death of many a poor man.   
She runs a halfway house to hell,   
   fits you out with a shroud and a coffin.

### Proverbs 8

The Message (MSG)

**Lady Wisdom Calls Out**

1 1-11 Do you hear Lady Wisdom calling?   
   Can you hear Madame Insight raising her voice?   
She’s taken her stand at First and Main,   
   at the busiest intersection.   
Right in the city square   
   where the traffic is thickest, she shouts,   
“You—I’m talking to all of you,   
   everyone out here on the streets!   
Listen, you idiots—learn good sense!   
   You blockheads—shape up!   
Don’t miss a word of this—I’m telling you how to live well,   
   I’m telling you how to live at your best.   
My mouth chews and savors and relishes truth—   
   I can’t stand the taste of evil!   
You’ll only hear true and right words from my mouth;   
   not one syllable will be twisted or skewed.   
You’ll recognize this as true—you with open minds;   
   truth-ready minds will see it at once.   
Prefer my life-disciplines over chasing after money,   
   and God-knowledge over a lucrative career.   
For Wisdom is better than all the trappings of wealth;   
   nothing you could wish for holds a candle to her.

12-21 “I am Lady Wisdom, and I live next to Sanity;   
   Knowledge and Discretion live just down the street.   
The Fear-of-GOD means hating Evil,   
   whose ways I hate with a passion—   
   pride and arrogance and crooked talk.   
Good counsel and common sense are my characteristics;   
   I am both Insight and the Virtue to live it out.   
With my help, leaders rule,   
   and lawmakers legislate fairly;   
With my help, governors govern,   
   along with all in legitimate authority.   
I love those who love me;   
   those who look for me find me.   
Wealth and Glory accompany me—   
   also substantial Honor and a Good Name.   
My benefits are worth more than a big salary, even a *very* big salary;   
   the returns on me exceed any imaginable bonus.   
You can find me on Righteous Road—that’s where I walk—   
   at the intersection of Justice Avenue,   
Handing out life to those who love me,   
   filling their arms with life—armloads of life!

22-31 “GOD sovereignly made me—the first, the basic—   
   before he did anything else.   
I was brought into being a long time ago,   
   well before Earth got its start.   
I arrived on the scene before Ocean,   
   yes, even before Springs and Rivers and Lakes.   
Before Mountains were sculpted and Hills took shape,   
   I was already there, newborn;   
Long before GOD stretched out Earth’s Horizons,   
   and tended to the minute details of Soil and Weather,   
And set Sky firmly in place,   
   I was there.   
When he mapped and gave borders to wild Ocean,   
   built the vast vault of Heaven,   
   and installed the fountains that fed Ocean,   
When he drew a boundary for Sea,   
   posted a sign that said NO TRESPASSING,   
And then staked out Earth’s Foundations,   
   I was right there with him, making sure everything fit.   
Day after day I was there, with my joyful applause,   
   always enjoying his company,   
Delighted with the world of things and creatures,   
   happily celebrating the human family.

32-36 “So, my dear friends, listen carefully;   
   those who embrace these my ways are most blessed.   
Mark a life of discipline and live wisely;   
   don’t squander your precious life.   
Blessed the man, blessed the woman, who listens to me,   
   awake and ready for me each morning,   
   alert and responsive as I start my day’s work.   
When you find me, you find life, real life,   
   to say nothing of GOD’s good pleasure.   
But if you wrong me, you damage your very soul;   
   when you reject me, you’re flirting with death.”

### Proverbs 9

The Message (MSG)

**Lady Wisdom Gives a Dinner Party**

1 1-6 Lady Wisdom has built and furnished her home;   
   it’s supported by seven hewn timbers.   
The banquet meal is ready to be served: lamb roasted,   
   wine poured out, table set with silver and flowers.   
Having dismissed her serving maids,   
   Lady Wisdom goes to town, stands in a prominent place,   
   and invites everyone within sound of her voice:   
“Are you confused about life, don’t know what’s going on?   
   Come with me, oh come, have dinner with me!   
I’ve prepared a wonderful spread—fresh-baked bread,   
   roast lamb, carefully selected wines.   
Leave your impoverished confusion and *live*!   
   Walk up the street to a life with meaning.”

7-12 If you reason with an arrogant cynic, you’ll get slapped in the face;   
   confront bad behavior and get a kick in the shins.   
So don’t waste your time on a scoffer;   
   all you’ll get for your pains is abuse.   
But if you correct those who care about life,   
   that’s different—they’ll love you for it!   
Save your breath for the wise—they’ll be wiser for it;   
   tell good people what you know—they’ll profit from it.   
Skilled living gets its start in the Fear-of-GOD,   
   insight into life from knowing a Holy God.   
It’s through me, Lady Wisdom, that your life deepens,   
   and the years of your life ripen.   
Live wisely and wisdom will permeate your life;   
   mock life and life will mock you.

**Madame Whore Calls Out, Too**

13-18 Then there’s this other woman, Madame Whore—   
   brazen, empty-headed, frivolous.   
She sits on the front porch   
   of her house on Main Street,   
And as people walk by minding   
   their own business, calls out,   
“Are you confused about life, don’t know what’s going on?   
   Steal off with me, I’ll show you a good time!   
   No one will ever know—I’ll give you the time of your life.”   
But they don’t know about all the skeletons in her closet,   
   that all her guests end up in hell.

### Proverbs 10

New King James Version (NKJV)

### Wise Sayings of Solomon

**10**The proverbs of Solomon:

A wise son makes a glad father,  
But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother.

**2**Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,  
But righteousness delivers from death.  
**3**The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish,  
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.

**4**He who has a slack hand becomes poor,  
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.  
**5**He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son;  
He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame.

**6**Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous,  
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.  
**7**The memory of the righteous *is* blessed,  
But the name of the wicked will rot.

**8**The wise in heart will receive commands,  
But a prating fool will fall.  
**9**He who walks with integrity walks securely,  
But he who perverts his ways will become known.

**10**He who winks with the eye causes trouble,  
But a prating fool will fall.

**11**The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life,  
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

**12**Hatred stirs up strife,  
But love covers all sins.

**13**Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,  
But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.

**14**Wise *people* store up knowledge,  
But the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

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

**16**The labor of the righteous *leads* to life,  
The wages of the wicked to sin.

**17**He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life,  
But he who refuses correction goes astray.

**18**Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips,  
And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

**19**In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,  
But he who restrains his lips *is* wise.  
**20**The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver;  
The heart of the wicked *is worth* little.  
**21**The lips of the righteous feed many,  
But fools die for lack of wisdom.**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2010&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-16678a)**]**

**22**The blessing of the Lord makes *one* rich,  
And He adds no sorrow with it.

**23**To do evil *is* like sport to a fool,  
But a man of understanding has wisdom.  
**24**The fear of the wicked will come upon him,  
And the desire of the righteous will be granted.  
**25**When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked *is* no *more,*  
But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.

**26**As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,  
So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him.

**27**The fear of the Lord prolongs days,  
But the years of the wicked will be shortened.  
**28**The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness,  
But the expectation of the wicked will perish.  
**29**The way of the Lord *is* strength for the upright,  
But destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.

**30**The righteous will never be removed,  
But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.  
**31**The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,  
But the perverse tongue will be cut out.  
**32**The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,  
But the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse.

### Proverbs 11

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

**11**A false balance is an abomination to the Lord,  
    but an accurate weight is his delight.  
**2**When pride comes, then comes disgrace;  
    but wisdom is with the humble.  
**3**The integrity of the upright guides them,  
    but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.  
**4**Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,  
    but righteousness delivers from death.  
**5**The righteousness of the blameless keeps their ways straight,  
    but the wicked fall by their own wickedness.  
**6**The righteousness of the upright saves them,  
    but the treacherous are taken captive by their schemes.  
**7**When the wicked die, their hope perishes,  
    and the expectation of the godless comes to nothing.  
**8**The righteous are delivered from trouble,  
    and the wicked get into it instead.  
**9**With their mouths the godless would destroy their neighbors,  
    but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.  
**10**When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices;  
    and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.  
**11**By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted,  
    but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.  
**12**Whoever belittles another lacks sense,  
    but an intelligent person remains silent.  
**13**A gossip goes about telling secrets,  
    but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence.  
**14**Where there is no guidance, a nation**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2011&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16703a)**]** falls,  
    but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.  
**15**To guarantee loans for a stranger brings trouble,  
    but there is safety in refusing to do so.  
**16**A gracious woman gets honor,  
    but she who hates virtue is covered with shame.**[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2011&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16705b" \o "See footnote b)]**  
The timid become destitute,**[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2011&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16705c)**]**  
    but the aggressive gain riches.  
**17**Those who are kind reward themselves,  
    but the cruel do themselves harm.  
**18**The wicked earn no real gain,  
    but those who sow righteousness get a true reward.  
**19**Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live,  
    but whoever pursues evil will die.  
**20**Crooked minds are an abomination to the Lord,  
    but those of blameless ways are his delight.  
**21**Be assured, the wicked will not go unpunished,  
    but those who are righteous will escape.  
**22**Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout  
    is a beautiful woman without good sense.  
**23**The desire of the righteous ends only in good;  
    the expectation of the wicked in wrath.  
**24**Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;  
    others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.  
**25**A generous person will be enriched,  
    and one who gives water will get water.  
**26**The people curse those who hold back grain,  
    but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.  
**27**Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,  
    but evil comes to the one who searches for it.  
**28**Those who trust in their riches will wither,**[[d](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2011&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16717d" \o "See footnote d)]**  
    but the righteous will flourish like green leaves.  
**29**Those who trouble their households will inherit wind,  
    and the fool will be servant to the wise.  
**30**The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,  
    but violence**[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2011&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16719e)**]** takes lives away.  
**31**If the righteous are repaid on earth,  
    how much more the wicked and the sinner!

### Proverbs 12

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

**12**Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,  
    but those who hate to be rebuked are stupid.  
**2**The good obtain favor from the Lord,  
    but those who devise evil he condemns.  
**3**No one finds security by wickedness,  
    but the root of the righteous will never be moved.  
**4**A good wife is the crown of her husband,  
    but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.  
**5**The thoughts of the righteous are just;  
    the advice of the wicked is treacherous.  
**6**The words of the wicked are a deadly ambush,  
    but the speech of the upright delivers them.  
**7**The wicked are overthrown and are no more,  
    but the house of the righteous will stand.  
**8**One is commended for good sense,  
    but a perverse mind is despised.  
**9**Better to be despised and have a servant,  
    than to be self-important and lack food.  
**10**The righteous know the needs of their animals,  
    but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.  
**11**Those who till their land will have plenty of food,  
    but those who follow worthless pursuits have no sense.  
**12**The wicked covet the proceeds of wickedness,**[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2012&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16732a" \o "See footnote a)]**  
    but the root of the righteous bears fruit.  
**13**The evil are ensnared by the transgression of their lips,  
    but the righteous escape from trouble.  
**14**From the fruit of the mouth one is filled with good things,  
    and manual labor has its reward.  
**15**Fools think their own way is right,  
    but the wise listen to advice.  
**16**Fools show their anger at once,  
    but the prudent ignore an insult.  
**17**Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence,  
    but a false witness speaks deceitfully.  
**18**Rash words are like sword thrusts,  
    but the tongue of the wise brings healing.  
**19**Truthful lips endure forever,  
    but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.  
**20**Deceit is in the mind of those who plan evil,  
    but those who counsel peace have joy.  
**21**No harm happens to the righteous,  
    but the wicked are filled with trouble.  
**22**Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,  
    but those who act faithfully are his delight.  
**23**One who is clever conceals knowledge,  
    but the mind of a fool**[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2012&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16743b)**]** broadcasts folly.  
**24**The hand of the diligent will rule,  
    while the lazy will be put to forced labor.  
**25**Anxiety weighs down the human heart,  
    but a good word cheers it up.  
**26**The righteous gives good advice to friends,**[[c](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2012&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16746c" \o "See footnote c)]**  
    but the way of the wicked leads astray.  
**27**The lazy do not roast**[**[**d**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2012&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16747d)**]** their game,  
    but the diligent obtain precious wealth.**[[e](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2012&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16747e" \o "See footnote e)]**  
**28**In the path of righteousness there is life,  
    in walking its path there is no death.

### Proverbs 13

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

**13**A wise child loves discipline,**[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2013&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16749a" \o "See footnote a)]**  
    but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.  
**2**From the fruit of their words good persons eat good things,  
    but the desire of the treacherous is for wrongdoing.  
**3**Those who guard their mouths preserve their lives;  
    those who open wide their lips come to ruin.  
**4**The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing,  
    while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied.  
**5**The righteous hate falsehood,  
    but the wicked act shamefully and disgracefully.  
**6**Righteousness guards one whose way is upright,  
    but sin overthrows the wicked.  
**7**Some pretend to be rich, yet have nothing;  
    others pretend to be poor, yet have great wealth.  
**8**Wealth is a ransom for a person’s life,  
    but the poor get no threats.  
**9**The light of the righteous rejoices,  
    but the lamp of the wicked goes out.  
**10**By insolence the heedless make strife,  
    but wisdom is with those who take advice.  
**11**Wealth hastily gotten**[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2013&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-16759b)**]** will dwindle,  
    but those who gather little by little will increase it.  
**12**Hope deferred makes the heart sick,  
    but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.  
**13**Those who despise the word bring destruction on themselves,  
    but those who respect the commandment will be rewarded.  
**14**The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,  
    so that one may avoid the snares of death.  
**15**Good sense wins favor,  
    but the way of the faithless is their ruin.**[[c](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2013&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-16763c" \o "See footnote c)]**  
**16**The clever do all things intelligently,  
    but the fool displays folly.  
**17**A bad messenger brings trouble,  
    but a faithful envoy, healing.  
**18**Poverty and disgrace are for the one who ignores instruction,  
    but one who heeds reproof is honored.  
**19**A desire realized is sweet to the soul,  
    but to turn away from evil is an abomination to fools.  
**20**Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,  
    but the companion of fools suffers harm.  
**21**Misfortune pursues sinners,  
    but prosperity rewards the righteous.  
**22**The good leave an inheritance to their children’s children,  
    but the sinner’s wealth is laid up for the righteous.  
**23**The field of the poor may yield much food,  
    but it is swept away through injustice.  
**24**Those who spare the rod hate their children,  
    but those who love them are diligent to discipline them.  
**25**The righteous have enough to satisfy their appetite,  
    but the belly of the wicked is empty.

### Proverbs 14

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

### Contrast the Upright and the Wicked

**14**The wise woman builds her house,  
But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.  
**2**He who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord,  
But he who is devious in his ways despises Him.  
**3**In the mouth of the foolish is a rod **[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16776a)**]**for *his* back,  
But the lips of the wise will protect them.  
**4**Where no oxen are, the manger is clean,  
But much revenue *comes* by the strength of the ox.  
**5**A trustworthy witness will not lie,  
But a false witness **[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16778b)**]**utters lies.  
**6**A scoffer seeks wisdom and *finds* none,  
But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.  
**7**Leave the presence of a fool,  
Or you will not **[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16780c)**]**discern **[**[**d**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16780d)**]**words of knowledge.  
**8**The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way,  
But the foolishness of fools is deceit.  
**9**Fools mock at **[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16782e)**]**sin,  
But among the upright there is **[**[**f**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16782f)**]**good will.  
**10**The heart knows its own bitterness,  
And a stranger does not share its joy.  
**11**The house of the wicked will be destroyed,  
But the tent of the upright will flourish.  
**12**There is a way *which seems* right to a man,  
But its end is the way of death.  
**13**Even in laughter the heart may be in pain,  
And the end of joy may be grief.  
**14**The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways,  
But a good man will *be satisfied* **[**[**g**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16787g)**]**with his.  
**15**The **[**[**h**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16788h)**]**naive believes everything,  
But the sensible man considers his steps.  
**16**A wise man **[[i](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-16789i" \o "See footnote i)]**is cautious and turns away from evil,  
But a fool is arrogant and careless.  
**17**A quick-tempered man acts foolishly,  
And a man of evil devices is hated.  
**18**The **[**[**j**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16791j)**]**naive inherit foolishness,  
But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.  
**19**The evil will bow down before the good,  
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.  
**20**The poor is hated even by his neighbor,  
But those who love the rich are many.  
**21**He who despises his neighbor sins,  
But happy is he who is gracious to the **[**[**k**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16794k)**]**poor.  
**22**Will they not go astray who devise evil?  
But kindness and truth *will be to* those who devise good.  
**23**In all labor there is profit,  
But **[**[**l**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16796l)**]**mere talk *leads* only to poverty.  
**24**The crown of the wise is their riches,  
*But* the folly of fools is foolishness.  
**25**A truthful witness saves lives,  
But he who **[**[**m**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16798m)**]**utters lies is **[**[**n**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16798n)**]**treacherous.  
**26**In the **[**[**o**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16799o)**]**fear of the Lord there is strong confidence,  
And **[**[**p**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16799p)**]**his children will have refuge.  
**27**The **[**[**q**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16800q)**]**fear of the Lord is a fountain of life,  
That one may avoid the snares of death.  
**28**In a multitude of people is a king’s glory,  
But in the dearth of people is a prince’s ruin.  
**29**He who is slow to anger has great understanding,  
But he who is **[**[**r**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16802r)**]**quick-tempered exalts folly.  
**30**A tranquil heart is life to the body,  
But passion is rottenness to the bones.  
**31**He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker,  
But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.  
**32**The wicked is thrust down by his **[**[**s**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16805s)**]**wrongdoing,  
But the righteous has a refuge when he dies.  
**33**Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding,  
But in the **[**[**t**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2014&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16806t)**]**hearts of fools it is made known.  
**34**Righteousness exalts a nation,  
But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.  
**35**The king’s favor is toward a servant who acts wisely,  
But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.

### Proverbs 15

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

### Contrast the Upright and the Wicked

**15**A gentle answer turns away wrath,  
But a **[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16809a)**]**harsh word stirs up anger.  
**2**The tongue of the wise makes knowledge **[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16810b)**]**acceptable,  
But the mouth of fools spouts folly.  
**3**The eyes of the Lord are in every place,  
Watching the evil and the good.  
**4**A **[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16812c)**]**soothing tongue is a tree of life,  
But perversion in it **[**[**d**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16812d)**]**crushes the spirit.  
**5**A fool **[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16813e)**]**rejects his father’s discipline,  
But he who regards reproof is sensible.  
**6**Great wealth is *in* the house of the righteous,  
But trouble is in the income of the wicked.  
**7**The lips of the wise spread knowledge,  
But the hearts of fools are not so.  
**8**The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,  
But the prayer of the upright is His delight.  
**9**The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,  
But He loves one who pursues righteousness.  
**10**Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the way;  
He who hates reproof will die.  
**11 [**[**f**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16819f)**]**Sheol and **[**[**g**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16819g)**]**Abaddon *lie open* before the Lord,  
How much more the hearts of **[**[**h**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16819h)**]**men!  
**12**A scoffer does not love one who reproves him,  
He will not go to the wise.  
**13**A joyful heart makes a **[[i](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-16821i" \o "See footnote i)]**cheerful face,  
But **[**[**j**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16821j)**]**when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.  
**14**The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge,  
But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.  
**15**All the days of the afflicted are bad,  
But a **[**[**k**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16823k)**]**cheerful heart *has* a continual feast.  
**16**Better is a little with the **[**[**l**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16824l)**]**fear of the Lord  
Than great treasure and turmoil with it.  
**17**Better is a **[**[**m**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16825m)**]**dish of **[**[**n**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16825n)**]**vegetables where love is  
Than a fattened ox *served* with hatred.  
**18**A hot-tempered man stirs up strife,  
But the slow to anger calms a dispute.  
**19**The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns,  
But the path of the upright is a highway.  
**20**A wise son makes a father glad,  
But a foolish man despises his mother.  
**21**Folly is joy to him who lacks **[**[**o**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16829o)**]**sense,  
But a man of understanding walks straight.  
**22**Without consultation, plans are frustrated,  
But with many counselors they **[**[**p**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16830p)**]**succeed.  
**23**A man has joy in an **[**[**q**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16831q)**]**apt answer,  
And how delightful is a timely word!  
**24**The path of life *leads* upward for the wise  
That he may keep away from **[**[**r**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16832r)**]**Sheol below.  
**25**The Lord will tear down the house of the proud,  
But He will establish the boundary of the widow.  
**26**Evil plans are an abomination to the Lord,  
But pleasant words are pure.  
**27**He who profits illicitly troubles his own house,  
But he who hates bribes will live.  
**28**The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer,  
But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.  
**29**The Lord is far from the wicked,  
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.  
**30 [**[**s**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16838s)**]**Bright eyes gladden the heart;  
Good news puts fat on the bones.  
**31**He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof  
Will dwell among the wise.  
**32**He who neglects discipline despises himself,  
But he who listens to reproof acquires **[**[**t**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16840t)**]**understanding.  
**33**The **[**[**u**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2015&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16841u)**]**fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom,  
And before honor *comes* humility.

### Proverbs 16

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

### Contrast the Upright and the Wicked

**16**The plans of the heart belong to man,  
But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.  
**2**All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight,  
But the Lord weighs the **[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16843a)**]**motives.  
**3 [**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16844b)**]**Commit your works to the Lord  
And your plans will be established.  
**4**The Lord has made everything for **[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16845c)**]**its own purpose,  
Even the wicked for the day of evil.  
**5**Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord;  
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.  
**6**By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for,  
And by the **[**[**d**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16847d)**]**fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil.  
**7**When a man’s ways are pleasing to the Lord,  
He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.  
**8**Better is a little with righteousness  
Than great income with injustice.  
**9**The mind of man plans his way,  
But the Lord directs his steps.  
**10**A divine decision is in the lips of the king;  
His mouth should not **[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16851e)**]**err in judgment.  
**11**A just balance and scales belong to the Lord;  
All the **[**[**f**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16852f)**]**weights of the bag are His **[**[**g**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16852g)**]**concern.  
**12**It is an abomination for kings to commit wicked acts,  
For a throne is established on righteousness.  
**13**Righteous lips are the delight of kings,  
And he who speaks right is loved.  
**14**The fury of a king is *like* messengers of death,  
But a wise man will appease it.  
**15**In the light of a king’s face is life,  
And his favor is like a cloud with the **[**[**h**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16856h)**]**spring rain.  
**16**How much better it is to get wisdom than gold!  
And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.  
**17**The highway of the upright is to depart from evil;  
He who watches his way preserves his **[[i](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-16858i" \o "See footnote i)]**life.  
**18**Pride *goes* before destruction,  
And a haughty spirit before stumbling.  
**19**It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly  
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.  
**20**He who gives attention to the word will find good,  
And blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.  
**21**The wise in heart will be called understanding,  
And sweetness of **[**[**j**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16862j)**]**speech increases **[**[**k**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16862k)**]**persuasiveness.  
**22**Understanding is a fountain of life to one who has it,  
But the discipline of fools is folly.  
**23**The heart of the wise instructs his mouth  
And adds **[**[**l**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16864l)**]**persuasiveness to his lips.  
**24**Pleasant words are a honeycomb,  
Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.  
**25**There is a way *which seems* right to a man,  
But its end is the way of death.  
**26**A worker’s appetite works for him,  
For his **[**[**m**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16867m)**]**hunger urges him *on*.  
**27**A worthless man digs up evil,  
While **[**[**n**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16868n)**]**his words are like scorching fire.  
**28**A perverse man spreads strife,  
And a slanderer separates intimate friends.  
**29**A man of violence entices his neighbor  
And leads him in a way that is not good.  
**30**He who winks his eyes *does so* to devise perverse things;  
He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.  
**31**A gray head is a crown of glory;  
It is found in the way of righteousness.  
**32**He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.  
**33**The lot is cast into the lap,  
But its every decision is from the Lord.

### Proverbs 17-24

The Message (MSG)

### A Whack on the Head of a Fool

**17**A meal of bread and water in contented peace  
    is better than a banquet spiced with quarrels.

**2**A wise servant takes charge of an unruly child  
    and is honored as one of the family.

**3**As silver in a crucible and gold in a pan,  
    so our lives are assayed by God.

**4**Evil people relish malicious conversation;  
    the ears of liars itch for dirty gossip.

**5**Whoever mocks poor people insults their Creator;  
    gloating over misfortune is a punishable crime.

**6**Old people are distinguished by grandchildren;  
    children take pride in their parents.

**7**We don’t expect eloquence from fools,  
    nor do we expect lies from our leaders.

**8**Receiving a gift is like getting a rare gemstone;  
    any way you look at it, you see beauty refracted.

**9**Overlook an offense and bond a friendship;  
    fasten on to a slight and—good-bye, friend!

**10**A quiet rebuke to a person of good sense  
    does more than a whack on the head of a fool.

**11**Criminals out looking for nothing but trouble  
    won’t have to wait long—they’ll meet it coming and going!

**12**Better to meet a grizzly robbed of her cubs  
    than a fool hellbent on folly.

**13**Those who return evil for good  
    will meet their own evil returning.

**14**The start of a quarrel is like a leak in a dam,  
    so stop it before it bursts.

**15**Whitewashing bad people and throwing mud on good people  
    are equally abhorrent to God.

**16**What’s this? Fools out shopping for wisdom!  
    They wouldn’t recognize it if they saw it!

### One Who Knows Much Says Little

**17**Friends love through all kinds of weather,  
    and families stick together in all kinds of trouble.

**18**It’s stupid to try to get something for nothing,  
    or run up huge bills you can never pay.

**19**The person who courts sin marries trouble;  
    build a wall, invite a burglar.

**20**A bad motive can’t achieve a good end;  
    double-talk brings you double trouble.

**21**Having a fool for a child is misery;  
    it’s no fun being the parent of a dolt.

**22**A cheerful disposition is good for your health;  
    gloom and doom leave you bone-tired.

**23**The wicked take bribes under the table;  
    they show nothing but contempt for justice.

**24**The perceptive find wisdom in their own front yard;  
    fools look for it everywhere but right here.

**25**A surly, stupid child is sheer pain to a father,  
    a bitter pill for a mother to swallow.

**26**It’s wrong to penalize good behavior,  
    or make good citizens pay for the crimes of others.

**27**The one who knows much says little;  
    an understanding person remains calm.

**28**Even dunces who keep quiet are thought to be wise;  
    as long as they keep their mouths shut, they’re smart.

### Words Kill, Words Give Life

**18**Loners who care only for themselves  
    spit on the common good.

**2**Fools care nothing for thoughtful discourse;  
    all they do is run off at the mouth.

**3**When wickedness arrives, shame’s not far behind;  
    contempt for life is contemptible.

**4**Many words rush along like rivers in flood,  
    but deep wisdom flows up from artesian springs.

**5**It’s not right to go easy on the guilty,  
    or come down hard on the innocent.

**6**The words of a fool start fights;  
    do him a favor and gag him.

**7**Fools are undone by their big mouths;  
    their souls are crushed by their words.

**8**Listening to gossip is like eating cheap candy;  
    do you really want junk like that in your belly?

**9**Slack habits and sloppy work  
    are as bad as vandalism.

**10**God’s name is a place of protection—  
    good people can run there and be safe.

**11**The rich think their wealth protects them;  
    they imagine themselves safe behind it.

**12**Pride first, then the crash,  
    but humility is precursor to honor.

**13**Answering before listening  
    is both stupid and rude.

**14**A healthy spirit conquers adversity,  
    but what can you do when the spirit is crushed?

**15**Wise men and women are always learning,  
    always listening for fresh insights.

**16**A gift gets attention;  
    it buys the attention of eminent people.

**17**The first speech in a court case is always convincing—  
    until the cross-examination starts!

**18**You may have to draw straws  
    when faced with a tough decision.

**19**Do a favor and win a friend forever;  
    nothing can untie that bond.

**20**Words satisfy the mind as much as fruit does the stomach;  
    good talk is as gratifying as a good harvest.

**21**Words kill, words give life;  
    they’re either poison or fruit—you choose.

**22**Find a good spouse, you find a good life—  
    and even more: the favor of God!

**23**The poor speak in soft supplications;  
    the rich bark out answers.

**24**Friends come and friends go,  
    but a true friend sticks by you like family.

### If You Quit Listening

**19**Better to be poor and honest  
    than a rich person no one can trust.

**2**Ignorant zeal is worthless;  
    haste makes waste.

**3**People ruin their lives by their own stupidity,  
    so why does God always get blamed?

**4**Wealth attracts friends as honey draws flies,  
    but poor people are avoided like a plague.

**5**Perjury won’t go unpunished.  
    Would you let a liar go free?

**6**Lots of people flock around a generous person;  
    everyone’s a friend to the philanthropist.

**7**When you’re down on your luck, even your family avoids you—  
    yes, even your best friends wish you’d get lost.  
If they see you coming, they look the other way—  
    out of sight, out of mind.

**8**Grow a wise heart—you’ll do yourself a favor;  
    keep a clear head—you’ll find a good life.

**9**The person who tells lies gets caught;  
    the person who spreads rumors is ruined.

**10**Blockheads shouldn’t live on easy street  
    any more than workers should give orders to their boss.

**11**Smart people know how to hold their tongue;  
    their grandeur is to forgive and forget.

**12**Mean-tempered leaders are like mad dogs;  
    the good-natured are like fresh morning dew.

**13**A parent is worn to a frazzle by a stupid child;  
    a nagging spouse is a leaky faucet.

**14**House and land are handed down from parents,  
    but a congenial spouse comes straight from God.

**15**Life collapses on loafers;  
    lazybones go hungry.

**16**Keep the rules and keep your life;  
    careless living kills.

**17**Mercy to the needy is a loan to God,  
    and God pays back those loans in full.

**18**Discipline your children while you still have the chance;  
    indulging them destroys them.

**19**Let angry people endure the backlash of their own anger;  
    if you try to make it better, you’ll only make it worse.

**20**Take good counsel and accept correction—  
    that’s the way to live wisely and well.

**21**We humans keep brainstorming options and plans,  
    but God’s purpose prevails.

**22**It’s only human to want to make a buck,  
    but it’s better to be poor than a liar.

**23**Fear-of-God is life itself,  
    a full life, and serene—no nasty surprises.

**24**Some people dig a fork into the pie  
    but are too lazy to raise it to their mouth.

**25**Punish the insolent—make an example of them.  
    Who knows? Somebody might learn a good lesson.

**26**Kids who lash out against their parents  
    are an embarrassment and disgrace.

**27**If you quit listening, dear child, and strike off on your own,  
    you’ll soon be out of your depth.

**28**An unprincipled witness desecrates justice;  
    the mouths of the wicked spew malice.

**29**The irreverent have to learn reverence the hard way;  
    only a slap in the face brings fools to attention.

### Deep Water in the Heart

**20**Wine makes you mean, beer makes you quarrelsome—  
    a staggering drunk is not much fun.

**2**Quick-tempered leaders are like mad dogs—  
    cross them and they bite your head off.

**3**It’s a mark of good character to avert quarrels,  
    but fools love to pick fights.

**4**A farmer too lazy to plant in the spring  
    has nothing to harvest in the fall.

**5**Knowing what is right is like deep water in the heart;  
    a wise person draws from the well within.

**6**Lots of people claim to be loyal and loving,  
    but where on earth can you find one?

**7**God-loyal people, living honest lives,  
    make it much easier for their children.

**8-9**Leaders who know their business and care  
    keep a sharp eye out for the shoddy and cheap,  
For who among us can be trusted  
    to be always diligent and honest?

**10**Switching price tags and padding the expense account  
    are two things God hates.

**11**Young people eventually reveal by their actions  
    if their motives are on the up and up.

### Drinking from the Chalice of Knowledge

**12**Ears that hear and eyes that see—  
    we get our basic equipment from God!

**13**Don’t be too fond of sleep; you’ll end up in the poorhouse.  
    Wake up and get up; then there’ll be food on the table.

**14**The shopper says, “That’s junk—I’ll take it off your hands,”  
    then goes off boasting of the bargain.

**15**Drinking from the beautiful chalice of knowledge  
    is better than adorning oneself with gold and rare gems.

**16**Hold tight to collateral on any loan to a stranger;  
    beware of accepting what a transient has pawned.

**17**Stolen bread tastes sweet,  
    but soon your mouth is full of gravel.

**18**Form your purpose by asking for counsel,  
    then carry it out using all the help you can get.

**19**Gossips can’t keep secrets,  
    so never confide in blabbermouths.

**20**Anyone who curses father and mother  
    extinguishes light and exists benighted.

### The Very Steps We Take

**21**A bonanza at the beginning  
    is no guarantee of blessing at the end.

**22**Don’t ever say, “I’ll get you for that!”  
    Wait for God; he’ll settle the score.

**23**God hates cheating in the marketplace;  
    rigged scales are an outrage.

**24**The very steps we take come from God;  
    otherwise how would we know where we’re going?

**25**An impulsive vow is a trap;  
    later you’ll wish you could get out of it.

**26**After careful scrutiny, a wise leader  
    makes a clean sweep of rebels and dolts.

**27**God is in charge of human life,  
    watching and examining us inside and out.

**28**Love and truth form a good leader;  
    sound leadership is founded on loving integrity.

**29**Youth may be admired for vigor,  
    but gray hair gives prestige to old age.

**30**A good thrashing purges evil;  
    punishment goes deep within us.

### God Examines Our Motives

**21**Good leadership is a channel of water controlled by God;  
    he directs it to whatever ends he chooses.

**2**We justify our actions by appearances;  
    God examines our motives.

**3**Clean living before God and justice with our neighbors  
    mean far more to God than religious performance.

**4**Arrogance and pride—distinguishing marks in the wicked—  
    are just plain sin.

**5**Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run;  
    hurry and scurry puts you further behind.

**6**Make it to the top by lying and cheating;  
    get paid with smoke and a promotion—to death!

**7**The wicked get buried alive by their loot  
    because they refuse to use it to help others.

**8**Mixed motives twist life into tangles;  
    pure motives take you straight down the road.

### Do Your Best, Prepare for the Worst

**9**Better to live alone in a tumbledown shack  
    than share a mansion with a nagging spouse.

**10**Wicked souls love to make trouble;  
    they feel nothing for friends and neighbors.

**11**Simpletons only learn the hard way,  
    but the wise learn by listening.

**12**A God-loyal person will see right through the wicked  
    and undo the evil they’ve planned.

**13**If you stop your ears to the cries of the poor,  
    your cries will go unheard, unanswered.

**14**A quietly given gift soothes an irritable person;  
    a heartfelt present cools a hot temper.

**15**Good people celebrate when justice triumphs,  
    but for the workers of evil it’s a bad day.

**16**Whoever wanders off the straight and narrow  
    ends up in a congregation of ghosts.

**17**You’re addicted to thrills? What an empty life!  
    The pursuit of pleasure is never satisfied.

**18**What a bad person plots against the good, boomerangs;  
    the plotter gets it in the end.

**19**Better to live in a tent in the wild  
    than with a cross and petulant spouse.

**20**Valuables are safe in a wise person’s home;  
    fools put it all out for yard sales.

**21**Whoever goes hunting for what is right and kind  
    finds life itself—*glorious* life!

**22**One sage entered a whole city of armed soldiers—  
    their trusted defenses fell to pieces!

**23**Watch your words and hold your tongue;  
    you’ll save yourself a lot of grief.

**24**You know their names—Brash, Impudent, Blasphemer—  
    intemperate hotheads, every one.

**25**Lazy people finally die of hunger  
    because they won’t get up and go to work.

**26**Sinners are always wanting what they don’t have;  
    the God-loyal are always giving what they do have.

**27**Religious performance by the wicked stinks;  
    it’s even worse when they use it to get ahead.

**28**A lying witness is unconvincing;  
    a person who speaks truth is respected.

**29**Unscrupulous people fake it a lot;  
    honest people are sure of their steps.

**30**Nothing clever, nothing conceived, nothing contrived,  
    can get the better of God.

**31**Do your best, prepare for the worst—  
    then trust God to bring victory.

### The Cure Comes Through Discipline

**22**A sterling reputation is better than striking it rich;  
    a gracious spirit is better than money in the bank.

**2**The rich and the poor shake hands as equals—  
    God made them both!

**3**A prudent person sees trouble coming and ducks;  
    a simpleton walks in blindly and is clobbered.

**4**The payoff for meekness and Fear-of-God  
    is plenty and honor and a satisfying life.

**5**The perverse travel a dangerous road, potholed and mud-slick;  
    if you know what’s good for you, stay clear of it.

**6**Point your kids in the right direction—  
    when they’re old they won’t be lost.

**7**The poor are always ruled over by the rich,  
    so don’t borrow and put yourself under their power.

**8**Whoever sows sin reaps weeds,  
    and bullying anger sputters into nothing.

**9**Generous hands are blessed hands  
    because they give bread to the poor.

**10**Kick out the troublemakers and things will quiet down;  
    you need a break from bickering and griping!

**11**God loves the pure-hearted and well-spoken;  
    good leaders also delight in their friendship.

**12**God guards knowledge with a passion,  
    but he’ll have nothing to do with deception.

**13**The loafer says, “There’s a lion on the loose!  
    If I go out I’ll be eaten alive!”

**14**The mouth of a whore is a bottomless pit;  
    you’ll fall in that pit if you’re on the outs with God.

**15**Young people are prone to foolishness and fads;  
    the cure comes through tough-minded discipline.

**16**Exploit the poor or glad-hand the rich—whichever,  
    you’ll end up the poorer for it.

## The Thirty Precepts of the Sages

### Don’t Move Back the Boundary Lines

**17-21**Listen carefully to my wisdom;  
    take to heart what I can teach you.  
You’ll treasure its sweetness deep within;  
    you’ll give it bold expression in your speech.  
To make sure your foundation is trust in God,  
    I’m laying it all out right now just for you.  
I’m giving you thirty sterling principles—  
    tested guidelines to live by.  
Believe me—these are truths that work,  
    and will keep you accountable  
    to those who sent you.

#### 1

**22-23**Don’t walk on the poor just because they’re poor,  
    and don’t use your position to crush the weak,  
Because God will come to their defense;  
    the life you took, he’ll take from you and give back to them.

#### 2

**24-25**Don’t hang out with angry people;  
    don’t keep company with hotheads.  
Bad temper is contagious—  
    don’t get infected.

#### 3

**26-27**Don’t gamble on the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow,  
    hocking your house against a lucky chance.  
The time will come when you have to pay up;  
    you’ll be left with nothing but the shirt on your back.

#### 4

**28**Don’t stealthily move back the boundary lines  
    staked out long ago by your ancestors.

#### 5

**29**Observe people who are good at their work—  
    skilled workers are always in demand and admired;  
    they don’t take a backseat to anyone.

### Restrain Yourself

#### 6

**23 1-3**When you go out to dinner with an influential person,  
    mind your manners:  
Don’t gobble your food,  
    don’t talk with your mouth full.  
And don’t stuff yourself;  
    bridle your appetite.

#### 7

**4-5**Don’t wear yourself out trying to get rich;  
    restrain yourself!  
Riches disappear in the blink of an eye;  
    wealth sprouts wings  
    and flies off into the wild blue yonder.

#### 8

**6-8**Don’t accept a meal from a tightwad;  
    don’t expect anything special.  
He’ll be as stingy with you as he is with himself;  
    he’ll say, “Eat! Drink!” but won’t mean a word of it.  
His miserly serving will turn your stomach  
    when you realize the meal’s a sham.

#### 9

**9**Don’t bother talking sense to fools;  
    they’ll only poke fun at your words.

#### 10

**10-11**Don’t stealthily move back the boundary lines  
    or cheat orphans out of their property,  
For they have a powerful Advocate  
    who will go to bat for them.

#### 11

**12**Give yourselves to disciplined instruction;  
    open your ears to tested knowledge.

#### 12

**13-14**Don’t be afraid to correct your young ones;  
    a spanking won’t kill them.  
A good spanking, in fact, might save them  
    from something worse than death.

#### 13

**15-16**Dear child, if you become wise,  
    I’ll be one happy parent.  
My heart will dance and sing  
    to the tuneful truth you’ll speak.

#### 14

**17-18**Don’t for a minute envy careless rebels;  
    soak yourself in the Fear-of-God—  
*That’s* where your future lies.  
    *Then* you won’t be left with an armload of nothing.

#### 15

**19-21**Oh listen, dear child—become wise;  
    point your life in the right direction.  
Don’t drink too much wine and get drunk;  
    don’t eat too much food and get fat.  
Drunks and gluttons will end up on skid row,  
    in a stupor and dressed in rags.

### Buy Wisdom, Education, Insight

#### 16

**22-25**Listen with respect to the father who raised you,  
    and when your mother grows old, don’t neglect her.  
Buy truth—don’t sell it for love or money;  
    buy wisdom, buy education, buy insight.  
Parents rejoice when their children turn out well;  
    wise children become proud parents.  
So make your father happy!  
    Make your mother proud!

#### 17

**26**Dear child, I want your full attention;  
    please do what I show you.

**27-28**A whore is a bottomless pit;  
    a loose woman can get you in deep trouble fast.  
She’ll take you for all you’ve got;  
    she’s worse than a pack of thieves.

#### 18

**29-35**Who are the people who are always crying the blues?  
    Who do you know who reeks of self-pity?  
Who keeps getting beat up for no reason at all?  
    Whose eyes are bleary and bloodshot?  
It’s those who spend the night with a bottle,  
    for whom drinking is serious business.  
Don’t judge wine by its label,  
    or its bouquet, or its full-bodied flavor.  
Judge it rather by the hangover it leaves you with—  
    the splitting headache, the queasy stomach.  
Do you really prefer seeing double,  
    with your speech all slurred,  
Reeling and seasick,  
    drunk as a sailor?  
“They hit me,” you’ll say, “but it didn’t hurt;  
    they beat on me, but I didn’t feel a thing.  
When I’m sober enough to manage it,  
    bring me another drink!”

### Intelligence Outranks Muscle

#### 19

**24 1-2**Don’t envy bad people;  
    don’t even want to be around them.  
All they think about is causing a disturbance;  
    all they talk about is making trouble.

#### 20

**3-4**It takes wisdom to build a house,  
    and understanding to set it on a firm foundation;  
It takes knowledge to furnish its rooms  
    with fine furniture and beautiful draperies.

#### 21

**5-6**It’s better to be wise than strong;  
    intelligence outranks muscle any day.  
Strategic planning is the key to warfare;  
    to win, you need a lot of good counsel.

#### 22

**7**Wise conversation is way over the head of fools;  
    in a serious discussion they haven’t a clue.

#### 23

**8-9**The person who’s always cooking up some evil  
    soon gets a reputation as prince of rogues.  
Fools incubate sin;  
    cynics desecrate beauty.

### Rescue the Perishing

#### 24

**10**If you fall to pieces in a crisis,  
    there wasn’t much to you in the first place.

#### 25

**11-12**Rescue the perishing;  
    don’t hesitate to step in and help.  
If you say, “Hey, that’s none of my business,”  
    will that get you off the hook?  
Someone is watching you closely, you know—  
    Someone not impressed with weak excuses.

#### 26

**13-14**Eat honey, dear child—it’s good for you—  
    and delicacies that melt in your mouth.  
Likewise knowledge,  
    and wisdom for your soul—  
Get that and your future’s secured,  
    your hope is on solid rock.

#### 27

**15-16**Don’t interfere with good people’s lives;  
    don’t try to get the best of them.  
No matter how many times you trip them up,  
    God-loyal people don’t stay down long;  
Soon they’re up on their feet,  
    while the wicked end up flat on their faces.

#### 28

**17-18**Don’t laugh when your enemy falls;  
    don’t crow over his collapse.  
God might see, and become very provoked,  
    and then take pity on his plight.

#### 29

**19-20**Don’t bother your head with braggarts  
    or wish you could succeed like the wicked.  
Those people have no future at all;  
    they’re headed down a dead-end street.

#### 30

**21-22**Fear God, dear child—respect your leaders;  
    don’t be defiant or mutinous.  
Without warning your life can turn upside down,  
    and who knows how or when it might happen?

## More Sayings of the Wise

### An Honest Answer

**23**It’s wrong, very wrong,  
    to go along with injustice.

**24-25**Whoever whitewashes the wicked  
    gets a black mark in the history books,  
But whoever exposes the wicked  
    will be thanked and rewarded.

**26**An honest answer  
    is like a warm hug.

**27**First plant your fields;  
    *then* build your barn.

**28-29**Don’t talk about your neighbors behind their backs—  
    no slander or gossip, please.  
Don’t say to anyone, “I’ll get back at you for what you did to me.  
    I’ll make you pay for what you did!”

**30-34**One day I walked by the field of an old lazybones,  
    and then passed the vineyard of a lout;  
They were overgrown with weeds,  
    thick with thistles, all the fences broken down.  
I took a long look and pondered what I saw;  
    the fields preached me a sermon and I listened:  
“A nap here, a nap there, a day off here, a day off there,  
    sit back, take it easy—do you know what comes next?  
Just this: You can look forward to a dirt-poor life,  
    with poverty as your permanent houseguest!”

[***The Message***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible/)***(MSG)***

*Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by*[*Eugene H. Peterson*](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/?action=getVersionInfo&vid=65)

### Proverbs 25-27

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

### Similitudes, Instructions

**25**These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah,

king of Judah, transcribed.

**2**It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,  
But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.  
**3***As* the heavens for height and the earth for depth,  
So the heart of kings is unsearchable.  
**4**Take away the dross from the silver,  
And there comes out a vessel for the smith;  
**5**Take away the wicked before the king,  
And his throne will be established in righteousness.  
**6**Do not claim honor in the presence of the king,  
And do not stand in the place of great men;  
**7**For it is better that it be said to you, “Come up here,”  
Than for you to be placed lower in the presence of the prince,  
Whom your eyes have seen.

**8**Do not go out hastily to **[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17122a)**]**argue *your case*;  
**[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17122b)**]**Otherwise, what will you do in **[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17122c)**]**the end,  
When your neighbor humiliates you?  
**9 [**[**d**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17123d)**]**Argue your case with your neighbor,  
And do not reveal the secret of another,  
**10**Or he who hears *it* will reproach you,  
And the evil report about you will not **[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17124e)**]**pass away.

**11***Like* apples of gold in settings of silver  
Is a word spoken in **[**[**f**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17125f)**]**right circumstances.  
**12***Like* **[**[**g**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17126g)**]**an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold  
Is a wise reprover to a listening ear.  
**13**Like the cold of snow in the **[**[**h**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17127h)**]**time of harvest  
Is a faithful messenger to those who send him,  
For he refreshes the soul of his masters.  
**14***Like* clouds and wind without rain  
Is a man who boasts **[[i](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17128i" \o "See footnote i)]**of his gifts falsely.  
**15**By **[**[**j**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17129j)**]**forbearance a ruler may be persuaded,  
And a soft tongue breaks the bone.  
**16**Have you found honey? Eat *only* **[**[**k**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17130k)**]**what you need,  
That you not have it in excess and vomit it.  
**17**Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor’s house,  
Or he will become **[**[**l**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17131l)**]**weary of you and hate you.  
**18***Like* a club and a sword and a sharp arrow  
Is a man who bears false witness against his neighbor.  
**19***Like* a bad tooth and **[**[**m**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17133m)**]**an unsteady foot  
Is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.  
**20***Like* one who takes off a garment on a cold day, *or like* vinegar on soda,  
Is he who sings songs to **[**[**o**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17134o)**]**a troubled heart.  
**21**If **[**[**p**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17135p)**]**your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat;  
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;  
**22**For you will **[**[**q**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17136q)**]**heap burning coals on his head,  
And the Lord will reward you.  
**23**The north wind brings forth rain,  
And a **[**[**r**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17137r)**]**backbiting tongue, an angry countenance.  
**24**It is better to live in a corner of the roof  
Than **[**[**s**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17138s)**]**in a house shared with a contentious woman.  
**25***Like* cold water to a weary soul,  
So is good news from a distant land.  
**26***Like* a trampled spring and a **[**[**t**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17140t)**]**polluted well  
Is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.  
**27**It is not good to eat much honey,  
Nor is it glory to search out **[**[**u**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17141u)**]**one’s own glory.  
**28***Like* a city that is broken into *and* without walls  
Is a man who has no control over his spirit.

### Similitudes, Instructions

**26**Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest,  
So honor is not fitting for a fool.  
**2**Like a sparrow in *its* **[**[**v**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17144v)**]**flitting, like a swallow in *its* flying,  
So a curse without cause does not **[**[**w**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17144w)**]**alight.  
**3**A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,  
And a rod for the back of fools.  
**4**Do not answer a fool according to his folly,  
Or you will also be like him.  
**5**Answer a fool as his folly *deserves*,  
That he not be wise in his own eyes.  
**6**He cuts off *his own* feet *and* drinks violence  
Who sends a message by the hand of a fool.  
**7***Like* the legs *which* **[**[**x**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17149x)**]**are useless to the lame,  
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.  
**8**Like **[**[**y**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17150y)**]**one who binds a stone in a sling,  
So is he who gives honor to a fool.  
**9***Like* a thorn *which* **[**[**z**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17151z)**]**falls into the hand of a drunkard,  
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.  
**10 [[aa](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17152aa" \o "See footnote aa)]***Like* an archer who wounds everyone,  
So is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by.  
**11**Like a dog that returns to its vomit  
Is a fool who repeats **[[ab](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17153ab" \o "See footnote ab)]**his folly.  
**12**Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?  
There is more hope for a fool than for him.  
**13**The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road!  
A lion is **[**[**ac**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17155ac)**]**in the open square!”  
**14***As* the door turns on its hinges,  
So *does* the sluggard on his bed.  
**15**The sluggard buries his hand in the dish;  
He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.  
**16**The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes  
Than seven men who can **[**[**ad**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17158ad)**]**give a discreet answer.  
**17***Like* one who takes a dog by the ears  
Is he who passes by *and* **[[ae](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17159ae" \o "See footnote ae)]**meddles with strife not belonging to him.  
**18**Like a madman who throws  
Firebrands, arrows and death,  
**19**So is the man who deceives his neighbor,  
And says, “Was I not joking?”  
**20**For lack of wood the fire goes out,  
And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.  
**21***Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire,  
So is a contentious man to kindle strife.  
**22**The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels,  
And they go down into the **[[af](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17164af" \o "See footnote af)]**innermost parts of the body.  
**23***Like* an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross  
Are burning lips and a wicked heart.  
**24**He who hates disguises *it* with his lips,  
But he lays up deceit in his **[[ag](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17166ag" \o "See footnote ag)]**heart.  
**25**When **[**[**ah**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17167ah)**]**he speaks graciously, do not believe him,  
For there are seven abominations in his heart.  
**26***Though his* hatred covers itself with guile,  
His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.  
**27**He who digs a pit will fall into it,  
And he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.  
**28**A lying tongue hates **[[ai](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17170ai" \o "See footnote ai)]**those it crushes,  
And a flattering mouth works ruin.

### Warnings and Instructions

**27**Do not boast about tomorrow,  
For you do not know what a day may bring forth.  
**2**Let another praise you, and not your own mouth;  
A stranger, and not your own lips.  
**3**A stone is heavy and the sand weighty,  
But the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.  
**4**Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood,  
But who can stand before jealousy?  
**5**Better is open rebuke  
Than love that is concealed.  
**6**Faithful are the wounds of a friend,  
But **[[aj](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17176aj" \o "See footnote aj)]**deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.  
**7**A sated **[[ak](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17177ak" \o "See footnote ak)]**man **[**[**al**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17177al)**]**loathes honey,  
But to a famished **[**[**am**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17177am)**]**man any bitter thing is sweet.  
**8**Like a bird that wanders from her nest,  
So is a man who wanders from his **[**[**an**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17178an)**]**home.  
**9**Oil and perfume make the heart glad,  
So a **[[ao](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17179ao" \o "See footnote ao)]**man’s counsel is sweet to his friend.  
**10**Do not forsake your own friend or your father’s friend,  
And do not go to your brother’s house in the day of your calamity;  
Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.  
**11**Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad,  
That I may reply to him who reproaches me.  
**12**A prudent man sees evil *and* hides himself,  
The **[[ap](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17182ap" \o "See footnote ap)]**naive proceed *and* pay the penalty.  
**13**Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger;  
And for an **[[aq](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17183aq" \o "See footnote aq)]**adulterous woman hold him in pledge.  
**14**He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning,  
It will be reckoned a curse to him.  
**15**A constant dripping on a day of steady rain  
And a contentious woman are alike;  
**16**He who would **[[ar](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17186ar" \o "See footnote ar)]**restrain her **[**[**as**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17186as)**]**restrains the wind,  
And **[**[**at**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17186at)**]**grasps oil with his right hand.  
**17**Iron sharpens iron,  
So one man sharpens another.  
**18**He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit,  
And he who cares for his master will be honored.  
**19**As in water face *reflects* face,  
So the heart of man *reflects* man.  
**20 [**[**au**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17190au)**]**Sheol and **[[av](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-17190av" \o "See footnote av)]**Abaddon are never satisfied,  
Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.  
**21**The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold,  
And each *is tested* by the praise accorded him.  
**22**Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain,  
*Yet* his foolishness will not depart from him.

**23**Know well the **[**[**aw**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2025-27&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17193aw)**]**condition of your flocks,  
*And* pay attention to your herds;  
**24**For riches are not forever,  
Nor does a crown *endure* to all generations.  
**25***When* the grass disappears, the new growth is seen,  
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,  
**26**The lambs *will be* for your clothing,  
And the goats *will bring* the price of a field,  
**27**And *there will be* goats’ milk enough for your food,  
For the food of your household,  
And sustenance for your maidens.

[***New American Standard Bible***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-American-Standard-Bible-NASB/)***(NASB)***

*Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by*[*The Lockman Foundation*](http://www.lockman.org/)

### Proverbs 28

New International Version (NIV)

**28**The wicked flee though no one pursues,  
    but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

**2**When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers,  
    but a ruler with discernment and knowledge maintains order.

**3**A ruler**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2028&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17200a)**]** who oppresses the poor  
    is like a driving rain that leaves no crops.

**4**Those who forsake instruction praise the wicked,  
    but those who heed it resist them.

**5**Evildoers do not understand what is right,  
    but those who seek the Lord understand it fully.

**6**Better the poor whose walk is blameless  
    than the rich whose ways are perverse.

**7**A discerning son heeds instruction,  
    but a companion of gluttons disgraces his father.

**8**Whoever increases wealth by taking interest or profit from the poor  
    amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor.

**9**If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction,  
    even their prayers are detestable.

**10**Whoever leads the upright along an evil path  
    will fall into their own trap,  
    but the blameless will receive a good inheritance.

**11**The rich are wise in their own eyes;  
    one who is poor and discerning sees how deluded they are.

**12**When the righteous triumph, there is great elation;  
    but when the wicked rise to power, people go into hiding.

**13**Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper,  
    but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

**14**Blessed is the one who always trembles before God,  
    but whoever hardens their heart falls into trouble.

**15**Like a roaring lion or a charging bear  
    is a wicked ruler over a helpless people.

**16**A tyrannical ruler practices extortion,  
    but one who hates ill-gotten gain will enjoy a long reign.

**17**Anyone tormented by the guilt of murder  
    will seek refuge in the grave;  
    let no one hold them back.

**18**The one whose walk is blameless is kept safe,  
    but the one whose ways are perverse will fall into the pit.**[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2028&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-17215b" \o "See footnote b)]**

**19**Those who work their land will have abundant food,  
    but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty.

**20**A faithful person will be richly blessed,  
    but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.

**21**To show partiality is not good—  
    yet a person will do wrong for a piece of bread.

**22**The stingy are eager to get rich  
    and are unaware that poverty awaits them.

**23**Whoever rebukes a person will in the end gain favor  
    rather than one who has a flattering tongue.

**24**Whoever robs their father or mother  
    and says, “It’s not wrong,”  
    is partner to one who destroys.

**25**The greedy stir up conflict,  
    but those who trust in the Lord will prosper.

**26**Those who trust in themselves are fools,  
    but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.

**27**Those who give to the poor will lack nothing,  
    but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses.

**28**When the wicked rise to power, people go into hiding;  
    but when the wicked perish, the righteous thrive.

[***New International Version***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-International-Version-NIV-Bible/)***(NIV)***

*Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by [Biblica, Inc.®](http://www.biblica.com/) Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.*

### Proverbs 29

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

**If People Can’t See What God is Doing**

**29**One who is often reproved, yet remains stubborn,  
    will suddenly be broken beyond healing.  
**2**When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;  
    but when the wicked rule, the people groan.  
**3**A child who loves wisdom makes a parent glad,  
    but to keep company with prostitutes is to squander one’s substance.  
**4**By justice a king gives stability to the land,  
    but one who makes heavy exactions ruins it.  
**5**Whoever flatters a neighbor  
    is spreading a net for the neighbor’s feet.  
**6**In the transgression of the evil there is a snare,  
    but the righteous sing and rejoice.  
**7**The righteous know the rights of the poor;  
    the wicked have no such understanding.  
**8**Scoffers set a city aflame,  
    but the wise turn away wrath.  
**9**If the wise go to law with fools,  
    there is ranting and ridicule without relief.  
**10**The blood thirsty hate the blameless,  
    and they seek the life of the upright.  
**11**A fool gives full vent to anger,  
    but the wise quietly holds it back.  
**12**If a ruler listens to falsehood,  
    all his officials will be wicked.  
**13**The poor and the oppressor have this in common:  
    the Lord gives light to the eyes of both.  
**14**If a king judges the poor with equity,  
    his throne will be established forever.  
**15**The rod and reproof give wisdom,  
    but a mother is disgraced by a neglected child.  
**16**When the wicked are in authority, transgression increases,  
    but the righteous will look upon their downfall.  
**17**Discipline your children, and they will give you rest;  
    they will give delight to your heart.  
**18**Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint,  
    but happy are those who keep the law.  
**19**By mere words servants are not disciplined,  
    for though they understand, they will not give heed.  
**20**Do you see someone who is hasty in speech?  
    There is more hope for a fool than for anyone like that.  
**21**A slave pampered from childhood  
    will come to a bad end.**[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2029&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-17246a" \o "See footnote a)]**  
**22**One given to anger stirs up strife,  
    and the hothead causes much transgression.  
**23**A person’s pride will bring humiliation,  
    but one who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.  
**24**To be a partner of a thief is to hate one’s own life;  
    one hears the victim’s curse, but discloses nothing.**[[b](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2029&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-17249b" \o "See footnote b)]**  
**25**The fear of others**[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2029&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-17250c)**]** lays a snare,  
    but one who trusts in the Lord is secure.  
**26**Many seek the favor of a ruler,  
    but it is from the Lord that one gets justice.  
**27**The unjust are an abomination to the righteous,  
    but the upright are an abomination to the wicked.

[***New Revised Standard Version***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-Revised-Standard-Version-NRSV-Bible/)***(NRSV)***

*New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*

### Proverbs 30

The Message (MSG)

## The Words of Agur Ben Yakeh

### God? Who Needs Him?

**30 1-2**The skeptic swore, “There is no God!  
    No God!—I can do anything I want!  
I’m more animal than human;  
    so-called human intelligence escapes me.

**3-4**“I flunked ‘wisdom.’  
    I see no evidence of a holy God.  
Has anyone ever seen Anyone  
    climb into Heaven and take charge?  
    grab the winds and control them?  
    gather the rains in his bucket?  
    stake out the ends of the earth?  
Just tell me his name, tell me the names of his sons.  
    Come on now—tell me!”

**5-6**The believer replied, “Every promise of God proves true;  
    he protects everyone who runs to him for help.  
So don’t second-guess him;  
    he might take you to task and show up your lies.”

**7-9**And then he prayed, “God, I’m asking for two things  
    before I die; don’t refuse me—  
Banish lies from my lips  
    and liars from my presence.  
Give me enough food to live on,  
    neither too much nor too little.  
If I’m too full, I might get independent,  
    saying, ‘God? Who needs him?’  
If I’m poor, I might steal  
    and dishonor the name of my God.”

**10**Don’t blow the whistle on your fellow workers  
    behind their backs;  
They’ll accuse you of being underhanded,  
    and then *you’ll* be the guilty one!

**11**Don’t curse your father  
    or fail to bless your mother.

**12**Don’t imagine yourself to be quite presentable  
    when you haven’t had a bath in weeks.

**13**Don’t be stuck-up  
    and think you’re better than everyone else.

**14**Don’t be greedy,  
    merciless and cruel as wolves,  
Tearing into the poor and feasting on them,  
    shredding the needy to pieces only to discard them.

**15-16**A leech has twin daughters  
    named “Gimme” and “Gimme more.”

### Four Insatiables

Three things are never satisfied,  
    no, there are four that never say, “That’s enough, thank you!”—

hell,  
a barren womb,  
a parched land,  
a forest fire.

**17**An eye that disdains a father  
    and despises a mother—  
that eye will be plucked out by wild vultures  
    and consumed by young eagles.

### Four Mysteries

**18-19**Three things amaze me,  
    no, four things I’ll never understand—

how an eagle flies so high in the sky,  
how a snake glides over a rock,  
how a ship navigates the ocean,  
why adolescents act the way they do.

**20**Here’s how a prostitute operates:  
    she has sex with her client,  
Takes a bath,  
    then asks, “Who’s next?”

### Four Intolerables

**21-23**Three things are too much for even the earth to bear,  
    yes, four things shake its foundations—

when the janitor becomes the boss,  
when a fool gets rich,  
when a whore is voted “woman of the year,”  
when a “girlfriend” replaces a faithful wife.

### Four Small Wonders

**24-28**There are four small creatures,  
    wisest of the wise they are—

ants—frail as they are,  
    get plenty of food in for the winter;  
marmots—vulnerable as they are,  
    manage to arrange for rock-solid homes;  
locusts—leaderless insects,  
    yet they strip the field like an army regiment;  
lizards—easy enough to catch,  
    but they sneak past vigilant palace guards.

### Four Dignitaries

**29-31**There are three solemn dignitaries,  
    four that are impressive in their bearing—

a lion, king of the beasts, deferring to none;  
a rooster, proud and strutting;  
a billy goat;  
a head of state in stately procession.

**32-33**If you’re dumb enough to call attention to yourself  
    by offending people and making rude gestures,  
Don’t be surprised if someone bloodies your nose.  
    Churned milk turns into butter;  
    riled emotions turn into fist fights.

[***The Message***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible/)***(MSG)***

*Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by*[*Eugene H. Peterson*](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/?action=getVersionInfo&vid=65)

### Proverbs 31

New International Version (NIV)

### Sayings of King Lemuel

**31**The sayings of King Lemuel—an inspired utterance his mother taught him.

**2**Listen, my son! Listen, son of my womb!  
    Listen, my son, the answer to my prayers!  
**3**Do not spend your strength**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2031&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17288a)**]** on women,  
    your vigor on those who ruin kings.

**4**It is not for kings, Lemuel—  
    it is not for kings to drink wine,  
    not for rulers to crave beer,  
**5**lest they drink and forget what has been decreed,  
    and deprive all the oppressed of their rights.  
**6**Let beer be for those who are perishing,  
    wine for those who are in anguish!  
**7**Let them drink and forget their poverty  
    and remember their misery no more.

**8**Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,  
    for the rights of all who are destitute.  
**9**Speak up and judge fairly;  
    defend the rights of the poor and needy.

### Epilogue: The Wife of Noble Character

**10 [**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2031&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17295b)**]**A wife of noble character who can find?  
    She is worth far more than rubies.  
**11**Her husband has full confidence in her  
    and lacks nothing of value.  
**12**She brings him good, not harm,  
    all the days of her life.  
**13**She selects wool and flax  
    and works with eager hands.  
**14**She is like the merchant ships,  
    bringing her food from afar.  
**15**She gets up while it is still night;  
    she provides food for her family  
    and portions for her female servants.  
**16**She considers a field and buys it;  
    out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
**17**She sets about her work vigorously;  
    her arms are strong for her tasks.  
**18**She sees that her trading is profitable,  
    and her lamp does not go out at night.  
**19**In her hand she holds the distaff  
    and grasps the spindle with her fingers.  
**20**She opens her arms to the poor  
    and extends her hands to the needy.  
**21**When it snows, she has no fear for her household;  
    for all of them are clothed in scarlet.  
**22**She makes coverings for her bed;  
    she is clothed in fine linen and purple.  
**23**Her husband is respected at the city gate,  
    where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.  
**24**She makes linen garments and sells them,  
    and supplies the merchants with sashes.  
**25**She is clothed with strength and dignity;  
    she can laugh at the days to come.  
**26**She speaks with wisdom,  
    and faithful instruction is on her tongue.  
**27**She watches over the affairs of her household  
    and does not eat the bread of idleness.  
**28**Her children arise and call her blessed;  
    her husband also, and he praises her:  
**29**“Many women do noble things,  
    but you surpass them all.”  
**30**Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;  
    but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.  
**31**Honor her for all that her hands have done,  
    and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

[***New International Version***](http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-International-Version-NIV-Bible/)***(NIV)***

*Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by [Biblica, Inc.®](http://www.biblica.com/) Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.*

*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**

**