
*“Equipping believers for **growth** and **service** by encountering God through his word.”*

The Bible for Today

October 8, 2009



Our Study Divisions of Proverbs: Using Kenneth Aitken

1. Types of Characters/ People One Encounters in life
2. [Wisdom in Various Places](#)

The Home

[The Community](#)

[The Market](#)

The Law Court

The Palace (Government/ Rulers)

The Wisdom School

3. Way of God and Ways of the Humankind

Wisdom in the Community: Hatred and Strife

26:24

26:25

26:26

10:12

15:17

17:1

26:21

17:19

26:17

17:14

18:19

- Discern the one who may be close to us who is out to “stab us in the back” (smiles, but will hurt you)
- Hatred breeds other actions; a friend who might become an enemy because of not forgiving or a grudge developed
- 15:7 & 17:1—two meals; one where there is bounty and hatred/ one simple with love
- Be careful of getting into quarrels that are not yours (and if you do, seek reconciliation)
- The closer the relationship, the greater the alienation from them if quarrel comes; “quit before the quarrel begins”

Wisdom in the Community: Rich and Poor

22:2
29:13

- The sage is not like the Old Testament prophet; the prophet calls for social justice in the face of the disparity between rich and poor
- Sage— wealth and poverty are a fact of life

However, the attitude of the heart reveals one's character; "God is the God and Maker of them both."

These verses set the tone for considering wealth, poverty, care for the poor, and wisdom.

Wisdom in the Community: Wealth, Poverty, and Wisdom

Wealth & Poverty

10:15
18:11
13:8
19:4
14:20
19:7
22:7
18:23

Observations about wealth and poverty:

1. Wealth provides security (helps meet obligations and security in sudden change), but makes them vulnerable to theft.
2. Wealth brings friends, but be discerning about this.
3. Wealth brings power— control and influence in the community; “Movers and Shakers,” but discern responsibility.
4. Wealth gives opportunity for people to speak more boldly (may be harsh/ arrogant), so be careful of responsibility.

Wealth will require making godly choices; the wealthy have room to make wise or foolish decisions—
what will he or she choose?

Wisdom in the Community: Wealth, Poverty, and Wisdom

Gaining Wealth

13:18

10:4

12:11

28:19

21:17

21:20

13:23

Means

13:11

27:23-27

20:21

28:22

28:20

20:17

21:6

10:2

11:4

One can gain wealth by wisdom or folly.
Careful in one's choices.

Hard work, inheritance, speculation, or miserly. The best wealth is built over time through hard work.

Agrarian background of Israel; hard work, tilling ground, herding flocks brings long term wealth.

Be watchful and wise about: reckless investing (get rich quick); deceitful inheritance; unjust means of getting wealth (miserly- "one of evil eye")— lying, deceit, wicked, a 'fast buck'— will eventually be found out.

Wisdom in the Community: Wealth, Poverty, and Wisdom

Proper attitude
toward
wealth

23:4

23:5

11:28

22:1

16:8

19:1

28:6

15:16

10:22

28:11

30:7-9

A proper attitude toward wealth:

1. Wisdom counts more than money (seek wisdom and not wealth; wealth does not last)
2. Living rightly can produce wealth, but it is still better to pursue: *a good name, uprightness/integrity, fear of the Lord.* (Wealth can cloud our judgment about what is right)
3. Wealth can breed moral and spiritual blindness.

Proverbs 30:7-9

Be content in life

Wisdom in the Community: Wealth, Poverty, and Wisdom

Attitude and care for the poor

17:5

14:21

14:31

22:16

30:14

28:3

22:22-23

15:25

22:28

23:10-11

22:9

19:17

28:27

21:13

Proverbs 14:31— do not oppress or disregard the poor; an insult to God. Condemnation on leaders (those in power positions) of injustice to the poor; Prov. 30:14 cf. Micah 3:2-3.

OT: woe to those who take advantage of the poor, orphaned, widowed (easy targets); they are powerless— God will deal with the oppressor.

Moving the 'boundary stone:' greed to take another's means of livelihood (obligation of the 'go'el:' the redeemer— one from the clan who buys back).

The wise care for the poor—especially those who are prosperous; be careful not to turn an indifferent heart toward the poor (Lk. 16:19-26; Mt. 25:31-46)

Wisdom in the Market/ Community: Debts/ Gifts-Bribes

Underwriting Debt

6:1-5 (prologue)

17:18

11:15

22:26

22:27

27:13

20:16

Gifts/ Bribes

15:27

17:8

19:6

18:16

21:14

25:14

Advice against surety: guaranteeing another's debt (friends/ neighbors) in a "rash" or "ill-considered" pledge.

Hebrews 7:22—Jesus is our surety for the new covenant with God; humankind is a bad risk, but Jesus guarantees payment of debt (release from sin and right standing with God).

Gifts/ Bribes: a fact of life (some ambiguity in the verses)—a fine line between a gift and a bribe. The wise discerns his or her motive and are open (not secret) in the giving of a gift.

Wisdom in the Market/ Community: Those in Authority

The Righteous or Wicked in High Places

11:11

11:10

29:16

28:28

28:12

29:2

14:34

The blessings coming to the righteous ‘spill over’ onto the community.

The righteous leader brings justice; the wicked misery, violence, injustice, oppression.

Proverbs 14:13– nations exalted because of righteousness/ disobedient suffer in time (the story of Israel in the OT); Deut. 28

Wisdom in the Market/ Community: Bargains, Hoarding, False

Weights

Bargains,
Hoarding,
False
Weights

20:14

11:26

20:10

20:23

11:1

16:11

Bargains: Our perception—we get a good price (customer)--we make a buck (seller); ‘beauty is in the eye of the beholder’

Hoarding: stock piling merchandise to drive up price (customer sees a cheat; seller sees a wise inventory management)

False Weights: God abhors cheating in the marketplace; the dishonest will be found out and punished. “Honesty is exact to the penny.”

The Bible for Today

- Teach our children to have a proper attitude toward wealth/ finances/ prosperity. Money is seductive.
- Teach that those who prosper have an obligation to those who do not have (the poor).
- Teach stewardship for all of the things we possess materially.
- Pray for the righteousness of our leaders; those in authority to make 'godly choices.'