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

# The Bible for Today

October 14, 2009



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# 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 Law Court: [False Witnesses](#),

## Corrupt Judges, Lots

12:17

14:5

14:25

25:18

24:28

24:29

19:28

19:5

19:9

21:28

29:24

### False Witnesses:

- Cases heard at the gate: a gathering place, witnesses are important in law (two men needed to affirm the case)— Ruth 4:1-12.
- Perjury (Ex. 20:16)— “Do not bear false witness.” Vineyard of Naboth/ Jezebel (1 Kings 21:8-14)
- Punishment: Deut. 19:16-21
- The witnesses’ responsibility: the first stone (Deut. 17:7, John 8:7)

# Wisdom in the Law Court: False Witnesses, Corrupt Judges, Lots

17:5

24:23

24:24

24:25

18:5

17:23

28:21

17:26

## Corrupt/ False Judges:

- Do not declare the guilty innocent or the innocent guilty (heavy matter for those who judge)
- “To be partial”– literally “raise up the face” (the king lifts the face of the one begging for mercy)
- “The bosom”– a fold of cloth in a garment where one conceals money.

# Wisdom in the Law Court: False Witnesses, Corrupt Judges, Lots

18:17

## The Lot:

18:18

16:33

- Used to determine the divine will/ both OT and NT; the providence of God. (yes or no)
- “*goral*” also destiny or fate/ “*pur*” Feast of Purim in Esther (*Urim and Thummim*)
- Multiple references in scripture of use; no detailed description of procedures, instructions, or nature of lots ever found.
- Prov. 18:17– “two sides to every story”
- “The die is cast;” “Let’s flip a coin;” “Throw your lot in with us;” “Short straw goes first;” “Rock, Paper, Scissors.”

# Wisdom in the Palace: Rulers and government

28:15

28:16

16:10

20:8

20:26

29:14

29:4

20:28

## The Ideal King (Ruler):

- Upholds justice; uses divine wisdom or “uncanny” perception to see the right choices (will “see” justice).
- King like a supreme court justice/ a diviner of truth
- Responsibility of the king:
  1. to bring the wrong to justice and punishment
  2. to protect the poor from the rich and the powerful

Strong condemnation of kings and courts who use power for their own gain (Isa. 3:13-15; Jer. 22:13-19; Ezek. 34:1-10; Micah 3:1-4, 9-12)

# Wisdom in the Palace: Rulers and government

25:2-5

16:12

17:7

29:12

21:1

## The Wise/ Practical King will:

1. Know what is going on around them; well informed of situations, circumstances; “The King’s Ears” in Persia.
2. Keeps confidences/ important information ‘close to the vest;’ is committed to taking action on relevant facts and truth for the best of the people.
3. Surround themselves with officials who have integrity.

Prov. 21:1– will “fear the Lord,” submit to God, so that God might direct him or her.

# Wisdom in the Palace: Rulers and government

31:1-9

## The Words to Lemuel:

- ANE—kings will not oppress the weak, widow, poor, orphan (“drive out the evil before the land”)—vss 8-9.
- A queen-mother’s words— “What shall I say?” “What are you doing?” (v 1-2)
- Sexual promiscuity and drunkenness (vss 3-4)— (*harem*— saps the energy/ distracts both physically and morally) wine— confuses the mind. (cf. 1 Kings 11:1-13, downfall of Solomon)
- 31:6-7— hard text; drown sorrows in drink, drink as medication (possible reading— “it is one thing for the wretched to seek oblivion in alcohol, but kings cannot afford to become oblivious to their wretchedness”).

# Wisdom in the Palace: Rulers and government

16:15

19:12

20:2

16:14

14:35

22:29

25:15

16:13

22:11

24:21

24:22

23:1-3

25:6-7

## Working for the king/ public servants:

Service to the king can be good or bad; make one or break one (and life or death— Joseph, Esther, Daniel)

## Advice of working for king/ or public service:

1. Expect approval or promotion only if merited;
2. Speak tactfully when asked for advice (calm, gentle, persistent persuasion);
3. Tell the truth (16:13);
4. Fear and obey the king as he would fear God—22:11 (give respect and obedience (remember: conflict of loyalties—Acts 5:29; “render to Caesar”));
5. Watch your table manners (23:1-3);
6. Know your place in the group/ you may be called up (Lk 14:7-11).

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# The Bible for Today

- Always tell the truth and nothing but the truth as a witness.
- Mt. 7:1-6– the weight of judging rightly (honest, godly discernment).
- Take seriously the role of being a leader (a model, just, honest, protecting of rights).
- Take seriously the role of being a servant/citizen.
- Heed the advice of being a public servant.