

correction see Prov. 12:1; 13:18; 15:5, 31, 32. But there will always be those who forsake reproof, and they will not prosper (Prov. 15:10). See also Prov. 1:25, 26.

V. 18. "Hideth" and "uttereth" are obvious contrasts. Those who seek to hide their true feelings will lie. When asked, "What's the matter?" or "What have I done that's wrong?" they will reply, "Nothing." When asked, "Why are you upset?" they will say, "I'm not upset." See also Prov. 20:24-26. On the other hand to slander (defame) is foolish and wrong (Matt. 5:21,22). The word "devil" means "slanderer". We must be careful not to be guilty of doing the same thing (I Tim. 3:11). We should neither hide hatreds nor utter slanders. We can only avoid such a dilemma by getting hatred out of our hearts, which we are commanded to do (Eph. 4:31).

V. 19. Eccl. 5:3 says a fool's voice is known, is recognized, by its multitude of words. Jas. 1:19 says we are to be "slow to speak". See also Prov. 17:28. Those who speak incessantly will surely sometime speak when they should be listening, will say some things that shouldn't be said, and will sometime speak before they think. "Speak little, because for one sin which we may commit by keeping silence where it would be well to speak, we commit a hundred by speaking upon all occasions" (Pinart).

V. 20. A triple contrast: "tongue" vs. "heart"; "the righteous" vs. "the wicked"; "choice silver" vs. "little worth". The "little worth" of the wicked person's heart is seen in that contains no praise for God and no love for his fellowman.

V. 21. In this verse "feed" is set over against "die". "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (Prov. 15:7). Jesus "fed" multitudes with His teachings. Teachers of God's Word "feed" the flock of God (Acts 20:28). Paul "fed" many people in many places. We too can edify (build people up) with our lips (Eph. 4:29). People need this knowledge, for they will die for lacking it or for disregarding it (Hos. 4:6). Why does a mouse die in a trap or a fish die on the end of a hook? Because they "didn't know" what would happen by biting the bait.

V. 22. When Israel did right, God blessed them and enriched them. They were not made rich by their own power but by God's (Deut. 8:17, 18). Compare Gen. 24:35; 26:12; Psa. 37:22. Those who gain riches without regard for God both err from the faith and pierce themselves through with many sorrows (I Tim. 6:9, 10). When people get money in their own way, they often resort to crookedness, and all kinds of troubles follow.

“Unsanctified riches bring only trouble and vexation” (Pulpit Commentary). God’s riches are a blessing all the way (“no sorrow therewith”).

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 10:12-22

1. Why does hatred stir up strife (v. 12)?
2. In what way does love cover transgression (v. 12)?
3. How does one show that he/she has discerning lips (v. 13)?
4. What two verses extolled listening and condemned excessive talking?
5. Why is a rich man’s riches referred to as his “strong city” (v. 15)?
6. What did Jesus say about those who trust in riches (v. 15)?
7. In what ways is the labor of the righteous good for him (v. 16)?
8. What often happens when the wicked increase in riches (v. 16)?
9. What are some of the groups or individuals who will correct us throughout life (v. 17)?
10. What is better than hiding hatred within or uttering slander without (v. 18)?
11. How do we know that slander is of the devil (v. 18)?
12. Whose voice is known by its multitude of words (v. 19)?
13. How does v. 20 describe the worth of the righteous person’s tongue?
14. How does v. 20 describe the worth of the wicked person’s heart?
15. How can we “feed” people with words (v. 21)?
16. What often happens when people obtain riches for themselves without regard for God (v. 22)?
17. How do riches gained from God’s blessings differ (v. 22)?

### TEXT — 10:23-32

23. It is as sport to a fool to do wickedness;  
And so is wisdom to a man of understanding.
24. The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him;  
And the desire of the righteous shall be granted.
25. When the whirlwind passeth, the wicked is no more;  
But the righteous is an everlasting foundation.
26. As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes,

So is the sluggard to them that send him.

27. The fear of Jehovah prolongeth days;  
But the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
28. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness;  
But the expectation of the wicked shall perish.
29. The way of Jehovah is a stronghold to the upright;  
But it is a destruction to the workers of iniquity.
30. The righteous shall never be removed;  
But the wicked shall not dwell in the land.
31. The mouth of the righteous bringeth forth wisdom;  
But the perverse tongue shall be cut off.
32. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable;  
But the mouth of the wicked speaketh perverseness.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 10:23-32

1. Cite illustrations of people who make sport of wickedness (v. 23).
2. Does v. 23 mean that wisdom is "sport" to the man of understanding?
3. According to v. 24 what will come upon the wicked, and what will come upon the righteous?
4. What "whirlwind" will take away the wicked (v. 25)?
5. How are the righteous an "everlasting foundation" (v. 25)?
6. What do the three things mentioned in v. 26 have in common?
7. How does the fear of Jehovah "prolong days" (v. 27)?
8. What shortens the years of the wicked (v. 27)?
9. What is meant by the expectation of the wicked perishing (v. 28)?
10. What is meant by the "way of Jehovah" in v. 29?
11. Why say the righteous shall "never" be removed when all must die (v. 30)?
12. Why say the wicked shall not dwell in the land when there are many wicked people living (v. 30)?
13. In what sense will the perverse tongue be "cut off" (v. 31)?
14. Why say the "lips" know when it is the "mind" that knows (v. 32)?
15. Which verse did the Paraphrase help you with the most?
16. Which verse did the Comments help you with the most?

## PARAPHRASE OF 10:23-32

23. A fool's fun is being bad; a wise man's fun is being wise!
24. The wicked man's fears will all come true, and so will the good man's hopes.
25. Disaster strikes like a cyclone and the wicked are whirled away. But the good man has a strong anchor.
26. A lazy fellow is a pain to his employers--like smoke in their eyes or vinegar that sets the teeth on edge.
27. Reverence for God adds hours to each day; so how can the wicked expect a long, good life?
28. The hope of good men is eternal happiness; the hopes of evil men are all in vain.
29. God protects the upright but destroys the wicked.
30. The good shall never lose God's blessings, but the wicked shall lose everything.
31. The good man gives wise advice, but the liar's counsel is shunned.
32. The upright speak what is helpful; the wicked speak rebellion.

## COMMENTS ON 10:23-32

V. 23. To do mischief is sport or fun to a fool. Heb. 11:25 speaks of the "pleasures of sin". Godliness would be boredom to him until converted. He is sure he is living the only way to be lived. He thinks he is smart, and that everybody else is missing out on the main thing of life. But don't forget that the man of understanding enjoys the way of wisdom too. Fools are not the only ones who enjoy themselves. Yes, godly people are happy too!

V. 24. Many know they are not right, but outwardly they seem to act as if there is nothing to worry about. Yet, within them are lurking fears that come to the surface when they think they are going to die. As instantly as men cry out for God's mercy when they think they may suddenly die shows they have done some thinking ahead of time about their manner of life knowing it was not right. Their way of life finally catches up with them, but the righteous have hope as they look to the future, and that hope will be granted whether in answer to prayer for things here or in heaven in eternity. Notice the same truth in Psa. 145:19; I John 5:14, 15.

V. 25. Finally God's patience with the wicked comes to an end, and He sweeps them away with the suddenness of a

whirlwind. After such a storm has passed, oftentimes it is only the foundation of a building that is left. The righteous are like that foundation, the wicked like the building that was carried away. Psa. 37 is a psalm that says the same thing over and over. Read it, noting the sudden destruction of the wicked and the continuation and blessing of the righteous.

V. 26. See the "Paraphrase" on this verse. The teeth do not like vinegar nor the eyes smoke, and neither does an employer like a sluggard. Pulpit Commentary: "In a country where chimneys are unknown...the eyes must have often been painfully affected by the household fire."

V. 27. As a rule a person or a people given to sin will not live as long as a godly person or people. Sin soon burns its victims out like a roaring fire does the wood. Read Prov. 9:11 and Psa. 55:23 in connection with this verse.

V. 28. Several times does this chapter state this same truth. The righteous have much to hope for, and God does not disappoint them. The hopes of the wicked will be dashed to the ground as they perish. Psa. 112:10 and Prov. 11:7 also speak of the expectation of the wicked perishing. Sin, then, is a losing game. Don't play it!

V. 29. The way of Jehovah is followed by two statements: it is a stronghold (the utmost is protection) to the upright, but it is destruction to the workers of iniquity. When God rises to sift a people, not one kernel will be lost, but all the sinners will be destroyed (Amos 9:9). For God's special care of the righteous, see Psa. 91:1-12. It pays to do right. The backslidden people of Malachi's day said it didn't (Mal. 3:14, 15), but look what Mal. 3:16-4:2 goes on to record.

V. 30. And again the same lesson is emphasized. "Never be removed" is said of the righteous, but "not dwell" of the wicked. For the security of the godly see Psa. 125:1,2.

V. 31. The good mouth brings forth good things like praise (Eph. 5:4), edifying things (Eph. 4:29), and truth (Eph. 4:25) while the wicked mouth brings forth just the opposite, for which it will be destroyed.

V. 32. The lips of the righteous know what to say, when, where, etc. The mouth of the wicked speaks the wrong thing. Proverbs, Ephesians, and James all have much to say on the use and the abuse of the tongue.

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 10:23-32

1. What is fools' attitude toward mischief? Toward godliness (v. 23)?
2. Do godly people have any fun in life (v. 23)?
3. Do the wicked ever have any inward fears? When do they come to the surface (v. 24)?
4. What about the wicked when the whirlwind passes? What about the righteous (v. 25)?
5. Who is compared with vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes (v. 26)?
6. What can shorten the life-span of sinners (v. 27)?
7. What often keeps the expectation of the wicked from coming to pass (v. 28)?
8. The way of Jehovah is what two different things to the upright and to the workers of iniquity.. (v. 29)?
9. How is the security of the godly and the insecurity of the wicked set forth in v. 30?
10. What are some of the good things that issue from the mouth of the righteous? What are some of the bad things that issue from the mouth of the wicked (v. 31)?
11. What three Bible books have much to say about the use and the abuse of the tongue (v. 32)?

## NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 10

*"The righteous"*--

- "The memory of the righteous" (v. 7).
- "The mouth of the righteous" (v. 11, 31).
- "The labor of the righteous" (v. 16).
- "The tongue of the righteous" (v. 20).
- "The lips of the righteous" (v. 21).
- "The desire of the righteous" (v. 24).
- "The hope of the righteous" (v. 28).
- "The lips of the righteous" (v. 32).

*"The wicked"*--

- "The name of the wicked" (v. 7).
- "The heart of the wicked" (v. 20).
- "The fear of the wicked" (v. 24).
- "The years of the wicked" (v. 27).
- "The expectation of the wicked" (v. 28).
- "The mouth of the wicked" (v. 32).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### *"Fools"--*

- "A foolish son is the heaviness of his mother" (v. 1).
- "A prating fool shall fall" (vs. 8, 10).
- "The mouth of the foolish is a present destruction" (v. 14).
- "He that uttereth a slander is a fool (v. 18).
- "The foolish die for lack of understanding" (v. 21).
- "It is as sport to a fool to do wickedness" (v. 23).

### *Laziness"--*

- "He becometh poor that worketh with a slack hand" (v. 4).
- "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame" (v. 5).
- "As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is a sluggard to them that send him" (v. 26).

### *"Diligence"--*

- "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" (v. 4).
- "He that gathereth in summer is a wise son" (v. 5).
- "The labor of the righteous tendeth to life" (v. 16).

### *"Speech"--*

- "Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked" (vs. 6, 11).
- "In the lips of him that hath discernment wisdom is found" (v. 13).
- "The mouth of the foolish is a present destruction" (v. 14).
- "He that hideth hatred is of lying lips" (v. 18).
- "He that uttereth a slander is a fool" (v. 18).
- "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression" (v. 19).
- "He that refraineth his lips doeth wisely" (v. 19).
- "The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver" (v. 20).
- "The lips of the righteous feed many" (v. 21).
- "The mouth of the righteous bringeth forth wisdom" (v. 31).
- "The perverse tongue shall be cut off" (v. 31).
- "The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable" (v. 32).
- "The mouth of the wicked speaketh perverseness" (v. 32).

## TEXT — 11:1-11

1. A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah;  
But a just weight is his delight.
2. When pride cometh, then cometh shame;  
But with the lowly is wisdom.
3. The integrity of the upright shall guide them;  
But the perverseness of the treacherous shall destroy them.
4. Riches profit not in the day of wrath;  
But righteousness delivereth from death.
5. The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way;  
But the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.
6. The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them;  
But the treacherous shall be taken in their own iniquity.
7. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish;  
And the hope of iniquity perisheth.
8. The righteous is delivered out of trouble;  
And the wicked cometh in his stead.
9. With his mouth the godless man destroyeth his neighbor;  
But through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered.
10. When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth;  
And when the wicked perish, there is shouting.
11. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted;  
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:1-11

1. What is meant by "balance" (v. 1)?
2. Name two Bible characters whose perverseness brought their destruction (v. 3).
4. What is meant by the "day of wrath" (v. 4)?
5. Give a Biblical illustration of the righteousness of the perfect directing his way (v. 5).
6. How much is v. 6 like v. 5?
7. What dies besides a wicked person's body (v. 7)?
8. What is meant by "the wicked cometh in his stead" (v. 8)?
9. Why would a man destroy his neighbor (v. 9)?
10. Illustrate both truths in v. 10 with kings of the Old Testament.
11. Does "blessing" mean "prayers for the city" or the blessings of God upon the righteous (v. 11)?

12. How could a city be overthrown by the mouth of the wicked (v. 11)?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 11:1-11

1. The Lord hates cheating and delights in honesty.
2. Proud men end in shame, but the meek become wise.
3. A good man is guided by his honesty; the evil man is destroyed by his dishonesty.
4. Your riches won't help you on Judgment Day; only righteousness counts then.
5. The upright are directed by their honesty; the wicked shall fall beneath their load of sins.
6. The good man's goodness delivers him; the evil man's treachery is his undoing.
7. When an evil man dies, his hopes all perish, for they are based upon this earthly life.
8. God rescues good men from danger while letting the wicked fall into it.
9. Evil words destroy. Godly skill rebuilds.
10. The whole city celebrates a good man's success--and also the godless man's death.
11. The good influence of godly citizens causes a city to prosper, but the moral decay of the wicked drives it downhill.

#### COMMENTS ON 11:1-11

V. 1. A perusal of this chapter will show that its sayings deal principally with honesty, integrity and uprightness in human relationships. A "false balance" was a set of dishonest scales. That God is concerned about honesty in business is evident from this verse and from Lev. 19:35,36; Deut. 25:13-16; Prov. 20:10, 23.

V. 2. A double contrast: "pride" vs. "lowly" and "shame" vs. "wisdom". Pulpit Commentary: "Self-assertion and self-confidence shall meet with mortification and disgrace in the end."

V. 3. A triple contrast: "integrity" vs. "perverseness"; "the upright" vs. "the treacherous"; and "guide" vs. "destroy". The integrity of Joseph "guided" him with reference to Potiphar's wife (Gen 39:7-12), and the perverseness of Absalom "destroyed" him (II Sam. 15-18).

V. 4. "Clarke": "Among men they can do all things; but they cannot purchase the remission of sins, nor turn aside the

wrath of God when that is poured out." Observe this fact in I Pet. 1:18; Prov. 10:2; Eze. 7:19; Zeph. 1:18. If one could gain the whole world, he could not redeem his lost soul by offering it to God at judgment (Mark 8:36, 37). But righteousness has a great bearing on one's being delivered when God raises to punish (Gen. 7:1; II Pet. 2:5,7).

V. 5. This saying is similar to v. 3. We observe that a person spends a lifetime developing his righteousness, and all the while it is the directing force of his life. Remember the wickedness of Judas and the downfall it brought him (Matt. 26:14-16; Matt. 27:3-5).

V. 6. One's righteousness that has directed him (v. 5) also delivers him from many a destruction. A treacherous person is one bent on injuring another for his own sinful gain. But such are often taken in the plot they laid for others: Psa. 9:15; Prov. 5:22; Eccl. 10:8.

V. 7. Compare with Prov. 10:28. Get this lesson: there is nothing good beyond death for the wicked. Death dashes his earthly hopes to the ground, and eternity holds nothing good for him.

V. 8. God's providential leadership and His answer of the righteous people's prayers brings about this deliverance (II Kings 18:28--19:19, 35). On the wicked coming in his stead, "Young" translates: "The righteous from distress is drawn out, And the wicked goeth in instead of him." "American Bible Union version:" "The righteous was delivered out of trouble; And the wicked came into his place." Amplified speaks of the wicked getting into trouble instead of the righteous.

V. 9. This verse well fits a court scene where the false witness can destroy his neighbor and where the faithful witness can deliver the innocent. Naboth was destroyed through false witnesses (I Kings 21:1-13).

V. 10. This verse and the one following have sayings about the "city". Good kings were honored because of their successful reigns (II Chron. 32:33; 35:24, 25); not so with the bad kings (II Chron. 24:25). Consider also Prov. 28:12-18. There must have been much rejoicing when both Athaliah and Herod the Great died.

V. 11. Prov. 29:8 says, "Scoffers set a city in a flame" (mighty cities, after being conquered, were often burned--Josh. 6:24; 8:19); "But wise men turn away wrath" (by submitting rather than resisting an over-powering enemy--Jer. 27:4-11).

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:1-11

1. The sayings in this chapter mainly have to do with what?
2. How strongly does God express His feelings about dishonesty in business (v. 1)?
3. What precedes destruction?
4. What precedes honor?
5. How did Joseph's integrity guide him in the Potiphar's-wife situation (v. 2)?
6. How did Absalom's perverseness destroy him (v. 2)?
7. What statement shows that righteousness is actually more powerful than riches (v. 4)?
8. How did Judas's wickedness bring about his downfall (v. 5)?
9. Who is a treacherous person? What often happens to them that they do not expect (v. 6)?
10. What happens to the wicked's hope at death (v. 6)?
11. How did Hezekiah's righteousness deliver him and Jerusalem out of trouble (v. 7)?
12. What is meant in v. 8 by "the wicked cometh in his stead?"
13. How can one's mouth destroy his neighbor (v. 9)?
14. Cite two rulers whose death must have brought rejoicing to their people (v. 10).
15. How could scoffers set their city aflame (v. 11)?
16. How would wise men often turn away wrath from their city (v. 11)?

## TEXT — 11:12-21

12. He that despiseth his neighbor is void of wisdom;  
But a man of understanding holdeth his peace.
13. He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets;  
But he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter.
14. Where no wise guidance is, the people falleth;  
But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.
15. He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it;  
But he that hateth suretyship is secure.
16. A gracious woman obtaineth honor;  
And violent men obtain riches.
17. The merciful man doeth good to his own soul;  
But he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.
18. The wicked earneth deceitful wages;

- But he that soweth righteousness hath a sure reward.
19. He that is stedfast in righteousness shall attain unto life; And he that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death.
  20. They that are perverse in heart are an abomination to Jehovah;  
But such as are perfect in their way are his delight.
  21. Though hand join in hand, the evil man shall not be unpunished;  
But the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:12-21

1. Is lack of respect equivalent to "despising," or is "despising" always active (v. 12)?
2. Is a talebearer one who bears falsehoods, or is he also one who reveals truths that ought to be kept secret (v. 13)?
3. "Faithful" to whom or to what in v. 13?
4. According to v. 14 one should have both ..... and ..... counselors.
5. What is meant by being "surety" for another (v. 15)?
6. What would be included in being a "gracious" woman (v. 16)?
7. Does society or God (or both) cause the statements in v. 17 to come true?
8. What are "deceitful" wages (v. 18)?
9. "Soweth righteousness" reminds one of what well known New Testament passage (v. 18)?
10. What are the contrasts in v. 19?
11. Name Bible Characters who you consider were "perverse in heart" (v. 20).
12. What is meant by "hand join in hand" (v. 21).
13. What is meant by the "seed of the righteous" (v. 21).

## PARAPHRASE OF 11:12-21

12. To quarrel with a neighbor is foolish; a man with good sense holds his tongue.
13. A gossip goes around spreading rumors, while a trustworthy man tries to quiet them.
14. Without wise leadership, a nation is in trouble; but with good counselors there is safety.
15. Be sure you know a person well before you vouch for his credit! Better refuse than suffer later.

16. Honor goes to kind and gracious women, mere money to cruel men.
17. Your own soul is nourished when you are kind; it is destroyed when you are cruel.
18. The evil man gets rich for the moment, but the good man's reward lasts forever.
19. The good man finds Life; the evil man, Death.
20. The Lord hates the stubborn but delights in those who are good.
21. You can be very sure that the evil man will not go unpunished forever. And you can also be very sure that God will rescue the children of the godly.

#### COMMENTS ON 11:12-21

V. 12. Following Rom. 12:18 is much wiser than despising one's neighbor. Yet many disregard it. Needless or selfish strife is a work of the flesh and not of the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-23). If you say all that can be said, you will have all the trouble that can be had!

V. 13. A double contrast: "talebearer" vs. "faithful spirit" and "reveleth" vs. "concealeth". The first statement is found also in Prov. 20:19. Wisdom dictates that some things should not be told. Both Lev. 19:16 and I Tim. 5:13 show that talebearing is wrong.

V. 14. A double contrast: "no wise guidance" vs. "multitude of counsellors" and "falleth" vs. "safety". The last statement is found also in Prov. 24:6. Kings always had counsellors, and in time of war they depended much upon them. Prov. 15:22 shows that all of us have need of counsel at times. This verse is just the opposite of a know-it-all.

V. 15. Suretyship is when one promises to stand good for the obligation of another if he cannot pay. How many people have "smarted" for co-signing notes of others!

V. 16. A triple contrast; "gracious" vs. "violent"; "woman" vs. "men"; and "honor" vs. "riches." A gracious woman prefers honor to riches, but violent men sacrifice honor to gain riches.

V. 17 The merciful man does good to himself in that others will show mercy to him (Matt. 5:7; Matt. 25:34, 35). On the other hand the cruel are asking for trouble, and it will surely come to him (I Kings 21:17-19).

V. 18. Sometimes it looks like the wicked prosper in this

world (Psa. 37:35), but they will be cut down (Psa. 37:1, 2, 10, 12-15, 17, 20, 38). They have sown to the flesh, and they will reap corruption (Gal. 6:8). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Sowing to righteousness leads to a sure reward (Hos. 10:12; Jas. 3:18; Psa. 37:3-6, 11, 18, 19, 29-31, 37).

V. 19. A double contrast: "steadfast in righteousness" vs. "pursueth evil" and "life" vs. "death". As sinners pursue evil, godly people forsake evil and follow after righteousness and godliness (I Tim. 6:11; Tit. 2:12). The results? "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17). See also the great passage, Rom. 2:6-8.

V. 20 A triple contrast: "perverse" vs. "perfect"; "in heart" vs. "in their way"; and "abomination to Jehovah" vs. "his delight". Instances of perverse hearts and God's reaction: Pharisees (Luke 16:14, 15; 18:9-14; Matt. 15:1-9; 23:25-28) and Simon of Samaria (Acts 8:20-22). Instances of good people who pleased the Lord: Job (Job 1:8) and Mary of Bethany (Luke 10:39, 42; Mark 14:3-9). God delights as much in the righteous as He deplores the wicked.

V. 21. The opening statement is also in Prov. 16:5. Clarke: "Let them confederate as they please to support each other, justice will take care that they escape not judgment." Other passages on the deliverance of the righteous: Prov. 16:4,8; Gen. 7:1).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:12-21

1. What two ways is wisdom shown in the neighborhood (v. 12)?
2. Does a faithful person spread rumors and tales or seek to suppress such (v. 13)?
3. What about the person who seeks no counsel or guidance from others (v. 14)?
4. How is "smarting" sometimes connected with suretyship (v. 15)?
5. What are the differing goals of a gracious woman and violent men (v. 16)?
6. How is one being good to himself when he shows mercy to others (v. 17)?
7. How does one trouble his own flesh by being cruel (v. 17)?
8. In what sense are the gains of the wicked "deceitful" (v. 18)?

9. What chapter in Psa. emphasizes the sure reward of the righteous?
10. What are the differing attitudes toward evil and righteousness on the part of the wicked and the righteous (v. 19)?
11. What are the differing outcomes of pursuing evil and righteousness (v. 19)?
12. What group of perverse people of Jesus' day were especially abominable (v. 20)?
13. Does God overlook the righteousness of the righteous (v. 20)?
14. What is meant by "hand join in hand" (v. 21)?

## TEXT — 11:22-31

22. As a ring of gold in a swine's snout,  
So is a fair woman that is without discretion.
23. The desire of the righteous is only good;  
But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.
24. There is that scattereth, and increaseth yet more;  
And there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it  
tendeth only to want.
25. The liberal soul shall be made fat;  
And he that watereth shall be watered also himself.
26. He that withholdeth grain, the people shall curse him;  
But blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.
27. He that diligently seeketh good seeketh favor;  
But he that searcheth after evil, it shall come unto him.
28. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall;  
But the righteous shall flourish as the green leaf.
29. He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind;  
And the foolish shall be servant to the wise of heart.
30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;  
And he that is wise winneth souls.
31. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth;  
How much more the wicked and the sinner!

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:22-31

1. Illustrate a woman with discretion (v. 22).
2. What is the comparison between her and the hog with a gold ring (v. 22)?
3. Do "desire" and "expectation" in v. 23 stand for "hope" or for what actually results?

4. Find the agricultural setting in v. 24.
5. What is meant by "liberal" in v. 25?
6. What is meant by "fat" (v. 25)?
7. What New Testament passage does the last statement in v. 25 call to mind?
8. How do we know that "withholdeth" in v. 26 means "won't sell"?
9. Why would the owner withhold the grain (v.26)?
10. Whose favor is obtained in v. 27--God's or man's (or both)?
11. Cite instances of people's seeking evil (v. 27)?
12. Show from the Bible that man should not trust in riches (v. 28).
13. What does Psa. 1:3 say about the leaf of the righteous (v. 28)?
14. How does one "trouble his own house" (v. 29)?
15. Give an illustration of the foolish serving the wise (v. 20; .
16. What is meant by "tree of life" in v. 30?
17. In Solomon's day what did "winning souls" mean or involve (v. 30)?
18. What are some of the earthly recompenses upon the righteous (v. 31)?
19. What are some of the earthly recompenses upon the wicked (v. 31)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 11:22-31

22. A beautiful woman lacking discretion and modesty is like a fine gold ring in a pig's snout.
23. The good man can look forward to happiness, while the wicked can expect only wrath.
- 24,25. It is possible to give away and become richer! It is also possible to hold on too tightly and lose everything. Yes, the liberal man shall be rich! By watering others, he waters himself.
26. People curse the man who holds his grain for higher prices, but they bless the man who sells it to them in their time of need.
27. If you search for good you will find God's favor; if you search for evil you will find His curse.
28. Trust in your money and down you go! Trust in God and flourish as a tree!
29. The fool who provokes his family to anger and resentment will finally have nothing worthwhile left. He shall be the

servant of a wiser man.

30. Godly men are growing a tree that bears lifegiving fruit, and all who win souls are wise.
31. Even the godly shall be rewarded here on earth; how much more the wicked!

#### COMMENTS ON 11:22-31

V. 22. We might ask, "What is a ring of gold if it be on a swine's snout? Does it make the hog? And what is physical beauty if the woman has no discretion? Is physical beauty all that counts?"

V. 23. Instead of "wrath", "Young's Literal translation" gives "transgression", and the "Septuagint" gives "shall perish". The passage means that the righteous desire only that which is good while the wicked desire that which is wrong ("transgression") or that which brings God's "wrath," causing them to perish." How wonderful to have right desires! And how bad to crave the wrong thing!

V. 24. "Scattereth" here has reference to giving to the needy (Psa. 112:9). Judiciously helping the needy does not impoverish us (God blesses us), but if we withhold from them, God will withhold from us. II Cor. 9:6: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." An old epitaph: "What we spent, we had; what we saved, we lost; what we gave, we have."

V. 25. "Liberal" here means "generous"; "fat" means "prosperous". Promised also in Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

V. 26. Often the rich withhold selling grain during shortages to let the price go higher and higher. How the people will curse such a character! But how the same people would bless him for not waiting for higher prices but releasing to their need!

V. 27. One who seeks to do right will obtain the favor of both man and God. As a young man Jesus "advanced...in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). So did the child Samuel (I Sam. 2:26). So will a virtuous person (Prov. 31:28-31). Those who traffic in evil will have evil (trouble) come upon them: Esth. 7:10; Psa. 7:15, 16; 9:15, 16; 10:2; 57:6.

V. 28. This man trusts his riches rather than God, something consistently condemned in the Bible: Job 31:24; Psa. 52:8; Mark 10:24; I Tim. 6:17. The righteous are often compared to the flourishing tree or leaf: Psa. 1:3; 52:8; 92:12; Jer. 17:8.

V. 29. God is displeased with one who makes trouble for his parents and brothers and sisters. He will inherit the "wind" (get nothing) rather than be included in the family inheritance. In life the foolish "serve" or work for the "wise". The man wise enough to choose what he wants to succeed in and prepares himself for it gets much farther than the man who idly drifts from job to job and from day to day.

V. 30. Men draw good from the lives of the righteous. To partake of the good from their lives is like eating of the tree of life. The righteous wisely win souls from the wrong to the right. This is a great Old Testament verse on the good influencing the bad over to the right way of life.

V. 31. The New Testament mainly points to the final reaping of what we have sown (Gal. 6:7-9), yet there are earthly as well as eternal consequences of our sowing (Matt. 6:33; I Tim. 4:8). There are two yokes that one can wear in life: Christ's and Satan's. Christ invited those worn out with the terrible load of sin (wearing Satan's yoke) to come to Him and to take His yoke instead, promising them soul-rest and a much better and easier way to live (Matt. 11:28-30). When one considers the sorrows and disappointments and intrigue and distrust that sin brings to a person, truly the way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15).

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:22-31

1. In what way is a beautiful woman with no judgment like a hog with a gold ring in its nose (v. 22)?
2. What do some other versions give instead of "wrath" in v. 23?
3. Tell in your own words what v. 24 means.
4. What are the meanings of "liberal" and "fat" as used in v. 25?
5. "Withholdeth grain" in what sense (v. 26)?
6. What two things are different people seeking, according to v. 27, and what are their prospects at succeeding at their endeavor?
7. "Trusting in riches" is set over against trusting in ..... (v. 28)

8. Cite two passages that liken the righteous to a flourishing tree or leaf (v. 28).
9. What will one "inherit" from his family who has caused them endless trouble (v. 20)?
10. In life who serves whom among the wise and the foolish (v. 29)?
11. Discuss the question of the righteous person's influence from v. 30.
12. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the
12. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the righteous right in this life (v. 31)?
13. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the wicked in this life (v. 31)?

#### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 11

*"What are you doing to yourself?"--*

"The wicked will fall by his own wickedness" (v. 5).

"The merciful man doeth good to his own soul" (v. 17).

"He that is cruel troubleth his own house" (v. 17).

"He that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death" (v. 19).

"He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind" (v. 29).

*"Abomination and delight"--*

"A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah; But a just weight is his delight" (v. 1).

"They that are perverse in heart are an abomination to Jehovah; But such as are perfect in their way are his delight" (v. 20).

*"Destruction"--*

"The perversness of the treacherous shall destroy them" (v. 3)

"With his mouth the godless man destroyeth his neighbor" (v. 9)

"The city....is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (v. 11).

"He that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death" (v. 19)

"He that trusteth in his own riches shall fall" (v. 28).

## CHAPTER 11

### *"Deliverance"--*

"Righteousness delivereth from death" (v. 4).

"The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them" (v. 6).

"The righteous is delivered out of trouble" (v. 8).

"Through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered" (v. 9).

"The seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (v. 21).

### *"Righteous"--*

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them" (v. 3).

"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way" (v. 5).

"The righteous is delivered out of trouble" (v. 8).

"Through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered" (v. 9).

"When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth" (v. 10).

"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted" (v. 11).

"He that soweth righteousness hath a sure reward" (v. 18).

"He that is steadfast in righteousness shall attain unto life" (v. 19).

"The seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (v. 21).

"The desire of the righteous is only good" (v. 23).

"He that diligently seeketh good seeketh favor" (v. 27).

"The righteous shall flourish as the green leaf" (v. 28).

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (v. 30).

"The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth" (v. 31).

## PRIDE IS A TROUBLE-MAKER

"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife" (28:25), and 13:10 says, "Only by pride cometh contention."

When one is proud, he is going to try to have his own way no matter what. He will not concede that he has been wrong or that he could even be wrong. He is a self-centered, conceited man who is going to ram-rod his way through anything (or anybody) that would resist him.

It should be easy to admit error when one sees his mistake, but pride will not permit a person to make such an admission. He would rather defend himself though in error than to concede the truth. Thus, trouble arises through pride. And there are other ways too in which pride causes trouble.

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### PRIDE LEADS DOWN—NOT UP

“A man’s pride shall bring him low” (29:23). There is a lot in that simple statement. A man’s pride is actually self-exaltation. A proud man lifts himself up. But, this proverb so wisely says that his pride will actually bring him down in time. And it will. As 16:18 says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

Haman’s pride brought his destruction. So did Nebuchadnezzar’s make a beast of the field of him for seven years. Peter’s trusting in his own moral strength led to his downfall, for he didn’t watch and pray as he should have done. And the persons of the Bible, as well as the persons of any community, give one ample examples of this sad fact.

### PRIDE CONTRASTED WITH WISDOM

A proud person glories in his exalted or inflated thoughts of himself. He thinks he is “it”, or she thinks she is “it”. But, Proverbs lists pride as foolish and in a number of passages contrasts it with wisdom. 14:3 says, “In the mouth of the FOOLISH, is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.” 11:2 says, “When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.” And 13:10 says, “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.” One is not well advised who is proud in heart. He has been using the wrong standard of measure. He is viewing himself in the light of his own thoughts, and they are warped. Anyone is foolish who views himself primarily in the light of his own thoughts. What God thinks of us is always right, and the common consensus of thought concerning us is also to be taken into consideration.

Let us see, then, that pride has no chance to get a start in our hearts. Let us pull out the first appearance of it lest it grow and take possession of our hearts.

## TEXT — 12:1-9

1. Whoso loveth correction loveth knowledge;  
But he that hateth reproof is brutish.
2. A good man shall obtain favor of Jehovah;  
But a man of wicked devices will he condemn.
3. A man shall not be established by wickedness;  
But the root of the righteous shall not be moved.
4. A worthy woman is the crown of her husband;  
But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.
5. The thoughts of the righteous are just;  
But the counsels of the wicked are deceit.
6. The words of the wicked are of lying in wait for blood;  
But the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.
7. The wicked are overcome, and are not;  
But the house of the righteous shall stand.
8. A man shall be commended according to his wisdom;  
But he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.
9. Better is he that is lightly esteemed, and hath a servant;  
Than he that honoreth himself, and lacketh bread.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 12:1-9

1. What is the meaning of "loving correction" when Heb. 12:11 says no chastening for the moment seems joyous but grievous (v. 1)?
2. In what sense is one "Brutish" who hates reproof (v. 1)?
3. Among the things that a person might seek, where should obtaining the favor of God rank (v. 2)?
4. Cite some example of people of wicked devices whom God condemned (v. 2)?
5. Apply both parts of v. 3 to David and his contemporaries.
6. According to v. 4 how can a wife affect her husband and his situation in life?
7. Are "thoughts" and "counsels" in v. 5 the same or different? Comment.
8. In what two different ways can the tongue be used (v. 6)?
9. Think of people of your own acquaintance whom you respect for their wisdom (v. 8).
10. What verse in this chapter is similar to v. 7?

11. Think of people of your own acquaintance who are despised because of their perverse heart (v. 8).
12. What does the Bible say about honoring and exalting yourself (v. 9)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 12:1-9

1. To learn, you must want to be taught. To refuse reproof is stupid.
2. The Lord blesses good men and condemns the wicked.
3. Wickedness never brings real success; only the godly have that.
4. A worthy wife is her husband's joy and crown; the other kind corrodes his strength and tears down everything he does.
5. A good man's mind is filled with honest thoughts; an evil man's mind is crammed with lies.
6. The wicked accuse; the godly defend.
7. The wicked shall perish; the godly shall stand.
8. Everyone admires a man with good sense, but a man with a warped mind is despised.
9. It is better to get your hands dirty--and eat--than to be to proud to work and starve.

## COMMENTS ON 12:1-9

V. 1. This 12th chapter is another entire chapter with two statements per verse, usually contrasting statements and usually a contrast between the righteous and the wicked (as in vs. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22). This verse connects correction and knowledge, showing that we learn through correction. The new worker has everything explained at first; he remembers most of the instructions, but he makes a mistake; the foreman re-shows him the part he had forgotten, and he now knows how to do it. The major league hires batting coaches to help players with their batting (often through correcting something about their present stance, holding the bat, or swing). Yes, correction here means rebuke (see the last statement of the verse). On "brutish" Pulpit Commentary says: "Insensible to higher aspirations, to regret for the past and hope of amendment, as a brute beast." A sad fact: more people hate reproof than love correction (John 3: 19-21; I Kings 22:8; Amos 5:10).

V. 2. A "good" man obtains God's favor, so does a righteous man (Gen. 7:1), and so does a wise man (Prov. 8:35). Rom. 5:7 draws a distinction between a "good" man and a "righteous" man. Righteousness has to do with doing right rather than wrong; goodness has to do with whether one is good to others or not. A man of wicked devices is neither right nor good. The first goal of life should be to obtain God's favor. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and a host of others did--and we can. Ahab, Jezebel, Judas Iscariot, Ananias and Sapphira didn't--and many today don't.

V. 3. Compare this verse with v. 7 and Prov. 10:25. A tree is something that is "established"; it is there from year to year. So are the righteous, but the wicked are often cut off (Psa. 37:1,2). Saul and his house lost out through disobedience (I Sam. 15:23). David's house was established through obedience (II Sam. 7:12-16). Wickedness may prosper for the moment but not forever (consider Ananias and Sapphira of Acts 5:1-10 and Haman of Esth. 5:11, 12; 7:8).

V. 4. "Pulpit Commentary:" "A virtuous woman--one whose portrait is beautifully traced in Prov. 31. The term is applied to Ruth in Ruth 3:11...As a crown to her husband, she is an honor to him, adorns and beautifies his life." But there are wives who make their husbands ashamed (maybe by over-spending, maybe their neglect of the house or the children, maybe by their excessive talking, maybe by their immoral conduct, etc.).

V. 5. Everyone has thoughts. The righteous person's thoughts reflect righteous thinking ("just"), but wicked people's thoughts ("counsels expressed in advice") are "deceit" and not sincere.

V. 6. This verse seems to be related to the previous verse. The "Thoughts" of people are put into "words" in which the wicked are out to overthrow, but the righteous are out to deliver. Jezebel used "deceit" and "words" to overthrow Naboth (I Kings 21:7-14). See Prov. 1:10-13 also.

V. 7. Similar in message to v. 3. In v. 6 the wicked were out to overthrow others; in this verse they themselves are overthrown, and the righteous who in v. 6 were out to deliver others are in this verse themselves established. Read the New Testament account of this (Matt. 7:24-27).

V. 8. "David behaved himself wisely, and Saul set him over the men of war" (I Sam. 18:5). A wise person will be looked to

for leadership among the relatives, in the community, at work, and in the church. While the righteous and the wise are held in high respect, the wicked are despised (I Sam. 25:17).

V. 9. Instead of "hath a servant", some versions say "Serving himself" ("Septuagint"); "Tills for himself" ("American Bible Union version") "amplified" speaks of working for his own support. "Pulpit Commentary": "it is wiser to look after one's own business and provide for one's own necessities, even if thereby he meets with contempt and detraction, than to be in real want, all the time assuming the airs of a rich and prosperous man."

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 12:1-9

1. What is the result of loving correction (v. 1)?
2. How is one "brutish" who hates reproof (v. 1)?
3. What is the careful distinction between a "righteous" person and a "good" person (v. 2)?
4. What should be one's first goal in life (v. 2)?
5. Who were some in the Bible who were not established because of wickedness (v. 3)?
6. Who were some who were established because of righteousness (v. 3)?
7. What chapter contains extended material on the virtuous woman (v. 4)?
8. How can a wife be a crown to her husband (v. 4)?
9. How can she make him ashamed (v. 4)?
10. How are vs. 5, 6 related?
11. How are vs. 6, 7 related?
12. How did David's case illustrate v. 8?
13. What do some other versions give for "hath a servant" in v. 9?

#### TEXT — 12:10-19

10. A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast;  
But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.
11. He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread;  
But he that followeth after vain persons is void of understanding.
12. The wicked desireth the net of evil men;  
But the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.

13. In the transgression of the lips is a snare to the evil man;  
But the righteous shall come out of trouble.
14. A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his  
mouth;  
And the doings of a man's hands shall be rendered unto  
him.
15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes;  
But he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsel.
16. A fool's vexation is presently known;  
But a prudent man concealeth shame.
17. He that uttereth truth showeth forth righteousness;  
But a false witness, deceit.
18. There is that speaketh rashly like the piercings of a  
sword;  
But the tongue of the wise is health.
19. The lip of truth shall be established for ever;  
But a lying tongue is but for a moment.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 12:10-19

1. Does v. 10 teach that a person's righteousness will include the way he treats his animals?
2. What is meant by the "tender mercies of the wicked" (v. 10)?
3. Who are "vain persons" in v. 11?
4. Give the meaning of v. 12 by rewriting in it your own words.
5. Cite Bible instances of the righteous coming out of trouble (v. 10).
6. Cite Bible instances of the doings of men's hands being rendered to them (v. 14).
7. What thought-connection is there between the two statements in v. 15?
8. Is all vexation wrong (v. 16)?
9. In what other Bible passages are both "truth" and "righteousness" found (v. 17)?
10. In v. 18 rash speech is contrasted with what kind of speech?
11. There is a saying that "truth crushed to the ground will ..... again" (v. 19).
12. How can v. 19 be a comfort when one has been misrepresented?

## PARAPHRASE OF 12:10-19

10. A good man is concerned for the welfare of his animals, but even the kindness of godless men is cruel.
11. Hard work means prosperity; only a food idles away his time.
12. Crooks are jealous of each other's loot, while good men long to help each other.
13. Lies will get any man into trouble, but honesty is its own defense.
14. Telling the truth gives a man great satisfaction, and hard work returns many blessings to him.
15. A fool thinks he needs no advice, but a wise man listens to others.
16. A fool is quick-tempered; a wise man stays cool when insulted.
17. A good man is known by his truthfulness; a false man by deceit and lies.
18. Some people like to make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise soothe and heal.
19. Truth stands the test of time; lies are soon exposed.

## COMMENTS ON 12:10-19

V. 10. A proverb for farmers, some of whom can be very cruel to their animals. Children should be taught not to torture nor abuse animals. As a child I learned:

Be kind to your animal,  
 For it cannot complain;  
 Be thoughtful when  
 Using the whip or the rein.

“Clarke:” “One principal characteristic of a holy man is mercy; cruelty is unknown to him, and his benevolence extends to the meanest of the brute creation. Pity rules the heart of a pious man; he can do nothing that is cruel. He considers what is best for the comfort, ease, health and life of the beast that serves him;” “Pulpit Commentary”: “God enacted that the rest of the sabbath should extend to the domestic animals (Exo. 20:10); that a man should help the overburdened beast even of his enemy (Exo. 23:5); that the unequal strength of the ox and ass should not be yoked together in the plough (Deut. 22:10); that the ox should not be muzzled when he was treading out the corn

(Deut. 25:4); that the sitting bird should not be taken from her little brood (Deut. 22:6), nor a kid seethed in its mothers' milk (Exo. 23:19). God was concerned over both man and animals in Nineveh's threatened destruction (Jon. 4:11)." There seems to be irony in speaking of the "tender mercies" of the wicked as it labels them as "cruel". All that some people know is cruelty but no tenderness.

V. 11. Prov. 28:19 is much like this verse. "Plenty" is the expected pay-off of work. The implication is that one who joins "vain fellows" (non-workers in this contrast) lacks understanding and will come to poverty. The elder son in the parable had plenty of bread, but the prodigal son who ran with useless people came to want (Luke 15:11-14, 17, 25, 26).

V. 12. The wicked (thieves, embezzlers, kidnappers, cheaters, etc.) desire and try to obtain by evil ways, but they are usually caught and end up with nothing while the righteous (who honestly work for what they have) are fruitful in their honest labors (Psa. 1:3, 4).

V. 13. The "net of evil" men desired by the wicked in order to get dishonest gain here becomes a "snare" in which one himself is taken. A liar's memory is not always good enough to keep him from contradicting himself and thus getting himself into trouble (Prov. 18:7), but the truthful, forthright speech of the righteous brings them out of difficulties.

V. 14. Compare Prov. 13:2 for a similar statement. One who has answered kindly is satisfied with the peace that results (Prov. 15:1). A good man's "doings" will also bring him blessings (Luke 6:38; Prov. 31:28-31).

V. 15. A fool knows little, actually not enough to know that he might be wrong, actually too little to seek out the advice of one who does know. Both testaments tell us not to be wise in our own eyes (Prov. 3:7, Rom. 12:16). A wise man can (and will) be warned, but a fool will go on his own way, not seeing his error, and will suffer for it (Prov. 22:3; 27:12).

V. 16. A writer has said: "A foolish man, if he is vexed, insulted, or slighted, has no idea of controlling himself or checking the expression of his aroused feelings; he at once...makes his vexation known." The wise man keeps a cool head and copes with the problem rather than cursing. Prov. 29:11 is a companion verse: "A fool uttereth all his anger; But a wise man keepeth it back and stilleth it."

V. 17. Truth and righteousness are properly associated

together (I Kings 3:6; Isa. 48:1; Zech. 8:8). Christians are to have their loins girt about with the "truth" and are to have on the breastplate of "righteousness" (Eph. 6:14). One speaks truth who has an eye to righteousness, but one who is untrue utters deceit (Prov. 14:5). We are commended before God by speaking right words but condemned before Him by speaking wrong words (Matt. 12:37).

V. 18. A double contrast: "Speaketh rashly" vs. "tongue of the wise" and "like the piercings of a sword" vs. "health". Rashness is always opposed to reason, for in rashness one speaks or acts before he thinks or beyond his thinking. Such a tongue can be like a destructive, cutting sword (Psa. 59:7; 64:3). Who hasn't sometime been cut (even cut down) by the thoughtless words of others? And yet speech can perk one up (Prov. 12:25), actually build one up. "Edify" means to "build up", and speech can be edifying (Eph. 4:29).

V. 19. It is always right to speak the truth instead of lying, and in the long run it is profitable to have told the truth, for most lies are ultimately found out. Never misrepresent anybody or anything, and if misrepresented by others, remember and take comfort from the fact that in time the truth will be known. Men may have killed Jesus as if evil, but God raised Him as His own Son (Acts 2:23, 24).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 12:10-19

1. According to v. 10 what two ways can a person treat animals?
2. Show from the Scriptures that God in His laws was concerned about animals (v. 10).
3. Who are the "vain persons" in v. 11?
4. What well known person in one of Jesus' parables followed vain persons and ended up with nothing (v. 11)?
5. Instead of honest work how do wicked people try to obtain things (v. 12)?
6. What is the double message of v. 13?
7. What will both a good man's words and his doings do for him (v. 14)?
8. What is right in the eyes of a fool (v. 15)?
9. What does a fool not seek nor heed (v. 15)?
10. How does a fool make his vexation known (v. 16)?
11. Eph. 6:14 speaks of being girt with ..... and having on the breastplate of .....

12. What is rashness contrasted with (v. 17)?
13. A wicked tongue is likened to a ..... in v. 18.
14. What does "edify" mean (v. 18)?
15. We know misrepresentation is not right. Show from v. 19 that it is also not wise.

## TEXT — 12:20-28

20. Deceit is in the heart of them that devise evil;  
But to the counsellors of peace is joy.
21. There shall be no mischief happen to the righteous;  
But the wicked shall be filled with evil.
22. Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah;  
But they that deal truly are his delight.
23. A prudent man concealeth knowledge;  
But the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.
24. The hand of the diligent shall bear rule;  
But the slothful shall be put under taskwork.
25. Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop;  
But a good word maketh it glad.
26. The righteous is a guide to his neighbor;  
But the way of the wicked causeth them to err.
27. The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in  
hunting;  
But the precious substance of men is to the diligent.
28. In the way of righteousness is life;  
And in the pathway thereof is no death.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 12:20-28

1. How many stated and implied truths can you find in v. 20?
2. What is the meaning of "mischief" in v. 21?
3. What is the meaning of "evil" in v. 21?
4. Why does it matter what God thinks of our speech (v. 22)?
5. Cite two contrasts in v. 22.
6. Why would a prudent man "conceal" knowledge (v. 22)?
7. Cite three contrasts in v. 23.
8. What is a "sloth" from which our word "slothful" comes (v. 24)?
9. Find two contrasts in v. 25.

10. If the righteous was a guide to his neighbor in Old Testament times, how is this even more true in New Testament times (v. 26)?
11. By extension could v. 27 be used against killing for sport (v. 27)?
12. Cite other passages besides v. 28 that connect righteousness with life.

### COMMENTS ON 12:20-28

V. 20. Deceit in the hearts of those who devise evil is contrasted with the joy that is in the hearts of those whose counsel toward peace. Those who devise evil will do anything (lie, cheat, etc.) in order to accomplish their ends. Those who counsel peace have the good feeling of joy.

V. 21. "Mischief" and "evil" here both mean calamity or difficulty. Other passages using "evil" in this way: Amos 3:6; Eccl. 12:1. Had Jonah obeyed God, he would not have had the nightmarish experience he did (Jon. 1:1-2:6).

V. 22. Strong verses against lying: Prov. 6:17; Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:8; 22:15. God is for truth-telling (Eph. 4:25) and for sincerity (John 1:47).

V. 23. A triple contrast: "prudent" vs. "fools"; "conceal-eth" vs. "proclaimeth"; and "knowledge" vs. "foolishness." Why would a prudent man conceal knowledge? "He is not wont to utter unadvisedly what he knows but waits for fitting opportunity, either from humility or wise caution" ("Pulpit Commentary"). In contrast "a foolish man cannot help exposing the stupid ideas that arise in his mind" (Pulpit Commentary").

V. 24. The diligent bear rule in the community, in business, in the church, etc. See these two classes in the Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:12-24). Before Esau and Jacob were born, God predicted that the elder (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob) (Gen. 25:23). Jacob was diligent (aggressive to get ahead, and he used every opportunity and every means at his disposal to do so), but Heb. 12:16 calls Esau a "profane" person, who "for one mess of meat sold his own birthright". What is God's evaluation of diligence and indolence? "I love Jacob; but Esau I hated" (Mal. 1:2, 3).

V. 25. While a person's own grief can make his heart heavy, a good word from someone else can cheer it up (Isa. 50:4; Prov. 12:18). Prov. 15:13 treats both conditions of the heart.

V. 26. Here are two kinds of neighbors; a true neighbor (one who is a guide) and a bad neighbor (one who causes another to err). The second greatest commandment in the law of Moses and one also found in the new covenant; love your neighbor (Matt. 22:36-39; Rom. 13:8). The law of love is to help one another (Gal. 6:2; 5:13); nor will love work injury to a neighbor (Rom. 13:10).

V. 27. The slothful man may kill game, bring it home, lay it down, and not bother to roast it so that it might be eaten. Not so with the diligent to whom everything acquired is "precious" (valuable). Some people will never get ahead because of not taking care of what they have; others get ahead by taking care of everything they have.

V. 28. Often the Hebrew poets restated the same thought in different words, such as here. This form emphasizes the fact that righetousness leads to life, not to death--a fact often taught in the Bible (Psa. 37:9, 11, 18, 29).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 12:20-28

1. What do devisers-of-evil employ to accomplish their ends (v. 20)?
2. What emotion do counselors of peace receive (v. 20)?
3. Prove that "mischief" and "evil" sometimes mean "difficulties" in the Bible (v. 21.)?
4. What is God's reaction to lying lips (v. 22)?
5. What is the triple contrast in v. 23?
6. What causes a prudent man to "conceal" knowledge (v. 23)?
7. What class gets elevated to ruling (v. 24)?
8. What twin brothers exemplify the two sides of v. 24?
9. What should we do when we find people with heavy hearts (v. 25)?
10. What contrast toward neighbors is found in v. 26?
11. Who does not roast what he shoots (v. 27)?
12. What common practice in Hebrew poetry is observed in v. 28?

#### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 12

*"Wicked"--*

"A man of wicked devices will he condemn" (v. 2).

"A man shall not be established by wickedness (v. 3).

"The counsels of the wicked are deceit" (v. 5).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

"The words of the wicked are of lying in wait for blood" (v. 6).

"The wicked are overthrown, and are not" (v. 7).

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (v. 10).

"The wicked desire the net of evil men" (v. 12).

"The wicked shall be filled with evil" (v. 21).

"The way of the wicked causeth them to err" (v. 26).

### *"Righteous"*--

"A good man shall obtain favor of Jehovah" (v. 2).

"The root of the righteous shall not be moved" (v. 3).

"The thoughts of the righteous are just" (v. 5).

"The mouth of the upright shall deliver them" (v. 6).

"The house of the righteous shall stand" (v. 7).

"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast" (v. 10).

"The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit" (v. 12).

"The righteous shall come out of trouble" (v. 13).

"There shall be no mischief happen to the righteous" (v. 21).

"The righteous is a guide to his neighbor" (v. 26).

"In the way of righteousness is life: And in the pathway thereof is no death" (v. 28).

### *"Speech"*--

"The words of the wicked are of lying in wait for blood; But the mouth of the upright shall deliver them" (v. 6).

"In the transgression of the lips is a snare to the evil man" (v. 13).

"A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth" (v. 14).

"He that uttereth truth showeth forth righteousness; But a false witness deceit" (v. 17).

"There is that speaketh rashly like the piercings of a sword; But the tongue of the wise healeth" (v. 18).

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever; But a lying tongue is but for a moment" (v. 19).

"Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 22).

"The heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness" (v. 23).

"A good word maketh it glad" (v. 25).

### *"Fools"*--

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" (v. 15).

"A fool's vexation is presently known" (v. 16).

"The heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness" (v. 23).

## CHAPTER 12

### *"Wisdom"--*

- "Whoso loveth correction loveth knowledge" (v. 1).
- "A man shall be commended according to his wisdom" (v. 8).
- "He that is wise hearkeneth unto counsel" (v. 15).
- "A prudent man concealeth shame" (v. 16).
- "The tongue of the wise is health" (v. 18).
- "A prudent man concealeth knowledge" (v. 23).

### *"Deceit"--*

- "The counsels of the wicked are deceit" (v. 5).
- "A false witness, deceit" (v. 17).
- "A lying tongue is but for a moment" (v. 19).
- "Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 22).
- "The way of the wicked causeth them to err" (v. 26).

### *"Favor"--*

- "A good man shall obtain favor of Jehovah" (v. 2).
- "A man shall be commended according to his wisdom" (v. 8).
- "Better is he that is lightly esteemed, and hath a servant, Than he that honoreth himself, and lacketh bread" (v. 9).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### FOOLS DISREGARD WISDOM

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (1:7). “A fool despiseth his father’s instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent” (15:5). Such a person will turn his back on the very instruction that would make something of him. He pays no attention to what others try to tell him. He goes on his way, not realizing he has turned his back upon sound counsel. 24:7 puts it so briefly, but so correctly. “Wisdom is too high for a fool.”

12:15 says, “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.” We have all seen living demonstrations of this. We may not always see fit to do everything that everybody tries to get us to do, but we should give sensible consideration to those things we are told. Probably most things we can accept, and we should.

10:8 continues, “The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.” And 29:9 says, “If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.” In this last passage, you will notice the usual responses given by fools to the wise efforts of others in their behalf—they will either get angry (rage) or make fun (laugh). Wisdom is too high for fools, but they don’t know it.

## TEXT — 13:1-9

1. A wise son heareth his father's instruction;  
But a scoffer heareth not rebuke.
2. A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth;  
But the soul of the treacherous shall eat violence.
3. He that guardeth his mouth keepeth his life;  
But he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.
4. The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing;  
But the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.
5. A righteous man hateth lying;  
But a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.
6. Righteousness guardeth him that is upright in the way;  
But wickedness overthroweth the sinner.
7. There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing;  
There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great wealth.
8. The ransom of a man's life is his riches;  
But the poor heareth no threatening.
9. The light of the righteous rejoiceth;  
But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 13:1-9

1. Is the son wise to hear his father or wise because he hears (v. 1)?
2. Why does a scoffer not listen (v. 1)?
3. What is the meaning of "soul" in v. 2?
4. What are some things that guarded speech will not permit to be said (v. 3)?
5. What does "open wide his lips" mean (v. 3)?
6. From what small animal does our word "sluggard" come (v. 4)?
7. What is the small animal known for (v. 4)?
8. Does "fat" in v. 4 stand for something good or something bad?
9. Cite passages in which both God and godly people hate sin (v. 5).
10. What does "loathsome" mean (v.5)?
11. List the contrasts in v. 6.
12. How can a person emphasize riches and yet have none (v. 7)?
13. How can a person be poor and yet have great wealth (v. 7)?

14. What is meant in v. 8 by riches being the ransom of a man's life?
15. What does v. 8 have in mind when it says the poor hear no threatening?
16. What do "light" and "lamp" in v. 9 stand for?

## PARAPHRASE OF 13:1-9

1. A wise youth accepts his father's rebuke; a young mocker doesn't.
2. The good man wins his case by careful argument; the evil-minded only wants to fight.
3. Self-control means controlling the tongue! A quick retort can ruin everything.
4. Lazy people want much but get little, while the diligent are prospering.
5. A good man hates lies; wicked men lie constantly and come to shame.
6. A man's goodness helps him all through life, while evil men are being destroyed by their wickedness.
7. Some rich people are poor, and some poor people have great wealth!
8. Being kidnaped and held for ransom never worries the poor man!
9. The good man's life is full of light. The sinner's road is dark and gloomy.

## COMMENTS ON 13:1-9

V. 1. Instruction for the wise, rebuke for the unwise. Wisdom is shown in respecting the age, learning, and office of the father; the scoffer respects nobody. He is wise in his own conceit (Rom. 12:16). Samson did not regard the rebuke of his father (Judg. 14:1-4) not did Eli's son regard his (I Sam. 2:22-25). If a son will not respect his father enough to follow his instructions, it will not be surprising if he doesn't receive his rebuke. One who scoffs at his father now will scoff at God and sacred things also.

V. 2 Compare Prov. 12:14. Ever hear of eating your own words? What people do and say will determine what they "eat" as a result. What will you eat?

V. 3. Guarding one's mouth suggests that a person should not say just anything that comes into his/her mind. One who opens his lips wide is one who talks too much and consequently

says some things he shouldn't. If we keep our mouth, we keep ourselves from many troubles (Prov. 21:23). Let us say with David, "I will take heed to my ways, That I sin not with my tongue" (Psa. 39:1).

V. 4. It is easy to pass somebody's nicely kept farmstead or home and wish to be a farmer or have a well kept home. It is easy to hear somebody speak who knows the Scripture and wish to be able to find things in the Bible. But while desiring is the basis of getting, it takes much work and application to make dreams and desires come true, and this becomes the downfall of the lazy (Prov. 10:4). Pulpit Commentary: "He has the wish, but not the will."

V. 5. The righteous hate all sin (Rom. 12:9). The wicked are loathsome in the eyes of others who deplore their conduct, and they come to no good end.

V. 6. Prov. 11:6 is a companion verse. Righteousness keeps one from getting into trouble, but a sinner is overthrown in his wickedness.

V. 7. Some take the Hebrew for "maketh himself" to mean "feign". If that translation is correct, the verse would be speaking of some who were poor but feigned themselves to be rich while others with great wealth would feign themselves poor. The above are both sometimes done. Another meaning commonly taken on the verse: some who would be rich and who do everything they can to become rich end in poverty while others are always giving away and giving away and yet end up rich. The latter view may be referring to the "nothing" that the wicked rich people will have in eternity (Luke 12:20,21) and to the "great wealth" that the righteous will have who have laid up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20). Translations and commentaries seem to favor the first position.

V. 8. "Clarke": "In despotic countries a rich man is often accused of some capital crime, and to save his life, though he may be quite innocent, is obliged to give up his riches; but the poor in such countries are put to no trouble."

V. 9. Various passages refer to the lamp or light of the wicked being put out (Job 18:5,6; 21:17; Prov. 24:20). While applied to the individual and his life, the figure was drawn from their household habit: "No house, however poor, is left without a light burning in it all night; the housewife rising betimes to secure its continuance by replenishing the lamp with oil. If a lamp goes out, it is a fatal omen" ("Geike"). The Septuagint

translates: "The light of the righteous is everlasting; but the light of sinners is quenched."

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 13:1-9

1. What about a wise son and his father's instruction (v. 1)?
2. What about a scoffer and rebuke (v. 1)?
3. What does v. 2 say a treacherous man will have to "eat"?
4. What does "guarding one's mouth" imply should be done (v. 3)?
5. Why will the sluggard have nothing (v. 6)?
6. Why will the diligent prosper (v. 4)?
7. What is a righteous man's attitude toward lying (v. 5).
8. Find the triple contrast in v. 6.
9. What two positions have been taken concerning the meaning of v. 7?
10. What did a rich man sometimes have to sacrifice in order to save his life (v. 8)?
11. What was meant by the lamp of the wicked being put out (v. 9)?

### TEXT — 13:10-17

10. By pride cometh only contention;  
But with the well-advised is wisdom.
11. Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished;  
But he that gathereth by labor shall have increase.
12. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick;  
But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
13. Whoso despiseth the word bringeth destruction on himself;  
But he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.
14. The law of the wise is a fountain of life,  
That one may depart from the snares of death.
15. Good understanding giveth favor;  
But the way of the transgressor is hard.
16. Every prudent man worketh with knowledge;  
But a fool flaunteth his folly.
17. A wicked messenger falleth into evil;  
But a faithful ambassador is health.

### STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 13(10-17)

1. Does "wisdom" in the last statement of v. 10 mean the

- avoid of contention in the setting of the verse?
2. And how can "pride" produce contention (v. 10)?
  3. What is "wealth gotten by vanity" (v.11)?
  4. Cite ways that hope can be deferred, making the heart sick (v. 12).
  5. What does "tree of life" mean in v. 12?
  6. Whose "word" in v. 13? Whose "commandment?"
  7. Comment upon "snares of death" (v. 14).
  8. Can you cite ten Bible examples that show the way of the transgressor to be hard (v. 15).
  9. From everyday life show three ways you have seen fools flaunt folly (v. 16).
  10. Who would a "wicked messenger" be in v. 17?

## PARAPHRASE OF 13:10-17

10. Pride leads to arguments; be humble, take advice and become wise.
11. Wealth from gambling quickly disappears; wealth from hard work grows.
12. Hope deferred makes the heart sick; but when dreams come true at last, there is life and joy.
13. Despise God's Word and find yourself in trouble. Obey it and succeed.
14. The advice of a wise man refreshes like water from a mountain spring. Those accepting it become aware of the pitfalls on ahead.
15. A man with good sense is appreciated. A treacherous man must walk a rocky road.
16. A wise man thinks ahead; a fool doesn't, and even brags about it!
17. An unreliable messenger can cause a lot of trouble. Reliable communication permits progress.

## COMMENTS ON 13:10-17

V. 10. The "King James" puts "only" with pride: "Only by pride cometh contention." Our text puts it with "contention": "By pride cometh only contention." Certainly contentions grow out of pride, one who will not be advised and who will argue back. The reason: a proud person is self-centered. A self-centered person "knows it all", and when anyone tries to advise him, he gets into an argument. On the other hand why is "wisdom" with

the well-advised? Because he knows all that he himself has learned plus that which he can pick up from others. He is not proud, so he can listen and learn.

V. 11. "Pulpit Commentary": "Wealth obtained without labor and exertion, or by illegitimate and dishonest means is soon dissipated, is not blessed by God, and has no stability...Quickly won, quickly gone." Our saying: "Easy come, easy go." But those who have obtained through hard work don't "blow" their money.

V. 12. You look forward with anticipation to some day or event only to learn that it has been postponed, and what a letdown! To be put off, to be disappointed, is hard on the heart. Imagine Jacob's letdown when Rachel was not his after working those seven years for her! But when something does come to which one has long looked forward, it is a "tree of life" (health to the heart).

V. 13. Probably referring to God's Word and commandment, although the same principle is in effect concerning any word of wisdom or just commandment. King Saul did not obey God's commandment to destroy the Amalekites and all their possessions so God took the kingship away from his house (I Sam. 15:17-23). Look at Abraham as one who was rewarded for fearing God's commandment enough to have proceeded to sacrifice his son Isaac until God intervened (Gen. 22:1-18).

V. 14. In Proverbs the second statement of a verse is usually a contrast to the verse's first statement. Occasionally it isn't, as in this verse. Pulpit Commentary: "The rules and teaching of wise men are a source of life to those who follow them so that they depart from the snares of death." Jesus is the wise lawgiver of the New Testament (Acts 3:22), and all who follow His teachings will have life (John 8:12) and will escape the snares of the devil (I Tim. 3:7) that bring death (Rom. 6:23). How can one escape traps that are set for him? By following the wisdom of one who knows where those traps are!

V. 15. We honor the person who knows and uses his understanding aright whether he be parent, leader, or neighbor. On the other hand we see the unbearable outcome of sin in Cain's statement, "My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Gen. 4:13), in King Saul's miserable end (I Sam. 28:15-25; 31:1-4), and in Judas Iscariot's suicide (Matt. 27:3-5).

V. 16. Two altogether different kinds of persons: one man works with knowledge; the other shows off his folly. The fool

does this because wisdom is too high for him (Prov. 24:7). David showed his prudence in the way he dealt with Saul, with his brothers, with Absalom, and with others. "I wisdom have made prudence my dwelling" and as a result "find out knowledge and discretion" (Prov. 8:12).

V. 17. A "wicked messenger" is one who is not true to the one sending him. He will be called to answer for his unfaithfulness. A curse belongs to one who perverts the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). One who is a faithful representative brings joy to the one dispatching him. God was pleased with Jesus (Matt. 17:5), and Christ will be pleased with us if we faithfully proclaim His Word (Matt. 28:19,20).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 13:10-17

1. How does pride bring contention (v. 10)?
2. Why is wisdom with the well-advised (v. 10)?
3. Why is wealth gotten by vanity short-lived (v. 11)?
4. Why is wealth gotten by hard work more enduring (v. 11)?
5. What does hope deferred bring (v. 12)?
6. What is the difference in the end of one who fears God's commandments and one who doesn't (v. 13)?
7. Which verse of this section does not contain a contrast?
8. What does the law of the wise permit a person to escape (v. 14)?
9. Illustrate the truth of good understanding bringing favor (v. 15).
10. Illustrate the truth that the way of the transgressor is hard (v. 15).
11. What two different kinds of persons does v. 16 talk about?
12. What does it say about each (v. 16)?
13. What kind of evil will a wicked messenger fall into (v. 17)?
14. What kind of health does a faithful ambassador bring (v. 17)?

#### TEXT — 13:18-25

18. Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth correction;  
But he that regardeth reproof shall be honored.

19. The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul;  
But it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.
20. Walk with wise men, and thou shalt be wise;  
But the companion of fools shall smart for it.
21. Evil pursueth sinners;  
But the righteous shall be recompensed with good.
22. A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children;  
And the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the righteous.
23. Much food is in the tillage of the poor;  
But there is that is destroyed by reason of injustice.
24. He that spareth his rod hateth his son;  
But he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.
25. The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul;  
But the belly of the wicked shall want.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 13:18-25

1. "Refuseth correction" in the first statement is set over against what words in the second statement (v. 18)?
2. Is there a connection between the thoughts in the first and second statements of v. 19?
3. Name a character in one of Jesus' parables who "smarted" for having been a "companion of fools" (v. 20).
4. What does "evil" mean in v. 21?
5. In what way is the "wealth of the wicked" laid up for the righteous (v. 22).
6. Restate the contrast found in v. 23.
7. In what way does a person "hate" his son if he fails to discipline him properly (v. 24)?
8. What does "betimes" mean (v. 24)?
9. How is "soul" used in v. 25?

## PARAPHRASE OF 13:18-25

18. If you refuse criticism you will end in poverty and disgrace; if you accept criticism you are on the road to fame.
19. It is pleasant to see plans develop. That is why fools refuse to give them up even when they are wrong.
20. Be with wise men and become wise. Be with evil men and become evil.
21. Curses chase sinners, while blessings chase the righteous!
22. When a good man dies, he leaves an inheritance to his

- grandchildren; but when a sinner dies, his wealth is stored up for the godly.
23. A poor man's farm may have good soil, but injustice robs him of its riches.
  24. If you refuse to discipline your son, it proves you don't love him; for if you love him you will be prompt to punish him.
  25. The good man eats to live, while the evil man lives to eat.

## COMMENTS ON 13:18-25

V. 18. "A wise son heareth his father's instruction" (v. 1) and "shall be honored" (this verse) while "a scoffer heareth not rebuke" (v. 1), and "poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth correction" (this verse). Reproof is mentioned as a part of everyone's life for no one can be right all the time (Heb. 12:6,9). Sooner or later each of us, somehow or in some way, "pulls a boner" and gets rebuked for it. Are we easily entreated? (Jas. 3:17). Are we exercised by God's chastening? (Heb. 12:11). If so, we will be honored; if not, "poverty and shame" will result.

V. 19. "The desire accomplished" (some worthy goal achieved is brought about because of diligence, v. 4) and is "sweet to the soul" (satisfying). The inventions of Thomas Edison began with an apparent need, followed by a belief that something could be done about it, urged on by a strong desire and determination to see it done, and pursued by his characteristic diligence, and when he ultimately came upon the answer, how gratifying to present its usefulness to his fellowmen! Consider Nehemiah's satisfaction when the wall was completed (Neh. 1:3,5; 2:3-5, 17,18; 6:15). The bigger and the longer a task, the more diligence and patience and desire it takes to accomplish it. If there be a connection between the first and second statements of this verse, it is that while good men dedicate themselves to the accomplishing of their righteous desires, the fool would consider it abominable to give up his sins in order to live that way.

V. 20. A Dutch proverb: "He that lives with cripples learns to limp." A Spanish saying: "He that lies down with dogs shall rise up with fleas." An Oriental saying: "He that takes the raven for his guide shall light upon carrion." The idea of apprenticeship is that we will be the wiser for having worked with those more advanced than we are. Younger men go to places of study and learning for this purpose. But others are contented with being companions of "fool." The outcome: they will "smart"

for it, like the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:13-16). It is too bad that some would rather "smart" than be "wise". One's native wisdom and ideals are reflected in the companions that he chooses.

V. 21. "Evil" or trouble is on the trail of sinners; it follows them wherever they go. It will ultimately catch up with everyone of them (on Judgment Day if not earlier). The righteous, on the other hand, will be recompensed for their good.

V. 22. A good man works hard, accomplishes much and takes care of what he had (see last statement in v. 11). He has something to pass onto succeeding generations. His children must also have been taught the lessons of thrift and economy, or there would be nothing left for them to pass onto his grandchildren. As for the wealth of the wicked man, there is an old saying that goes, "The third generation shall not possess the goods that have been unjustly acquired." Sometimes it ends up in the hands of the righteous. Keep your eyes open in life, and you will get to see an example of this.

V. 23. The last statement is variously translated: "But there is that is consumed without judgment" ("Young's Literal"); "But there is that is destroyed for want of judgment" ("King James"). The thought seems to be that work normally produces a good supply, but as "Clarke" observes: "How much of the poverty of the poor arises from their own want of management! They have little or no economy and no foresight. When they get anything, they speedily spend it, and a feast and a famine make the chief varieties of their life." Migrant workers are often a good example.

V. 24. The first statement puts the outcome for the attitude; that is, in view of what will result from sparing the rod, one is not really loving his child by sparing the rod (some claim they "love" their child too much to discipline him with whippings). It is better to "spare" the child from ruination than from the rod! Consider the wisdom of the saying: "Spare the rod and spoil the child." For "chasteneth him betimes" the "Amplified" says he punishes him early; "American Bible Union" says: "gives him timely chastisement;" "early" ("Pulpit Commentary"); others give "diligently". "Immediately" seems to be the thought. A wise parent will not defer punishing, will not put it off and off and really do nothing about his child's disobedience.

V. 25. The righteous may not be wealthy, but they will have enough (Matt. 6:33; Psa. 37:25). The Prodigal Son (Luke

15:14) exemplifies the latter statement.

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 13:18-25

1. What serious personal reappings may result from refusing correction (v. 18)?
2. What is the promised result of regarding reproof (v. 18)?
3. What about a "desire accomplished" (v. 19)?
4. Why do fools not know this satisfaction (v. 19)?
5. What are the contrasting results of choosing wise men, and fools for compaions (v. 20)?
6. What finally catches up with sinners (v. 21)?
7. What comes to the righteous (v. 21)?
8. Why does a good man leave an inheritance (v. 22)?
9. What sometimes happens to the wealth of the wicked (v. 22)?
10. What are some other translations given for "destroyed by reason of injustice" (v. 23)?
11. What is the meaning of v. 23?
12. What strong language is used in v. 24 for not properly punishing a child?
13. What is the meaning of "betimes" (v. 24)?
14. What is God's material promise to the righteous (v. 25)?
15. What Bible character fulfilled the statement, "The belly of the wicked shall want" (v. 25)?

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 13

#### *"Destruction"*--

"He that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (v.3).

"Wickedness overthroweth the sinner" (v. 6).

"Whoso despiseth the word bringeth destruction on himself" (v. 13).

"There is that is destroyed by reason of injustice" (v. 23).

#### *"Speech"*--

"A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth" (v. 2).

"He that guardeth his mouth keepeth his life; But he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (v. 3).

"A righteous man hateth lying" (v. 5).

#### *"Parent and child"*--

"A wise son heareth his father's instruction; But a scoffer heareth not rebuke" (v. 1).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

“He that spareth his rod hateth his son; But he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” (v. 24).

### “Righteous”--

“A righteous man hateth lying” (v. 5).

“Righteousness guardeth him that is upright in the way” (v. 6).

“The light of the righteous rejoiceth” (v. 9).

“The righteous shall be recompensed with good” (v. 21).

“A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children’s children” (v. 22).

### “Wicked”--

“A wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame” (v. 5).

“Wickedness overthroweth the sinner” (v. 6).

“The lamp of the wicked shall be put out” (v. 9).

“A wicked messenger falleth into evil” (v. 17).

“Evil pursueth sinners” (v. 21).

“The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the righteous” (v. 22).

### “Wisdom”--

“A wise son heareth his father’s instruction” (v. 1).

“With the well-advised is wisdom” (v. 10).

“The law of the wise is a fountain of life” (v. 14).

“Good understanding giveth favor” (v. 15).

“Every prudent man worketh with knowledge” (v. 16).

“Walk with wise men, and thou shalt be wise” (v. 20).

### “Fools”--

“A fool flaunteth his folly” (v. 16).

“It is an abomination to fools to depart from evil” (v. 10).

“The companion of fools shall smart for it” (v. 20).

## TEXT — 14:1-12

1. Every wise woman buildeth her house;  
But the foolish plucketh it down with her own hands.
2. He that walketh in his uprightness feareth Jehovah;  
But he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.
3. In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his pride;  
But the lips of the wise shall preserve them.
4. Where no oxen are, the crib is clean;  
But much increase is by the strength of the ox.
5. A faithful witness will not lie;  
But a false witness uttereth lies.
6. A scoffer seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not;  
But knowledge is easy unto him that hath understanding.
7. Go into the presence of a foolish man,  
And thou shalt not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.
8. The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way;  
But the folly of fools is deceit.
9. A trespass-offering mocketh fools;  
But among the upright there is good will.
10. The heart knoweth its own bitterness;  
And a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy.
11. The house of the wicked shall be overthrown;  
But the tent of the upright shall flourish.
12. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man;  
But the end thereof are the ways of death.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 14:1-12

1. Find the two contrasts in v. 1.
2. Name some blessings of walking uprightly (v. 2).
3. Name some blessings of being perverse (v. 2).
4. Reword the first statement in v. 3 so as to bring out its meaning.
5. What is the meaning of "clean" in v. 4?
6. We talk about, "As strong as an ....." (v. 4).
7. What are some of the reasons why some people bear false witness (v. 5)?
8. Why does a scoffer have trouble learning (v. 6)?
9. Are there people who you judge to be wiser than they prove to be (v. 7)?

10. What does "prudent" mean in v. 8?
11. How could a trespass-offering mock fools (v. 9)?
12. What is "good will" (v. 9)?
13. Write an elaboration on v. 10.
14. Find the triple contrast in v. 11.
15. What other verse in Proverbs restates v. 12?
16. Cite an incident in the Bible, in history, or in your own personal knowledge illustrating v. 12.

## PARAPHRASE OF 14:1-12

1. A wise woman builds her house, while a foolish woman tears hers down by her own efforts.
2. To do right honors God; to sin is to despise Him
3. A rebel's foolish talk should prick his own pride! But the wise man's speech is respected.
4. An empty stable stays clean--but there is no income from an empty stable.
5. A truthful witness never lies; a false witness always lies.
6. A mocker never finds the wisdom he claims he is looking for, yet it comes easily to the man with common sense.
7. If you are looking for advice, stay away from fools.
8. The wise man looks ahead. The fool attempts to fool himself and won't face facts.
9. The common bond of rebels is their guilt. The common bond of godly people is good will.
10. Only the person involved can know his own bitterness or joy--no one else can really share it.
11. The work of the wicked will perish; the work of the godly will flourish.
12. Before every man there lies a wide and pleasant road that seems right but ends in death.

## COMMENT ON 14:1-12

V. 1. People can either build or pluck down. The wise build (Prov. 24:3-5); the foolish destroy. Owners usually build and take care of things; renters often let everything run down. Rachel and Leah are said to have built the house of Israel (Ruth 4:11). Contrast the virtuous woman of Prov. 31 with the adulterous woman often pictured in the first part of Proverbs with reference to building and destroying.

V. 2. This verse deals with two classes of men just as v. 1

did with two classes of women. What a wonderful life results for both and for their offspring when "he that walketh in his uprightness" (this verse) marries the "wise woman" (v. 1)! When people properly fear God, they keep his commandments (Eccl. 12:13); when people don't fear God, evil results (Rom. 3:15-18; Gen. 20:11). "Jehovah" is the antecedent of "him" in the second statement. Those who are perverse in their ways pay no attention to God, and "the world is full of" them.

V. 3. "American Bible Union version" and "Young's Literal" give, "A rod of pride." Septuagint: "Fom the mouth of fools cometh a staff of insolence." The foolish can have a cruel tongue ("rod"). Other passages compare the wicked tongue to a cutting sword (Psa. 57:4; 64:3).

V. 4. The ox was used for agricultural purposes then (I Kings 19:19; Deut. 25:4). A "clean" crib meant an "empty" crib. We, too, talk of the "strength" of an ox in our saying: "As strong as an ox." Through the wise use of animal power (and now much more of mechanical power), man has been able to increase his agricultural (and other) output. Man shows that he is of a higher sphere than the animal world, for he constantly utilizes the strengths and abilities of lower forms of life to serve him.

V. 5. The one difference between a "faithful" and a "false" witness: one will lie; the other one won't. Some are "false" because it is not always easy to tell the full truth. Others are "false" on purpose (for material gain, to ruin others, etc.). The soldiers who guarded Jesus' tomb lied and were paid for it (Matt. 28:11-14). Men told lies in Jesus' trial to bring about His condemnation (Mark 14:57,58). Other passages against bearing false witness: Exo. 20:16; 23:1; Prov. 6:19; 12:17; 14:25. The apostles would neither lie nor suppress the truth about Jesus (Acts 4:18-20). Such conscientious souls are needed in every age.

V. 6. A "scoffer" is strong on his own ideas and reluctant to take the word of others. Learning is not gullible, but there is still a strong element of trust involved in learning, which the scoffer does not have. Therefore, he cuts himself off from some wisdom that he could have if he were otherwise in attitude. But it is much easier for an humble man of understanding to increase his knowledge, for he has no barrier of pride. One who has understanding easily picks up additional knowledge from what he reads, hears, studies, and is instructed in, for he can understand and comprehend what he comes in contact with. See

Prov. 9:9; 17:24.

V. 7. There is some doubt as to which rendering is correct. The "King James" has: "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." The "American Standard" gives a truism (the foolish man has nothing to give you by his presence), but the "King James" tells you what to do about it (depart from his unprofitable presence). Enroll under teachers who know what they are talking about; doctor with those who know what they are doing; listen to religious teachers who accurately know the Bible. People would save themselves much disillusionment if they would regard this instruction.

V. 8. The prudent wisely watch every aspect of their lives (v. 15). They do not jump and then look for a place to land. They do not shoot and then investigate whether it was a deer or a man. They do not sign the contract and then study to see what they signed. And spiritually they are just as careful (Eph. 5:15). The foolish foolishly suppose they can deceive others, but seldom are they successful in their attempt.

V. 9. A trespass-offering was ordained of God if properly offered (Lev. 6:1-7), but if one thought he would "pull the wool over" God's eyes by such an offering when he intended to keep on in the trespass, he was mocked-not God (Gal. 6:7). For this reason God did not accept the acts of worship mentioned in Isa. 1:11-17. The "upright" gain the good will and favor of God by their honest dealings with themselves before Him.

V. 10. There is a portion of each person's inner-self that no one else can fully enter into. After others have sought to assuage our grief with their words lovingly administered, there is still a portion that they have not touched not known. On the other hand after we have sought to share our joys with others, we have probably enlisted their polite ears more than we have their hearts' feelings. We cannot fully communicate our joys, nor can they fully enter into our joys.

V. 11. A triple contrast: "house" vs. "tent"; "wicked" vs. "upright"; and "shall be overthrown" vs. "shall flourish". This verse blends the material found in vs. 1,2; study it until you can see this fact.

V. 12. Prov. 16:25 gives the identical statement. The importance of the truth may account for its double appearance in the book. Men are often talked into things that do not end as they expected. Sometimes people do the wrong thing when they

think they are doing the wise and desirable thing--like mice eating bait on a trap or fish eating bait on a hook. This is even true religiously (John 16:2; Acts 26:9; Rom. 10:1-3). False teachers may look like sheep even though they are ravening, devouring wolves (Matt. 7:15). Counterfeits are made to resemble the genuine. So the devil pawns off denominations started by men for the church started by Christ.

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 14:1-12

1. The wise woman who builds her house and the foolish woman who tears hers down are likened to what two women in the earlier and the latter chapters of Prov.?
2. V. 2 shows what to be a motivation for uprightness?
3. What is the perverse person's attitude toward God or the idea of God (v. 2)?
4. Some passages liken a wicked tongue to a sword; what does v. 3 liken it to?
5. How was the ox used in Bible days (v. 4)?
6. What saying do we have involving the ox (v. 4)?
7. What was the case where there were no oxen (v. 4)?
8. How has man used his head for greater productive output (v. 4)?
9. How does this fact distinguish him from the animal world (v. 4)?
10. What two kinds of witnesses are there (v. 5)?
11. Why will people bear false witness (v. 5)?
12. Who said, "We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (v. 5)?
13. Why does a scoffer sometimes cut himself off from the opportunity of learning (v. 6)?
14. Why is acquiring knowledge easy for the person who has understanding (v. 6)?
15. How does the King James and American Standard differ on v. 7?
16. How do people bring disillusionment upon themselves by not regarding v. 7?
17. What are the prudent very careful about (v. 8)?
18. Comment upon "the folly of fools in deceit" (v. 8).
19. How does a trespass-offering mock fools (v. 9)?
20. How do the upright acquire God's good will (v. 9)?
21. Comment upon v. 1.

22. What triple contrast is found in v. 11?
23. Show that v. 11 blends the material found in vs. 1,2.
24. What explanation was suggested for v. 12 and Prov. 16:25 being in the book of Proverbs since they are identical statements?
25. Illustrate the truth of v. 12.

## TEXT — 14:13-24

13. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful;  
And the end of mirth is heaviness.
14. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways;  
And a good man shall be satisfied from himself.
15. The simple believeth every word;  
But the prudent man looketh well to his going.
16. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil;  
But the fool beareth himself insolently, and is confident.
17. He that is soon angry will deal foolishly;  
And a man of wicked devices is hated.
18. The simple inherit folly;  
But the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
19. The evil bow down before the good;  
And the wicked, at the gates of the righteous.
20. The poor is hated even of his own neighbor;  
But the rich hath many friends.
21. He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth;  
But he that hath pity on the poor, happy is he.
22. Do they not err that devise evil?  
But mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.
23. In all labor there is profit;  
But the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.
24. The crown of the wise is their riches;  
But the folly of fools is only folly.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 14:13-24

1. Are there people who try to act happy when they really aren't, or is life an admixture of happiness and sorrow (v. 13)?
2. In the Bible whose "mirth" ended in "heaviness" (v. 13)?
3. A backslider in heart is filled with his own ways instead of whose ways (v. 14)?
4. At what stage of life is one of the most apt to believe

- every word (v. 15)?
5. Cite other passages connecting fear with departing from sin (v. 16).
  6. What does "insolent" mean (v. 16)?
  7. Who hates a man of wicked devices (v. 17)?
  8. Does life become better for the simple (v. 18)?
  9. What are some Bible instances of v. 19?
  10. Why do people not want to be companions of the extremely poor (v. 20)?
  11. Do you see in v. 21 a man despising his neighbor because he is poor, or is the first clause to be so limited?
  12. What are illustrations of devising evil (v. 22)?
  13. What are illustrations of devising good (v. 22)?
  14. What does "penury" mean (v. 23)?
  15. What is meant by "crown" in v. 24?

## PARAPHRASE OF 14:13-24

13. Laughter cannot mask a heavy heart. When the laughter ends, the grief remains.
14. The backslider gets bored with himself; the godly man's life is exciting.
15. Only a simpleton believes what he is told! A prudent man checks to see where he is going.
16. A wise man is cautious and avoids danger; a fool plunges ahead with great confidence.
17. A short-tempered man is a fool. He hates the man who is patient.
18. A simpleton is crowned with folly; the wise man is crowned with knowledge.
19. Evil men bow before the godly.
20. Even his own neighbors despise the poor man, while the rich have many "friends."
21. To despise the poor is to sin. Blessed are those who pity them.
22. Those who plot evil shall wander away and be lost, but those who plan good shall be granted mercy and quietness.
23. Work brings profit; talk brings poverty!
24. Wise men are praised for their wisdom; fools are despised for their folly.

## COMMENTS ON 14:13-24

V. 13. Fun and sorrow are found in both statements. Many who laugh may have inward sorrows they are either trying to suppress or cover up (first statement). Some who laugh easily cry just as easily. An old saying: "Laugh before breakfast, and you will cry before night" (probably superstition). Mirth sometimes precedes heaviness, like Belshazzar's feast (Dan. 5:1-6) and loose living (Prov. 5:4).

V. 14. A backslidden life is no longer filled with God's ways but with one's own. A backslider is one who has returned to selfish living. Clarke: "Who is the backslider? 1. The man who once walked in the ways of religion but has withdrawn from them. 2. The man who once fought manfully against the world, the devil, and the flesh but has retreated from the battle or joined the enemy. 3. The man who once belonged to the congregation of the saints but is now removed from them and is set down in the synagogue of Satan." One backslides "in heart" before he does in his "ways": people cease enjoying the assembly before they actually quit attending; they lose their touch with God in prayer before they drop the practice of prayer; etc. A "good man" (contrasted with the backslider) will be satisfied from himself because he is actually filled with God's good and holy ways which bring blessings and satisfaction.

V. 15. Such are like children (Eph. 4:14). Older people often amuse themselves by taking advantage of an innocent child's gullibility by telling him all kinds of yarns and tales. And some people grow up and never doubt anything they hear. In contrast "the prudent man considers whither the advice given will lead him; he always acts with deliveration" ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 16. A wise man does not take dangerous chances, but a foolish man will (Prov. 22:3). Joseph was a "wise man" who feared God and "departed" from the evil in which Potiphar's wife would have ensnared him (Gen. 39:9-12).

V. 17. The Bible is against quick-temperedness: Tit. 1:7; Jas. 1:19; Prov. 15:18; 16:32. An angry man will deal foolishly because anger momentarily blurs one's judgment (a good reason for not losing one's temper). Jokingly, keep your temper--nobody wants it. A man of wicked devices is hated of God (Prov. 12:2), but two human groups who hate or abhor him are those who are hurt by his devices (like people who get robbed or cheated by

some slick maneuver) and those who do not approve of them (Rev. 2:2).

V. 18. Those at the low end of wisdom (the simple) participate or know only folly (foolishness) (Prov. 18:2; Eccl. 7:5,6); those at the top end (the prudent) are blessed with knowledge (Prov. 9:9). A Stoic saying: "The wise is the only king."

V. 19. "Pulpit Commentary": "The final victory of good over evil is here set forth. However triumphant for a time and apparently prosperous the wicked may be, their success is not lasting; they shall in the end succumb to the righteous even as the Canaanite kings crouched before Joshua's captains (Josh. 10:24) and, hurled from their high estate, they shall stand humbly at the good man's door begging for bread to support their life (I Sam. 2:36). The contrast here indicated is seen in our Lord's report of the rich man and Lazarus when the beggar is comforted and the rich man is tormented, and when the latter urgently sues for the help of the once despised outcast to mitigate the agony which he is suffering" (Luke 16:24). When troubles hit the wicked and ungodly (those who never go to church; they often turn to the righteous for sympathetic help and comfort (a preacher, the church, or some good Christian). Ultimately the wicked will bend (Dan. 3:24-26, 28-30; 5:13,16; Rev. 3:9).

V. 20. There is a certain shame and disgrace to extreme poverty that causes even neighbors not to be associated with such in people's minds. This is why people are often ashamed of their poor relatives (Prov. 10:7), their clothes, their car, their home, their ways, etc. But people are usually glad to claim relationship and friendship with the financially successful (a saying: "Success makes false friends and true enemies"). The rich have many friends, especially if they are generous with their gifts or have powers and offices to bestow.

V. 21. But we are not to despise our neighbor (even if he is poor, as in v. 20). Some have no sense of respect or honor, seemingly despising, belittling, and running down everyone continually. Let us not thus violate the "second commandment" (Mark 12:31), but let us have pity upon the poor (Gal. 2:10; Matt. 25:35,36), for those who do will be blessed of God (Psa. 41:1; Acts 20:35; Prov. 19:17; Luke 14:13,14).

V. 22. Such a question is an emphatic way to state truth. The man who invented the atomic bomb went out of his mind after it was used on the Japanese, and the widow of the man who

invented television is extremely remorseful because of the evil it has become associated with and promotes. This verse speaks of two devisings (evil and good). Some are devising evil (the wicked), and some are devising good (the godly). What are you devising? Mercy and truth belong together (Prov. 3:3; Psa. 61:7; John 1:17; I Tim. 1:2).

V. 23. There is often a difference between being a talker and a worker. It is not those who talk about what they are going to do but those who go out and get it done that counts. Sometimes children come to look down upon their lazy, wind-bag, good-for-nothing dads who are always talking about the trip the family is going to take, the house they are going to build, etc. but who never get any of it done. This verse has two contrasts: "talk" vs. "labor" and "penury" vs. "profit". "Penury" means to want or to suffer need.

V. 24. Notice "folly" all the way in this triple contrast: "The crown" vs. "the folly"; "of the wise" vs. "of fools"; and "is their riches" vs. "is only folly". Pulpit Commentary: "Decorate folly as you may, deck it out in gaud and ornament, it is still nothing but folly and is discerned as such, and that all the more for being made conspicuous."

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 14:13-24

1. Comment upon v. 13.
2. Who is a backslider (v. 14)?
3. Why is a good man satisfied from himself (v. 14)?
4. What is v. 15's contrast between the simple and the prudent?
5. What is v. 16's contrast between the wise and the foolish?
6. What does the Bible say about being quick-tempered (v. 17)?
7. What is v. 18's contrast between the simple and the prudent?
8. Cite examples of the truth set forth in v. 19.
9. Why do people disdain the poor (v. 20)?
10. Why do many want to claim the rich for friends (v. 20)?
11. What commandment is violated by despising your neighbor (v. 21)?
12. Where else are we taught to have pity (help) the poor (v. 21)?
13. Have people ever lived to regret evil they one time devised (v. 22)?

14. What two contrasts are found in v. 23?
15. What does "penury" mean (v. 23)?
16. Cite the triple contrast in v. 24.

## TEXT — 14:25-35

25. A true witness delivereth souls;  
But he that uttereth lies causeth deceit.
26. In the fear of Jehovah is strong confidence;  
And his children shall have a place of refuge.
27. The fear of Jehovah is a fountain of life,  
That one may depart from the snares of death.
28. In the multitude of people is the king's glory;  
But in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.
29. He that is slow to anger is of great understanding;  
But he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
30. A tranquil heart is the life of the flesh;  
But envy is the rottenness of the bones.
31. He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker;  
But he that hath mercy on the needy honoreth him.
32. The wicked is thrust down in his evil-doing;  
But the righteous hath a refuge in his death.
33. Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understand-  
ing;  
But that which is in the inward part of fools is made  
known.
34. Righteousness exalteth a nation;  
But sin is a reproach to any people.
35. The king's favor is toward a servant that dealeth wisely;  
But his wrath will be against him that causeth shame.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 14:25-35

1. A true witness "delivereth souls" from what (v. 25)?
2. How is "fear" used in v. 26?
3. What is meant by "fountain of life" in v. 27?
4. Give a synonym for "want" in v. 28.
5. Give illustrations of "hasty of spirit" exalting folly (v. 29).
6. What is a "tranquil" heart (v. 30)?
7. What passage in Matt. does v. 31 remind one of?
8. What is the righteous person's "refuge" when death comes (v. 32)?

9. What is the meaning of "resteth" in v. 33?
10. Trace the truthfulness of v. 34 in Israel's up-and-down history.
11. Cite the double contrast in v. 35.

#### PARAPHRASE OF 14:25-35

25. A witness who tells the truth saves good men from being sentenced to death, but a false witness is a traitor.
26. Reverence for God gives a man deep strength; his children have a place of refuge and security.
27. Reverence for the Lord is a fountain of life; its waters keep a man from death.
28. A growing population is a king's glory; a dwindling nation is his doom.
29. A wise man controls his temper. He knows that anger causes mistakes.
30. A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life; jealousy rots it away.
31. Anyone who oppresses the poor is insulting God who made them. To help the poor is to honor God.
32. The godly have a refuge when they die, but the wicked are crushed by their sins.
33. Wisdom is enshrined in the hearts of men of common sense, but it must shout loudly before fools will hear it.
34. Godliness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.
35. A king rejoices in servants who know what they are doing; he is angry with those who cause trouble.

#### COMMENTS ON 14:25-35

V. 25. V. 5 of this chapter speaks of the faithful witness and of the lying witness mentioned in this verse. A true witness "delivereth" souls or persons from their false accusers in court; a false witness, on the other hand, will tell lies of deceit in order to bring about one's condemnation. This verse has a ready application today to the true gospel preacher who delivers souls from the clutch of sin and the doom it would bring upon him and to the false teacher who utters falsehood deceitfully (Eph. 4:14). The tongue of man is either a mighty instrument for good or a mighty monster for bad (Prov. 18:21).

V. 26. This and the following verse both refer to the "fear

of Jehovah". The "fear of Jehovah" here is that reverence for Him that causes one to commit one's whole self to Him, and when this is done, both he and his children are blessed: he has strong confidence or assurance that God will take care of Him (Heb. 13:5,6; Psa. 23:1-6), and his children (brought up to live the same way) will be likewise blessed.

V. 27. This verse and Prov. 13:14 strongly resemble. Also compare it with v. 16. One who fears Jehovah departs from evil that he may escape the "snares of death" (this verse), which characterizes him as "wise" (v. 16). Instead of death he is drinking of the fountain of life. Because Adam and Eve sinned, they were banned from the tree of "life", and they brought "death" upon themselves (Gen. 2:17; 3:22-24).

V. 28. To be too small in number was to invite invasion, and the rule was that the lesser-in-number lost to the greater-in-number. This is why the men of Gideon's army were so fearful (Judg. 6:33; 7:3). In somewhat a different thought Pulpit Commentary says, "This maxim is not in accordance with the views of Oriental conquerors and despots, who in their selfish lust of aggrandizement cared not what suffering they inflicted or what blood they shed...The reign of Solomon, the peaceful, gave an intimation that was and conquest were not a monarch's highest glory; that a happy and numerous people, dwelling securely and increasing in numbers, was a better honor for a king and more to be desired" (I Kings 4:24,25,20).

V. 29. V. 19<sup>13</sup> of this chapter deals with the man who is "soon angry" while this verse deals with one who is "slow to anger". The quick-tempered man will "deal foolishly" (v. 17), while the calm-headed man is of "great understanding" (this verse). The man of understanding does not burst into a rage, for to do so is to exalt "folly", for an angry man will say and do things before he thinks, which are both unwise and often disastrous. Compare Prov. 16:32 and Jas. 1:19 with this teaching.

V. 30. There is nothing better for the health of one's body than a tranquil, calm, and peaceful heart. Oh, the health disturbances that are brought on through a distraught mind and heart! All the doctor's prescriptions and all the doctor's operations cannot put one's health together again. God wants us to live right that we might be at peace with Him (Num. 6:24-26). He wants us to live at peace with our fellowmen (Heb. 12:14). When our consciences are void of offence toward both God and

men :(Acts 24:16), what a blessing of peace follows (Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:7; Rom. 8:6) Psalms 37:37) I Pet. 3:11), one of which is "the life of the flesh" (this verse). Prov. 12:4 also speaks of "the rottenness of the bones". When one's very framework is thus deteriorated, one's health is in an extremely bad way.

V. 31. One's action toward the poor and needy is here judged in relation to God (Matt. 25:44,45), who is the Maker of the poor as well as any other (Prov. 22:2). Prov. 17:5 speaks of mocking the poor, which also results in reproaching their Maker. V. 21 of this chapter speaks of having pity on the poor which he does by having mercy upon him (this verse). People of Job's day understood this teaching (Job 31:13-15). In life there are some who help make people poor (like the thieves in the Good Samaritan parable, Luke 10:30) and others who help the needy (like the Good Samaritan himself, Luke 10:33,34); and then there are also many (like the priest and levite of that parable) who neither made the man poor nor help him get better (Luke 10:31,32). In which class are you?

V. 32. The wicked are cut off because of their sins (Psa. 37:1,2), sometimes right while they are committing it (Acts 5:1-10; Lev. 10:1,2; Num. 11:33). The godly have always had the refuge of hope and God's help in death (Psa. 23:4; Phil. 1:21,23; II Cor. 5:8). Even wicked men, like Balaam, have wished to die the death of the righteous (Num. 23:10). "Thus the Christian martyrs went joyfully to the stake, and gentle women and little children smiled on the sword which sent them home. It is natural to see in this clause a belief in a future life, and a state of rewards and punishments" ("Pulpit Commentary"). This verse causes us to ask, "Which is really more important--to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season and be rejected and punished of God forever or to live the way that is always right and that will end right?"

V. 33. A triple contrast: "Wisdom" vs. "that which is in the inward part of fools"; "him that hath understanding" vs. "fools"; and "resteth" vs. "is made known". From the contrast we understand the word "rest" as meaning it quietly resides. Therefore, a wise, informed, and knowledgeable person is not always telling all he may know (he couldn't, and he has no disposition to flaunt his knowledge;). But with fools it is different: they are always talking, and they will tell you everything (Prov. 29:11; 12:16). For the last clause a few Hebrew copies give, "In the midst of fools it maketh itself known."

V. 34. An oft-quoted verse because its message is pertinent. God sees that righteousness does build up, bless, and make a great nation, and history surely shows that sin deteriorates a nation (many nations have fallen from the inside through moral degradation). Who could better understand this verse than the Israelites themselves who could certainly see that when they had good kings and were following God's way, the nation was "up", and that when they had bad kings and were following wickedness, the nation was "down"? This is observable throughout Kings and Chronicles.

V. 35. Every leader that Joseph was under (Potiphar, the jailer, and Pharaoh) could see that he was wise, and they respected that wisdom and showed favor toward him (Gen. 39:3-6, 21-23; 41:39-43). Daniel, too, though a part of a captured people, was in every king's favor and service that he was under (Dan. 1:19,20; 2:46-48; 5:29; 6:1-3). For the promotion of the wise see Matt. 24:45,47. Even heathen governments have punished those who did things contrary to its laws and things against its best interest. In this age of softening-punishments (in the government, at work, at school, in the home, etc.) there is a need to return to stricter trials and just punishments.

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 14:25-35

1. How might v. 25 apply to preachers?
2. What does the fear of Jehovah cause one to do (v. 26)?
3. What else does one do who fears Jehovah (v. 27)?
4. Why was Gideon's army so fearful in Judg. 6,7 (v. 28)?
5. How does one hasty of spirit exalt folly (v. 29)?
6. Relate both a peaceful heart and an envious heart to one's health (v. 30).
7. What are three classes of people in relation to the poor (v. 31)?
8. Name some wicked people who were cut down right while doing their sin (v. 32).
9. State the contrast in v. 33 concerning the understand and the fools.
10. How was the nation of Israel in a good position to understand v. 34?
11. What Bible heroes served their governmental superiors well (v. 35)?

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 14

#### *"Fools"--*

- "The foolish plucketh it down with her own hands" (v. 1).
- "In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his pride" (v. 3).
- "Go into the presence of a foolish man, And thou shalt not perceive in him the lips of knowledge" (v. 7).
- "The folly of fools is deceit" (v. 8);
- "A trespass-offering mocketh fools" (v. 9).
- "The fool beareth himself insolently, and is confident" (v. 16).
- "He that is soon angry will deal foolishly" (v. 17).
- "The simple inherit folly" (v. 18).
- "The folly of fools is only folly" (v. 24).
- "He that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly" (v. 29).
- "That which is in the inward part of fools is made known" (v. 33).

#### *"The simple"--*

- "The simple believe every word" (v. 15).
- "The simple inherit folly" (v. 18).

#### *"The wise"--*

- "Every wise woman buildeth her house" (v. 1).
- "The lips of the wise shall preserve them" (v. 3).
- "Knowledge is easy unto him that hath understanding." (v. 6).
- "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way" (v. 8).
- "The prudent man looketh well to his going" (v. 15).
- "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil" (v. 16).
- "The prudent are crowned with knowledge" (v. 18).
- "The crown of the wise is their riches" (v. 24).
- "He that is slow to anger is of great understanding" (v. 29).
- "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding" (v. 33).
- "The king's favor is toward a servant that dealeth wisely" (v. 35).

#### *"Fear"--*

- "He that walketh in his uprightness feareth Jehovah" (v. 2).
- "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil" (v. 16).
- "In the fear of Jehovah is strong confidence" (v. 26).

## CHAPTER 14

"The fear of Jehovah is a fountain of life" (v. 27).

### *"Speech"--*

"In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his pride; But the lips of the wise shall preserve them" (v. 3).

"A faithful witness will not lie; But a false witness uttereth lies" (v. 5).

"A foolish man, And thou shalt not perceive in him the lips of knowledge" (v. 7).

"The talk of the lips tendeth only to penury" (v. 23).

"A true witness delivereth souls; But he that uttereth lies causeth deceit" (v. 25).

### *"The righteous"--*

"He that walketh in his uprightness feareth Jehovah" (v. 2).

"Among the upright there is good will" (v. 9).

"The tent of the upright shall flourish" (v. 11).

"A goodman shall be satisfied from himself" (v. 14).

"Mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good" (v. 22).

"The righteous hath a refuge in his death" (v. 32).

### *"The wicked"--*

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown" (v. 11).

"A man of wicked devices is hated" (v. 17).

"The evil bow down before the good; And the wicked, at the gates of the righteous" (v. 19).

"Do they not err that devise evil?" (v. 22).

"The wicked is thrust down in his evil-doing" (v. 32).

### *"Knowledge"--*

"Knowledge is easy unto him that hath understanding" (v. 6).

"Thou shalt not perceive in him the lips of knowledge" (v. 7).

"The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way" (v. 8).

"The prudent are crowned with knowledge" (v. 18).

"Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding" (v. 33).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### GOD CREATED US ALL

“The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all” (22:2). The rich may feel superior to the poor, but they need to remember that God is the poor man’s God just as much as He is their God. They should not overlook the fact that the poor man is rich in the fact that he too is a recipient of God’s love and concern. On the other hand, the poor many times hate the rich, but they need to remember that God is just as much concerned about the soul of the rich as He is their souls. All have been created in the image of God, and we have gone a long way in living right in the earth when we come to regard each person as one who bears the image of God. Because of this fact, we are to have a regard and a love for each individual.

“The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the Lord lighteneth both their eyes” (29:13). God does not rejoice in their deceitfulness, but He bears with them in His great longsuffering and loving kindness, hoping that the time will come when they will be what they should be. That we too might not abandon people without any future hope whom God continues to sustain!

### GOD CREATED AND SUSTAINS THE UNIVERSE

The thought that all things came into existence through millions of years of struggle via the evolutionary route is all too common today. That all things merely govern themselves in a natural way without any personal God behind it all seems even more common. But, both concepts are wrong. Proverbs is strong on the fact of God’s creation, and it also shows that He governs His universe today: “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew” (3:19:20).

## TEXT 15:1-11

1. A soft answer turneth away wrath;  
But a greivous word stirreth up anger.
2. The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright;  
But the mouth of fools poureth out folly.
3. The eyes of Jehovah are in every place,  
Keeping watch upon the evil and the good.
4. A gentle tongue is a tree of life;  
But perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit.
5. A fool despiseth his father's correction;  
But he that regardeth reproof getteth prudence.
6. In the house of the righteous is much treasure;  
But in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.
7. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge;  
But the heart of the foolish doeth not so.
8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah;  
But the prayer of the upright is his delight.
9. The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah;  
But he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.
10. There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way;  
And he that hateth reproof shall die.
11. Sheol and Abaddon are before Jehovah;  
How much more then the hearts of the children of men!

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:1-11

1. Find the double contrast in v. 1.
2. Does "fools" mean "simpleton" or "unwise" in v. 2?
3. Cite other passages besides v. 3 that show either the omnipresence of the omniscience of God.
4. The breaking of what "spirit" (v. 4)?
5. Locate other passages besides v. 5 that speak of despising correction.
6. Locate other passages on regarding reproof (v. 5).
7. Who was a righteous man in the Bible who was rich (v. 6)?
8. Who was a wicked rich man who had trouble (v. 6)?
9. What does "disperse" mean (v. 7)?
10. What makes the sacrifice mentioned in v. 8 abominable to God?

11. Compare vs. 8,9.
12. Forsaketh what "way" (v. 10)?
13. What is "Sheol" (v. 11)?
14. Where else is "Abaddon" used in the Bible (v. 11)?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 15:1-11

1. A soft answer turns away wrath, but harsh words cause quarrels.
2. A wise teacher makes learning a joy; a rebellious teacher spouts foolishness.
3. The Lord is watching everywhere and keeps His eye on both the evil and the good.
4. Gentle words cause life and health; griping brings discouragement.
5. Only a fool despises his father's advise; a wise son considers each suggestion.
6. There is treasure in being good, but trouble dogs the wicked.
7. Only the good can give good advice. Rebels can't.
8. The Lord hates the gifts of the wicked, but delights in the prayers of His people.
- 9,10. The Lord despises the deeds of the wicked, but loves those who try to be good. If they stop trying, the Lord will punish them; if they rebel against that punishment, they will die.
11. The depths of hell are open to God's knowledge. How much more the hearts of all mankind!

#### COMMENTS ON 15:1-11

V. 1 The setting of the verse: someone has spoken angrily to us. What kind of answer shall we give? We can return a "soft" (gentle) answer, which will tone down the other's wrath, or we can answer in the same tone in which he spoke to us, and full-fledged trouble flares. "Pulpit Commentary: "Two things are here observed: an answer should be given--the injured person should not wrap himself in sullen silence; and that answer should be gentle and conciliatory." A medieval rhyme: "Anger, however great, is checked by answer sweet." This instruction is necessary for maintaining good human relations. Even strange animals are often calmed by a gentle voice. Giving a "soft" answer is part of obeying Rom. 12:18. An instance of the "soft" answer working (I

54 Sam 25:23-33). Instances of "grievous" words stirring up strife (Judg. 8:1-3; Prov. 25:15; I Sam. 25:10-13; I Kings 12:13-16).

V. 2. A "wise" person has the knowledge to utter; he also knows when, where, and how to speak; and he studies or thinks before he speaks (v. 28). Jesus' speech was always superior, beginning with Luke 2:46,47. But fools pour out folly (Prov. 12:23; 13:16). A fool's voice is known by its words (Eccl. 5:3).

V. 3. Both the omnipresence and the omniscience of God are implied in this statement: He is everywhere, and He knows everything (Psa. 139:1-12; Prov. 5:21; Jer. 16:17; Heb. 4:13). Such knowledge is necessary if God is to be our judge (Jer. 32:19). Since He beholds both the evil and the good, God is not human, for human beings tend to see only the evil of their enemies and critics and to by-pass the evil in their friends and close relatives. This verse backs up our song, "You Cannot Hide from God." Jonah (Jon. 1:3) tried it; so did Achan (Josh. 7:1,11,16-21); so did Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-9); so did many others.

V. 4. A "tree of life" to everyone: to the one who has spoken and to those who have heard. The perverse tongue is a "breaking of the spirit" to all involved: the speaker himself is often hurt; so are those who have been spoken to. A kind tongue was a part of the virtuous woman (Prov. 31:26).

V. 5. A fool is wrong twice: first, he disobeys, and then he will not accept correction--much like King Asa (II Chron. 16:7-10). Some will accept correction, and some won't (Prov. 10:1). Those who do are "wise" (Prov. 10:1); those who don't aren't. See these passages (Prov. 13:18; 15:10,12,31,32).

V. 6. This was especially true of Israel's and Judah's kings. Those who were good gained cities and amassed wealth through the blessing of God, and those who were wicked often lost cities and had to pay off their enemies to keep from being destroyed.

V. 7. Another contrast between the "wise" and "foolish". The wise's lips "disperse" (disseminate, give out) knowledge (Prov. 10:21), but the foolish's heart has no inclination to do so. These two groups live "poles apart". They live in the same material world, yet they live in two different "worlds" while here.

V. 8. Sometimes the wicked sacrifice, pray, and keep up a "front" of religion, but it does them no good (Prov. 21:27; 28:9; Gen. 4:5; Isa. 1:11; Jer. 6:20; Amos 5:22; Mark 7:7; Luke 18:11-14). God is pleased to hear the prayers of the godly (I Pet.

2:12; John 9:31; I John 3:22).

V. 9. This verse goes closely with v. 8. Sinners often look down upon others who do not live as they live, go where they go, and indulge in what they indulge in. They seem to be very "sold" on themselves and their ways, even thinking it strange that others do not run with them to the same excess of riot and speaking evil of them (I Pet. 4:4); but their ways are abominable to God (this verse; . And Psa. 1:1 says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of the scoffers." Righteousness is something to be followed (pursued). and we are to follow wherever it may lead (Prov. 21:21; I Tim. 6:11). There are "paths of righteousness" (Psa. 23:3) where the Good Shepherd has led His sheep throughout the centuries of time.

V. 10. Those who are in the "way of the wicked" (v. 9) are in for grievous correction, both by God and man (God's chastening and man's courts and personal dealings). And while such are famous for not regarding reproof, not listening, not amending their ways, they had better, for "he that hateth reproof shall die" (sometimes by execution, sometimes by God's cutting him off, and by ultimately the second death). Other passages: Vs. 5,12,32; Prov. 5:12; 10:17; Heb.<sup>12</sup>:21:11.

V. 11. "Sheol" is the Hebrew word for the place of departed spirits (the same as "Hades" in Greek). "Abaddon" is the Hebrew word for destruction (the same as "Apollyon" in Greek). Both forms of the latter are used in Rev. 9:11 "Sheol and Abaddon" are used together in Job 26:6 and Prov. 27:20. The omniscience of God, then, extends to those who have perished (this verse; Psa. 139:8), and so does it also to the hearts of men (I Sam. 16:7; II Chron. 6:30; Psa. 7:9; 44:21; John 2:24,25; Acts 1:24; 8:21).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:1-11

1. In what two ways can we respond to cutting words (v. 1)?
2. Give the outcome of the two different answers (v. 1)?.
3. Comment upon a wise person's uttering knowledge (v. 2).
4. What comes forth from a fool's mouth (v. 2)?
5. Cite two passages showing God's omniscience (v. 3).
6. Why is God's omniscience necessary to His righteous judgment (v. 3)?
7. Who all are blessed by the gentle tongue (v. 4)?
8. Who all are hurt by the perverse tongue (v. 4)?

9. What two times is the fool of v. 5 wrong?
10. Illustrate v. 6 by some of the kings of Israel and Judah.
11. What is the contrast between the wise and foolish in v. 7?
12. Why would the wicked bother to sacrifice to God (v. 8)?
13. What about the sacrifice of the wicked (v. 8)?
14. How does sinners' view of the ungodly life differ from God's view of it (v. 8)?
15. What does it mean to "follow" righteousness (v. 9)?
16. Who will correct the person who forsakes the right way (v. 10)?
17. Why should people listen to reproof (v. 10)?
18. What is "Sheol" (v. 11)?
19. What Greek word means the same (v. 11)?
20. What does "Abaddon" mean (v. 11)?
21. What Greek word means the same (v. 11)?
22. According to v. 11 what is before the eyes of God?

## TEXT — 15:12-22

12. A scoffer loveth not to be reprov'd;  
He will not go unto the wise.
13. A glad heart maketh a cheerful countenance;  
But by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.
14. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge;  
But the mouth of fools feedeth on folly.
15. All the days of the afflicted are evil;  
But he that is of a cheerful heart hath a continual feast.
16. Better is little, with the fear of Jehovah,  
Than great treasure and trouble therewith.
17. Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is,  
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.
18. A wrathful man stirreth up contention;  
But he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
19. The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns;  
But the path of the upright is made a highway.
20. A wise son maketh a glad father;  
But a foolish man despiseth his mother.
21. Folly is joy to him that is void of wisdom;  
But a man of understanding maketh straight his going.
22. Where there is no counsel, purposes are disappointed;  
But in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:12-22

1. Is there a relationship between a scoffer's not loving to be reproved and his not going to the wise (v. 12)?
2. What characterizes a "cheerful countenance" (v. 13)?
3. What characterizes a "broken spirit" (v. 13)?
4. Why does a man of understanding seek knowledge when people who are sadly deficient in understanding don't (v. 14)?
5. What is meant by the mouth of fools' feeding on folly (v. 14)?
6. What does "evil" mean in v. 15?
7. A "continual feast" of what kind (v. 15)?
8. Find the double contrast in v. 16.
9. Find the double contrast in v. 17.
10. A "wrathful man" is contrasted with what kind of person in v. 18?
11. What does "appeaseth" mean (v. 18)?
12. How is the way of a sluggard like a "hedge of thorns" (v. 19)?
13. How is the path of the upright like a "highway" (v. 19)?
14. What earlier verse in Proverbs is much like v. 20?
15. What would you include under "folly" in v. 21?
16. What is meant by a man making "straight his going" (v. 21)?
17. Reword the thought found in v. 22.

## PARAPHRASE OF 15:12-22

12. A mocker stays away from wise men because he hates to be scolded.
13. A happy face means a glad heart; a sad face means a breaking heart.
14. A wise man is hungry for truth, while the mocker feeds on trash.
15. When a man is gloomy, everything seems to go wrong; when he is cheerful, everything seems right!
16. Better a little with reverence for God, than great treasure and trouble with it.
17. It is better to eat soup with someone you love than steak with someone you hate.
18. A quick-tempered man starts fights; a cool-tempered man tries to stop them.

19. A lazy fellow has trouble all through life; the good man's path is easy!
20. A sensible son gladdens his father. A rebellious son saddens his mother.
21. If a man enjoys folly, something is wrong! The sensible stay on the pathways of right.
22. Plans go wrong with too few counselors; many counselors bring success.

## COMMENTS ON 15:12-22

V. 12. A scoffer is a proud, know-it-all person, self-willed, opinionated, and usually wrong. He will not go to the wise to ask or to learn, and he doesn't like people coming to him with their corrections of him. Many deplore being reprov'd (I Kings 22:8; Amos 5:10; John 3:19,20). For hating and despising reproof see also vs. 5,10,32 of this chapter.

V. 13. A "glad heart" (on the inside) makes a "cheerful countenance" (on the outside). The reverse is also true (a sad heart will show up in a sad countenance--Neh. 1:1-4; 2:1,2). "Pulpit Commentary": "The face is the index of the condition of the mind." "Septuagint" translates: "When the heart is glad, the face bloometh." See also Prov. 17:22; 12:25.

V. 14. The person who has knowledge wants more, and he gets it. Solomon desired wisdom that he might rule God's great people and follow his famous father upon the throne of Israel (I Kings 3:5-9). Note the vastness of his growing wisdom and understanding (I Kings 4:29-34). "Pulpit Commentary": "The wise man...is always seeking to learn more...The fool is always gaping and devouring every silly, or slanderous, or wicked word that comes in his way, and in his turn utters and disseminates it."

V. 15. To the person suffering, no day seems physically good: they are all "evil" (like those referred to in Eccl. 12:1). To the healthy and the happy every day is good (a "continual feast"). Oh, the great blessing of good health and favorable conditions that make one happy!

V. 16. Sometimes "treasure and trouble" go together--are twins (I Tim. 6:9,10). It is really better and the part of wisdom to take a lesser-paying job with which God is pleased than to take a big-paying job with which He is not pleased (Mark 8:36). What is great or true gain? See I Tim. 6:6. Other verses with much of the same truth in them are v. 17 of this chapter; Psa.

37:16; Prov. 16:8; 17:1.

V. 17. A "dinner of herbs" represents a meatless meal (a poor man's meal); "stalled ox" represents a luxurious meal. Note the double contrast: "dinner of herbs" vs. "stalled ox" and "where love is" vs. "hatred". People can have a good fare of food and love at the same time just the same as people can have hatred with their dinner of herbs. This verse does teach that love in the home is better than luxury in the home if there is to be only one and not both.

V. 18. A wrathful man stirs up contention because he wants things stirred up. What a perverted outlook! But men who are slow to anger try to keep things calm. And they are doing what they should. "Hot heads" and "cold hearts" often go together. See also Prov. 26:21; 29:22. "Pulpit Commentary": "It requires two to make a quarrel, and where one keeps his temper and will not be provoked, anger must subside."

V. 19. Try to walk down an old road that has gotten grown over with thornbushes. Progress is slow and difficult. Such is the way of the sluggard of lazy person (Prov. 22:5). In contrast the path of the upright is clear and open (like a highway). Prov. 4:18 also speaks of the path of the righteous.

V. 20. Read Prov. 10:1; 29:3 also. Nothing makes a father happier than the good ways of his children (III John 4). "Despising" one's mother is just the opposite of the Fifth Commandment (Exo. 20:12). A child who is brought up to honor his parents will usually grow up and bring honor and gladness to them.

V. 21. Compare the first statement with the first statement in Prov. 10:23. Putting the two together, "folly" (or "wickedness") is "joy" (or "sport") to the fool. And so it is. Many live this way (consider Tit. 3:3). They may live in the same world, but the wise person lives so differently from the fool who is void of wisdom. The wise man makes his going "straight" (see Eph. 5:15 also).

V. 22. A double contrast: "no counsel" vs. "multitude of counsellors" and "purposes are disappointed" vs. "they are established". Compare Prov. 11:14. "Counsel" in Proverbs' day had to do mostly with war (Prov. 20:18).

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:12-22

1. Describe a "scoffer" (v. 12).

2. How does a "glad heart" show up (v. 13)?
3. What does "sorrow of heart" do (v. 13)?
4. Who was a man of understanding who constantly sought more knowledge (v. 14)?
5. Contrast the day of the "afflicted" and the person with a "cheerful heart" (v. 15).
6. What often accompanies a quest for "treasure" (v. 16)?
7. What is better than great treasure and trouble (v. 16)?
8. What kind of home is better than one with the finest of fare if it has trouble (v. 17)?
9. What is the double contrast in v. 18?
10. How is the way of the wicked contrasted with the path of the upright (v. 19)?
11. What is it that makes a happy father (v. 20)?
12. What other verse in Proverbs is similar to the first part of v. 21?
13. When especially did they rely upon "counselors" in olden times (v. 22)?

## TEXT — 15:23-33

23. A man hath joy in the answer of his mouth;  
And a word in due season, how good is it!
24. To the wise the way of life goeth upward,  
That he may depart from Sheol beneath.
25. Jehovah will root up the house of the proud;  
But he will establish the border of the widow.
26. Evil devices are an abomination to Jehovah;  
But pleasant words are pure.
27. He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house;  
But he that hateth bribes shall live.
28. The heart of the righteous studieth to answer;  
But the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.
29. Jehovah is far from the wicked;  
But he heareth the prayer of the righteous.
30. The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart;  
And good things make the bones fat.
31. The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life  
Shall abide among the wise.
32. He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul;  
But he that hearkeneth to reproof getteth understanding.
33. The fear of Jehovah is the instruction of wisdom;  
And before honor goeth humility.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:23-33

1. What is meant by a "word in due season" (v. 23)?
2. Does "upward" in v. 24 imply heaven or the better life here?
3. Cite other passages besides v. 25 condemning the proud.
4. Cite other passages besides v. 25 showing God's concern for the widow?
5. What is meant by "border" in v. 25?
6. What would be some examples of "evil devices" (v. 26)?
7. Comment on pleasant words being "pure" (v. 26).
8. How does a greedy person "trouble" his house (v. 27)?
9. What connection is there between hating bribes and living (v. 27)?
10. Will a person remain righteous who speaks the first thing that comes into his or her mind (v. 28)?
11. What are some kinds of evil speech coming from the evil (v. 28)?
12. In what sense is Jehovah "far" from the wicked (v. 29).
13. Why does God hear the prayer of the righteous (v. 29)?
14. What is the "light of the eyes" (v. 30)?
15. What is meant by "make the bones fat" (v. 30)?
16. What is meant by the reproof of "life" (v. 31)?
17. Cite a Biblical character who refused correction (v. 32).
18. In the Bible who was humble before he was honored (v. 33)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 15:23-33

23. Everyone enjoys giving good advice, and how wonderful it is to be able to say the right thing at the right time!
24. The road of the godly leads upward, leaving hell behind.
25. The Lord destroys the possessions of the proud but cares for the widows.
26. The Lord hates the thoughts of the wicked but delights in kind words.
27. Dishonest money brings grief to all the family, but hating bribes brings happiness.
28. A good man thinks before he speaks; the evil man pours out his evil words without a thought.
29. The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayers of the righteous.
30. Pleasant sights and good reports give happiness and

health.

- 31,32. If you profit from constructive criticism you will be elected to the wise men's hall of fame. But to reject criticism is to harm yourself and your own best interests.
33. Humility and reverence for the Lord will make you both wise and honored.

#### COMMENTS ON 15:23-33

V. 23. A person does not have joy from just any answer of his mouth but by a right answer or a good answer or a timely answer. "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" (v. 28). "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one" (Col. 4:6). "Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (I Pet. 3:15). "All that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver" (Prov. 25:11).

V. 24. The wise choose the way that leads to life rather than destruction ("Sheol"): "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it" (Matt. 7:13,14). Wisdom makes the decision now that will end right later: "If thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43). Are you "pressing on the upward way"? Are you "gaining new heights every day"?

V. 25. A double contrast: "root up" vs. "establish" and "the proud" vs. "the widow" (and maybe a third: "house" vs. "border"). For similar passages see Prov. 12:7; 14:11; Psa. 146:9. This is a great warning against arrogancy, self-sufficiency, and being independent in attitude. Concerning the "border" (or boundary) of the widow: "In a country where property was defined by landmarks--stones or some such objects--nothing was easier than to remove these altogether, or to alter their position. That this was a common form of fraud and oppression we gather from the stringency of the enactments against the offence (see Deut. 19:14; 27:17; and compare Job 24:2 and Prov. 22:28). In the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions...there are many invoking curses, curious and multifarious, against the disturbers

of boundaries" ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 26. "Evil devices" would include everything from the simplest plot to outsmart somebody to the most complex invention for the production of evil. Such inventers may be lauded, and such devisers may think themselves shrewd, but such is not God's view. God is against "evil" and everything and everybody multiplying it. Words that are "pleasant" (or pleasing) are "pure" and not evil.

V. 27. One "greedy of gain" was violating the Tenth Commandment (Exo. 20:17). But instead of building up one's own house at the expense of others, sometimes one brings ruination to himself and his house, such as did Achan (Josh. 7:21,24,25), Naboth (I Kings 21:1-24), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10), and Lot and others. Other Scriptures: Isa. 5:8; Jer. 17:11; I Tim. 6:9,10. One who hates bribes is one who refuses to accept them (to enrich himself) or one who offers them (In hopes of profiting himself). There is far more of this in government than we realize.

V. 28. "Clarke": "His tongue never runs before his wit; he never speaks rashly, and never unadvisedly; because he studies--ponders--his thoughts and his words." A wise person is "slow to speak" (Jas. 1:19) so as to tell the exact truth and to say what should be said. The chief priests and elders deliberated in answering Jesus (they studied before answering), but it was not righteous (Matt. 21:23-27). The mouth of wicked "poureth out" evil things suggests that they speak with ease, giving no forethought to what they are about to say. And, oh, the wrong things that get said in this way!

V. 29. Man's wickedness puts "distance" between himself and God (Isa. 59:2). God hears the prayer of the righteous, but His face is against the wicked (Psa. 34:15-18; I Pet. 3:12; Psa. 145:18-20). The godly person finds joy in walking with God, and when he needs special help, he can call upon Him. The ungodly relinquish all this to their sin.

V. 30. The sunlight and other beautiful things that man sees bring joy to his heart, and the good news that he hears makes him feel good and results in good health. What one sees and hears, then, affects the way he feels, and the way he feels affects the functions of his body. People who trust instead of fret, who pray instead of worry, who thank God rather than complain, etc. are bound to have better health than those who do otherwise.

V. 31. V. 5 said that the person who regarded reproof would get wisdom. This verse says that such will abide among the wise. See vs. 10,12 also. An old proverb: "Advice is for them that will take it." Stephen referred to his hearers' ears as "uncircumcised" (Acts 7:51). The ear cannot always hear what is pleasing and commendatory, as much as we would like it that way. Praise may be pleasing, but reproof may be more profitable. All of us need both.

V. 32. This verse treats both responses to reproof. One refusing correction may appear to be despising the one reproving him, but in reality he is despising his own best interests; he is hurting himself. The inclusion of so many sayings on correction indicates the amount of this that will come to us in life. Their purpose is to get us to accept it for our own betterment.

V. 33. Compare with Prov. 1:7. To learn true reverence for God is true wisdom. Wisdom would instruct us to this fear through parents, through the Scriptures, and through our religious leaders and religious associates. Honor does precede humility: it was so with Jesus (Phil. 2:7-11); it was so with the penitent publican (Luke 18:13,14); and we must be converted (humbled) before we become Christians (honor).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:23-33

1. What are some other verses besides v. 23 on giving a right answer?
2. What famous statement of Jesus tells us to choose the way that leads to life (v. 24)?
3. What was stated about borders or boundaries (v. 25)?
4. What all would be included under "evil devices" (v. 26)?
5. Who were some Bible characters who troubled their own house through greed (v. 27)?
6. In what area of life are "bribes" the most apt to occur (v. 27)?
7. What is the contrast in speech between the righteous and the wicked in v. 28?
8. In what sense is God "far" from the wicked (v. 29)?
9. What is said of both sight and hearing in v. 30?
10. Who accused his hearers of having "uncircumcised ears" (v. 31)?
11. Who is hurt the more when one refuses correction--the reprover or the reproved (v. 32)?

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

12. Who in the Bible were humble before they were honored (v. 33)?

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 15

#### *"Good speech"--*

- "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (v. 1).
- "The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright" (v. 2).
- "A gentle tongue is a tree of life" (v. 4).
- "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (v. 7).
- "A man hath joy in the answer of his mouth; And a word in due season, how good is it!" (v. 23).
- "Pleasant words are pure" (v. 26).
- "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer (v. 28).

#### *"Bad speech"--*

- "A grievous word stirreth up anger" (v. 1).
- "The mouth of fools poureth out folly" (v. 2).
- "Perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit" (v. 4).
- "The mouth of fools feedeth on folly" (v. 14).
- "The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things" (v. 28).

#### *"Wise"--*

- "The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright" (v. 2).
- "He that regardeth reproof getteth prudence" (v. 5).
- "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (v. 7).
- "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge" (v. 14).
- "A wise son maketh a glad father" (v. 20).
- "A man of understanding maketh straight his going" (v. 21).
- "To the wise the way of life goeth upward, That he may depart from Sheol beneath" (v. 24).
- "The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life shall abide among the wise" (v. 31).

#### *"Fools"--*

- "The mouth of fools poureth out folly" (v. 2).
- "A fool despiseth his father's correction" (v. 5).
- "The heart of the foolish doeth not so" (v. 7).
- "The mouth of fools feedeth on folly" (v. 14).
- "A foolish man despiseth his mother" (v. 20).
- "Folly is joy to him that is void of wisdom" (v. 21).

## CHAPTER 15

### *"Righteous"--*

"In the house of the righteous is much treasure" (v. 6).

"The prayer of the upright is his delight" (v. 8).

"He loveth him that followeth after righteousness" (v. 9).

"The path of the upright is made a highway" (v. 19).

"The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" (v. 28).

"He heareth the prayer of the righteous" (v. 29).

### *"Wicked"--*

"In the revenues of the wicked is trouble" (v. 6).

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 8).

"The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 9).

"There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way" (v. 10).

"The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things" (v. 28).

"Jehovah is far from the wicked" (v. 29).

### *"Abomination"--*

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 8).

"The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 9).

"Evil devices are an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 26).

### *"Rebuke"--*

"A fool despiseth his father's correction" (v. 5).

"He that regardeth reproof getteth prudence" (v. 5).

"There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way" (v. 10).

"He that hateth reproof shall die" (v. 10).

"A scoffer loveth not to be reprov'd" (v. 12).

"The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life Shall abide among the wise" (v. 31).

"He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul" (v. 32).

"He that hearkeneth to reproof getteth understanding" (v. 32).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### DON'T TAKE UP WITH FOOLS

How true is the statement made in 13:20, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Why does God warn people about becoming a companion of fools? Because there are those who seem to know no better than to throw themselves into the direct influence of those whom God labels as fools. Anybody who has no more judgment than to take up with fools will probably not have enough judgment to preserve him from becoming like them.

Again God warns, "Go from the presence of the foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge" (14:7). This is more than a warning; it is a commandment. It shows that we must make judgment of others in order to know with whom to be companions and with whom not to be.

Especially do those who are younger (immature in judgment) and those who are known for being easily affected by their surroundings need to regard these true warnings from Proverbs.

### HE IS A GOD WHO CHASTENS

"Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth: even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (3:11,12).

Just as any wise, loving, concerned parent corrects his child, so does God His. Sometimes we make mistakes in our discipline, but God doesn't. When we do wrong, we can be sure that God is not going to stand idly by and permit us to continue in the way of wrong-doing unchastened. He loves us too much to see us continue that way. When we fail to regard His will, He expects that we will regard His chastening.

## TEXT — 16:1-11

1. The plans of the heart belong to man;  
But the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah.
2. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes;  
But Jehovah weigheth the spirits.
3. Commit thy works unto Jehovah,  
And thy purposes shall be established.
4. Jehovah hath made everything for its own end;  
Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.
5. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to  
Jehovah:
6. By mercy and truth iniquity is atoned for;  
And by the fear of Jehovah men depart from evil.
7. When a man's ways please Jehovah,  
He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.
8. Better is a little, with righteousness,  
Than great revenues with injustice.
9. A man's heart deviseth his way;  
But Jehovah directeth his steps.
10. A divine sentence is in the lips of the king;  
His mouth shall not transgress in judgment.
11. A just balance and scales are Jehovah's;  
All the weights of the bag are his work.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 16:1-11

1. In view of v. 1 are all answers of the tongue from Jehovah?
2. What is the implication or insinuation in v. 2?
3. What does "purposes" mean in v. 3?
4. Is "its own end" of the text or "his own purpose" of the footnote the real reading in v. 4?
5. Why does God deplore man's pride so much (v. 5)?
6. What is meant by hand joining in hand in v. 5?
7. How do mercy and truth atone for iniquity (v. 6)?
8. Why do some people not depart from evil (v. 6)?
9. How does Jehovah make even a person's enemies to be at peace with a godly person (v. 7)?
10. If v. 7 be true, how could there ever be any martyrs?
11. What other passages resemble v. 8?
12. What previous verse in this chapter resembles v. 9?

13. Was (and is) a divine sentence in the lips of all kings (v. 10)?
14. What were "weights of the bag" (v. 11)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 16:1-11

1. We can make our plans, but the final outcome is in God's hands.
2. We can always "prove" that we are right, but is the Lord convinced?
3. Commit your work to the Lord, then it will succeed.
4. The Lord has made everything for His own purposes--even the wicked, for punishment.
5. Pride disgusts the Lord. Take my word for it--proud men shall be punished.
6. Iniquity is atoned for by mercy and truth; being good comes from reverence for God.
7. When a man is trying to please God, He makes even his worst enemies to be at peace with him.
8. A little, gained honestly, is better than great wealth gotten by dishonest means.
9. We should make plans--counting on God to direct us.
10. God will help the king to judge the people fairly; there need be no mistakes.
11. The Lord demands fairness in every business deal. He established this principle.

## COMMENTS ON 16:1-11

V. 1. These first seven verses are all "religious" maxims, for they all contain the name "Jehovah". The "answer of the tongue" appears to be set over against the "plans of the heart". If so, the saying would refer to those times when a person's plans become altered by providence so that he ends up doing something else. There is a marvelous teaching here for those who believe in God's providential leadership. See v. 9 also. When we pray, "Thy will, not mine, be done," God may alter our thoughts either in a minor or a major way. Your writer can testify to this as he had personal well-laid vocational plans in life, and yet he believed that it was God's will for him to say, "Lord, I will devote my life to preaching your Word."

V. 2. Prov. 21:2 is very similar. The heart can be so deceptive (Jer. 17:9) that it often deceives the person himself into

thinking he is right when he is wrong (Prov. 30:12). Laodicea had its own estimation of itself, but Christ weighed them and found them wanting (Rev. 3:17,18). If we practice self-justification in the eyes of people (Luke 16:15), in time we may come to deceive ourselves into thinking we are all right even though we have not obeyed God's commandments (Jas. 1:22).

V. 3. This verse is very similar to Psa. 37:5: "Commit thy way unto Jehovah; Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." The promise of Psa. 37:4 is: "Delight thyself also in Jehovah: And he will give thee the desires of thy heart." God does not always overrule our purposes (He wouldn't unless they are wrong or unless He had some special plan for us), but it is His blessing that makes our plans and purposes come to pass.

V. 4. Jehovah had something definite in mind for everything He created, and if men do not fulfill His loving will, He will use them in another sense as recipients of His just wrath because of their sins. God was as glorified in His overthrow of Pharaoh as He was in His deliverance of Israel (Exo. 9:16). God is as glorified in the "vessels of wrath" as He is in the "vessels of mercy" (Rom. 9:22,23), only in a different way. Yes, He would much rather be glorified by showing mercy, but if man will not so glorify God, He will be glorified in His just wrath.

V. 5. Again we have a saying showing God's abomination for pride. In comparison to God and His works, man is nothing (Psa. 8:3,4; 39:4,5). Even whole nations of the earth are "nothing" in comparison with Him (Isa. 40:15,17). What each of us has, we should not boast of it, for we have received it (I Cor. 4:7). Regardless of the area of our lives that we might be considering, before God "boasting is excluded" (Rom. 3:27). Other passages against pride: Prov. 6:16,17; Luke 18:11-14; I Pet. 5:5; I John 2:16). The last part of our present verse is found in Prov. 11:21 also, meaning that no matter how many alliances proud man may make, God can overthrow them all. Nor is there safety in "numbers" when God arises to punish the multitude of the wicked.

V. 6. God is in both parts of man's salvation: His fear causes man to depart from evil, and His mercy and truth atone for the sin that has been dropped. "Mercy" is that attribute of God that exhibits itself in our forgiveness; "truth" stands for the way that He has set up for us to come to Him for His forgiveness. "Fear" is a deterrent to sin, to crime, and to misbehavior (Prov. 14:16).

V. 7. It is not normal for enemies to be at peace with those whom they hate. There have been instances where God has so blessed individuals that his enemies so respected him or so feared him that they caused him no trouble. Such was true of Israel in Solomon's days (I Kings 4:20,21,24,25). Such caused the Gibeonites to seek peace with Joshua and Israel (Josh. 9:9-11). Such caused Abimilech and the men of Gerar to seek Isaac's peace (Gen. 26:26-29).

V. 8. This should be a great passage to keep in mind when one is tempted to take a high-paying job or to get into a lucrative business that is not right. We know that taverns, theaters, gambling casinos, and other businesses connected with evil can make their owners or operators sizable sums, but it is better to work at something else that makes less money. Compare this verse with Psa. 37:16 and Prov. 15:16. Christians are commanded to work at divinely-approved jobs (Eph. 4:28; Tit. 3:8--especially the marginal note on the latter). Remember, too, that "righteousness" is to be sought before even the earthly necessities of food, drink, and clothing (Matt. 6:33).

V. 9. This is but one of several passages that bear out the thought that "man proposes, but God disposes." See v. 1; Prov. 19:21; Psa. 37:23; Prov. 20:24; Jer. 10:23. These verses emphasize a most precious truth: the providence and leadership of God in our lives. The song writer has tried to put into words both the belief and the feeling of our hearts when he wrote, "He leadeth me; Oh, blessed thought! Oh, words with heavenly comfort fraught!" We should pray for this leadership, follow it, and thank God for it constantly. It is one of the Christian's greatest treasures.

V. 10. God has both instituted government (Rom. 13:1-7) and commanded that they rule justly (II Sam. 23:3; Deut. 16:18-20; v. 12 of this chapter). When a king does his duty properly, man is being ruled governmentally as God intends, and man should submit to his government's decrees as he would to God (I Pet. 2:13,14). The latter statement of the verse must be understood in this context; namely, that if he is wisely and righteously doing his kingly duty, his verdicts will be true verdicts.

V. 11. God commanded just measurements in business (Lev. 19:36) and declares that He is pleased with just weights and highly displeased with false ones (Prov. 11:1). To be right with God one must be honest in business.

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 16:1-11

1. What word is found in the first seven verses of this chapter?
2. How is the leadership of God shown in v. 1?
3. Cite an example of some who were wrong but thought they were right (v. 2).
4. What wonderful promise is contained in v. 3?
5. How would you explain v. 4 to someone?
6. Why is a proud person so abominable to God (v. 5)?
7. What is meant by hand joining in hand (v. 5)?
8. Comment upon mercy's relationship to atonement (v. 6).
9. Comment upon truth's relationship to it (v. 6).
10. Comment upon fear's relationship to man's departure from evil (v. 6).
11. Cite two Biblical examples of v. 7.
12. What does God say is better than "great revenues with injustice" (v. 8)?
13. "Man proposes, but God ....."
14. In what sense is a "divine sentence" in the lips of a king (v. 10)?
15. What does God say about just and unjust weights (v. 11)?

## TEXT — 16:12-22

12. It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness;  
For the throne is established by righteousness.
13. Righteous lips are the delight of kings;  
And they love him that speaketh right.
14. The wrath of a king is as messengers of death;  
But a wise man will pacify it.
15. In the light of the king's countenance is life;  
And his favor is as a cloud of the latter rain.
16. How much better is it to get wisdom than gold!  
Yea, to get understanding is rather to be chosen than silver.
17. The highway of the upright is to depart from evil:  
He that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.
18. Pride goeth before destruction,  
And a haughty spirit before a fall.
19. Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the poor,  
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20. He that giveth heed unto the word shall find good;  
And whose trusteth in Jehovah, happy is he.
21. The wise in heart shall be called prudent;  
And the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.
22. Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it;  
But the correction of fools is their folly.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 16:12-22

1. Why is it such an abomination for kings to commit wickedness (v. 12)?
2. Why do kings love those who speak truth (v. 13)?
3. Show from v. 14 that the will and the rights of a king were supreme.
4. What is meant by the "light of the king's countenance" (v. 15)?
5. Who asked God for "wisdom" rather than riches (v. 16)?
6. What verse in chapter 15 speaks of the way of the upright being a "highway"?
7. Give a Bible example of one's pride leading to his destruction (v. 18).
8. Why is it better to be lowly and poor than rich and proud (v. 19)?
9. What "word" is meant in v. 20?
10. How does the "sweetness of the lips" increase learning (v. 21)?
11. What is meant by understanding being a "wellspring of life" (v. 22)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 16:12-22

12. It is a horrible thing for a king to do evil. His right to rule depends upon his fairness.
13. The king rejoices when his people are truthful and fair.
14. The anger of the king is a messenger of death and a wise man will appease it.
15. Many favors are showered on those who please the king.
16. How much better is wisdom than gold, and understanding than silver!
17. The path of the godly leads away from evil; he who follows that path is safe.
18. Pride goes before destruction and haughtiness before a

- fall.
19. Better poor and humble than proud and rich.
  20. God blesses those who obey Him; happy the man who trusts in the Lord.
  21. The wise man is known by his common sense, and a pleasant teacher is the best.
  22. Wisdom is a fountain of life on those possessing it, but a fool's burden is his folly.

## COMMENTS ON 16:12-22

V. 12. Another saying concerning kings. "Pulpit Commentary": "When a ruler acts justly and wisely, punishes the unruly, rewards the virtuous, acts as God's vicegerent, and himself sets the example of the character which becomes so high a position, he wins the affection of his people...Law-makers should not be law-breakers." A ruler should desire the success of his nation; then he should lead it into righteousness: "Righteousness exalteth a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). A king's rule upon his throne and the power passing to his sons is brought about by a righteous rule upon his and their parts. (Prov. 25:5; 29:14).

V. 13. A ruler is concerned about how things are going in his kingdom. For much of this knowledge he is dependent upon the information of others. Inaccurate reporting on their part can be his undoing. So he loves the person who speaks right. In Bible times a king not only ruled but served much like a high judge today (I Kings 3:16-28). In passing judgment he likewise depended upon the information that he heard from the "witnesses". He had a special appreciation for those who spoke the truth. Every ruler knows, though, that he must sort out the information he hears into true, false, partly true, partly false, etc. Is it any wonder that when Jesus said to the ruler Pilate, "To this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John 18:37), that Pilate remarked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

V. 14. The king's wrath is compared to the rage of a roaring lion in Prov. 19:12; 20:2. Various men in Bible times found this to be true: Agag (I Sam. 15:33); the Amalekite who claimed he had mercifully killed Saul (II Sam. 1:14,15); Shemei (I Kings 2:39-46); and many others. "None but a fool will excite the monarch's resentment" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Prov. 15:1 says

wrath can be pacified with a "soft answer".

V. 15. Prov. 19:12 likens the king's favor to "dew upon the grass". "The former rain in Palestine falls about the end of October or the beginning of November, when the seed is sown; the latter rain comes in March or April, and is absolutely necessary for the due swelling and ripening of the grain. It is accompanied, of course, with cloud, which tempers the heat, while it brings fertility and vigour" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Queen Esther obtained favor in the sight of King Ahasuerus (Esth. 4:11; 5:1,2). Likewise did Jehoiachin obtain the favor of Evil-merodach, king of Babylon (Jer. 52:31-34).

V. 16. Prov. 8:11,19 contains statements to the same effect. Wisdom builds the man, gold his holdings. One who gets wisdom may get riches as a result. For those who take a deeper look into this passage, there seems to be an additional comparison; namely, that "wisdom" is actually better than "understanding" as "gold" is greater than "silver": "An intimation of the superiority of wisdom over intelligence, the former being the guide of life and including the practice of religion, the latter denoting discernment, the faculty of distinguishing between one thing and another" ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 17. Prov. 15:19 shows that the path of the upright is a highway and not a place of thorns as is the way of the sluggard. A "highway" leads from one place to another place. The highway of the upright leaves or goes away from evil, making it a the "way of holiness" (Isa. 35:8). And one who stays in this way preserves his soul.

V. 18. Pride is when a person is puffed up (I Cor. 13:4), when one's spirit is unduly lifted up within him (Hab. 2:4), when one is conceited and thinks more highly of himself than he ought to think (Rom. 12:16). Haman (Esth. 5:11,12; 7:3-10) and Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30-33) are good examples of Prov. 17:19 ("He that raiseth high his gate seeketh destruction") and Prov. 18:12 ("Before destruction the heart of man is haughty"), causing the warning of I Cor. 10:12 to be timely ("Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"). "Herodotus": "Artabanus warned the arrogant Xerxes, 'Seest thou how God strikes with the thunder animals which overtop others, and suffers them not to vaunt themselves, but the small irritate him not? And seest thou how he hurls his bolts always against the mightiest buildings and the loftiest trees? For God is wont to cut short whatever is too highly exalted.'"

V. 19. "Better" in two senses: One is more righteous to be lowly than proud, and when destruction hits the proud and reduces him to nothing, it is surely ultimately better.

V. 20. The "word" is the Word of God as the last statement of the verse indicates. To give heed is to pay attention to the Word, to respond properly to the Word. This is to believe its facts, obey its commands, accept its promises, and heed its warnings. Heeding what God says reflects a trust in God, which is the happy, blessed way to live (Psa. 34:8; 125:1; Jer. 17:7). "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

V. 21. One usually deserves the reputation he acquires; thus, the wise are called "prudent". People look to those for leadership and advice whose wisdom they respect and admire. "People listen to instruction at the mouth of one who speaks well and winningly" ("Pulpit Commentary"). The "sweetness" of pleasantness of a person's speech enables him to impart his knowledge to others who willingly listen.

V. 22. The person whose understanding in v. 21 blesses others also has it for his own blessing (this verse). One's understanding is like an ever-flowing spring (well) from which he can ever drink. But over and over again is the foolish person corrected by his own folly. He is going to "show them" only to be shown up. Oh, the usual conceit of an ignorant person!

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 16:12-22

1. How many of these verses deal with kings?
2. What establishes a king and his family upon a throne (v. 12)?
3. Why and when would kings appreciate truthful words (v. 13)?
4. What is a king's wrath compared to in other proverbs (v. 14)?
5. What does Prov. 15:1 say can pacify wrath?
6. What if one did not have the favor of the king (v. 15)?
7. V. 16 says ..... is better than gold and ..... than silver.
8. What is the sense of "highway" in v. 17?
9. Name two Bible characters whose pride preceded their fall (v. 18).
10. In what two ways is it better to be lowly and poor than rich and proud (v. 19)?

11. How do we know that "word" in v. 20 is the Word of God?
12. What do we do when we give "heed" to God's Word (v. 20)?
13. How does a wise person help others (v. 21)?
14. How does he help himself (v. 22)?
15. How is a fool's folly his downfall (v. 22)?

## TEXT — 16:23-33

23. The heart of the wise instructeth his mouth,  
And addeth learning to his lips.
24. Pleasant words are as a honeycomb,  
Sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.
25. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,  
But the end thereof are the ways of death.
26. The appetite of the laboring man laboreth for him;  
For his mouth urgeth him thereto.
27. A worthless man deviseth mischief;  
And in his lips there is as a scorching fire.
28. A perverse man scattereth abroad strife;  
And a whisperer separateth chief friends.
29. A man of violence enticeth his neighbor,  
And leadeth him in a way that is not good.
30. He that shutteth his eyes, it is to devise perverse things:  
He that compresseth his lips bringeth evil to pass.
31. The hoary head is a crown of glory;  
It shall be found in the way of righteousness.
32. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;  
And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.
33. The lot is cast into the lap;  
But the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 16:23-33

1. How does the heart instruct the mouth (v. 23)?
3. What two qualities of honey are brought out in v. 24?
3. What earlier verse in Proverbs is exactly like v. 25?
4. How does one's appetite labor for him (v. 26)?
5. Show from v. 27 that mischief is worthless.
6. What kind of man is v. 28's "perverse" man?
7. What might v. 28's enticements include?
8. What is meant by shutting the eyes and compressing the

lips in v. 30?

9. What is the "hoary head" of v. 31?
10. What virtue or virtues is v. 32 extolling?
11. What is meant by the lot being cast into the lap (v. 33)?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 16:23-33

23. From a wise mind comes careful and persuasive speech.
24. Kind words are like honey--enjoyable and healthful.
25. Before every man there lies a wide and pleasant road he thinks is right, but it ends in death.
26. Hunger is good--if it makes you work to satisfy it!
27. Idle hands are the devil's workshop; idle lips are his mouthpiece.
28. An evil man sows strife; gossip separates the best of friends.
29. Wickedness loves company--and leads others into sin.
30. The wicked man stares into space with pursed lips, deep in thought, planning his evil deeds.
31. White hair is a crown of glory and is seen most among the godly.
32. It is better to be slow-tempered than famous; it is better to have self-control than to control an army.
33. We toss the coin, but it is the Lord who controls its decision.

#### COMMENTS ON 16:23-33

V. 23. The wise person thinks before he speaks, instructing himself as to what to say, how to say it, when to say it, to whom to say it, and even whether to say it. It is this thinking that adds "learning" to his lips that he would not otherwise have. He "studieth to answer" (Prov. 15:28) and is sometimes "slow to speak" (Jas. 1:19). Speaking of the heart and the lips of the good man, Matt. 12:35 beautifully says, "The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things."

V. 24. Another proverb on speech. The ancients' sweetening was from the honey. Pleasant words are "pure" words (Prov. 15:26) and "sweet" words (this verse). Pleasant words come from a "sweet" soul and one who is blessed with a healthy outlook, and they bring sweetness to the soul of the hearer and health to him too. Nothing can destroy this sweetness of soul and the consequent health of the body more than angry,

hateful, and untrue words.

V. 25. This same statement is found in Prov. 14:12. It is probably included twice in the book not by error but for emphasis. In life it is possible to think you are right when you are "dead-wrong." Many errors occur this way both in religion and in the everyday things of life. This is why we should always be pleased to recheck our conclusions. Even before pulling onto a highway, take one more look after you are sure it is clear--there may be a car coming after all!

V. 26. A laboring man has an appetite. He needs food for strength and for health. He "goes" on food just as an engine does on fuel and a fire on wood. But when people don't work, their food goes to fat, which hinders health. We are told by health authorities to eat more for breakfast and less at night so that we burn up what we eat with work during the day rather than let it go to fat while we sleep at night.

V. 27. Somebody is the originator or deviser (cause) of everything that comes to pass. Prompted and empowered by the devil, such a wicked deviser is here said to be "worthless," and he is as worthless and as destructive with his "lips" as a fire can be to property (Jas. 3:6). Both a "fire" and the "lips" have many useful purposes (fire: heat, cooking, industrial purposes, etc.; the lips: conversation, business, singing, preaching, prayer, etc.); but a person who turns these to wicked, mischievous ends is "worthless" both to God and society. We can get along without them, and God will separate them from himself and from the saved forever.

V. 28. Here is the person of v. 27 in action. He is "perverse" because he is perverting his time and powers to destructive from constructive possibilities. He is creating and scattering strife abroad, which is contrary to the will and desire of God (Prov. 6:14; 15:18; 26:21; 29:22). One of his chief ways of proceeding is to work secretly ("whisperer"). This way he can work quietly, be less detected, and appears to be confiding information to those whom he is approaching. And, oh, the power for evil that this approach has: it separates "chief friends." Quite an accomplishment, wouldn't you say! Prov. 17:9 says that he that "harpeth" on a matter can also separate chief friends.

V. 29. Another proverb on misusing one's power for the harm of others. This time he is inviting his neighbor to join him ("enticeth" him, as if it is a good thing to do). If he joins him, he

is being led into a way that is not good; actually he is "misled". It was this very thing that Prov. 1:10 was warning against ("If sinners entice thee, consent thou not"). Notice the "violence" that was planned (1:11-14); it was a program of gain by wrong means. We are told in 1:15: "Walk not thou in the way with them; Refrain thy foot from their path."

V. 30. As you behold one sitting with closed eyes and closed mouth, he does not look like the "factory of evil" that he is. While he looks like he is resting and "taking it easy," he is actually devising "perverse things" and working to bring "evil" to pass.

V. 31. The "hoary" head refers to the white hair of old age. It is said here to be a "crown of glory" (compare Prov. 20:29). White hair, then, is not something to be ashamed of, for it should be a mark of distinction (Lev. 19:32). The latter statement of our verse bears out the fact that many are more righteous in old age than in younger years (especially if they have been given religious training in childhood). Some who are wild and utterly neglectful of God settle down to the serious side of life later. A "Gallup Poll" found that the largest group of Bible-readers were 55 years old and older.

V. 32. A person who is "slow to anger" is a person of good judgment, one who exhausts his ability to overlook and explain the possible "why's" and "wherefore's" of another's displeasing action who finally faces the downright evil that the other person has done. This virtue is praised (Prov. 19:11) and commanded (Jas. 1:19), and one is disqualified from being an elder in the church without it (Tit. 1:7). Such rules his own "spirit"; and some who can take cities (conquerors) and do all kinds of physical feats of power (like Samson) cannot rule themselves successfully. "Clarke": "It is much easier to subdue the enemy without than the one within...Alexander, who conquered the world, was a slave to intemperate anger, and in a fit of it slew Clytus, the best and most intimate of all his friends."

V. 33. "Pulpit Commentary": "It is not quite clear what articles the Jews used in their divinations by lot. Probably they employed stones, differing in shape or color or having some distinguishing mark...The Jew...did not feel justified in resorting to this practice on every trivial occasion...The lot was employed religiously in cases where other means of decision were not suitable." The soldiers who crucified Jesus cast lots to determine who got what piece of His clothing (Mark 15:24; John 19:23,24).

The apostles used it in determining who would succeed Judas (Acts 1:26). No more often than we read of this in the Bible (though handy it would have been to use often), we conclude that it was not commonplace even then. This was evidently something that God arranged for His Old Testament people that we do not read about in the New Testament. If we lack wisdom, we are not taught to "draw straws" or use some other method of casting lots but to pray and trust that God's leadership will be had (Jas. 1:5).

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 16:23-33

1. What all does a wise person consider before he speaks (v. 23)?
2. What are two blessings of pleasant words (v. 24)?
3. Why should we recheck our conclusions (v. 25)?
4. Comment on the laboring man and his appetite (v. 26).
5. What does v. 27 call a deviser of mischief?
6. Why does a whisperer often succeed with his whispering (v. 28)?
7. How does v. 29 tie up with Prov. 1:10-15?
8. How does the man of v. 30 fool people?
9. At what stage of life do people read the Bible the most (v. 31)?
10. What did Alexander the Great once do in a fit of rage (v. 32)?
11. What did you learn about lot-using from the comments on v. 33?

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 16

#### "Jehovah"--

"The plans of the heart belong to man: But the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah" (v. 1).

"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: But Jehovah weigheth the spirits" (v. 2).

"Commit they works unto Jehovah, And thy purposes shall be established" (v. 3).

"Jehovah hath made everything for its own end; Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (v. 4).

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 5).

"By the fear of Jehovah men depart from evil" (v. 6).

"When a man's ways please Jehovah, He maketh even his

## CHAPTER 16

enemies to be at peace with him" (v. 7).

"A man's heart deviseth his way; But Jehovah directeth his steps" (v. 9).

"A just balance and scales are Jehovah's; All the weights of the bag are his work" (v. 11).

"The lot is cast into the lap; But the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah" (v.33).

### *"Better"*--

"Better is a little, with righteousness, Than great revenues with injustice" (v. 8).

"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! Yea, to get understanding is rather to be chosen than silver" (v. 16).

"Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the poor, Than to divide the spoil with the proud" (v. 19).

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city" (v. 32).

### *"Pride"*--

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 5).

"Pride goeth before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall" (v. 18).

"Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the poor, Than to divide the spoil with the proud" (v. 19).

### *"King"*--

"A divine sentence is in the lips of the king; His mouth shall not transgress in judgment" (v. 10).

"It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; For the throne is established by righteousness" (v. 12).

"Righteous lips are the delight to kings; And they love him that speaketh right" (v. 13).

"The wrath of a king is as messengers of death; But a wise man will pacify it" (v. 14).

"In the light of the king's countenance is life; And his favor is as a cloud of the latter rain" (v. 15).

### *"Speech"*--

"The answer of the tongue is from Jehovah" (v. 1).

"A divine sentence is in the lips of the king; His mouth shall not transgress in judgment" (v. 10).

"Righteous lips are the delight of kings; And they love him that speaketh right" (v. 13).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

“The sweetness of the lips increaseth learning” (v. 21).

“The heart of the wise instructeth his mouth, And addeth learning to his lips” (v. 23).

“Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul, and health to the bones” (v. 24).

“In his lips there is a scorching fire” (v. 27).

“A whisperer separateth chief friends” (v. 28).

“He that compresseth his lips bringeth evil to pass” (v. 30).

*“Righteous”--*

“Better is a little, with righteousness, Than great revenues with injustice” (v. 8).

“The throne is established by righteousness” (v. 12).

“Righteous lips are the delight of kings” (v. 13).

“The hoary head is a crown of glory; It shall be found in the way of righteousness” (v. 31).

## TEXT — 17:1-10

1. Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith,  
Than a house full of feasting with strife.
2. A servant that dealeth wisely shall have rule over a son  
that causeth shame,  
And shall have part in the inheritance among the brethren.
3. The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold;  
But Jehovah trieth the hearts.
4. An evil-doer giveth heed to wicked lips;  
And a liar giveth ear to a mischievous tongue.
5. Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker;  
And he that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished.
6. Children's children are the crown of old men;  
And the glory of children are their fathers.
7. Excellent speech becometh not a fool;  
Much less do lying lips a prince.
8. A bribe is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath  
it;  
Whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.
9. He that covereth a transgression seeketh love;  
But he that harpeth on a matter separateth chief friends.
10. A rebuke entereth deeper into one that hath understanding  
Than a hundred stripes into a fool.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 17:1-10

1. What does "quietness" stand for in v. 1?
2. Cite the two contrasts in v. 2.
3. What does Jehovah do when He "trieth the hearts"  
(v. 3)?
4. Why will a liar give heed to a mischievous tongue (v. 4)?
5. What are some common examples of laughing at calamity  
(v. 5)?
6. Reproacheth whose Maker (v. 5)?
7. What is meant in v. 6 by "the glory of children are their  
fathers?"
8. What is "excellent" speech (v. 7)?
9. What does "becometh" mean in v. 7?
10. What is the meaning of a bribe's being a "precious  
stone" to its possessor (v. 8)?

11. What is the "it" in v. 8?
12. Covers his or somebody else's transgression (v. 9)?
13. What is "harping on a matter" (v. 9)?
14. What will help a man if one hundred stripes won't (v. 10)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 17:1-10

1. A dry crust eaten in peace is better than steak every day along with argument and strife.
2. A wise slave will rule his master's wicked sons and share their estate.
3. Silver and gold are purified by fire, but God purifies hearts.
4. The wicked enjoy fellowship with others who are wicked; liars enjoy liars.
5. Mocking the poor is mocking the God who made them. He will punish those who rejoice at others' misfortunes.
6. An old man's grandchildren are his crowning glory. A child's glory is his father.
7. Truth from a rebel or lies from a king are both unexpected.
8. A bribe works like magic. Whoever uses it will prosper!
9. Love forgets mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends.
10. A rebuke to a man of common sense is more effective than a hundred lashes on the back of a rebel.

## COMMENTS ON 17:1-10

V. 1. Because their bread was "dry", they dipped it in water and other softening fluids (Ruth 2:14; John 13:36). And having only a dry morsel to eat could be the sign of extreme poverty. So taken, the verse means that poverty and peace are to be preferred to prosperity and problems (such as "strife"). The rich have troubles and problems that the poor do not have. This statement should be a comfort to people who have only the barest of necessities. Prov. 15:17 is very similar.

V. 2. "Pulpit Commentary": "Here is intimated the supremacy of wisdom over folly and vice...Slaves were often raised to high honor and might inherit their master's possessions. Thus Abraham's servant...was at one time considered the patriarch's heir (Gen. 15:2,3); Ziba, Saul's servant, obtained the inheritance of his lord Mephibosheth (II

Sam. 16:4); Joseph was advanced to the highest post in Egypt." In European history when the sons of Clovis, king of the Franks, did not really care to rule but merely to enjoy the pleasures of the palace, they had "mayors of the palace" who did the actual ruling, and in time the mayors became the heirs of the throne itself. (For further reading consult the "Merovingian" and "Carolingian" dynasties in church history books or encyclopedias.) For "a son that causeth shame", see Prov. 10:5; 19:26.

V. 3. Just as men refine gold and silver (Prov. 27:21), so does God refine men. Through the Word (John 15:3), but especially through chastening :Isa. 48:10; Heb. 12:11) and persecution (I Pet. 1:6,7; Jas. 1:2,3; and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (II Cor. 3:18), does He refine us. Mal. 3:2,3 aptly predicted this refining in the Christian dispensation.

V. 4. It is common for perverse people to believe the wrong thing about others. They want to. They get enjoyment from it. They derive satisfaction in thinking the righteous are not really righteous. This verse is a case of Hebrew parallelism in which the second line restates the truth of the first statement. Thus the "liar" is the "evil-doer", "giveth ear" is the same as "giveth heed", and a "mischievous tongue" is the same as "wicked lips" The liar will have something more to lie about.

V. 5. Prov. 14:31 talked of oppressing the poor; this verse of mocking the poor. People mock the poor when they make fun of them, laugh at them, mimic them, and make life harder for them. God is the "Maker" of the poor as well as the rich (Prov. 22:2); when we mock them, we mock Him; when we give to them, we are making a loan to the Lord (Prov. 19:17). We should not be glad at any calamity, whether that calamity be poverty (as in this context) or any other. Job said he was free from this (Job. 31:29), but Edom wasn't (Oba. 12). God will punish us if we do (Prov. 24:17).

V. 6. When one's own health begins to fail, and it seems there is less and less purpose for one's earthly life, along come the births of grandchildren to inject a new dimension into one's living. They "crown" one's life near one's bowing-out years. The last statement shows that good children not only respect their parents but actually glory in them. How they will brag about them (sometimes even exaggerate concerning what he can do, what he knows, how much money he has, etc.).

For the blessing that children can be, see Psa. 127:3-5; 128:3.

V. 7. Excellent speech is speaking only the facts, speaking them at the right time, at the right place, to the right person, in the right spirit, and for the right purpose (to mention a few of its characteristics). As we don't expect good speech from a fool, neither should we expect bad speech from a ruler. It is a shame that so many of our present-day ruling-class, even though elected to their offices, are known for being "politicians" (policy-men) more than "statesmen" (doing what is right under all conditions).

V. 8. The various translations face the problem of whether it should be "bribe", "gift," or "stone of grace", and whether the "it" after "whithersoever" should be "it" or "he". Of all the translations the "New World" gives as understandable a message on this verse as any: "The gift is a stone winning favor in the eyes of its grand owner. Everywhere that he turns he has success." If the foregoing is correct, both Prov. 18:16 and 19:6 verify the truth of its statement. If "bribe" is correct, "Living Bible" has, "A bribe works like magic. Whoever uses it will prosper" and it adds this footnote: "This is a fact, but the writer strictly forbids this perversion of justice. See v. 23"

V. 9. "Septuagint": "He who concealeth injuries seeketh friendship." One's sense of love will cause him not to repeat many things he has heard, even if true, if they are not in the best interests of the one involved (Prov. 10:12). Harping on a matter is just the opposite of concealing it, for it utilizes every opportunity to bring it up, to mention it, or to ramble on and on about it. This can be the end of friendship.

V. 10. The contrast here does not mean to elevate "rebuke" (words of correction) and eliminate "stripes" (Physical punishments). It merely shows that some "words" do a wise man more good than "stripes" do a fool. What a pity that there are some whom neither words nor stripes will help! Peter was a man who was helped by rebuke, by both Jesus and Paul (Matt. 16:23; 26:75; Gal. 2:11-15).

V. 11. An "evil" man is one who will not be guided and governed by that which is right. He is a law-breaker, both in heart and in act. He seeks only rebellion against properly constituted authority (parents, school, government, manners, etc.). He, thus, is a liability and not an asset. Because he will not obey, will not respect the rights and property of others, he is often confined in prison at a great outlay of citizens' money. Better for society if he had never been born!

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 17:1-10

1. In v. 1 a "dry morsel" stands in contrast with ....., and "quietness" stands in contrast with .....
2. Cite instances illustrating the truth of v. 2.
3. Men work at refining gold and silver; God works at refining ..... (v. 3).
4. Why do evil people give heed to wicked lips (v. 3)?
5. Cite the three parallels in v. 4.
6. Why is mocking the poor tantamount to mocking God (v. 5)?
7. What about being glad at others' calamities (v. 5)?
8. What is a great blessing of old age (v. 6)?
9. Comment on the fathers being the glory of children (v. 6)?
10. What is the double contrast in v. 7?
11. What is the problem of understanding v. 8?
12. What will love cause one to do concerning the faults of others (v. 9)?
13. Is v. 10 a contrast between rebuking and whipping or what?

## TEXT — 17:11-19

11. An evil man seeketh only rebellion;  
Therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.
12. Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man,  
Rather than a fool in his folly.
13. Whoso rewardeth evil for good,  
Evil shall not depart from his house.
14. The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water:  
Therefore leave off contention, before there is quarrelling.
15. He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth  
the righteous,  
Both of them alike are an abomination to Jehovah.
16. Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy  
wisdom,  
Seeing he hath no understanding?
17. A friend loveth at all times;  
And brother is born for adversity.
18. A man void of understanding striketh hands,  
And becometh surety in the presence of his neighbor.
19. He loveth transgression that loveth strife;  
He that raiseth high his gate seeketh destruction.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 17:11-19

1. Rebellion against what (v. 11)?
2. What is a "whelp" (v. 12)?
3. Cite two Bible examples of people's rewarding evil for good (v. 13).
4. The lesson in v. 14 is "Don't begin ..... lest it lead to ....."
5. The wicked are to be ....., not ..... (v. 15).
6. The righteous are to be ....., not ..... (v. 15).
7. Cite two Bible examples of justifying the wicked (v. 15).
8. Cite two Bible examples of condemning the righteous (v. 15).
9. Is "fool" in v. 16 one who is mentally deficient or one who does not use his head?
10. What kind of "friends" did the Prodigal Son have (v. 17)?
11. What is "surety" (v. 18)?
12. What is meant by raising high one's gate (v. 19)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 17:11-19

11. The wicked live for rebellion! they shall be severely punished.
12. It is safer to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than a fool caught in his folly.
13. If you repay evil for good, a curse is upon your home.
14. It is hard to stop a quarrel once it starts, so don't let it begin.
15. The Lord despises those who say that bad is good, and good is bad.
16. It is senseless to pay tuition to educate a rebel who has no heart for truth.
17. A true friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.
18. It is poor judgment to countersign another's note, to become responsible for his debts.
19. Sinners love to fight; boasting is looking for trouble.

## COMMENTS ON 17:11-19

V. 11. The "rebellion" here under consideration was anarchy against the existing government. With the monarchical form of government of those days, this was common and accounted for many assassinations (see the Northern Kingdom

history for numerous instances of this). When any such rebellion was detected, the rebellion was immediately put down ("a cruel messenger shall be sent against him").

V. 12. The fierceness of a bear who has lost her young ("whelps") is also referred to in II Sam. 17:8 and Hos. 13:8. One who is unfortunate enough to come along to become involved in some fool's folly may suffer all the way from embarrassment to being murdered. Thus, one may have his car pelted by rock-throwing children as he drives by, his tires slashed because he lives in a neighborhood of "no-goods", or his life taken by hoodlums who kill him to see what he had in his billfold.

V. 13. It is contrary to nature (an extreme wrong) to reward evil for good. It is bad enough not to receive thanks from those helped, but it is even worse for the blessed to repay evil to the giver of good. When this occurs, the promise is that "evil" will abide upon such a one and his house. Instances of repaying good with evil: I Sam. 25:21; Psa. 109:4,5; Jer. 18:20.

V. 14. "Clarke": "As soon as the smallest breach is made in the dike or dam, the water begins to press from all parts towards the breach; the resistance becomes too great to be successfully opposed, so the dikes and all are speedily swept away. Such is the beginning of contentions, quarrels, lawsuits, etc." "Pulpit Commentary" also interprets the statement "as when one letteth out water". It is possible, though, that the expression referred to is the plain type of talk that they used in those days, talk that our society does not look upon as acceptable. Regardless of the figure and its interpretation, its application is unquestioned: cut off strife before it gets started.

V. 15. In God's books the wicked are to be condemned and the righteous commended (Matt. 25:34-36; 41-43 and many, many others). V. 26 of this chapter says, "To punish the righteous is not good, Nor to smite the noble for their uprightness." Exo. 23:7: "The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked." Prov. 24:24: "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, People shall curse him, nations shall abhor him." Isa. 5:20: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil."

V. 16. Why pay out money for books and then not read, study, or use them? Why pay tuition fees to go to school when one does not really want to study and learn? "Pulpit Commentary": "A fool thinks that there is a royal road to wisdom, and that it, like other things, is to be purchased with

money." One who has a heart for learning will treasure and value every opportunity for learning (books, lectures, films, travel, etc.), such as Abraham Lincoln, and they rise on the wings of acquired knowledge and bless others with the knowledge they have gained. But pupils are not all students, teachers soon discover.

V. 17. A "friend" is "one who loves". A true friend loves at all times, even in times of adversities and reverses and health-failures. They are contrasted with "fair-weather friends" such as the Prodigal Son had (Luke 15:13-16,30). Ruth represents inseparable love (Ruth 1:16). David and Jonathan also (I Sam. 18:1,4; II Sam. 1:26). Brothers may live at a distance and not get to see each other very often, but times of adversity bring them together to help each other. Prov. 18:24 speaks of the friend that is even closer to us than a brother.

V. 18. "Clarke": "Striking each other's hands, or shaking hands, was anciently the form in concluding a contract." This was just as binding as our "signing" our names to a contract today. "Surety" was when one obligated himself for the debts of others. Proverbs gives strong warnings against this (Prov. 6:1,2; 11:15).

V. 19. One who loves strife must "love" transgression for strife produces many violations of God's law (such as jealousies, envyings, evil surmisings, hatreds, anger, malice, evil speaking, etc.). Such is carnality: "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of man?" (I Cor. 3:3). Jas. 3:16: "Where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." "Pulpit Commentary" on exalting one's gate and its consequent destruction: "He who builds a sumptuous house and lives in a way that his magnificent surroundings demand draws ruin on himself...The entrance to a Palestine house would usually be of humble dimensions and sparse ornamentation; any doorway of great architectural pretensions would be uncommon, and would be regarded as a token of extraordinary wealth or reprehensible pride...which he is unable to support or...provoke reprisals and injurious consequences." A saying: "One who makes an unusual success in life makes many false friends and true enemies." Build something great, and the world will not only notice it, but someone will try to destroy it. See Prov. 16:18 also.

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 17:11-19

1. What kind of "rebellion" does v. 11 have particularly in mind?
2. What existing form of government made that a rather common occurrence (v. 11)?
3. What fierce animal is better to run into than a fool in his folly (v. 12)?
4. What are some examples of personal danger involved in meeting a fool in his folly (v. 12)?
5. What two possibilities are there for the expression, "as when one letteth out water" (v. 14)?
6. What is the lesson of v. 14?
7. Why does God pronounce a woe upon any who condemn the righteous and commend the unrighteous (v. 15)?
8. Why does an opportunity for learning sometimes not profit a person (v. 16)?
9. What is the difference between a true friend and a fair-weather friend (v. 17)?
10. If brothers don't get together often, when are they the most apt to get together (v. 17)?
11. What warnings does Proverbs give about "surety" (v. 18)?
12. What are some of the "transgressions" that grow out of "strife" (v. 18)?
13. Why does exalting one's gate often lead to destruction even in this life (v. 18)?

## TEXT — 17:20-28

20. He that hath a wayward heart findeth no good;  
And he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.
21. He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow;  
And the father of a fool hath no joy.
22. A cheerful heart is a good medicine;  
But a broken spirit drieth up the bones.
23. A wicked man receiveth a bribe out of the bosom,  
To pervert the ways of justice.
24. Wisdom is before the face of him that hath understanding;  
But the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.
25. A foolish son is a grief to his father,  
And bitterness to her that bare him.

26. Also to punish the righteous is not good,  
Nor to smite the noble for their uprightness.
27. He that spareth his words hath knowledge;  
And he that is of a cool spirit is a man of understanding.
28. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace is counted wise;  
When he shutteth his lips, he is esteemed as prudent.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 17:20-28

1. What is a "wayward Heart" in v. 20?
2. What does "fool" mean in v. 21?
3. How can one's attitude affect one's health (v. 22)?
4. What is meant by "out of the bosom" (v. 23)?
5. Apply the last statement of v. 24 to the Prodigal Son.
6. A foolish son is what two things to his parents (v. 25)?
7. Cite Bible instances of smiting the noble or punishing the righteous (v. 26).
8. What does it mean to spare his words (v. 27)?
9. What does holding one's peace mean (v. 28)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 17:20-28

20. An evil man is suspicious of everyone and tumbles into constant trouble.
21. It's no fun to be a rebel's father.
22. A cheerful heart does good like medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick.
23. It is wrong to accept a bribe to twist justice.
24. Wisdom is the main pursuit of sensible men, but a fool's goals are at the end of the earth!
25. A rebellious son is a grief to his father and bitter blow to his mother.
26. How short-sighted to fine the godly for being good! And to punish nobles for being honest!
- 27,28. The man of few words and settled mind is wise; therefore, even a fool is thought to be wise when he is silent. It pays him to keep his mouth shut.

## COMMENTS ON 17:20-28

V. 20. Another case of Hebrew parallelism in which the second statement is a restatement of the first, using different words. A "wayward heart" and a "perverse tongue" are two liabilities. The wayward heart is one that wandered out of the path

that God has intended; it will find no good (no blessing from God). It is not pure so it will not see God (Matt. 5:8). It does not think upon the things listed in Phil. 4:8 so it will not know the peace that Phil. 4:7 mentions. Look at Jer. 17:9's description of the wayward heart. The perverse tongue is perverted; that is, it is speaking contrary to God's intentions for it. Such will get itself and others into much mischief and wrong-doing. See Jas. 3:6,8 for the evil that the perverse tongue can cause.

V. 21. The behavior of one's children can greatly affect his own future happiness or sorrow (v. 25; Prov. 10:1; 19:13). Think of the sorrow that Cain brought to Adam and Eve by killing Abel, that Absalom brought to his father David when he tried to steal his throne, and that Hophni and Phinehas brought to their priestly father Eli.

V. 22. Those who have cheerful hearts and bright outlooks upon life have a physical blessing of health that others do not know. On the other hand "nothing has such a direct tendency to ruin health and waste out life as grief, anxiety, fretfulness, bad tempers, etc. All these work death" ("Clarke"). Other passages: Prov. 12:25; 15:13,15.

V. 23. "Clarke": "Above their girdles the Asiatics carry their purses." A wicked (not a righteous) man receives a bribe and perverts justice as a result. This was forbidden in Exo. 23:8. If officials are not to receive them, we should not give them in our desire to get some kind of preferential treatment.

V. 24. The contrast between the fool and the one with understanding in this verse is that the fool's eyes are a long way off (to the "ends of the earth"), but the wise man sees wisdom right where he is. The fool misses the opportunities at hand and is always supposing that somewhere else, something else, is really better. An old saying: "A rolling stone gathers no moss," meaning that one who is always moving about and not settled down will not accumulate much nor accomplish much. Remember the Prodigal Son in this connection (Luke 15)? See Prov. 6:11 also.

V. 25. V. 21 spoke of the sorrow that a fool brings to his father. This verse speaks of the grief and bitterness he brings to both his parents. It is a tragedy when a son brings "grief" instead of joy to his father, and when he brings "bitterness" instead of satisfaction to his mother. But children must be reared and trained, not merely begotten and born. Similar passages: Prov. 10:1; 15:20; 19:13.

V. 26. See v. 15, also Prov. 18:5. This represents corruption in government, a perversion of justice. God has ordained government, and He says, "Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same" (Rom. 13:3). Both Jesus and Paul were smitten when innocent (Matt. 26:67; Acts 23:1,2).

V. 27. "Pulpit Commentary": "He shows his common sense, not by rash talk or saying all he knows, but by restraining his tongue." We are to be "slow to speak" (Jas. 1:19). "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression; But he that refraineth his lips doeth wisely" (Prov. 10:19). "Cool spirit" means not losing one's temper and is parallel to "slow to wrath" (Jas. 1:19) and is praised in Prov. 16:32 ("He that ruleth his spirit"). This verse teaches us the wisdom of both not being too talkative and not losing one's temper.

V. 28. This verse continues the thoughts begun in v. 27. Eccl. 5:3 connects a "fool's voice" with the "multitude of words". Job exclaimed to his rash critics, "Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace! And it would be your wisdom" (Job 13:5). An old saying: "Be silent, and they will think you are a fool; speak, and they will know it." Occasionally you will get acquainted with a fool who does not advertise it with his speech; it was his lack of talkativeness that caused you to think of him as a normal person until you got better acquainted with him.

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 17:20-28

1. What two things are condemned in v. 20?
2. How do they get their owner into trouble (v. 20)?
3. Cite some Bible examples of sons who brought grief to their parents (v. 21).
4. What is said to be a good medicine that does not come from the store (v. 22)?
5. What two people sin when a bribe is given (v. 23)?
6. What is the contrast in v. 24?
7. Give another passage that tells of the grief that children can bring to their parents (v. 25).
8. Cite a Bible example of one being smitten who was upright :v. 26).
9. Does the Bible commend or condemn talkativeness (v. 27)?
10. What does v. 27 say about one who has a "cool spirit"?
11. By what means is a fool sometimes counted among the wise (v. 28)?

## CHAPTER 17

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 17

#### *"Wisdom"*--

"A servant that dealeth wisely shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, And shall have part in the inheritance among the brethren" (v. 2).

"Wisdom is before the face of him that hath understanding" (v.24).

"He that spareth his words hath knowledge" (v. 27).

"He that is of a cool spirit is a man of understanding" (v. 27).

#### *"Fools"*--

"Excellent speech becometh not a fool" (v. 7).

"A rebuke entereth deeper into one that hath understanding Than a hundred stripes into a fool" (v. 10).

"Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, Rather than a fool in his folly" (v. 12).

"Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, Seeing he hath no understanding?" (v. 16).

"He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow" (v. 21).

"The father of a fool hath no joy" (v. 21).

"The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth" (v. 24).

"A foolish son is a grief to his father, And bitterness to her that bare him" (v. 25).

"Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace is counted wise; When he shutteth his lips, he is esteemed as prudent" (v. 28).

#### *"Strife"*--

"Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, Than a house full of feasting with strife" (v. 1).

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: Therefore leave off contention before there is quarrelling" (v. 14).

"He loveth transgression that loveth strife" (v. 19).

#### *"Wicked"*--

"A servant that dealeth wisely shall have rule over a son that causeth shame" (v. 2).

"An evil-doer giveth heed to wicked lips; And a liar giveth ear to a mischievous tongue" (v. 4).

"An evil man seeketh only rebellion" (v. 11).

"A wicked man receiveth a bribe out of the bosom, To pervert the ways of justice" (v. 23).

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### *“Evil speech”--*

“An evil-doer giveth heed to wicked lips; And a liar giveth ear to a mischievous tongue” (v. 4).

“Much less do lying lips a prince” (v. 7).

“He that harpeth on a matter separateth chief friends” (v. 9).

“He that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief” (v. 20).

### *“Bribes”--*

“A bribe is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; Whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth” (v. 8).

“A wicked man receiveth a bribe out of the bosom, To pervert the ways of justice” (v. 23).

## TEXT — 18:1-12

1. He that separateth himself seeketh his own desire,  
And rageth against all sound wisdom.
2. A fool hath no delight in understanding,  
But only that his heart may reveal itself.
3. When the wicked cometh, there cometh also contempt,  
And with ignominy cometh reproach.
4. The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters;  
The wellspring of wisdom is as a flowing brook.
5. To respect the person of the wicked is not good,  
Not to turn aside the righteous in judgment.
6. A fool's lips enter into contention,  
And his lips are the snare of his soul.
7. A fool's mouth is his destruction,  
And his lips are the snare of his soul.
8. The words of a whisperer are as dainty morsels,  
And they go down into the innermost parts.
9. He also that is slack in his work  
Is brother to him that is a destroyer.
10. The name of Jehovah is a strong tower;  
The righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
11. The rich man's wealth is his strong city,  
And as a high wall in his own imagination.
12. Before destruction the heart of man is haughty;  
And before honor goeth humility.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 18:1-12

1. What kind of person do you visualize in v. 1?
2. What kind of person do you visualize in v. 2?
3. What does "ignominy" mean (v. 3)?
4. How are words like "deep waters" (v. 4)?
5. What is the "wellspring of wisdom" (v. 4)?
6. What verse in Chapter 17 goes with v. 5?
7. Were these "stripes" public stripes (v. 6)?
8. Cite personal instances where you know people's mouths have cost them jobs, marriage, tranquility, etc. (v. 7).
9. Comment on "dainty morsels" (v. 8).
10. How is a slacker a brother to a destroyer (v. 9)?
11. Comment on "tower" as used in v. 10.
12. Does the rich man's "strong city" and "high wall" ever

fail him (v. 11)?

13. What other passages in Proverbs teach the same as v. 12?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 18:1-12

1. The selfish man quarrels against every sound principle of conduct by demanding his own way.
2. A rebel doesn't care about the facts. All he wants to do is yell.
3. Sin brings disgrace.
4. A wise man's words express deep streams of thought.
5. It is wrong for a judge to favor the wicked and condemn the innocent.
- 6,7. A fool gets into constant fights. His mouth is his undoing! His words endanger him.
8. What dainty morsels rumors are. They are eaten with great relish!
9. A lazy man is brother to the saboteur.
10. The Lord is a strong fortress. The godly run to Him and are safe.
11. The rich man thinks of his wealth as an impregnable defense, a high wall of safety. What a dreamer!
12. Pride ends in destruction; humility ends in honor.

#### COMMENTS ON 18:1-12

V. 1. Selfish and self-centered people isolate themselves from others. And a self-centered person is conceited to the point that he goes into a rage against the sound words and advice of others. This is true in the field of religion also: "Mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly" (Rom. 16:17,18).

V. 2. A fool does not like to take in, to learn, but only to talk. Facts, figures, and business have no interest for the fool--only to talk, talk, talk, and he really has nothing to say that is worth listening to. How often the Bible represents the fool as contented without learning or improving himself!

V. 3. Another Hebrew parallelism, paralleling "wicked" and "ignominy" (no reputation) and paralleling "contempt" and "reproach". The wicked loses a good name and turns despiser of all that is good and of all who are good. "When the wicked

cometh," watch out! He injects into the association contempt and reproach. The rule is, those who deserve no honor themselves are sure to dishonor all others, and those who themselves are good are the last to suspicion others of evil.

V. 4. The verse is not talking about just any mouth but the mouth of "wisdom". A wise man's mouth is likened to a "deep", "flowing" spring. Such is a great blessing to all around him, and to such they turn for counsel and guidance.

V. 5. A "court" verse. Clarke: "We must not, in judicial cases, pay any attention to a man's riches, influence, friends, offices, etc. but judge the case according to its own merits." Many passages teach the same: Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19; Prov. 24:23; 28:21. A nation's principles are either maintained or crucified by its judicial officials.

V. 6. A fool's lips show that he is a fool. He says the wrong thing or speaks at the wrong time, or he says what he does in the wrong place or to the wrong person. He is like a child who does not know these wise details of speech. Consequently, he gets himself into trouble with others, and his superiors correct him severely for it.

V. 7. This verse continues the topic of v. 6. Similar passages: Prov. 10:14; 12:13; 13:3; Eccl. 10:12. "Soul" means "life" here, showing the serious destruction that his speech is capable of bringing.

V. 8. This saying is carried twice in Proverbs (see 26:22 also), probably for a needed emphasis. A "whisperer" is one who goes behind people's backs in talking about them, saying things that are not in the best interests of the one being spoken about. The verse brings out the sad fact that people are willing to listen to such cowardly, wrong, ruinous talk (They are as "dainty morsels"). They are swallowed without question ("they go down into the innermost parts of the belly").

V. 9. The slacker (one who doesn't work) doesn't produce, and the destroyer destroys what has been produced. The results are the same: there is nothing to show for one's time and efforts. Therefore, they are said to be "brothers". Some who don't take care of what they have, or who are spendthrifts, sometimes look down upon and criticize the person who has no ambition and produces nothing. But this saying relates the two groups.

V. 10. Many passages teach that God is a refuge: sometimes a "tower," sometimes a "rock", sometimes covering "wings" (II Sam. 22:3; Psa. 18:2; 27:1; 61:3,4; 91:2ff; 144:2).

The ancients had their fortified cities with their walls, big gates, and towers. Sometimes the enemy was able to break through the gates and batter down the walls. That left a tower to get up into for their final safety. The Lord is able to take care of us when other helpers fail.

V. 11. The first statement is also in Prov. 10:15. In contrast to the righteous person's God, the rich man makes "wealth" that in which he trusts. This is forbidden in I Tim. 6:17: "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God." Don't overlook the connection of "high wall", "strong city," and "tower" in vs. 10,11.

V. 12. While the righteous of v. 10 find their "tower" (Jehovah) a place of safety, the rich man of v. 11 finds that his false-trust (His "wealth") did not save him from destruction. The first statement is similar to Prov. 16:18; the last to Prov. 15:33. The present verse actually brings these two contrasting statements found isolated in Proverbs and brings them together in one verse as a contrast, whose truths are witnessed numerous times in the Bible.

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 18:1-12

1. How does selfishness show up in v. 1?
2. According to v. 2 what is and what isn't a fool interested in?
3. When the wicked come, what else comes (v. 3)?
4. Find three words in v. 4 that are related in a natural world?
5. What is the setting of v. 5?
6. How does the fool's mouth prove to be his destruction (v. 7)?
7. Why will people play the role of the "whisperer" (v. 8)?
8. Who besides the "whisperer" is condemned in v. 8?
9. Prove that a slacker and a destroyer are "relatives" (v. 9).
10. Find three things in vs. 10,11 that are related in life.
11. Compare the "strong tower" of the righteous with the "strong city" of the rich (vs. 10,11).
12. What fact was brought out about the two statements in v. 12?

## TEXT — 18:13-24

13. He that giveth answer before he heareth,  
It is folly and shame unto him.
14. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity;  
But a broken spirit who can bear?
15. The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge;  
And the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.
16. A man's gift maketh room for him,  
And bringeth him before great men.
17. He that pleadeth his cause first seemeth just;  
But his neighbor cometh and searcheth him out.
18. The lot causeth contentions to cease,  
And parteth between the might.
19. A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong  
city;  
And such contentions are like the bars of a castle.
20. A man's belly shall be filled with the fruit of his mouth;  
With the increase of his lips shall he be satisfied.
21. Death and life are in the power of the tongue;  
And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.
22. Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing,  
And obtaineth favor of Jehovah.
23. The poor useth entreaties;  
But the rich answereth roughly.
24. He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruc-  
tion;  
But there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 18:13-24

1. How is it "folly" to him (v. 13)?
2. How is it "shame" to him (v. 13)?
3. What would a doctor get out of v. 14?
4. Locate the parallels in v. 15.
5. Cite Bible examples of such "gifts" (v. 16).
6. What lesson should church leaders learn from the first statement (v. 17)?
7. Why did the lot end contentions (v. 18)?
8. What lesson should Christians gain from the first statement in v. 19?
9. Is the first statement in v. 20 true whether his words are good or bad?

10. Give examples of "death" and "life" resulting from the tongue (v. 21).
11. How have Catholics misapplied verse 22.
12. When do the poor use entreaties (v. 23)?
13. Why do the rich answer roughly (v. 23)?
14. When might the first statement of v. 24 prove to be true?
15. What friend of David's seemed to be closer to him than his brothers (v. 24)?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 18:13-24

13. What a shame--yes, how stupid!--to decide before knowing the facts!
14. A man's courage can sustain his broken body, but when courage dies, what hope is left?
15. The intelligent man is always open to new ideas. In fact, he looks for them.
16. A bribe does wonders: it will bring you before men of importance!
17. Any story sounds true until someone tells the other side and sets the record straight.
18. A coin toss ends arguments and settles disputes between powerful opponents.
19. It is harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to capture a fortified city. His anger shuts you out like iron bars.
20. Ability to give wise advice satisfied like a good meal!
21. Those who love to talk will suffer the consequences. Men have died for saying the wrong thing!
22. The man who finds a wife finds a good thing; she is a blessing to him from the Lord.
23. The poor man pleads and the rich man answers with insults.
24. Some people are friends in name only. Others are closer than brothers.

#### COMMENTS ON 18:13-24

V. 13. Pre-judging (judging before the facts are known) gives us our word "prejudice". Many misjudgments are made because of pre-judging: replacing investigation with rumor or making a judgment of a person on the sound of his or her name or where one is from (John 1:45,46), one's looks, or first impres-

sions. Nicodemus said, "Doth our law judge a man, except it first hear from himself and know what he doeth?" (John 7:51). Jesus said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

V. 14. One who maintains a cherry, hopeful, bright outlook will rebound from his sickness sooner, but one who has a dark, pessimistic outlook does not recover so well. In fact, when one loses the will to live, he often dies. Pulpit Commentary: "The influence of the mind over the body, in a general sense, is here expressed."

V. 15. The heart of the prudent desires knowledge, and it uses the ear as a means of acquisition. Or said again, the ear seeks knowledge, and the heart lays it up. It is too bad that we have many people who have no thirst for useful knowledge.

V. 16. "Pulpit Commentary": "The Oriental custom of offering suitable gifts to one in authority, when a favor or an audience is desired, is here alluded to (I Sam. 10:27; I Kings 4:21; 10:25)." See also Gen. 32:20; I Sam. 25:27. It is also true today that people's gifts have opened doors to them in various realms.

V. 17. Leaders, be careful! The first person to come to you with his side of a story may not be true. See this even in children: "Johnny hit me;" and while he is speaking, in comes another child of the group and says, "And what did you do to Johnny first? You kicked him!" An old maxim is so true: "One story is good till the other is told."

V. 18. The ancients sometimes resorted to this to settle important contentions. Moderns in our land sometimes draw straws and other means to settle minor matters. Pulpit Commentary: "If it were not for the decision by lot, persons... would settle their differences by violent means." The apostle used this method in determining who was to succeed Judas (Acts 1:26). There is no doubt but what God directed the pagans' lot to fall upon Jonah (Jon. 1:7). See comment on Prov. 16:33.

V. 19. When love is lost, bitterness sets in, and the bitterness is as strong and as intense as the love had previously been. "Pulpit Commentary": "Bitter are the quarrels of friends"; and, "Those who love beyond measure also hate beyond measure." "Clarke": "When brothers fall out, it is with extreme difficulty that they can be reconciled." The verse shows an offended brother is hard to be won, but it does not say it is impossible. Paul and Barnabas had a serious break (Acts

15:36-40), but there is evidence that such was not permanent. Paul refused to take Mark (Acts 15:37,38), which no doubt was an offence to Mark, but later Paul wrote, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering" (II Tim. 4:11). Jacob and Esau had a notable falling out (Gen. 27:41-45), but later there was a reconciliation (Gen 33:8-12). This verse gives a strong reason for being careful of what we say and do that may needlessly offend others. Jas. 1:19 says, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

V. 20. This verse likens what a man says to the food he eats. If what he says is good, it is like eating good food: there is no bad after-effect. The verse is speaking of good speech. Prov. 12:14 and 13:2 contain similar statements.

V. 21. The tongue can edify (build up), or it can destroy the heart or the reputation of another. By our words we can bring either the best or the worst out of a person. As Jas. 3:9 says, "Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we man." The last statement of our verse speaks of good speech and the pleasant results it brings.

V. 22. Marriage is God's plan for the human race (Matt. 19:4-6). His displeasure is against the growing trend in society to by-pass marriage by illicitly living together. A common-law situation is not equal to marriage in God's sight (John 4:16-18). Other passages that show the divine plan includes marriage: Prov. 19:14; 31:10; Heb. 13:4. There are at least two abuses of this verse: (1) Jokers quote this in levity as if to prove that a wife is a "thing"; (2) Catholics have used it as a proof-text that marriage is a sacrament because of the words "obtaineth favor of Jehovah". What the verse really means is that when one marries, he is entering into something good and is carrying out God's will for the human race in that regard. If somebody argues back that many marriages are anything but pleasant and good, it is not God's fault but the people who have made their marriages that way. If they would follow God's instructions for marriage (Eph. 5:22-33), they would find that it is good.

V. 23. The poor man who is behind on his loan payments begs for mercy and consideration, and the rich man who loaned him the money and is afraid he is going to lose that money talks roughly to him. The same is true of the delinquent renter and his landlord. The poor man uses entreaties because he knows he is at a disadvantage and is at the mercy of the rich man, and the rich man answers roughly because he can, because he is afraid he is

going to lose some money, and sometimes so that he can take undue advantage of the situation.

V. 24. In what sense is the first statement true? In the many friends that people make, often there is one or a small handful of them that he would have been better off not to have known: the one or the group that turned against him and ruined him. In the long run they proved not to be true friends and are to be contrasted to the true friend who "sticketh closer than a brother", such as Jonathan was to David. Jonathan was closer to David (I Sam. 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:17,41,42; 23:15-18) than his own brothers were (I Sam. 17:28).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER CHAPTER 18:13-24

1. What does our word "prejudice" mean (v. 13)?
2. Give examples of people who pass judgment before they have the facts (v. 13).
3. What is one of the best things for helping a sick person get better?
4. What usually happens when a person gives up and loses his will to live (v. 14)?
5. According to v. 15 what two parts of a person are involved in his getting knowledge?
6. Cite examples verifying the truth of v. 16.
7. Where trouble brews, who is often first to tell his side of it (v. 17)?
8. When have people resorted to using the lot to settle their differences (v. 18)?
9. What happens when love between people dies (v. 19)?
10. Comment upon v. 20.
11. What are two uses of the tongue (v. 21)?
12. How important can what we say prove to be (v. 21)?
13. What is the meaning of v. 22?
14. Cite an example of a poor man using entreaties and a rich man answering roughly (v. 23).
15. Why does a poor man use entreaties (v. 23)?
16. Why does a rich man answer roughly (v. 23)?
17. What may come out of some of the friendships that a man makes (v. 24)?
18. What friend in the Bible was closer than the man's own brothers (v. 24)?

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 18

#### *“Speech”--*

- “The words of a man’s mouth are as deep waters” (v. 4).  
“A fool’s lips enter into contention, And his mouth calleth for stripes” (v. 6).  
“A fool’s mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul” (v. 7).  
“The words of a whisperer are as dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts” (v. 8).  
“He that giveth answer before he heareth, It is folly and shame unto him” (v. 13).  
“A man’s belly shall be filled with the fruit of his mouth; With the increase of his lips shall he be satisfied” (v. 20).  
“Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (v. 21).  
“The poor useth entreaties; But the rich answereth roughly” (v. 23).

#### *“Fools”--*

- “A fool hath no delight in understanding, But only that his heart may reveal itself” (v. 2).  
“A fool’s lips enter into contention, And his mouth calleth for stripes” (v. 6).  
“A fool’s mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul” (v. 7).  
“He that giveth answer before he heareth, It is folly and shame unto him” (v. 13).

#### *“Rich”--*

- “The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, And as a high wall in his own imagination” (v. 11).  
“The rich answereth roughly” (v. 23).

#### *“Wicked”--*

- “When the wicked cometh, there cometh also contempt” (v. 3).  
“To respect the person of the wicked is not good” (v. 5).

#### *“Wisdom”--*

- “The wellspring of wisdom is as a flowing brook” (v. 4).  
“The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; And the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge” (v. 15).

## CHAPTER 18

### *"Righteous"--*

"Not good...to turn aside the righteous in judgment" (v. 5).

"The righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (v. 10).

### *"Destruction"--*

"The fool's mouth is his destruction" (v. 7).

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty" (v. 12).

"He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruction" (v. 24).

## THE BLESSINGS OF WISDOM

We should appreciate the splendid words concerning the desirableness of wisdom in 4:5-13: "Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life."

2:10-17 is another fine passage showing the usefulness of wisdom: "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths; to deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words." Nothing like wisdom can preserve a person from crooked men and wicked women.

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

Consider other smaller passages on the subject of wisdom:

12:8: "A man shall be commended according to his wisdom." Other things being as they should be, a man of wisdom is a well respected man. His advice is often sought, His word carries weight. His very person embodies a dignity.

13:20: "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." This passage shows the importance of proper association. Choosing fools as one's companions does not lead to great things in one's life, but walking with wise men does.

19:2: "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good." Here is a real appeal to be an informed soul, to know the things we should, to appreciate the privileges of learning and to take advantage of them.

19:27: "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." There is false knowledge that leads astray. In this passage, the father warns the son about receiving false instruction and counsel.

24:3-5: "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength." Yes, wisdom is strength, and knowledge leads to many victories.

## TEXT — 19:1-10

1. Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity  
Than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool.
2. Also, that the soul be without knowledge is not good;  
And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.
3. The foolishness of man subverteth his way;  
And his heart fretteth against Jehovah.
4. Wealth addeth many friends;  
But the poor is separated from his friend.
5. A false witness shall not be unpunished;  
And he that uttereth lies shall not escape.
6. Many will entreat the favor of the liberal man;  
And every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.
7. All the brethren of the poor do hate him:  
How much more do his friends go far from him!
8. He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul:  
He that keepeth understanding shall find good.
9. A false witness shall not be unpunished;  
And he that uttereth lies shall perish.
10. Delicate living is not seemly for a fool;  
Much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 19:1-10

1. What is a synonym for "integrity" in v. 1?
2. Why is it not good to remain ignorant (v. 2)?
3. Is all "haste" sinful or just some (v. 2)?
4. When does the heart fret against Jehovah (v. 3)?
5. When is a poor person separated from his friend (v. 3)?
6. What class of persons likes to make friends of the wealthy (v. 4)?
7. Will it be God or man who will do the punishing (v. 5)?
8. If everybody is a friend to one who gives gifts, why don't all people love God because of His gifts (v. 6)?
9. What kind of words does he use as he pursues them (v. 7)?
10. In what sense is "love" used in v. 8?
11. Why would v. 9 and v. 5 both be included in the same chapter?
12. What is "delicate living" (v. 10)?
13. What does "not seemly" mean (v. 10)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 19:1-10

1. Better be poor and honest and rich and dishonest.
2. It is dangerous and sinful to rush into the unknown.
3. A man may ruin his chances by his own foolishness and then blame it on the Lord.
4. A wealthy man has many "friends"; the poor man has none left.
5. Punish false witnesses. Track down liars.
6. Many beg favors from a man who is generous; everyone is his friend!
5. Punish false witnesses. Track down liars.
6. Many beg favors from a man who is generous; everyone is his friend!
7. A poor man's own brothers turn away from him in embarrassment; how much more his friends! He calls after them, but they are gone.
8. He who loves wisdom loves his own best interest and will be a success.
9. A false witness shall be punished and a liar shall be caught.
10. It doesn't seem right for a fool to succeed or for a slave to rule over princes!

## COMMENTS ON 19:1-10

V. 1. This is very similar to Prov. 28:6. Pulpit Commentary: "The poor man who lives a guileless, innocent life, content with his lot and using no wrong means to improve his fortunes, is happier and better than the rich man who is hypocritical in his words and deceives others and has won his wealth by such means." There is often a connection between being poorer and honest and being dishonest and getting rich. The "fool" in this verse is apparently a rich fool.

V. 2. A double contrast: "Soul without knowledge" vs. "hasteth with his feet" and "not good" vs. "sinneth". It is not good for one to be without knowledge when God has given us minds in which to store and which can use knowledge and many means by which to acquire it. God was pleased that Solomon wanted wisdom (1 Kings 3:9,10). See also v. 8. One without knowledge often acts hastily (No sense of caution) and errs as a result.

V. 3. "Clarke": "They get into straits and difficulties

through the perverseness of their ways; and...they fret against God; whereas...they are the causes of their own calamities." Rom. 1:19-32 gives a running account of the way mankind subverted its way: they began with a knowledge of God; there came a time when they did not glorify Him as they should; darkness set in upon their unspiritual hearts; in their conceit they began making idols, and the longer they went the worse representation of God they made; they came to be filled with all kinds of wickedness; God finally gave up on them until Gospel times.

V. 4. Compare v. 7. People like to identify with someone who will be a credit to them in the eyes of men, not with someone who will discredit them. The poorest of families don't have very many real friends: those who will claim them, invite them over, etc. (Prov. 14:20). Sometimes even relatives practically disown extreme poverty cases.

V. 5. Another case of Hebrew parallelism in which the latter statement is a restatement of the first. This verse is almost identical to v. 9. For the punishment of false witnesses, see Prov. 21:28; Deut. 19:16-19.

V. 6. They seek his favor for what he can do for them. A saying: "Be an unusual success, and you will have many false friends and true enemies." This can raise the question: Do people love you or what you can do for them? Let a child show up on the school ground with a sack of candy, and everybody wants some; "you know me," many will say.

V. 7. Compare with v. 5; Prov. 14:20. In v. 6 everybody wants to be a friend of the well-to-do, the one who gives gifts; but in this verse a man's friends and relatives even go away from him, not wanting to have anything to do with him. Even the poor man's words of appeal fall on deaf ears.

V. 8. He loves his soul because wisdom is good for the soul (v. 2). Proverbs pictures wisdom as something to "get" (4:7). We are to "buy the truth" (Prov. 23:23). We are to give wisdom an exalted place in our lives (Prov. 4:8). But this verse also talks about keeping understanding. "Get" it, and then "forget it not" Prov. 4:5 would tell us.

V. 9. A false witness, in those instances of lying about others, would be breaking the 9th Commandment (Exo. 20:16). God says such must be punished (v. 5).

V. 10. "Delicate living" is luxurious living. "Seemly" means "fitting for." Both statements of this verse show

somebody out of place: a fool living luxuriously and a servant ruling over princes. Neither one is in order. Appropriately does Prov. 30:21-23 say, "For three things the earth doth tremble, And for four, which it cannot bear: For a servant when he is king; And fool when he is filled with food..." History tells us of a man who wanted to guard against falling into the very things of which this verse speaks. He was Agathocles, ruler of Syracuse. He rose from the lowly occupation of a potter and to remind himself of his lowly origin, he ate off cheap earthenware.

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 19:1-10

1. What kind of "fool" is evidently under consideration in v. 1?
2. Why is the honest poor better off than such a person (v. 1)?
3. Why does one lacking knowledge often act hastily (v. 2)?
4. What Bible character did not want to live without knowledge (v. 2)?
5. Tell of the account in Rom. 1 of mankind subverting its way (v. 3).
6. How does wealth make friends for a person (v. 4)?
7. Sometimes what kind of friends (v. 4)?
8. Why is the poverty-stricken family often ostracized and even disowned by their own relatives (v. 4)?
9. What did God say about punishing false witnesses (v. 5)?
10. What is the problem of friends you make and keep through gifts (v. 6)?
11. Contrast vs. 6,7.
12. The two verbs in v. 8 talk of doing what two things with knowledge?
13. A false witness often violates which of the Ten Commandments (v. 9)?
14. According to v. 10 what two things are out of order?

#### TEXT — 19:11-20

11. The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger;  
And it is his glory to pass over a transgression.
12. The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion;  
But his favor is as dew upon the grass.
13. A foolish son is the calamity of his father;  
And the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

14. House and riches are an inheritance from fathers;  
But a prudent wife is from Jehovah.
15. Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep;  
And the idle soul shall suffer hunger.
16. He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his soul;  
But he that is careless of his ways shall die.
17. He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah,  
And his good deed will he pay him again.
18. Chasten thy son, seeing there is hope;  
And set not thy heart on his destruction.
19. A man of great wrath shall bear the penalty;  
For if thou deliver him, thou must do it yet again.
20. Hear counsel, and receive instruction,  
That thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 19:11-20

1. What does it mean "to pass over a transgression" (v. 11)?
2. Find the contrasts in v. 12.
3. What two sources of trouble can a man have in his own home (v. 13)?
4. How does a "prudent wife" act (v. 14)?
5. What is "slothfulness" (v. 15)?
6. Comment on "he that is careless of his ways shall die" (v. 16).
7. How and when will God repay him (v. 17)?
8. How does one chasten his child (v. 18)?
9. How would one "set" his heart on his child's destruction (v. 18)?
10. Why do some people get angry so easily (v. 19)?
11. How would you relate Rehoboam's case to v. 20?

## PARAPHRASE OF 19:11-20

11. A wise man restrains his anger and overlooks insults. This is to his credit.
12. The king's anger is as dangerous as a lion's. But his approval is as refreshing as the dew on grass.
13. A rebellious son is a calamity to his father, and a nagging wife annoys like constant dripping.
14. A father can give his sons homes and riches, but only the Lord can give them understanding wives.
15. A lazy man sleeps soundly--and goes hungry!

16. Keep the commandments and keep your life; despising them means death.
17. When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord--and He pays wonderful interest on your loan!
18. Discipline your son in his early years while there is hope. If you don't you will ruin his life.
19. A short-tempered man must bear his own penalty; you can't do much to help him. If you try once you must try a dozen times.
20. Get all the advice you can and be wise the rest of your life.

#### COMMENTS ON 19:11-20

V. 11. Prov. 14:29 says, "He that is slow to anger is of great understanding," very similar to this verse that credits it to his "discretion". Prov. 16:32 credits it to ruling his spirit (self-control). It takes both wisdom and self-control to remain calm and collected and Christian under fire and under pressure. It is this ability that enables him to "pass over a transgression of another", which is said to be a "glory" to him. To lose one's temper is not a "glory" to him but a "shame". When one passes over a transgression, he is like God: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" (Mic. 7:18).

V. 12. Numerous passages compare a king's wrath to a roaring lion: Prov. 20:2; 16:14; 28:15. Prov. 16:25 also compares a king's favor to refreshing moisture. "Geike": "The secret of the luxuriant fertility of many parts of Palestine lies in the rich supply of moisture afforded by the sea-winds which blow inland each night and water the face of the whole land...From May till October rain is unknown, the sun shining with unclouded brightness day after day. The heat becomes intense, the ground hard; and vegetation would perish but for the moist west winds that come each night from the sea. The bright skies cause the heat of the day to radiate very quickly into space so that the nights are as cold as day is the reverse...To this coldness of the night air the indispensable watering of all plant-life is due. The winds, loaded with moisture, are robbed of it as they pass over the land, the cold air condensing it into drops of water, which fall in a gracious rain of mist on every thirsty blade...The amount of moisture thus poured on the thirsty vegetation during the night is very great.