

Proverbs 16:1-33

“The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue *is* from the LORD. 2 All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. 3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. 4 The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. 5 Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be unpunished. 6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil. 7 When a man’s ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. 8 Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right. 9 A man’s heart divideth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps. 10 A divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment. 11 A just weight and balance *are* the LORD’s: all the weights of the bag *are* his work. 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 favour *is as* a cloud of the latter rain. 16 How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding 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 an haughty spirit before a fall. 19 Better *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. 20 He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD. 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 instruction of fools *is* folly. 23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. 24 Pleasant words *are as* an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. 25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death. 26 He that laboreth laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him. 27 An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire. 28 A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. 29 A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good. 30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his

lips he bringeth evil to pass. 31 The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it 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 the LORD.”

“Free Will” verses “Predestination”

“Chapter 16, we get an interesting look here, the sovereignty of God, and some of it is sobering, it’s really remarkable. It says **“The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.”** (verse 1) we’re going to have a lot of “and’s” here, so the thoughts are building. There’s a few where it will say “but,” that’s contrastive, but here the ideas are building. **“The preparations of the heart in man, AND the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.”** man cogitates, he thinks, he does this, he’s planning, and then finally what he says, it says here **‘It’s from the LORD.’** It’s interesting, we know from our study in the New Testament, in *Philippians* Paul said **“It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.”** Here it says **“The preparations of the heart of man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.”** [This, combined with verses 9 and 33, sounds like “predestination” coupled to the concept of “free choice.” If these verses apply to all of mankind, not just that of the “saved,” which is a New Testament concept, and this was written as part of the Old Testament, then these expressed concepts would tend to indicate, when carried to their uttermost end, that God is ultimately in control of it all, in spite of free choice in a world which is now under the direct influence of Satan, and not God’s influence, God’s direct influence only coming upon mankind in general after the Lord’s 2nd coming. The whole Plan of God, his ultimate Plan of Salvation must be taken into consideration to properly combine the two Bible concepts where God gives everyone “free choice” in life, but is in ultimate control of everyone’s actions and what they say and do, what we call “predestination.” The concept of “predestination” shows up in **verse 1, “The preparation of the heart of man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the LORD.”** i.e. predestination. Compare this with **verse 9** which says **“A man’s heart divideth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”** (now verse 9, we could say without much doubt, applies to believers, both then and now, and includes both concepts of “free choice” and “predestination.”) But **verse 33** says **“The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.”** Now this one most definitely could apply to both believer and non-believer

alike, and includes both concepts of “free choice” and “predestination.” (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/E-Mails/June%2014/FallHolyDays-short.htm> to come to a better understanding of how this may all shake out in the overall Plan of Salvation for mankind as a whole.)).

Men, Women, Will Justify Just About Anything, But God Has The Final Say

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.” (verse 2) “are clean in his own eyes,” that’s true, isn’t it? Men [and women too] will justify anything, you know people like that. You know, friends if they backslide, they become prodigals, you try to go and talk to them, and it’s amazing the justification people can come up with. So, **“All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes;”** here’s the contrast, **“but the LORD”** is the one who **“weigheth the spirits.”** God is the one who searches the spirit of man, so they can say what they want to say, God is the one, and God alone is able to lift our guilt, he’s the one who weighs, he’s able to take weight off, leave weight on.

*God’s Calling Is A Progressive Revelation
or
‘Do Your Best, Commit The Rest’*

“Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.” (verse 3) so you commit your works unto the LORD...you know, people always tell me ‘*Well how do I know if God wants me to do this? How do I know if God wants me to do that?*’ and always when they’re asking me that I’m thinking ‘*I don’t know, you think I know that because I’m a pastor? I don’t know that.*’ I know what the Bible tells me, and I know that my pastor, Chuck Smith, before he went home to be with the Lord, would always tell me “*God’s calling is a progressive revelation. If you’ll give him each day, God’s calling will unfold in your life, it’s a progressive revelation.*” It doesn’t give you the five-year-plan and the ten-year-plan so you can decide whether you want to cooperate with him. It just says **‘If you commit your works unto the LORD, thy thoughts shall be established.’ (verse 3)** It’s interesting, the Hebrew is **“if you roll them over on the LORD,”** the idea is, you do your best and all this, Chuck used to say **“Do your best, and commit the rest.”** That’s a Chuck Smith proverb. Your works, you do your best, and then it says, **“roll them over onto the LORD.”** It’s his responsibility, **‘you’ve done your best, roll it over**

unto the LORD,' "and thy thoughts shall be established." (verse 3b)

'The LORD's Made All Things For Himself, Even The Wicked For The Day Of Evil'

Verse 4, "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." I would say, you're in that category. Wait a minute, we could have an hour-long controversy here on this one. Look, the Lord doesn't tempt, James says, anybody with wickedness. What do you mean **'the LORD even makes the wicked for the day of evil'** the day that's necessary, for the day of evil? What's that speaking of? Well look, if we back up, right before that, he's made all things for himself. This is, look, our Christian journey. The reason you exist, the reason I exist, is not for yourself, it is for himself. We were created for him. That flies in the face of our selfishness immediately. Are you married? If you thought (I always thought *mawage*), if you thought marriage was for your fulfillment and for your blessing, and I've been married for a long time, and it is fulfilling and there is blessing, but clearly marriage, the Lord, is another arena to conform you into the image and to the likeness of his Son. The husband is supposed to love the wife the way Christ loves the Church, the wife is supposed to relate to her husband the way the Church relates to Christ. There's something in that for him, and of him. And in all of life, you know, it's interesting the Westminster Catechism says *'That we were created for his glory, the purpose of man is to glorify God.'* And we should. But I think further than that, it tells us in **Revelation chapter 4:11, 'That all things were created for his pleasure...what gives him pleasure, what gives him joy, that we were created for his pleasure.'** Careful, because then you think, *'Well, what is he, an egotist? just so he can have a jolly old day? Created for his pleasure, that's what this is all about?'* Well, you have to take a step back and say *'Well then, what is his pleasure?'* If it says *"for his pleasure,"* what is his pleasure? Well I think we see that when he tries to describe to us his relationship with us in human terms. The Bible gives us those anthropomorphisms. He tells us that he is the Bride Groom and we're the Bride. That's one of the ways he tries to describe his relationship to us. He tells us he's the Father and we're the children, he puts it in human relationships. He tells us he's the Shepherd and we're the sheep. You go through that and you realize he's stooped down, he's created this stage of human history to take out a Bride for his Son. We were created in the final analysis for his pleasure, not just to give him glory, we should, but

for his pleasure, and for yours. And what is that pleasure, it's the pleasure of Almighty God, it is to fellowship with us. He paid the ultimate price in the blood of his Son, not so we can say '*God, give me this, God give me that...*' and it says we should cast all of our care upon him, we should make our requests known. But the ultimate benefit of the price of his Son on the cross, was he tore sin out of the way, he satisfied his eternal judgment and wrath, so that now he can stoop to us. He calls us children. Look, again, I raised four kids, I haven't raised sheep, so I can't go there, I feed them every Sunday but I don't raise them. You raise four kids, it's not so they can give you glory and praise you, you don't come home from work and your little kids are kneeling down, '*Oh praise you Daddy, you're so good.*' No, you wish that was happening for a day, but that's not what happens. Ok? It isn't so they can serve you, people think that's the purpose of man, to serve God. Well I have four kids. It's not like I had one, and put him behind the lawnmower. I said '*Honey, if we have three more we can get the whole yard taken care of.*' You know, when I let my kids help, particularly when they were little, I did that to bless them, not to bless me. You know what a four-year-old is like with a paintbrush in his hand? '*Daddy, can I help, Daddy, can I help?*' and he only helps for five minutes, then he's tired and he's gone, and you gotta patch up everything he did. That's the way I am in the ministry, I feel like you know, he lets me do this so it blesses me, and then every Sunday after I preach he's gotta go and fix up everything I said. His pleasure is to fellowship with us. You know, my wife, my wife does not exist to glorify me. If you're married you should be laughing. She's not there to serve me. Look, your children are a praise, if they're raised right in the Lord, they do serve. You wife, of course, the spouse, the relationship is to serve one another. But the beauty of the marriage is the intimacy. We were created for his pleasure, it says here **"The LORD hath made all things for himself."** He is not selfish, '*he's made all things for himself, he has lavished a measure of love upon us, it says in the ages to come we're still going be learning about that.*' It softens the second half of the verse if we try to figure out what the second half of the verse means, **"yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."** **(verse 4b)** What is that talking about? First of all, I'll say this, whenever you don't understand what the Lord's doing, fall back on what you do know. '*I'm not sure why this is going on in my life, I'm not sure why the Lord's letting this happen, but I do know this, he loves me, he's been faithful to me, he saved me.*' Whatever we don't know, fall back on what you do know. What does this expressly mean? I can't give you a coined answer here, **"The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked"** now look,

“for the day of evil.” One of the things I’m appreciating in moving through the Proverbs, this time more than I ever have, it’s the prophetic sense of these things. It tells us this in the Book of Daniel, it talks about Daniel’s describing to Nebuchadnezzar why God raises us one and another, and he says ***‘It’s to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and he giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over them even the basest of men.’*** The prophet Habakkuk said, ***‘LORD, what are you doing? You’re using the Babylonians who are wicked, a wicked king, you’re using them to judge us? They’re more wicked than we are.’*** And the LORD ended up saying ***‘If I told you what I was doing, you wouldn’t understand it anyway.’*** And Nebuchadnezzar, I believe, by the time the LORD was done with him, he ends up becoming saved, I believe we’re going to see Nebuchadnezzar in glory. But God raised him up as a rod of chastisement on the nation of Israel [actually the nation, kingdom of Judah, Israel had already been taken into captivity for similar reasons 150 years earlier] because of their idolatry, and God finally said ***‘You want idols? I’m going to take you to the land of idols, you can have idols until you’re sick of idols.’*** And in that context, Nebuchadnezzar was evil, he was wicked, but on the prophetic sense, God was accomplishing. And look at what’s going on in the world now, and I think, ***‘None of this takes the LORD by surprise.’*** He says in the last days there would be wars, rumours of wars, famines, pestilences, infectious diseases, earthquakes in divers places, we’re seeing all of these things. So **“The LORD hath made all things for himself:”** the wonderful part about that is you and I, we are his pleasure, we’re his children, his Bride, he says **“yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.” (verse 4b)** And I will leave what I don’t know about that with him. [Comment: And I will pick up where you left off Pastor Joe. I admire your honesty in saying you don’t have a proper interpretation for the second half of this verse instead of trying to explain it away. There is an interpretation which comes from the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God which may help explain this one. For one, when all recorded history of mankind going back 6,000 years to present is taken into account, maybe 98 to 99 percent of all mankind has never accepted Jesus Christ into their lives, becoming saved, before their deaths. So, for following the logic according to the Catholic everburning hellfire doctrine that all who die in their normal lifetimes having not accepted Jesus Christ into their lives go into some kind of everburning hellfire. According to the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, this is a false doctrine which has been introduced into the Christian churches by the Roman Catholic church, and thus is false. The Bible speaks of two large resurrections, the first being to

glory and eternal life (Revelation 20:4-6; 1st Corinthians 15:49-54), and the second resurrection is for all of unsaved mankind at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:5b,11-13). The Bible in the Old Testament also describes this resurrection, where every living “unsaved human” is resurrected back to life and given an opportunity and choice to accept Jesus at that time, receiving God’s Holy Spirit if they so desire (see Ezekiel 37:1-14). This doctrinal interpretation says that God has not been calling the vast majority of human beings during their normal lifetimes. It is these people who come into the classification of **“yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.”** These folk, resurrected back to physical life, having lived painfully in Satan’s world during their first lifetimes, having never been called to salvation, are now given that opportunity. Mankind, living under Satan’s evil influence, with a history filled with wars, famines, pestilences, pain, suffering and death, has been learning about life, as Pastor Joe even has said, **experientially, learning the hard way.** God has to give these folk the same chance that has been offered to us. Now this is the doctrinal interpretation of the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, which you do not have to accept, but I do believe it sheds some light on what might be the proper interpretation for Proverbs 16:4b. see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/E-Mails/June%2014/FallHolyDays-short.htm> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm> for a thorough review of these doctrines.])

One For Everyone Who Is Proud In Heart

“Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.” (verse 5) the idea is **‘though they gather together, the proud, hand joined in hand, he shall not go unpunished.’** You know, very interesting, Paul says in **2nd Corinthians**, look, **‘Don’t make yourself among the number of those who compare themselves among themselves.’** You know, you can go to the sanctuary on Sunday and look at somebody and say *‘Well at least I’m not like that sap over there.’* That means you don’t understand God’s grace. You’re only here by the 100 percent pure grace of God, you’re no more deserving than any other sinner that sits here. Paul says **‘Don’t make yourself among the number of those who compare themselves among themselves.’** Remember Isaiah when he saw the LORD, he said **‘I fell down and said Woe is me, I’m a man of unclean lips,’** or Daniel saying, **‘My comeliness was turned to ashes,’** or John falling down like a dead man. So one who is doing this, proud in heart, judging others, is someone

who hasn't seen the Lord. And I don't mean with a physical eye. I believe there are tongues, in my experience, over the years, when I really have been in his presence. I've seen with an eyeball, was unable to see, and what I saw was this, '*Lord, I am such a sinful man.*' And his love and his grace was crushing me to the point where I could hardly breathe. And when you really come into the presence of God, there's no room for pride and there's no room for judging anyone else. **'Everyone who is proud in their heart is an abomination to the LORD, and though hand join hand, it's not to go unpunished.'** (verse 5)

Without Truth Mercy Is Senseless, Without Mercy Truth Is Cruel

I like this, **"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."** (verse 6) Certainly as Solomon put the quill to the page **"By mercy and truth"** was this, you came to the altar, you brought a lamb, and the lamb was inspected to make sure it was without spot or blemish. The worshipper was never inspected, it was a forgone conclusion that the worshipper had spot and blemish, that's why he was bringing an innocent substitute. And it wasn't just that you brought it to the priest and walked away, you then put your hand on the head of that animal, and the priest then put the knife in your hand, and with your hand he guided it, and you cut the throat of that lamb. And you stood there with your hand feeling that animal begins to quiver as it bled out, as the priest gathered the blood in a golden bowl. And you had all of the impression of a spotless, blemishless innocent substitute dying in your place, and that was mercy and truth all in one. It was mercy and truth on the cross, that's what we saw in the crucifixion. It says **"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged."** Without truth mercy produces nothing, and truth without mercy is cruel. **'By mercy and truth, iniquity, the twisted part of man is purged, cleaned.'** **"and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."**

There's More Profit Spending Time Pleasing The LORD Than Pleasing Man

"When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (verse 7) Take note there, you should probably expend your time and energy trying to please the Lord, and not please men, because if you spend your time and energy trying to please men [or women], you're still going to have trouble with your enemies. But if you please the Lord, you're not

going to have trouble with your enemies. **“When a man’s ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.” (verse 7)** and of course there’s exceptions, if somebody’s cutting your head off or something, this is a general observation by Solomon here, but led by the Spirit.

Better A Little With God, Than Everything Without God

Here’s one of the better proverbs, **“Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.” (verse 8)** “without right, without justice.” **“Better a little with righteousness,”** there’s something that sits right about that, than somebody whose filthy rich and there’s no justice, what they’re doing is wrong, it’s perverted, taking advantage, that eats at us. **‘I’d rather be the poorest saint in heaven than the richest man in hell,’** is what it’s saying.

For A Believer, ‘We Make Our Plans, God Guides Our Steps’

Verse 9, it kind of harks back to verse 1, about God’s sovereignty, **“A man’s heart divideth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”** Very interesting the way the Hebrew presents it. In a man’s heart, in your own heart, it says, you devise your way, you’re mediating, you’re thinking, not just your head, desire is involved, something emotional, visceral about it, *‘Should I go here, should I do this, should I do that, Lord?’* I find I am always a rooky. [comment: by appearance, this verse applies to believers, not non-believers, who would never be questioning with the Lord in mind. And the LORD would not be so specifically guiding, directing the steps of a non-believer, whereas verse 1, 4b, and 33 point to the issues of “free will” verses “predestination.” So this is a believer verse, a verse for believers, God’s in your life, you’re devising your way, but he’s intimately involved, directing your steps. I have seen this proven out throughout my life as a believer.] I was a rooky years ago, I’m still a rooky. Every time I learn something I have to move onto the thing I haven’t learned yet. Interesting, it says here, **“A man’s heart may devise his way,”** look, here’s what removes the pressure, it says **“but the LORD directeth his steps.” (verse 9b)** the smallest increments of his way are his steps. And if the LORD is overseeing each step, it says the LORD is directing the increments of that pilgrimage that you’re on. He cares that much, he’s directing your steps. I like that.

About Kings And Divine Right Of Kings

“A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.” (verse 10) Now by the way, this is the ideal. When we get over a little further in the chapter we’re going to hear about kings a number of times, and the way they should behave. But the idea is, the king is by divine, it’s a divine appointment, a divine sentence is in the lips of the king, **“his mouth,”** this is the ideal, **“transgresseth not in judgment.”** Look, it comes from Deuteronomy chapter 17, as they’re approaching the Land and God is reiterating the Law, and God says to them, *‘When you come into the land, what you’re going to want, is you’re going to want a king like the nations around you. What you’re supposed to be is a theocracy, what you’re supposed to be is a nation ruled by and from the Tabernacle, ruled by me, ruled by my Word, ruled by the priests and the prophets, you’re supposed to be a nation under Divine guidance. But what you’re gonna do is when you come into the land I give you, then you’re gonna look around and say ‘We want a king like all the other nations around us, because it’s more tangible.’ He says, ‘And these are going to be the rules, if you have a king, you can’t choose a foreigner, somebody else, he says he’s supposed to be one of your own brethren,’ it says, ‘you may not set a stranger over you,’ and then he says this, ‘He shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses, for as much as the LORD has said unto you, you shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away, neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. It shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write himself a copy of this Law in a book, out of which is before the priests and Levites, and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, and to keep all the words of the Law and these statutes to do them, that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the Commandments to the right hand or to the left hand, to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, and he and his children in the midst of Israel.’* So, remarkably, Solomon is only the third king, Saul, David, Solomon in the reign, the list of Israel’s kings, and Solomon is the one who ends up violating all of the things here that God says. The ideal is, **“A divine sentence is in the lips of the king.”** He’s supposed to be speaking on God’s behalf, **“and his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.”** But Solomon returned to Egypt for horses, specifically what the LORD said not to do. Moses when

he came out of Egypt said, ***‘The horse and rider were thrown in the sea, we’re going to trust in the LORD our God, he’s the one who gave us the victory.’*** Solomon went back to Egypt for horses. It says not to multiply gold and silver, and there was so much gold in Jerusalem in the days of Solomon that silver was considered as stones. Kiddow in his history of Solomon says that Solomon had six guards and they all had to be over six feet tall, and they all wore white silk, and they all had to have raven black hair, and every morning they ground fresh gold dust to sprinkle it in their hair, and they ran next to his chariot with their spears and their swords, and they were all incredible warriors. It doesn’t sound like Solomon was trusting in the LORD. He multiplied gold and silver. And it says you shall not multiply wives, he might have thought he was adding. When you get to 700 wives and 300 concubines you need to at least think about the verse a little bit, because they will lure your heart away, it’s exactly what they did. And look, listen to me, the danger in ministry, the danger in serving the Lord, has not changed, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life is still there, passion, position, possession, pride, women, money, hasn’t changed, through the centuries. You see somebody taken down, you see them mishandling money, trying to get into everybody’s wallets, you see how many are taken down, we bury them in Kibroth Hatavah, the graves of lust along the way. How many taken down with just pride and arrogance, not depending on the Lord anymore, they’ve just got a machine going. It’s interesting, Solomon’s only the third king, the wisest man that ever lived, and he violates all of these things in his reign. Certainly there is warning in that for all of us.

The LORD Minds Your Business

Verse 11 says this, ***“A just weight and balance are the LORD’s: all the weights of the bag are his work.”*** In other words, you may tell somebody else *‘Mind your own business,’* it says here ***‘he minds your business.’*** OK? You can’t tell the LORD *‘Mind your own business,’* it says very specifically he’s minding your business. Just weights and balances, they didn’t have coinage, so gold and silver were weighed out, and then you had stones in your purse that produced the equivalent amount, and it says ***‘even the stones in your bag, it says, are his work.’***

More About Kings

Now look, verse 12, kings, verse 13 it talks about the delight of kings, in verse 14 it talks about the wrath of a king, and in verse

15 it talks about the light of the king's countenance. Now these next few verses tell us very specifically, **"It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness."** (verse 12) **"Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right."** (verse 13) "and" it's adding. A righteous king doesn't like to be surrounded by "yes men." **"Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right."** (verse 13) Now, the wrath of a king. So we have an abomination, to kings, of kings, right king, so **verse 14, "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death:"** it goes without saying, **"but a wise man will pacify it."** Somebody in wisdom adds to the king's counsel, and there's wisdom in a multitude of counsellors, the king knew that, so a wise man pacifies that, so the king doesn't act out wrongly. And **"In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain."** (verse 15) Now by the way, look, let's think about our King. Ok? Our King. It's an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, God is never doing anything wicked in your life. It says it right here. It's an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, **"for the throne is established by righteousness."** (verse 12b) Our God is a righteous King, and his reign is a righteous reign, and his throne is a righteous throne. **"Righteous lips are the delight of kings;"** it's the same with our King, isn't it? **"and they love him that speaketh right."** (verse 13) it delights the LORD when he hears his children speaking wisely, speaking truth. **"The wrath of a king is as messengers of death:"** and certainly that is true with the LORD of lords and the King of kings, **"but a wise man will pacify it."** (verse 14) you know, sometimes we say *'Lord, be merciful to this person.'* How many times do we pray for the "unsaved"? *'Save them, don't let them come under your wrath and be lost.'* **"The light of the king's countenance is life;"** I love this, when God is smiling on us, that's what I want, **"and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain."** (verse 15) The latter rain came in the Spring, former rain, latter rain was in the Spring, and the latter rains in the Spring were the last rains before the harvest season all the way through the summer. And the latter rains were a blessing. And it says that God's favour in our life, it's life-giving, it does something in us that enables us for long seasons in our lives to produce fruit. When God shows us his favour, it's like the latter rain, it nourishes, it gives moisture to our being, it invigorates us. Sometimes you can't describe it. Look, I find it with [spiritual] warfare. I can't describe it, sometimes I'm just miserable, because things are crazy. Now, I thrive in craziness. My life is crazy, crazy good. And I could never describe the recent things in my life, but sometimes it gets crazy-crazy, its beyond crazy, it's insane-insanity. And then my wife is

saying 'You're so crabby!' I say 'I AM NOT!' [laughter] And then I think, 'What am I so crabby about?' And I can't put my finger on any specific thing, and I say 'Wait a minute, this is warfare, the enemy is messing with me here.' Because God's favour is the opposite, it adds moisture to my life, it invigorates me, I can't help it, I notice that the sun is shining, 'Oh wow, that's beautiful,' it's raining, 'That's really cool, it's like his Word coming down from heaven,' it's just so different. So it says **"his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain."** (verse 15b) it produces fruit in our lives, it's a good thing. I can't explain that to somebody, but I know the sense of it, I know the sense of it. I know what it's like to sit alone with him, and feel his favour, and what it does in my soul and my spirit is what rain does to the ground when it's dry, it wets me down, with divine love and grace.

'Wisdom Is Better Than Gold And Silver'

He says **"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"** (verse 16) good question, right? exclamation mark, exclamation mark, these two things are said hammer slamming down, exclamation mark. **"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold boom! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver Boom!"** It's very interesting, look, because, it doesn't say, it doesn't tell you, you have to think about it, many times in Proverbs it told us that if we exercise wisdom, that prosperity is part of that. So wisdom and gold often follow on the same pathway, wisdom and silver often go together. It doesn't preclude one or the other, it doesn't say if you're wise that you shouldn't have prosperity in your life. In fact the Book of Proverbs has been teaching us the opposite. What it's saying is this, you may be traveling along a path, exercising wisdom, doing things right, and God is blessing that and prospering. And all of a sudden you come to a fork in the road, and you know that the Lord wants you to turn in a certain direction there, and logic is telling you 'I like the gold trail, if I make this one right here, I don't think gold's making a right with me here.' What it's saying is, when push comes to shove, and you have to make that decision, then you ask yourself **'How much better to wisdom than gold? How much better is it to get understanding than silver?'** Because the truth is, you're a wise human being, you exercise God's wisdom, there is a prosperity that's attached to that. But there are times in our lives, and in the lives of lots of Christians all around the world when they have to make a choice, and they know 'If I make this choice, I could lose my job, if I take a stand right now for wisdom, for understanding, for

what's right, it's gonna cost me.' And the question is, at that crossroads, when that comes, how do we decide? [Comment: If you check out the About the Author section of this site, you will see that I came and come from the Sabbath-keeping Church of God side of the Body of Christ. There were times when I had to make a choice between keeping the 7th day Sabbath, which begins at sundown Friday evenings, or keeping my job, where keeping the Sabbath by not working on it actually cost me several jobs. But within two weeks of losing my job, having been faithful, God gave me a better one, with better pay.] And it's an exhortation. ***'How much better is wisdom than gold, and how much better is it to get understanding rather than choice silver?'*** Verse 17 plays into it, ***"The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul."*** The Hebrew is this, ***"The highway of the upright is to turn aside from evil."*** it puts a little more of an onus on you, ***"The highway of the upright is you know when you come into that intersection, or you come into that experience where there's evil, the highway of the upright is to turn aside from it."*** ***'I'm making a right here, I'm not hanging here, I'm turning away from this.'*** ***"The highway of the upright is turn aside from evil: he that keepeth or guardeth"*** that's the idea here, ***"his way preserveth his soul."*** it preserves his own life. It's up to you to guard your way. Guard it. Look, we know the end, ***"an inheritance that's incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away,"*** and glory is set aside for us, this is a temporary pilgrimage, it's up to you to guard your way, and it says the person that guards their way preserves their own life, preserves their own life. And it says ***"The highway of the upright is to turn aside from things that are evil."*** Here's the contrast in **verse 18**, ***"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."*** The Hebrew reads ***"Pride goeth before ruin"*** and in fact it's very short the way it's written, it says ***"Ruin before pride."*** ***"Pride goeth before ruin, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."*** You just pray for them, because if you watch, they're going to stumble, they're going to fall. Contrasting **verse 18**, ***"Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud."*** (**verse 19**) ***'Better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, the humble, than to divide the spoil with the proud.'***

Pleasant Words Promote Instruction

"He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he." (**verse 20**) happy person, there's a contentment. ***"The wise in heart shall be called***

prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.” (verse 21) somebody whose wise in heart, they’re going to be called prudent, they make good decisions. **“sweetness of lips increaseth learning”** I think the NIV says **“Pleasant words promote instruction,”** the idea is, when you’re teaching your kids, you can always come down on them, you can always be slamming them, or you can get under them and build them up. It says the wise in heart, they’re going to be called prudent, they make good decisions, and sweetness of the lips increases learning. Pleasant words promote instruction, people are going to hear things more easily, you know, when Jesus came, it says the common people heard him gladly, it says **‘No one has spoken such gracious words,’** he sat with tax gatherers, sinners, prostitutes, they didn’t run from him because he was holier than thou, he instructed them, he corrected them, he spoke right to their emptiness, and it says their response was **‘We’ve never heard such gracious words.’** **Charles Spurgeon said “When you preach the Word, you never preach down at people, you preach under them and lift them up.”** And you know, we’ve all been in legalistic churches where you get a good beating, you come out on Sundays [or especially Saturdays, out of a Sabbath-keeping Church of God, I know] *‘Now that was a good one, I’m bleeding, I really got a beating today, that was great.’* Well you can only put up with that for a certain number of years, and then you can’t get back to go in any more you got so beat up. The idea is, pleasant words promote instruction. **“Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.”** (verse 22) it’s just wonderful to understand what’s going on. **“but the instruction of fools is folly.”** to try to instruction a fool, and look, “fool” in the Bible again, in the Old Testament, **“the fool hath said in his heart there is no God.”** [i.e. the Bible definition of a fool is defined as being someone who is an atheist.] Look at our culture, look at the media, look at the entertainment industry, look at what’s going on around us, look at the morality that’s being produced, look at the way Christians are being mocked, look at the way they’re making fun of marriage between a man and a woman. Look at everything good in our world is being torn down, that’s because the instruction of fools is folly, **‘because a fool has said in his heart there is no God.’** And I look at the trouble in our country, the trouble around the world, there’s all kinds of practical solutions, and many of them should be put in place. **But if the hearts of men and women are not converted, there’s no instruction that ever lasts.** Just, very interesting here, our culture embraces insanity because it says there’s no God, and then there’s no fear of God, **“the instruction of fools is folly.”** On the other hand, **“The heart of the wise teacheth his**

mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.” (verse 23) “the heart of the wise” on the other hand, not the brain, the heart, not the IQ, **“the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.”** No one here is forbidden to enjoy the benefits of wisdom, because it’s not talking about IQ, it’s talking about the heart, the wise at heart. And what it’s logging here, lifting up before us, is those who apply, it’s the application of understanding. Wisdom is the application of knowledge (and understanding) not just knowing, but being able to apply it, that’s wisdom. You know, Solomon said *‘Cut the baby in half,’* knowing that the real mom is going to say *‘No, give it to her.’* So none of us are precluded from being a part of this wisdom club that’s constantly being exhorted here in the Book of Proverbs. It’s not IQ, it’s heart. [I have developed a certain understanding about a certain person in my life, what exactly they are, and this helps me understand why certain negative things have happened to me resulting from a relationship with this person. But I have not yet learned how to use this knowledge and understanding of what this person is, graciously, without hurting this person with this knowledge of what they are. Sometimes you can have knowledge, but not know how to apply it. I’m still taking this one to the Lord, asking for the wisdom of how to apply this knowledge in the most gracious manner possible.] **“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.” (verse 24)** again, important to remember, as we raise kids.

Ask Yourself ‘Where’s This Path I’m On Going?’

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (verse 25) this is the second time we’ve read this. That’s always the question, where’s it going? How are you on the journey, where’s it going, the destination? [That Rock’n Roll song comes to mind which Pastor Joe would know too, *‘Highway To Hell!’*] **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”** (We’re gonna finish this chapter, thought I was going to finish 17.)

If You Don’t Work, You Don’t Eat

Look, **“He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.” (verse 26)** What it’s saying there is, if you don’t work, you don’t eat. We heard Paul say that in the Book of Thessalonians. Hunger is not the only reason that people work, but it probably is the most universal reason on the planet that people labour. And sadly, we don’t know it here, but there are

places around the world where people each day didn't get enough food for themselves for that particular day. It's interesting, I was watching an interview with Benny Pakio, and if you don't know who he is I'll pray for you. But I was watching an interview with Benny Pakio, and he said when he was little he started fighting, there's a fight this weekend, the largest prize fight money-wise in the history of boxing. But they have pictures of him when he was a little kid, and he said, "*We didn't know when we were going to eat, we'd pick through trash and garbage every day, we didn't know if we were going to get enough food,*" and he said, "*When I was very young, I fought and I won enough money to feed the whole family for that day.*" And he said, "*That was it for me, I was a fighter. If I could make enough money to feed my whole family for one day in one fight, I was gonna fight.*" And he just talked about his beginnings, and you would never imagine the level of poverty and the things that, and God no doubt used those things in his life. But **"He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him."** (verse 26) Look, there are some people who labour because of greed, and it already told us about the sluggard, he's even too lazy to take his hand out and put it to his mouth, there's some people even though they're hungry they don't work. But it says here, look, you're the beneficiary of it, the person that's working, they're labouring, look, it benefits yourself, and even your mouth craves that of you.

Ungodly People

Ah verses 27, 28 and 29 tell us about the ungodly man, the proud man, froward man, and the violent man. It says **"An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire."** (verse 27) here it might say "a man of belial," "unsaved man," "an evil man, diggeth up evil," that's what he does. He digs it up, he's gotta get his hands on it, **"and in his lips there is as a burning fire."** (verse 27b) So someone who doesn't believe, they're lost, in darkness, the ungodly man, they dig for evil, in his lips there's like a burning fire there, if you listen to them. Put your fingers in your ears. **"A froward man, a proud man, an arrogant man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends."** (verse 28) "he soweth strife" because he's ambitious, he only cares about himself [or herself], **"and a whisperer separateth chief friends."** (verse 28b) you know, they slander, something God looks down on, somebody who sows discord between brethren God says is an abomination. **"A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good."** (verse 29) A violent man working on his neighbour, then it tells us this about the

violent man in **verse 30**, **“He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.”** “he shutteth his eyes” now remember, “he winks with his eyes,” we talked about this a couple weeks ago. All scholars say *“We have no exact idea what winking meant when Solomon wrote this, but we know it was no good.”* It’s not like your grandpa winking at his granddaughter, that’s not what it’s talking about. It’s saying here, **‘he’s giving some eye-signal to devise proud things, he moves his lips to bring evil to pass, it’s the violent man.’**

‘The Hoary Head Is A Crown Of Glory’

Now, finally I get in here. **“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” (verse 31)** now by the way, a hoary head is like hoar frost that lay there in the morning, so it’s like frost, it could be gray, it can be white. Don’t think if you get your hair frosted you fit into this category, you have to earn your white hair. Ok? you have to earn it. Don’t die it away, either, it says here it’s a crown of glory. Ah, **“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.”** “if” it says “it be found in the way of righteousness.” Someone whose been around that long, someone, you know, you get around an older person and they’re in the path of righteousness, they love the Lord, how sweet it is sometimes, to be around someone like that. I mean, A.E. Wildersmith, when he was here, and I got to spend five days with him, he’s one of the twelve brightest guys on the planet they said, three earned PhD’s, Temple heard he was here, they had him come lecture, the University of Pennsylvania heard he was here, had him come lecture, but I got to hang out with him, and we went walking in the park together, laughing and talking. He said *“You see that tree?”* He said *“If you take those leaves it will help bones heal faster.”* A duck went by, he said *“You see the way a duck walks, they walk like this?”* He said *“You’ll notice if a chicken goes by, they walk vertically like this, a duck walks horizontally, that because of the way the cerebellum is shaped,”* he’s telling this whole thing, his wife is there, they’ve been married sixty-seven years...but in all of that he talked about God’s creation and God’s genius, he had three PhD’s and the more he learned, the more amazed he was with God. It was so sweet to be around him, it was so remarkable. I think about it now, because the kids were little, I didn’t really understand who he was, I’d become a fan, of course he’s gone on to be with the Lord a number of years ago. If you go to our app under scientists, there’s like 33 studies by Wildersmith in there, they will blow your mind. And I think, I got to hang out with him for a couple days. In fact I was sitting in Friendly’s with

him, we're eating ice cream, I said "Isn't this amazing?" he said "What?" thick British accent, I said, "Here you are, one of the smartest guys on the planet, and here I am, an ex-druggie from Philadelphia, and we're sitting here eating an ice cream together, isn't that amazing?" he said, "Yesss, it is amazing." Of course he said it to be funny, with his British accent. But, how sweet, you know, the hoary head. Chuck Smith, this would take in no-hair also, white hair, gray hair, no hair, you know, some wisdom in ages show that way. I think of the times sitting with Chuck, and those were highlights of my life, I got a chance to spend five days with him in Colorado a couple years ago before he died, it was Greg and Laurel and Mike MacIntosh and Greg Laurie, and Skip Heitzig and Don and I, there were seven of us together, for five days we sat, we laughed, like crazy people, we talked. I'll never forget that. Henry Morris before he died, I got a chance to meet him. He forgot more Scripture than I'm ever going to remember. He was just amazing. So, ***'the hoary head, it's a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.'***

It's All About Patience

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (verse 32) You can control your anger. The idea is here, look, cities are taken and lost, kingdoms are taken and lost, if you have patience, it's never taken away because it's an internal quality that's the very thing that stands up to somebody whose trying to take it away. Cities can be taken and then lost again. Kingdoms can be taken and lost. If the work of Almighty God in your life has produced a patience and a self-control, you can't take that away, because it's the very thing that makes you unable to lose it. So, ***"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (verse 32)*** and again, you know you can control it. You can be screaming at your wife [or vice versa], the phone can ring and you pick it up and say [in a very nice tone] 'Hello.' You know, there's blood on the floor, your eyeball's over in the corner, 'Hey, how are you?'

What Casting Of Lots Meant In The Old Testament

"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." (verse 33) We get the idea of allotment from this, what fell out to in an allotment. In the ancient cultures sometimes it was bones, one side was painted, one side wasn't, sometimes they were flattened sticks, one side was painted, one side wasn't,

the priest had the urim and the thumin. When Israel divided up the Land it was by the casting of lots. That was so respected that even in the Book of Acts we hear that's still being practiced. Now, look, understand this, to a Jew, casting of lots was not throwing dice. Understand? To the Jew, it says right here, ***'the casting of the lot, the LORD is the one whose in charge of the disposing.'*** They knew, before they cast the lot, that they had brought their hearts before the LORD, they wanted a decision, they were going to trust him the way it fell out. Wonderfully, you go to Genesis chapter 49, 50, you read about Jacob's death, he props himself up on his deathbed...[tape ran out, sorry folks]