

Proverbs 21:1-31

“The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it withersoever he will. 2 Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts. 3 To do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice. 4 An high look, and a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked *is* sin. 5 The thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plentiousness; but of every one *that is* hasty only to want. 6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. 7 The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment. 8 The way of man *is* froward and strange: but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right. 9 *It is* better to dwell in a corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. 10 The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes. 11 When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge. 12 The righteous *man* wisely considereth the house of the wicked: *but God* overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedness. 13 Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard. 14 A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath. 15 *It is* joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity. 16 The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead. 17 He that loveth pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich. 18 The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright. 19 *It is* better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman. 20 *There is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up. 21 He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour. 22 A wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof. 23 Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. 24 Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth in proud wrath. 25 The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. 26 He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not. 27 The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind? 28 A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly. 29 A wicked man hardeneth his face: but *as for* the upright, he

directeth his way. 30 There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD. 31 The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.”

Introduction: God Is Ultimately Responsible For World Leadership

“Proverbs chapter 21, begins by telling us **“the king's heart”** Solomon writing, I wonder what he thinks, as he's putting his quill to the page, **“The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it withersoever he will.” (verse 1)** Great encouragement for us, as we look at the world today, and see world leaders that we're not happy with at all, remember that the LORD is sovereign, that they are in his hand. It's a great exhortation for those that are in leadership, for the king here, to realize that God is sovereign in their lives. Again, great encouragement for us to pray, 1st Timothy chapter 2, Paul says 'for those in authority, kings and rulers and so forth, Nero was on the throne then. So this, the king's heart, the monarch, the civil authority, the President, the Prime Minister, his heart is in the hands of the LORD, as rivers of water, you know, God is able, every river begins with a spring somewhere, and it flows, it broadens as tributaries come, it begins with nothing, ends up to be a river, it flows, it consummates, and ends up to have force moving in a direction. It says the LORD is involved in the springs of that, is involved in the beginnings of that, he can aim that. We see Nehemiah, burdened about Jerusalem, hearing the walls were broken down, Artaxerxes saying *'What's the deal? You look so sad.'* And he prays, and says *'Let the king give me favour.'* and the LORD facilitates, sends him back to Jerusalem. We see Ahimelech, in Genesis, God gives him a dream so that he will set Abraham free, *'What did you do, you came here, told me your wife was your sister.'* You see God moving on Cyrus to finance and to finish the job of rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple, you see him working in the life of Nebuchadnezzar to finally give a command that all places and all people, that the God of Daniel should be worshiped, the God of heaven. You see him, no doubt in the life of Caesar Augustus, in his days he gave a command that all the world be taxed, and Mary and Joseph then had to go from Nazareth up to Bethlehem, the house of David, there where the Saviour was to be born, throughout the Scripture. Today as we look at the news, that's good for me to remember, because I have agida when I watch the news, I am aggravated, and God has to reprove me, and challenge me to pray, and to trust him. Daniel tells us even the basest of men are raised up, at times, over a nation. So, **“The**

king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it” this king's heart **“withersoever he will.”**

Self-Deception Stops With The LORD

“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.” (verse 2) Every way of a man seems right in his own eyes, I am amazed at the potential I personally have for self-deception, because I can get myself out on a limb somewhere, thinking something, and have to say *'Lord, drag my motives into the Light, would you please, I know I'm grinding here with something I shouldn't be grinding with,'* so sometimes just, the thoughts of a man, a woman, they seem right in their own eyes, everybody thinks their way is right, but the LORD weighs the hearts.

Make Your Worship Real

“To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.” (verse 3) He will say this in the beginning of Isaiah, *'I abhor your sacrifices, your feasts days are an abomination to me,'* you know, just all of this stuff, *'who cares about how many oxen you kill, how many throats of lambs you slaughter when your heart is far from me, I'm looking for fellowship, not for religiosity,'* he says *'let us reason, though your sins be as scarlet they'll be white as snow,'* and so forth. To do justice and judgment, that is what the LORD is looking for, it should be produced out of genuine fellowship of the LORD and not just a man involved in ritual. Many of us grew up in that ritualistic religion.

The Lamp Of The Wicked Is Sin

He says **“An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin.” (verse 4)** King James I think gets this one wrong, a high look is outward, somebody that's got an arrogant look, you've seen that. Haven't you? If you've raised kids you've seen that. *'What did I tell you?'* and you catch them. *'Don't look at me like that,'* just a proud look, and arrogant high look. A proud heart, that's inward, that's not seen. The plowing is interesting, the Hebrew word is “lamp” here, ***'the lamp of the wicked is sin.'*** What they think guides their way, you know, it was a lamp that guided you at night, the way of every man is right in his own eyes, you know, it says to do justice and judgment, that's the right thing, more acceptable than sacrifice. A proud look, an arrogant look, a proud heart, and the lamp of the wicked is sin, there's no real

guidance there.

Haste Makes Waste

“The thoughts of the diligent *tend only to plentiousness; but every one that is hasty only to want.*” (verse 5) Those who are diligent, good stewards over what they have, God blesses that. **“but every one that is hasty only to want.”** only want comes from that, haste makes waste, one of our proverbs.

Getting Of Treasures By Lying Is Empty

“The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.” (verse 6) interesting, what your translation says, it seems to be speaking, it's a vanity, it's just a breath that's exhaled. Getting treasure by a lying tongue, it's nothing, it's like a breath, it's something exhaled is the idea of what it's saying here.

God Takes Away The Robber's Wisdom

And **“The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.” (verse 7)** literally **“shall chew them up, because they refuse to do justice.”** And these days they take Selfies, and after they rob the bank, got their money, and they take a Selfie, and then the police watch the Selfie on the Internet and say *“I know who those guys are, now we know who stole it,”* God evidently takes away their wisdom too, when they do things like that. [chuckles]

Some People Are Strange

It says, **“The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the pure, his work is right.” (verse 8)** just, man left to himself. How many times have you said that, *‘That guy's strange, Biblical for him to do that.’* **“but as for the pure, his work is right.”**

*Who **Not** To Marry*

“It is better to dwell in a corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.” (verse 9) especially if she's 6'5” or 6'6”, in a wide house. Ah *‘A woman of contentions’* is the idea. You know, earlier we said, *‘a wife that's contentious is like a continual dripping.’* then you're inside the house. Now she's

dripping so long you're outside the house on the roof. You know, a continual dripping, again the roofs were made of plaster and sticks and wood, and if there was a continual leak, the whole structure was in jeopardy, it compromised the entire structure of the home, and certainly a woman that's constantly like that is doing that. And Solomon has 700 wives, he made his own problems, 300 concubines, you know, he said **'It's better to dwell in the corner of the house top,'** he must have had a nice place up there, I imagine. This is the wisest man who ever lived, he can't win. **"It is better to dwell in the corner of the house top,"** you're up there in the elements, the wind and the rain, **"than with a brawling"** a contentious **"woman in a wide house."** Just, arguing is not good. And look, this can be, by the way, it's not talking about it, but it can be the same way if there's a brawling husband, a contentious husband. You know, sometimes it's better for us to give place to one another, than to give place to the devil. Because that's who wins if we aren't yielding. Again, there's higher things than just winning sometimes, even if you're right and the other person's wrong. Sometimes peace is the premium, and God appreciates that more than just right and wrong. Peter tells us that a woman of a meek and quiet spirit is of a great price in the sight of God. So, Solomon will go through these things, another one of these as we're moving through.

The Wicked Are Selfish

It says, **"The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes."** (verse 10) in his inward parts, that's what he longs for. And his neighbour finds no favour in his eyes, that's because he doesn't want anything to do with neighbourliness, inside he's only longing for the things that are selfish. So he neighbour finds no favour in his eyes.

A Healthy Chain-Reaction, Think About It

"When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge." (verse 11) I like this. If you take a scorner, a mocker, and in that day someone who was scorning and mocking, sometimes they were beaten, so it says when the scorner is punished, even the simple, people who kind of lack understanding, they become wiser seeing that person whupped. **"and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge."** There's a learning all the way across the board there.

The Righteous Man Considers Where The Wicked Are Headed

It says **“The righteous man”** or woman, put yourself in there girls **“wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.” (verse 12)** so the righteous person, it doesn't say they're judgmental, doesn't say they hate, it says they wisely consider the house of the wicked. And in the culture here, the household was more than just the building. The idea is, **'their dynasty, their place,'** the righteous person wisely considers that. Asaph said when he was looking at it wrongly, when he coveted, he was envious, you know, the prosperity of the wicked, he said he had well-nigh slipped, he was in a slippery place. He said he got so far out of perspective, he said **'I couldn't even talk to the people in church about it, because I would have stumbled them, I just saw good people suffering, bad people making out,'** he said, **'until I went into the house of the LORD, and then I considered their end.'** He said, **'What set me right was I got things back in perspective of eternity again.'** And I think for us, one of the great things about coming to church Sunday's [or Saturday's], Wednesday's, Tuesday mornings, Monday nights, all kinds of things going on during the week. As you finally get away from a world that makes fun of you because of what you believe about marriage, or what you believe about Creation, or what you believe about eternity, what you believe about sin, what you believe about eternal life, what you believe about hell. And you gather with a whole bunch of other people who want to sing about what you believe in, you're kind of resonating, this is good, this is kind of a warm-up, Lord, get us out of here, I can't wait till the Big Show starts. You just kind of get in that place where it feels so right to you. And wisely then, considering, remembering, this is where the world is going, you know. And narrow is the way that leads to eternal life, and few that be that find it, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be that go thereon. The righteous person wisely considers the house of the wicked. God overthroweth the wicked, that's what the righteous man wisely considers, that they'll be overthrown.

No Mercy Shown, None Given

“Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.” (verse 13) Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor seems to give us a picture of the hardhearted. It doesn't say *'Whoso stops his ears at the cry of the*

lazy,' it's not in here about the sluggard. And often we're in a circumstance, you know, you look at the news, I think we see the cry of the poor all around us, we're exposed to that in the media, we see the areas where there's war, we see the areas where there's bodies laying in the street, huge earthquakes and tsunamis, we see people getting their heads cut off, we can see people in our own communities, just disenfranchised, broken-down, and every Christian should have that heart-pang, you know, that desire...and you know, the other side of the coin, you ride down the street, you see somebody with a sign that says *HUNGRY*. Now some of those people, I hate to tell you, are making 300-400 bucks a day, they're driving a nicer car than you. So, you tend, then you don't want to be, should I be skeptical, I don't want to finance irresponsibility, so there's a balance in there somewhere. I would say this, when in doubt, err on the side of mercy. Don't err on the side of judgment, because we can all be kind of persnickety and judgmental, not me, but other people I see driving around. And when you're not sure, the Christ in us would give, and you'll be rewarded whether the person is taking advantage of you or not. But we certainly live in a world, and I have the feeling, we're going to see more hardship, I don't get any sense, from studying Scripture, things are going to get easier as we move forward [and if they do, God granting restoration for the sake of the Body of Christ, Jesus is going to expect us to use those gifted resources wisely for the promotion of the Gospel]. We're going to be more dependent on one another, and it's going to require that we, that all men know we're his disciples by the love that we show one another, we'll have to reach out and hold one another up more and more. So, the person whose stopping his ears, the idea is, he is stopping up his ears, it says "the cry of the poor," there's a pleading. The problem with this person is their heart is hard, and when your heart is hard, your ears are stopped up as well, is what it's saying. So, **"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor,"** and this poor person, whether we see them in the news, or see them in another country, remember, they're an image-bearer, they're an image-bearer, they're bearing the image of Almighty God, they were created in his image and likeness. They are in a less fortunate circumstance than the rest of us. **"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."** (verse 13) [see http://www.unityinchrist.com/evangelism/samaritan_purse.htm]

You Can Act Wisely When There's Been An Offense

Verse 14 is a little rough, **“A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.”** Now, some scholars try to say, because it says 'a gift in secret' it's talking about something shady, something wrong, it's just talking about a bribe. But other scholars, and most of them feel this verse is saying *'hey, a gift in secret pacifieth anger,'* sometimes at home, when I've been a jerk, and I have to think way back [his wife is thinking, *'you don't have to think that far back'*], but just with Cathy, a card, cards do not mean anything to me, I appreciate when you give me cards, but I don't ever go *'Oh, these people gave me such a nice card, I'm so touched.'* It means something to her that it will never mean to me. I don't have to understand that, I don't have the means to measure that. But what I do know, is that it's important to her. Flowers, again, you know I can get the \$5 flowers driving down on the corner, they're kind of nice, they can be a little bit beat, you know, or I can get the ones from the supermarket, a little more expensive, they're a little nicer, they look better. But if I ever stop and get ones with those little ferns, and little white flowers around them, she can't believe *'You stopped at a florist? You got me those,'* they'll sit on the table for a week and say *'He's a jerk, but you need to cut him some slack, he's really trying,'* they talk out loud to her. And it seems to be saying, that's what it's saying here. ***'A gift in secret, it pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.'*** It seems to be saying, you can act wisely when there's an offense, and you can give. And that can help things get patched up. Even if I'm wrong, you should do that anyway, I think that's what the verse says here. I don't think it's talking about bribery. You know, sometimes you can bribe your wife too, that's all up to you.

Workers Of Iniquity And Those Who Wander From The Truth

“It is joy to the just to do judgment; but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.” (verse 15) *'to do judgment, to do what is right,'* these are very straight forward. **“The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.”** (verse 16) that's sobering. Somebody who wanders out of the way, and it seems, willingly, doesn't want anything to do with instruction or understanding, he's going to remain in the congregation of the dead. He may have a place now in this life that is not permanent, and he can wander from one thing to the next, where it finally deposits you in a permanent place, and it says he'll remain there.

Avoiding Immediate Gratification Can Produce Long-Term

Goals

“He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.” (verse 16) No doubt, both spiritual poverty, and a warning, if you love wine, somebody who loves feasting, all they want to do is stuff themselves. I just want to stuff myself a percentage of the time. What it's saying here, **'He that loveth pleasure,' 'avoiding immediate gratification can produce long-term goals,'** that's what it's saying. Avoiding immediate gratification, we see that with somebody getting in shape, somebody getting in shape for the Olympics, somebody getting in shape for the NFL season, you know, somebody whose going to compete somewhere, they understand a certain measure of discipline, they're not going to eat, feed themselves, take care of things, and avoiding immediate gratification sometimes will produce long-term goals, and the person whose wise understands that. So he that loveth pleasure, just indulges all the time, he's going to be poor. The person that loves wine and oil, which is a sign of prosperity and of feasting, he's not going to be rich, because they eat everything up, there's no setting aside, there's no thinking ahead.

Remember Haman

“The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.” (verse 18) interesting, the wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, now Rashi, one of the famous rabbis in the Middle Ages, that most Jewish scholars revere, says this is a picture of Haman, remember Haman, who was hung on his own gallows in the Book of Esther. So, the wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

Stay Away From The Contentious & Angry Woman, Really Don't Marry Her

Now we're back to this brawling woman again in verse 19, she's butted her way into this chapter twice, she's tough to deal with here, and we're in the wilderness now, we started in the house, we moved to the roof, and now we've left the roof, we've left the city, we've left the irrigated fields, we are out in the middle of nowhere now, **“It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.” (verse 19)** the Hebrews says **“than with a woman of contentions and vexation,”** King James says **“contentious and an angry woman.”** It is better to dwell, and you understand, to the Jew the wilderness was not 'you're

going camping in the woods,' you see the wilderness in Judea, it is the desert, there's nothing out there, where Jesus went for 40 days and 40 nights. ***I would rather be out in the desert, burning up all day, freezing at night, with lizards and serpents as my friends than live in the house with her. We tried living on the roof, no, that didn't work, so I got a bus, I'm out in the wilderness now.*** I don't know if there's any particular insight here, men love peace and quiet sometimes. I'm made different than Cathy. Some say the average man speaks around 2,000 words a day, the average woman speaks between 4,000 and 5,000 words a day [see <http://www.HOWMARRIAGEWORKS.com/heshe.php>]. And sometimes I've come home, I've met my quota, I'm done, all 2,000 are gone, and Cathy's just warming up. And it will go on, so I understand that. And sometimes, and men and women are so different, I'm around people, that's what I do [and he's a pastor of a Mega-church, so he knows]. I've been to the women's retreat where they've got these big round tables, and you'll see 8 or 10 women sitting at a table, talking, all at the same time, and everybody knows what everybody else is saying in the conversation. You sit there at the men's retreat, at a table, one guy talks at a time, *'Man, did you see that game last week?'* *'Seven other heads go, this guy says something, everybody looks over there, 'Oh I didn't know, did you think that was going to happen?'* seven other guys go like this, and then this guy talks. It's just so different. If you raise boys and girls, and psychologists have affirmed this, that a little girl, by the time she's 3-years-old is saying sentences, she has a vocabulary of about 300 to 400 words by then. A little boy is still grunting. And I raised both. Joanna wasn't even two years old, and she would say *'Dad, do not antagonize me.'* The boys were just saying *'Mmm, umh-uh, mm-mm,'* just, you know. So different. So sometimes the man just needs peace and quiet. And if he's got somebody who wants to constantly fight, it's a tough situation. I think of Job, I think there were times he wanted peace and quiet. God said to Satan, *'Alright, you can test him, don't mess with him, don't touch him,'* so he kills all of his kids, burns down all of his houses, kills all of his crops, his herds, and leaves his wife alive. He knew what he was doing. And Job's wife is next to him saying *'Curse God and die, what's your problem.'* and I think Job just wanted some peace and quiet then, personally. Sometimes that's what a man does. And the woman's surprised at him when he's gone, *'Where is he?'* *'he's in the wilderness, he tried the roof, he's gone.'* [he chuckles] he is gone. I would say this then, to you young guys, there's a few here. You're looking for a wife? **Choose wisely.** Because a prudent wife, it tells us here, is from the LORD.

There are people that are joined together just physically, emotionally, they're not joined in the Lord, and I can't see a marriage making it in the world we're in today, because of all the options that are presented 24 and 7, I can't see a marriage making it unless you're joined in the Lord, the way this world is. Young guys, it has to be more than eye-candy, has to be more than that. Beauty's only skin deep, there may be a brawling, contentious woman under there, you'll know by the time you're on the housetop [laughter]. Look, the LORD was offended, heart-broken, when Israel constantly complained about him, **'You brought us out here to die, we were in Egypt, we had leeks, we had garlic, we had fish, we had fleshpots, you brought us out here to die.'** And it tells us, the LORD was offended, his heart was broken, because they constantly complained when he was trying to take care of them, so, there's something in that. You know, I, it's funny, Cathy, I want her approval, I can finish up here Sunday, everybody's saying *'That was a great study, that was a great study,'* and if Cath says *'You know, don't shake your hand with the change in your pocket,'* everything else is gone, everything everybody else said, gone. Women, you have a, ladies, moms, wives, grandmas, you have an incredible responsibility, the hand the rocks the cradle is what is said determines the history of mankind. And with this poor guy, you know, he's gone from a drip in inside, to *'I'm going out in the rain, I'd rather be out in the rain than with the drip inside, Chinese water torture,'* and he goes out on the rooftop, and evidently, she chases him out there, and then he finds the bus Gus, and he's out of town now, he's in the wilderness. And again, you study this wilderness, he is way out, he's way out, he's gone, he's in the wilderness. So, poor guy, pray for him, I don't know what his name is, **"It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman." (verse 19)** you could say **'on the housetop.'**

Riches Come With Wisdom, But The Foolish Spends It Up

"There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." (verse 20) God has told us about that earlier in the chapter, he blesses the wise, **"but a foolish man spendeth it up."** he just wastes everything. Sometimes, you know, isn't it sad, you see heavyweight champions of the world, or middleweight champions, or NVA players, or people that were investors on Wall Street that were worth hundreds of millions, and you see them broke, you see them in prison, you see people that had everything, **'spendeth it up here.'** There's no wisdom in that, it's foolishness. You think *'How could you have*

had that much, and end up with nothing?' Must have had a brawling wife.

Follow After Righteousness & Mercy, And You'll Get More Than That

“He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.” (verse 21) look, **“he that followeth after righteousness and mercy,”** it's not difficult, ok, it's not rocket science. It says here, somebody who follows one thing finds more than what they're looking for, is what it says. It says **“He that followeth after righteousness and mercy”** what's right, and what's merciful in this world, two good things really to long for. It says if you follow after those two things, it doesn't say you find righteousness and mercy, it says what you find is **life, righteousness and honour.** So if you seek those two things, it says you find more than you're looking for.

Wisdom Always Gets The Victory

“A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.” (verse 22) it should be **“the strength of his false confidence”** is the idea. Wisdom always has the victory. A wise man, and there were many through the centuries that understood the tactics of warfare and so forth, the wise man, understands how to get in, scales the city of the mighty. **'he casts down the strength of the false confidence of that person,'** so, the wise man in the Scripture is always the godly man, the false confidence is someone who is confident in their own fortress.

Keep Your Mouth Shut, You'll Stay Out Of Trouble

“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.” (verse 23) so it's not just keeping your mouth, it's keeping your mouth and your tongue. You might shut your mouth and go *'Mmmm, grrh'* Now I remember my one son, it still breaks my heart, one time in his life I called him an idiot, one time in his entire life. And he's bright, he's a gift from the Lord, God's got his hand all over him. And I wasn't even mad. We had bought a Christmas tree, and you have to slide it out the fat end of the trunk, and he was excited and opened up the other side and was trying to pull out the top and all the branches were, I said *'Don't do that, you idiot,'* I wasn't mad, but it just came out so fast. I can't bring that back. I would much rather be able to say I lived my

whole life and never said a single unkind word... **“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.” (verse 23)** when somebody understands the power there is in the tongue, to build up somebody, to tear somebody down, he says if you can keep your mouth and tongue, you keep your soul out of trouble. Amen to that? There are very few times we wish we had said something, most of the time we wish we hadn't said something. And once it's gone, it's gone. And trying to fix it is always a nightmare. Isn't it? *'What did you say?'* *'Ah, ah, I said, no I didn't say that, ah, that's not what I meant,'* my wife, I can't fool her, because she has a whole other layer of discernment, *'What did you say?'* *'I didn't say that,'* *'You **looked** like you were saying that.'* I'm done, *'I didn't look like that, no I didn't, I didn't look like that, I don't look like that now, I'll never look like that again,'* hmmm.

Somebody Whose Proud, Arrogant And Critical Ends Up Lonely

“Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.” (verse 24) somebody's whose proud and arrogant and critical, **“Proud and haughty scorner is name, who dealeth in proud wrath.”** this is a person, that's his name, not even Fred, Bruce, Sam, we don't know who he is, he doesn't have any friends, everybody avoids him, and that's the way it's going to be, if that's, if that's the way you are, proud and haughty, critic, that's who he is, he deals in proud wrath, everybody stays away from him.

The Slothful, Lazy Person

“The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.” (verse 25) the desire of the slothful, now we're back with the slothful, the lazy person again, it kills him, for his hands refuse to labour, here's the rest of it, **“He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.” (verse 26)** But the righteous, in contrast to that person **“giveth and spareth not.”** Not only, does he have from being diligent in working, he's able to give to others. So, the desire of the slothful person, you know, it kills him, his hands refuse to labour. It's interesting, because I'm kind of addicted, I like these Alaska shows, like the weird family, the last Alaskans, building in Alaska, then there's 'living below zero.' You look at all these guys living up there, they're out in the middle of nowhere in Alaska, and they're all like *'If you don't do this, now the winter's coming, you gotta shoot your moose, shoot your bear now, you gotta catch your fish, if you don't fish now,'* they're cutting holes in the ice with the chainsaw, *'now when they're*

running, if you don't get them now, in the winter, you're gonna run out of food,' and when I read this I think of that, the lazy person, he might not do anything, but when the winter comes, he's not gonna have a moose or a bear cut up in his freezer, he's gonna have problems. And then you see the people who are out there working, I was watching one family, brought back like this whole truckload of fish, now they're all frozen by the time they get them back, and then they strung them out in front of the house, and then all these other people come and trade them oranges and you know, all this other stuff, and bread and all this, and then they're saying *'there's leftovers,' 'no you just take that, I know you guys are...'* I know you're tired of listening to me, but in my mind I go to Alaska when I read these two verses here. **“The desire of the slothful killeth him;”** because he doesn't want to do anything, ***his hands refuse to labour.*** I just love to watch where these people are independent of everything we think we need to live, and they kind of figure out a way to live off the land, to live, and it says **“he coveteth greedily all day long: *but the righteous are different, they're able to give and spare not.*” (verse 26)**

The Worship Of The Wicked, How God Views It

“The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind.” (verse 27) so we're at worship now. So, the sacrifice of the wicked, we think of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phineas, you think of those in the Old Testament, living at the Temple, offering sacrifices while they were in sexual sin, taking advantage, and just have God strike them down dead, with the strange fire in Leviticus chapter 11. It says here, **“The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination:”** God's not interested in you bringing, this is not about you paying him off. He's not a harlot, you can't pay God off, just because you bring something, you're going to make him happy? Those are pagan gods, you bring bloody sacrifices and you appease the pagan gods. Well this God wanted you to come with a lamb, he wanted you to realize, for you and him to have fellowship, and that's what he wants, an innocent substitute had to die in your place. He wanted your heart to be broken, he wanted you to be touched with his love and his grace, and he wanted to fellowship with you. And in every sacrifice he wanted you to look forward to the coming of his Son Jesus Christ on the cross. It says in the Hebrew, you'll always read when they burnt the sacrifice, it was a sweet savour before him. The Hebrew says “a savour of rest.” As God smelled the smoke of that lamb and that sacrifice coming up, it was rest in his heart, because he knew one day the Lamb of God was coming to take away the sin of

the world. And all of that is turned into sacrilege when somebody comes and thinks he's a big meany in the sky, and they can pay him off with some kind of hamburger or something. He says **'that's an abomination, and how much more when that person comes, he brings it with a wicked mind.'**

Liars Are Inconsistent

Verse 28, "A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly." Liars are inconsistent is the idea, the person that genuinely hears, his speech, what he has to say is trustworthy, is constant. A false witness is going to perish. You read Deuteronomy chapter 19, verses 15 to 21, it will tell you there, in context of being a false witness, that at a certain point, that false witness is actually put to death because of what they're testifying, saying it's wrong, God will not put up with it at all. [Comment: Does this apply in the New Covenant? See Acts 5:1-11.] **"A false witness shall perish."** Deuteronomy 19, verses 15 to 21, **"but the man that heareth"** whose heart is right, **"speaketh constantly." i.e. 'his speech is consistent.'**

God Establishes The Way Of The Upright

"A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way." (verse 29) "A wicked man hardeneth his face" you know people like that? They're so miserable, that even when you try to say something nice to them, they go...you know those people?--a hard face. **"The wicked man hardeneth his face:"** I don't even want to see it, **"but as for the upright, he directeth his way."** "he" should be a capital "H" in your Bible, he, the LORD, **"but as for the upright, He directeth his way."** "directeth" is in the King James, the Hebrew says **"He, the LORD, will establish his way."** So the wicked man hardeneth his face, when you try to meet face to face with him, try to reason with him, he just looks demon possessed, just hardens his face. But it says **"but the upright, He, the LORD will establish his way."** That's wonderful for us to know. He doesn't always give us the two-year plan or the five-year plan or the ten-year plan, but he'll establish our way, if we please him, do what's right.

There Is No Wisdom, Understanding, Nor Counsel Against The LORD

"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD." (verse 30) I need to remember that, I need to

remember that. Because I see these people in the news, Christians being picked on, being run out of business, being sued, being threatened, I see them being persecuted and martyred in other countries. Sometimes I see what's going on here, and I think *'What are you going to do, wait till they destroy the businesses of a thousand Christian people because they don't agree on a particular issue, cut me a break.'* And then I need to remember *'Alright Lord, before I get ulcers, **"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against you LORD."*** You can ask Ahitophel about that. It says in the days of David, Ahitophel was such a wise counselor, it was like hearing the oracle of God. But, when Ahitophel, angry because David slept with his granddaughter, Bathsheba, turned against David, and determined to kill David, which was not his place, his counsel turned to foolishness, because it was against the LORD's will, and he ended up taking his own life. Baalam, remember the story of Baalam? Balak hires Baalam, the children of Israel passing through the territory of the Amorites and so forth, so Balak sends to Mesopotamia and hires this famous soothsayer, sorcerer Baalam to come and to curse the children of Israel for him. You know the deal, first his people come to him and say *'He's offering you all this money,'* he says, *'I can't do it, they're God's people, I can't do it,'* he said, *'the LORD won't let me do that.'* And then they come back and they raise the price, now Baalam's asking God, *'Can I go, can I go, can I go?'* And then he finally breaks down, so it really wasn't matter of principle, it was a matter of price. And of course, he's going, and he's going across the bridge, his donkey stops, won't go any further, now he's kicking the donkey, he's kicking the donkey, and it says finally the donkey looks up and says *'Yo! Haven't I been a good donkey all these years? Why are you beating me?'* and it says the LORD opens up Baalam's eyes and he sees the angel of the LORD there, with his sword drawn. And Baalam says to the donkey, *'You're lucky that I'm seeing this, or I would have killed you.'* I think *'What a stupid man, who would kill a talking donkey, you know how much that animal was worth, he could have opened up a show, are you kidding me.'* That just proves that the LORD takes away the wisdom of the people who try to counsel against him. So finally the angel moves and he goes forward, and Balak pays him to try to curse the children of Israel, it says the Spirit of the LORD comes on him, and he says ***'How lovely are thy tents of Jacob, there is no iniquity found in thee.'*** And he looks at the children of Israel, and says, ***'How I want to die the death of the righteous.'*** You think of Athaliah, she kills everybody of the royal throne of David, doesn't know there is a little baby of David's line still alive, and how she ends up just getting killed. It just says here, and history proves it, and I need to

remember it, **“There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.” (verse 30)** In fact, he moves on, he says, realize this **“The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.” (verse 31)** ask Pharaoh, you can go to *Exodus 15, 'I will sing unto the LORD, he has triumphed gloriously, the horse and rider thrown into the sea,'* Pharaoh gone, horses gone, everything gone [actually God left Pharaoh alive so he could go back to Egypt, embarrassed beyond measure. Historically, this Pharaoh lived, but his entire army was destroyed.] You know, **“There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel” or is there anything that stands against the LORD.’** Even if you have an army, greatest army in the world, filled with horses and so forth, the horse may be prepared against the day of battle, but it says **‘safety is in the LORD.’** And we sing the song, *‘The battle belongs to the Lord.’*

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