

PROVERBS: ALIGNING TO GOD'S FIXED MORAL ORDER

Part III: Displaying God's Fixed Moral Order

N. Viewing Specific Proverbs Of God's Fixed Moral Order

(Proverbs 23:1-35)

I. Introduction

- A. After motivating a young man to heed an observed fixed moral order, the literary genre of the Egyptian *sboyet* that the Book of Proverbs uses works to supply actual proverbs to reveal that order, cf. Bruce Waltke, "The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 136:543, p. 221-238.
- B. Solomon reveals that order to be **God's** order for his son to heed. We continue our study of that order:

II. Viewing Specific Proverbs Of God's Fixed Moral Order From Proverbs 23:1-35.

- A. A son must be taught to watch that he not get entrapped by his **own** lusts in the presence of wealthy people: many wealthy people try to control others for their own ends by dangling temptations of riches before the unsuspecting to control them through their lusts, Proverbs 23:1-3.
- B. As set into the context, verses 4-5 warn one's son that wealthy people who dangle riches as lures for the unsuspecting often do not intend to give those gifts as permanent ones, but to use them to manipulate others so they can hoard all the more riches into their coffers, Proverbs 23:4-5.
- C. According to the context again, verses 6-8 teach that a son must watch out for a man he **knows** is selfish that he not fall for his "positive" lures of motivation: selfish people always think of what's in a deal for themselves with no thought for others with whom they deal. **Hence, Proverbs 23:1-8 as a SECTION warns about the fallacies of letting another party control one's self through appealing to his lusts! Since Solomon says as much to his son, the world's lusts are a GREAT temptation for a YOUNG man, cf. 1 John 2:14b-17; John G. Mitchell, Fellowship: Three Letters From John, p. 65-70.**
- D. A son must learn not to try teaching God's truth to one who has evidenced a calloused attitude toward it before: all such teaching produces is scorn to the pain of the teacher, so it's not worth the effort, 23:9.
- E. A son must avoid any kind of wrong acquisition of property if he would escape divine discipline, 23:10f.
- F. A son must learn to view himself as a learner if he would excell in heeding God's fixed moral order, 12.
- G. A son should learn to overcome his natural hesitancy about practicing discipline on his child if he would parent in the best long-term interests of that child, Proverbs 23:13-14.
- H. A son should be told that keeping his heart aligned to God's moral order so that his lips speak what is upright will not only bless himself, but greatly please his father, Proverbs 23:15-16.
- I. A son must learn to quench his feeling envious of the initial blessings of sinners: his zeal for respecting Jahweh all his days will give him a blessed long-term end unlike the end of such sinners, Prov. 23:17-18.
- J. A son must be taught to heed God's fixed moral order by withdrawing fellowship with those who indulge their appetites: such folk may enjoy immediate gratifications, but their end is shame and poverty, 19-21.
- K. A son must heed his parents when young and respect them when they are old to adhere to God's order, 22.
- L. A son must learn to value truth, wisdom, discipline and understanding at all costs to excel in life, 23:23.
- M. A son must learn that being upright will not only bless himself, but his parents as well, 23:24-25.
- N. A son must learn that he must avoid entanglements with an immoral person if he would avoid an early death and an infamous end, 23:26-28.
- O. A son must be told that though alcoholic beverages initially are appealing to one's lusts (23:31), they will long-term produce emotional (woe and sorrow), social (strife and complaints) and their resulting physical problems (bruises and bloodshot eyes). Regarding physical problems, alcoholism long-term produces alcohol poisoning which is as destructive long-term as being bitten by a serpent (23:32). Hence, one is just best not delighting in alcoholic beverages, Proverbs 23:29-35.

Lesson: From these proverbs, we learn that a youth is much better off learning from his parents that heeding God's ways is to his own distinct advantage in the adult world.

Application: (1) We parents must have the courage under God's leading to inform our maturing sons and daughters of the **VALUE** of heeding God's fixed moral order. (2) As maturing children or as adults ourselves, we can apply these truths to our own lives for our eventual blessings.