

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Proverbs: Motivating Teens And Adults To Align With God's Fixed Moral Order

Part III: Solomon's Proverbs Reflecting God's Fixed Moral Order For Blessing, Proverbs 10:1-22:16

B. Proverbs With Directions On Righteous Living, Proverbs 16:1-22:16

5. Studying Proverbs 17:4-12

I. Introduction

- A. Where Proverbs 10:1-15:33 contrasts wise, upright lives with foolish, wicked ones, Proverbs 16:1-22:16 focuses mainly on the upright life, guiding us on how to live righteously in many realms of experience.
- B. We thus view each proverb in this section to draw out its deeper insight that Proverbs 1:5-6 implies exists:

II. Studying Proverbs 17:4-12.

- A. Proverbs 17:4 teaches he who acts wickedly (*ra'a'*, B. D. B., A Hebrew-English Lexicon of the O. T., p. 949; Hiphil = causative) gives attention (*qashab*, Ibid., p. 904) to lips of false vanity (*aven*, Ibid., p. 19-20; Robert B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the O. T., 1973, p. 83); a liar (*sheqer*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1055) gives ear (*azan*, Ibid., p. 24; Hiphil ptc. = causative) to a tongue [words] of destruction (*havah*, Ibid., p. 217). We need to be selective of the parties we heed, for heeding the words those with false vanity leads us to act wickedly, and heeding destructive, malicious words leads us to lie!
- B. Proverbs 17:5 asserts he who mocks (*la'ag*, Ibid., p. 541) the poor (*rush*, Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1175; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 930) taunts, reproaches (*harap*, Ibid., p. 357) his Maker; he who causes to exult (*sameha*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 970; Piel = intensive) over distress, calamity (*ed*, Ibid., p. 15) will not be exempt from punishment (*naqah*, Ibid., p. 667; Niphal = passive). We must not gloat over those who suffer financial hardship or distress and calamity, for God created them, and calls us to honor all people by virtue of the fact that they, both men and women, bear His image, 1 Peter 1:17; Gen. 1:27.
- C. Proverbs 17:6 claims a crown of honor (*atarah*, Ibid., p. 742) to the elderly is [one's] children's children, and the glory (*tip'arah*, Ibid., p. 802) of children is their parents. The middle generation, the parents of the small children who themselves have parents, play a very important role in the extended family structure as they tie the preceding and ensuring generations together. Those in this role should take their role seriously, and the elderly and the children who glory in their grandchildren or parents respectively should be grateful to God for blessing them with these family members.
- D. Proverbs 17:7 teaches it is not comely, suitable (*na'veh*, Ibid., p. 610) for an impious, senseless fool (*nabal*, Ibid., p. 614-615) [to have] lips of excess [arrogant] (*yeter*, Ibid., p. 451-452), how much less (*ap ki*, Ibid., p. 64-65) [is] lying speech to a noble (*nadib*, Ibid., p. 622). The higher we climb in the social ranks or positions of oversight, the greater our need to tell the precise truth in order to avoid shame.
- E. Proverbs 17:8 asserts a precious stone, a charm (*eben-hen*, Ibid., p. 336) is the bribe in the eyes of one who owns, possesses it (*ba'al*, Ibid., p. 127); wherever he turns (*panah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 815), he succeeds (*sakal*, Ibid., p. 968; Hiphil = causative). One who influences others by gifts and bribes assumes he is more effective than he really is, so we should not trust much in his achievements.
- F. Proverbs 17:9 claims he who covers over [forgives] a rebellion, transgression (*pesha'*, Ibid., p. 833) seeks, aims to practice (*baqash*, Ibid., p. 134-135) love; but he who repeats the matter separates intimate friends. Keeping confidence especially on matters of serious sin is important to promote love instead of hate.
- G. Proverbs 17:10 teaches a rebuke (*ge'arah*, Ibid., p. 172) goes beneath, into (*tahat*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1065-1066) a man of understanding than a hundred lashes into one with a dull, closed mind (*kesil*, Ibid., Kittel; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 908). One's level of wisdom is directly proportional to his responsiveness to correction, a rule by which we can measure ourselves and others we encounter.
- H. Proverbs 17:11 asserts the seeking, aim of practice (*baqash*, Ibid., p. 134-135) of the wicked is only on rebellion (*meri*, Ibid., p. 598); a cruel (*akezari*, Ibid., p. 470) messenger [royal official] will be sent against him. We must avoid rebelling against proper authority if we would avoid its dire punishment.
- I. Proverbs 17:12 claims it is better to meet a she bear robbed, bereaved (*shakal*, Ibid., p. 1013) of her cubs than a dull, closed minded man (*kesil*, see Pr. 17:10 above) in his folly. Dull, closed minded people in their follies are so destructive, one is better to avoid them than even to avoid an infuriated mother bear!

Lesson Application: May we align with God's fixed moral order in each of these realms for blessing.