

## Proverbs 20 part 2

2 The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul. *\*Using an image from a previous proverb (Proverbs 19:12), this proverb reminds us that those in power and leadership have potential for a great and fearful exercise of wrath. Since in many ways the king held the power of life and death over his subjects, to provoke the king to anger was to endanger one's own life. Knowing this principle should make us more reverent to the King of Kings, and happy that our King of Kings is rich in mercy and slow to anger (Psalm 103:8, 145:8).*

3 It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling. *\*Many men feel that honor drives them to dispute and fight with others. This proverb reminds us that it takes a man of honor to stop the fight, but any fool can start the quarrel and continue it.*

4 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing. *\*The lazy man always finds some excuse not to do his work. It is always too early or too late in the season to begin. It is always winter, and the ground is too hard for plowing. Any excuse will work when the heart is set on not working. "Winter designates the Palestinian raining season from mid-October to April.... Since no sowing could have been done without plowing, the farmer waited for the first autumn rains to soften the ground. The sluggard, however, lacks the industry to plow from winter on, the only time that matters." (Waltke)*

5 Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

*\*"The metaphor is of a well whose waters are far beneath the surface of the ground so that*

*one must use a bucket with a long rope to draw water to the surface. Thus a person's real motives are 'deep' in that they are difficult to extract; one must be wary of the pretenses of others." (Garrett) So since the intent of a person can be hidden, in deep waters, a wise man or woman with understanding can ask the right questions research the right information to draw out the true intent. Just like drawing water from a deep well, it takes the right length of rope.*

6 Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? *\*It is true that most everyone feels they are good in their own eyes. True faithfulness in a man is different than self-advertised goodness. A faithful man doesn't want or need to proclaim his own goodness. The quiet satisfaction of faithfulness to God and man is enough.*

7 The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him. *\*The greatest gift a parent can give to a child is for that parent to be a righteous, upright person who walks in his integrity. That one will create a home and atmosphere that will be a blessing to the child.*

8 A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

*\*In the ancient world kings did not only govern, they were also the highest court and judge in their kingdom. The presence alone of a king in judgment over his realm is enough to scatter all evil. When a people know that evil will be punished by godly and just leadership, it makes evil scatter.*

9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

*\*"No man. But thousands can testify that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed them from*

*all unrighteousness. And he is pure from his sin, who is justified freely through the redemption that is in Jesus." (Clarke)*

10 Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord.

*\*God wants business and trading to be done fairly and justly. To have diverse weights and measures means that you will cheat both the buyer and the seller. God wants our weights and measures to be proper and consistent.*

11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right. *\*In the realm of religion and faith, it is easy for us to think of ourselves only by what we believe, instead of also by what we do. We are more than what we do, but even a child is known by his deeds. We shouldn't deny that others see and understand us by the measure of our deeds.*

12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.

13 Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread. *\*It takes some initiative and energy to open your eyes, to get out of bed and get to work. But the reward is worth it; you will avoid poverty and you will be satisfied with bread. In God's economic system, hard work is rewarded.*

14 It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth. *\*This is what the buyer cries out. In bargaining, the buyer always wants to speak less of what he wants to buy, hoping to get it cheaper from the seller.*

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

16 Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

*\*Exodus 22:26-27 says an Israelite could take someone's outer garment as a deposit or a guarantee for a loan as long as they returned it each evening, so it could be used as a night covering or blanket. Solomon's advice here is that if you loan to someone, make sure you get the deposit or guarantee.*

*\*17 Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel. "Such a bitter-sweet was Adam's apple, Esau's mess, the Israelites' quails, Jonathan's honey, the Amalekites' cakes after the sack of Ziklag, [1 Samuel 30:16] Adonijah's dainties, [1 Kings 1:9] which ended in horror; ever after the meal is ended, comes the reckoning." (Trapp)*

*18 Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.*

*19 He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips. \*The man or woman who is a talebearer or gossip loves to reveal things that should more properly be concealed. There are certainly some things that should be revealed (Ephesians 5:11), but many things should be concealed out of love (1 Peter 4:8). Wisdom will know which approach is appropriate in each situation.*

*20 Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.*

*\*To curse one's parents is to do the opposite of this command. God promised to bless those who keep the command to honor father and mother (Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6:2). There is a corresponding principle that those who disobey and curse their father or mother will face the judgment of God.*

*21 An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.*

*\*When we get too much too soon, it often isn't helpful for us. So, a large inheritance that comes hastily and towards the beginning of our life is a dangerous blessing.*

*22 Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.*

*\*Wisdom teaches us to rely on God and trust in Him to payback evil.*

*23 Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good.*

*24 Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?*

*\*This proverb teaches us humility in regard to our life choices and path. We should not think or act as if it were all in our control or all according to our planned steps.*

*25 It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.*

*\*This has in mind the practice of dedicating things to God for His use alone. When it comes to promises of dedication to God, we should avoid the snare of emotional, rash promises. Solomon dealt with this in Ecclesiastes 5:4-7.*

*These passages show us that a commonly overlooked and unappreciated sin among God's people is the sin of broken vows – promising things to God and failing to live up to the vow. Those who honor God:*

- Will not be quick to make vows to God.*
- Will be serious about fulfilling vows made.*
- Will regard broken vows as sins to be confessed and to be repented of.*

*26 A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them. \*A wise earthly ruler not only knows how to carefully examine the wicked, but then also to bring whatever punishment is appropriate, to use what is wise and necessary to separate the evil from the*

*good (as a threshing wheel separates the chaff from the wheat grain).*

*27 The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*

*28 Mercy and truth preserve the king; and his throne is upholden by mercy. \*This is hesed, the great covenant love God shows to His people and they should show to others. Men often assume that thrones are upheld by armies and raw power, but God has a better way to establish and uphold a king and his kingdom.*

*29 The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head.*

*\*God has so designed human development that young men excel in physical strength, and this is a glory to them. What the old men lack in physical strength, they should make up for in wisdom that is appropriate for those who have a gray head.*

*30 The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly. \*Pain is a burden, but it can bring a benefit. If we allow the unpleasant fire of pain to refine and cleanse away evil, then our sorrow and pain were not wasted. Something was gained. Solomon probably used stripes here in a symbolic sense for the chastening that comes in life. If we receive such discipline with wisdom, it will purify us in the inner depths of the heart. This is not parental discipline but beatings administered by the king's officers as punishment for crime.*