

Woodland Baptist Church
 Wednesday, December 3, 2014
 Seeking Wisdom Together - Proverbs 28-29

1) READ PROVERBS 28

- a) **A Life of Fear - 1** The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.
- i) Those that commit evil will always be worried about when the retaliation is coming, always concerned about who is going to show up at their door, however, the righteous has a clear conscience, so they are bold as a lion.
- b) **Distortions Caused by Evil - 2** When a land transgresses, it has many rulers, but with a man of understanding and knowledge, its stability will long continue.
- i) When a country falls into immorality and wickedness, straying from God, there will be instability in leadership (assassinations, deaths, civil unrest... etc.), but when a “man with understanding and knowledge,” Godly leader is in control, there will be stability and consistency.
- c) **Oppression, Keeping in the Right Way and the Law**
- i) 3 A poor man who oppresses the poor is a beating rain that leaves no food. 4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law strive against them. 5 Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it completely. 6 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways. 7 The one who keeps the law is a son with understanding, but a companion of gluttons shames his father. 8 Whoever multiplies his wealth by interest and profit gathers it for him who is generous to the poor. 9 If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination. 10 Whoever misleads the upright into an evil way will fall into his own pit, but the blameless will have a goodly inheritance. 11 A rich man is wise in his own eyes, but a poor man who has understanding will find him out.
- (1) **Verse 8** - This saying requires explanation because charging interest on a loan to a fellow Israelite was forbidden (Exo 22:25; Lev 25:36; Deut 23:19) but was evidently practiced. According to Whybray, the point of the saying is that while a moneylender may extort money from the poor, the

lender's heir may be a generous person who "pays it back" through gifts to the poor.

- (2) **Verse 9** - One who deliberately refuses to listen to torah (instruction) will have no access to God through prayer. "Even his prayer is an abomination." This person refuses to abandon his favorite sin even while engaging in worship to the God whose law he breaks. Such a person's prayer lacks the ingredients of sincerity, unselfishness, submissiveness and faith. If man is deaf to God's instruction, God will be deaf to man's supplication (28:9).

2) Various Proverbs

- a) **Good/Bad Government** - 12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory, but when the wicked rise, people hide themselves.
- i) Why do they hide when the wicked rise?
- b) **Turning from Sin** - 13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. 14 Blessed is the one who fears the Lord always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.
- i) **Hebrews 3:12-13** - 12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
- c) **Tyranny** - 15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people. 16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor, but he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.
- i) Examples of Tyranny? Hitler, Stalin
- d) **Guilt and Innocence** - 17 If one is burdened with the blood of another, he will be a fugitive until death; let no one help him. 18 Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall.
- e) **Prosperity by Fair/Foul Means** - 19 Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty. 20 A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished. 21 To show partiality is not good, but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong. 22 A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that

poverty will come upon him. 23 Whoever rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with his tongue. 24 Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, "That is no transgression," is a companion to a man who destroys. 25 A greedy man stirs up strife, but the one who trusts in the Lord will be enriched. 26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered. 27 Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.

i) Verse 21 -

f) **Good/Bad Government** - 28 When the wicked rise, people hide themselves, but when they perish, the righteous increase. (v. 12)

3) Proverbs 29

a) **Good/Bad Government** - He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing. 2 When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan.

b) **Squandering Wealth and a Nation** - 3 He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth. 4 By justice a king builds up the land, but he who exacts gifts tears it down.

c) **Beware of the Traps** - 5 A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. 6 An evil man is ensnared in his transgression, but a righteous man sings and rejoices.

i) **Verse 5** - "A person who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his steps." In Hebrew the word "flatter" (machaliq) means literally "to make smooth," i.e., his words so as to deceive. Who falls into the net, the flatterer, or the one being flattered? Probably the "net" is the punishment upon the deceiver (cf. 26:27; 28:10). God punishes those who attempt to get ahead by using hypocritical deception (29:5).

d) **Concern for Justice** - 7 A righteous man knows the rights of the poor; a wicked man does not understand such knowledge.

e) **Order in the Court and Society** - 8 Scoffers set a city aflame, but the wise turn away wrath. 9 If a wise man has an argument with a fool, the fool only rages and laughs, and there is no quiet. 10 Bloodthirsty men hate one who is blameless and seek the life of the upright. 11 A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

i) **Verse 9** - A typical "foolish" response, to some disagreement ("controversy") that arises between two people, is that the fool loses his temper ("rages") or

tries to laugh off the disagreement, rather than dealing with the matter seriously, calmly, and with consideration for the other person. The foolish response does not solve the problem. The Pharaoh of the Exodus did not take Moses and Aaron seriously at first, so their disagreement escalated (Exod. 7).

(1) Creation vs. Evolution debates often descend into this.

- f) **The Throne Secured by Righteousness** - 12 If a ruler listens to falsehood, all his officials will be wicked. 13 The poor man and the oppressor meet together; the Lord gives light to the eyes of both. 14 If a king faithfully judges the poor, his throne will be established forever.
- i) **Verse 12** - Fair judgment is a primary responsibility of government. In order to render fair judgment the ruler must be able to distinguish between true and false evidence or reports. "If a ruler listens to falsehood," i.e., false accusations, "all his servants are wicked." They will be tempted to take advantage of the ruler's weakness and bring lying charges against others. A ruler sets the moral tone for his servants. The proverb alludes to the fact that some rulers do not care to hear the truth. The result is that his servants flatter and lie to him. His court is charged with unreality and deceit (29:12).
- ii) **Verse 13** - "The poor man" represents the oppressed, and "the oppressor" represents the rich. They are opposites in this regard. But both owe God their physical eyesight, and really all the common blessings He bestows on everyone (cf. 22:2). Giving "light to [their] eyes" probably means giving them life (cf. Job 33:30; Ps. 13:3).⁵⁸⁹ Similarly, the Lord "sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matt. 5:45). The grace of God is the great leveler of humanity. Therefore one should not "think more highly of himself than he ought to think" (Rom. 12:3). The Pharisee who prayed "to himself" thought more highly of himself than did the publican who humbly prayed: "God, be merciful to me, the sinner" (Luke 18:11, 13).
- g) **Discipline at Home and in the Nation** - 15 The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. 16 When the wicked increase, transgression increases, but the righteous will look upon their downfall. 17 Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart. 18 Where there is **no prophetic vision** the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.
- i) **Verse 17** - when they are disciplined and trained correctly they really do give you rest, when they aren't, they can bring much more labor.

h) Controlling the Servant - 19 By mere words a servant is not disciplined, for though he understands, he will not respond. 20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him. 21 Whoever pampers his servant from childhood will in the end find him his heir. 22 A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.

i) **Verse 21** - The verb “pampers” (*panak*) refers the spoiling of a person by overindulgence and luxury. Such treatment is particularly unsuitable for a bond-servant, for it tends to make him forget his dependent position. A pampered slave who reaches adulthood will claim the privileges of a son, perhaps ousting the legitimate children from their inheritance (29:21).

i) **The First Shall be Last** - 23 One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.

j) **A Poor Choice for a Friend** - 24 The partner of a thief hates his own life; he hears the curse, but discloses nothing.

i) **Verse 24** - “The one who is a partner of a thief hates his own soul.” Such a person is his own worst enemy since he contributes to his own undoing. That pitiful person is further described as “one who is put under oath and declares nothing.” The accessory may not have actually committed the theft, but he has knowledge of it and is in a position to give evidence. He refuses to testify in the case lest he implicate himself. Thus does he bring upon himself the curse which is pronounced upon all those who withhold evidence (29:24).

k) **Seek Deliverance from God** - 25 The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe. 26 Many seek the face of a ruler, but it is from the Lord that a man gets justice.

l) **The Sum of it All** - 27 An unjust man is an abomination to the righteous, but one whose way is straight is an abomination to the wicked.