

Woodland Baptist Church
 Wednesday, February 19, 2014
 Seeking Wisdom Together - Proverbs 10:1-16
 Wisdom/Foolishness

1) Introduction

2) READ PROVERBS 10:1-16

a) 1 The proverbs of Solomon.

b) **A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.**

- i) A wise son is contrasted here with “a foolish son,” in 13:1 with a mocker, and in 15:20 with a foolish man. A son who has become wise, by heeding his parents’ teachings (5:1–2), brings joy to his father, a fact stated several times in Proverbs (15:20; 23:15, 24; 27:11; 29:3). A foolish (kesil; see comments on 1:7) son, on the other hand, grieves his mother. This does not mean that a foolish son does not grieve his father, as is clearly stated in 17:21, 25; 19:13. Nor does 10:1 mean that a mother’s heart is not gladdened by a son’s wisdom. The use of “father” in one line and “mother” in the other is typical of proverbial literature. Both parents experience either the joy or the grief, just as both are involved in teaching (1:8; 4:3–4; 6:20).¹

c) **2 Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death.**

- i) To say that treasures are of no value seems like a startling, almost contradictory statement until one remembers that the treasures are ill-gotten (cf. 1:19; 28:16; Micah 6:10), gained unjustly (cf. Prov. 16:8) by theft or deceit. An example of this is addressed in 1:11–14, 18–19. Such treasures are no good because they dwindle away (13:11; 21:6) and do not forestall death (11:4). Of course money acquired dishonestly may provide some pleasure and be valuable for a while but in the long run it does not satisfy.²
- ii) Righteousness on the other hand does the exact opposite. Obviously, it may cause problems, as we stand for truth, but there is no question that God’s definition of righteousness delivers from death.

¹ The Bible Knowledge Handbook - Dallas Theological Seminary

² Ibid.

(1) Examples? Crooked business deals?

d) 3 The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked. 4 A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. 5 He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.

i) Verses 3–5 discuss diligence and sloth.

- (1) Satisfaction of one's appetite is related to the Lord (v. 3); poverty and wealth result from laziness and diligence, respectively (v. 4); industry characterizes a wise son and sleep characterizes a shameful son (v. 5).
- (2) The righteous is literally, "the soul of the righteous." Since "soul" emphasizes the whole person, God has said here that He meets all one's needs, including the needs of his body for food (cf. Ps. 37:19, 25).
- (3) The craving of the wicked refers to their evil desires to bring about destruction and disaster. God can keep them from carrying out such plans.

ii) Like many verses in Proverbs, this verse is a generalization. It is usually true that the godly do not starve and that the wicked do not get all they desire.³

(1) If a person refuses to work he will be poor (a word used often in Prov.), whereas a hard worker eventually is rewarded. (Besides laziness other reasons for poverty are mentioned in Prov. See comments on 14:23.)

(i) It's general truth about the value of hard work should not be taken as a promise that God is constrained to fulfill but as a description of what generally happens in life.⁴

(b) One example of diligence and therefore of wisdom (wise is from the verb *śākal* meaning "to be prudent or to have sound judgment"; cf. 1:3; 16:20) is harvesting in the summer while the crops are ripe. An example of laziness is a son who sleeps rather than works during harvest (in contrast with the ants, 6:6–11). In fact such a person brings shame (the meaning of disgraceful), probably to his parents.

³ Bible knowledge Commentary, DTS

⁴ Koptak, 289

(c) The idea of someone sleeping during this time is not only a symbol of laziness but also of disregard for the concerns of family and village.⁵

e) 6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

- (1) In this section, proverbs about speaking and listening are intertwined with proverbs that touch on the matters of wealth, income, and rewards.⁶
- ii) Whereas a righteous person receives blessings, it is different with the wicked. Violence overwhelms his mouth. The same statement is made in verse 11. Since the word for “overwhelms” can be translated “covers” (as it is in v. 12), the idea is either that his mouth conceals or deceptively hides violence (niv marg.), or that violence characterizes what a person says. As Jesus stated, “The evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart” (Luke 6:45).⁷

f) 7 The memory of the righteous is a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot.

- i) Speaking of blessings and the righteous (v. 6), even thinking about righteous people of the past can be a source of spiritual blessing. By contrast most people want to forget the wicked. Like their character, even their names are corrupt, rotting like a corpse.⁸

- (1) When you think of Winston Churchill what are your thoughts?
 (2) When you think of Adolf Hitler what are you thoughts?
 (3) What about your thoughts about Noah?
 (4) What about Judas Isacriot?
 (5) What about Jerry Sandusky?

g) 8 The wise of heart will receive commandments, but a babbling fool will come to ruin. 9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.

⁵ Koptac, 289

⁶ Koptac, 290

⁷ BNC, DTS

⁸ Ibid

- i) A wise person is teachable, willing to become wiser (cf. 1:5; 9:9).
- ii) But a fool (‘ěwîl, a coarse, hardened fool; see comments on 1:7; cf. 10:21) does not quit chattering long enough to learn anything.

(1) In Proverbs needless talking is often associated with folly. Such a person comes to ruin, a phrase repeated only two verses later (v. 10; cf. 13:3). “Ruin” is mentioned five times in chapter 10 (vv. 8, 10, 14–15, 29). An honest person (v. 9) is secure (cf. a similar thought in 3:23; 18:10; 28:18) in his walk (his conduct) but a person whose paths are crooked (lit., “twisted”), whose conduct is wicked, in contrast with a person of integrity, eventually will be discovered for what he truly is.⁹

h) 10 Whoever winks the eye causes trouble, and a babbling fool will come to ruin. 11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence. 12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.

- i) Verses 10–12 deal with interpersonal relations.

(1) Winking maliciously with one’s cohorts suggests sinful intentions (cf. 6:13; 16:30; Ps. 35:19). No wonder this leads to grief on the part of the victims of their evil plans, or the victim’s loved ones. Yet a talkative fool will himself eventually get into trouble (cf. the same line in Prov. 10:8b).

- ii) 10:11. The words of a righteous (and wise) person are like a fountain of life (cf. 13:14; 14:27; 16:22; also note 18:4). His words of wisdom are free-flowing and as refreshing as a cool spring to a weary desert traveler. On the second part of 10:11; see comments on verse 6.
- iii) 10:12. Hatred results in dissension (cf. 6:14) because people who despise each other can hardly work or live together in peace.

(1) Love contributes toward peace because it covers or forgives the faults of others (cf. 17:9). It does not dwell on those faults (cf. 1 Cor. 13:5; James 5:20; 1 Peter 4:8). “Covers” is kāsâh, the same word rendered “overwhelms” in Proverbs 10:6, 11. A wicked one’s words are covered over with violence, but a righteous person covers up wrongs by forgiving the wrongdoers.

⁹ Ibid

i) 13 On the lips of him who has understanding, wisdom is found, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks sense. 14 The wise lay up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool brings ruin near.

i) These statements contrast the wise and the fool.

(1) While the discerning person is characterized by his wise statements, one lacking judgment (cf. v. 21; 6:32; 7:7; 9:4, 16; 11:12; 12:11; 15:21; 17:18; 24:30; 28:16) experiences trouble. He may be punished by a rod on the back (cf. 14:3; 26:3).

(2) A wise person stores up knowledge; he holds it in for the right occasion without spouting off his knowledge. What a fool says, however, causes him trouble and eventually ruin because he foolishly speaks the wrong things and gets himself in trouble (cf. 10:19).¹⁰ [Peter?]

ii) The wise in their knowledge know when to share it and when it is best to keep it in reserve; fools, lacking such discretion and self control, speak in ways that eventually will come back to harm them.¹¹

j) 15 A rich man's wealth is his strong city; the poverty of the poor is their ruin. 16 The wage of the righteous leads to life, the gain of the wicked to sin.

i) These verses are together because they both discuss wealth. The first line of verse 15 is repeated in 18:11. Though wealth should not be placed above honor (28:20) and should not be trusted in (11:4; 23:5), it can provide a hedge against some disasters.

(1) Poverty is a continually suppressive problem to the poor (cf. 14:20; 18:23; 19:7; 22:7). The Hebrew word here for poor is *dal*, "feeble, weak, helpless," translated "poor" or "helpless" in 19:4, 17; 21:13; 22:16; 28:3, 8, 11, 15; 29:7, 14. Proverbs also uses several other words for "poor" and "poverty."

ii) Wages (10:16) refers not to money but to the natural result or "return" for righteous living. That result is a meaningful life (cf. 3:18, 21–22; 4:4; 7:2a). But the wicked reap trouble (Gal. 6:7).

¹⁰ BNC, DTS

¹¹ Koptak, 293