

LESSONS FROM SOLOMON'S PROVERBS

BIBLE TEXT : Proverbs 27:1-27; 28:1-28; 29:1-27.

LESSON 280 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13)

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Proverbs 27:1-27 ¹ Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

² Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

³ A stone *is* heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

⁴ Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand before envy?

⁵ Open rebuke *is* better than secret love.

⁶ Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

⁷ The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

⁸ As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

⁹ Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

¹⁰ Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* better *is* a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off.

¹¹ My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

¹² A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

¹³ Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

¹⁴ He that blesseth his friend with

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Tomorrow

In these chapters of the Proverbs, Solomon has written about many different subjects. The Lord inspired Solomon to write them for the good and benefit of all people. Those who are not saved can realize, by reading the Proverbs, the advantages there are in having one's peace made with God and in living a righteous life. Those who are saved can take heed to the warnings that are given in the Proverbs.

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow." Solomon warns us that a person never knows what will happen in a day. Often people plan far into the future. They make their plans without giving the Lord a thought.

Bigger Barns

In the Bible, there is the example of a rich man who made his boast of the days to come. The rich man prospered. His barns could not hold all his crops. He decided to tear down the barns to build bigger ones. In those bigger barns he planned to store all his fruit and grain. Then, he thought, he would retire, because he would have enough for many years. He would say to himself, "Soul, . . . take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Luke 12:19). He had planned far into the future, with no thought of God and without praying. But he did not know what the next day would bring for him, to say nothing of many days.

God said to the rich man, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" So it is with those who are thinking of themselves, and are not thinking of God. They may be rich in themselves but they are poor toward God. Earthly treasures last such a short time! How much better to lay up treasures in Heaven by working for the Lord and living for Him! (**Matthew 6:19-20** ¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:).

If the Lord Wills

Solomon's words did not forbid one to prepare for tomorrow. It is the self-confidence, and the lack of submitting to God, that are wrong and that will bring sorrow and disaster. A Christian depends upon God, and refers to the future with the words "if God permits" it to come, or "if Jesus tarries" until that time, "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:15).

No Convenient Time

The Bible tells about another man whose life should be a warning to those who are not saved. At the time when Paul the

a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

¹⁵ A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

¹⁶ Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which bewrayeth itself.*

¹⁷ Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

¹⁸ Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

¹⁹ As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man.

²⁰ Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

²¹ As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise.

²² Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

²³ Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* look well to thy herds.

²⁴ For riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* to every generation?

²⁵ The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

²⁶ The lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field.

²⁷ And *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and *for* the maintenance for thy maidens.

Proverbs 28:1-28 ¹ The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

² For the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: but

Apostle was arrested and imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, Felix the governor "sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ." When Paul talked to him about "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," Felix trembled and was convicted of his sins. He sent Paul away saying, "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25). He boasted in himself that there would be a more convenient time to pray; but we do not read that Felix was ever saved. If you are unsaved, do not put off your salvation. It is not for us to know the times and seasons (**Acts 1:7** ⁷ **And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**). How, then, can one boast of his days? Seek God for salvation, depend upon God, obey Him, and you will be ready for any event which may come.

Self-Praise

"Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth." In this proverb Solomon did not give the reason for his statement, nor did he tell the consequences, as he did in many of his sayings. To praise oneself or to exalt oneself, does not help anybody. It is a hindrance. To praise oneself is to seek one's own destruction (**Proverbs 17:19** ¹⁹ **He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction**). People do not like to listen to a person praise himself. They usually think that he is conceited. When he has finished talking, others have a worse opinion of him rather than thinking more highly of him as he had hoped.

In the teachings of Jesus we are warned that "whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12). What could be the reason for self-praise if it were not to lift oneself in the sight of others? If what one does is for the praise of men, then that is his reward (**Matthew 6:1-2** ¹ **Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.** ² **Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward**).

A Pharisee

In the Bible we read about a man who praised himself. He was the Pharisee who went to the Temple to pray (**Luke 18:10-14** ¹⁰ **Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.** ¹¹ **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.** ¹² **I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.** ¹³ **And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.** ¹⁴ **I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.**). Instead of praying to God, he prayed "with himself." He told of all the good things he did, as if God did not know it and did not consider that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). The Pharisee did not mention God's goodness and righteousness, because he did not have those things in his life. The Pharisee praised his own good deeds rather than "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:11), and rather than "having on

by a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.

³ A poor man that oppresseth the poor *is like* a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.

⁴ They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.

⁵ Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

⁶ Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

⁷ Whoso keepeth the law *is* a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.

⁸ He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

⁹ He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

¹⁰ Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

¹¹ The rich man *is* wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

¹² When righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.

¹³ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

¹⁴ Happy *is* the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

¹⁵ As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; *so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

¹⁶ The prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: *but* he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his*

the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephesians 6:14) which is a part of the spiritual armour.

A Full Soul

The Pharisee thought he was so good that he did not need to ask God for anything. He did not receive anything from God and went away without being justified. Thus, he was an example of another of Solomon's proverbs. "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb." Which means that one who does not feel his need does not enjoy even the best. This is often the case spiritually when a person goes to church as the Pharisee did. When one thinks that he has need of nothing, even the choicest promises do not appeal to him and he goes away "empty" (Luke 1:53). The person who goes to church spiritually hungry – feeling that he wants to know more about God and the Bible – enjoys all parts of the meeting. The sermon, songs, and testimonies may show him his faults, but he goes away satisfied because he prays and takes heed to the things he has heard.

Friends

Perhaps you have discovered that in order to have friends you must be friendly (**Proverbs 18:24** ²⁴ **A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother**). Most people have some friends. There are others who thought they had friends but they found that they were just people they knew. It is generally accepted that he who has a kind regard for another is a friend. Solomon makes mention of a "friend" many times in his writings. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Proverbs there are five verses that discuss friends. Solomon tells us to value true friendship. Old friends have proved themselves to be true; they know one's faults, and have a concern for one's welfare. They will be helpful by pointing out one's shortcomings as well as one's good things that the faults might be overcome.

A Good or Bad Influence

Solomon said that we have an influence on our friends, "A man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." What kind of influence do you have on your friends? Do you flatter them so that they might have reason to suspect that you only want a favour? Solomon said that such loud praises of a friend would "be counted a curse to him" and "a man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet." After your friends have talked to you, do they go away feeling worse for having talked to you? or do they go away feeling cheered and encouraged in serving the Lord?

A Friend of Jesus

Solomon said that "a friend loveth at all times" (Proverbs 17:17). That means that a friend loves in times of need and times of trouble as well as in times of advancement and praise. Those words of Solomon are a good test for a friend. Are you a friend to others?

Solomon said that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). Who could be such a friend? No other person than Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the time of need, He proved Himself to be a Friend to Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus (**John 11:5** ⁵ **Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus**). Jesus called the Apostles His friends (**John 15:15** ¹⁵ **Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you**

days.

¹⁷ A man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

¹⁸ Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but *he that is* perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.

¹⁹ He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

²⁰ A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

²¹ To have respect of persons *is* not good: for for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.

²² He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

²³ He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

²⁴ Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; the same *is* the companion of a destroyer.

²⁵ He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

²⁶ He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

²⁷ He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

²⁸ When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 29:1-27 ¹ He, that being often reproved hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

² When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the

friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.). Many beautiful songs have been written about Jesus' being our Friend. Perhaps better known than any other is the one which says:

"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!"

No doubt you would like to claim Jesus for your Friend. If you are saved and obey the Lord, you and Jesus are friends, because He said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

The Wicked

Solomon often mentioned the advantages of those who are saved. Usually he contrasted the lives of the righteous with those of the unrighteous. Solomon said, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion." Can you think of any lesson that we have studied where these words of Solomon might apply? Were the Children of Israel ever bold and brave because they put their trust in the Lord? Was there ever a time when their enemies fled even though they were not being chased?

Mercy

Solomon did more than describe the lives of the wicked. He showed the difference between those who live righteously and those who live wickedly. Besides giving a warning to the unsaved, Solomon also gave instructions on seeking God for mercy and salvation. Solomon said, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." When one is willing to admit that he is a sinner, and asks God for forgiveness, being willing to turn his back on his sins, the Lord will have mercy and will pardon that person.

Forsaking Sin

It is possible for a person to confess his sins and yet not be saved, because he is not willing to forsake them. Saul was such a man. He was commanded to go and smite Amalek, to destroy utterly and spare not. But Saul and the people spared Agag the king, and the best of the animals, and "would not utterly destroy them." Saul disobeyed and then said that he had performed the commandment of the Lord. God sent His Prophet Samuel to Saul. When questioned about the sheep and oxen that were spared, Saul blamed the people for the sins, and said that he feared the people. Saul finally admitted that he had sinned, but he was not willing to forsake all his sins. God rejected him from being king because Saul had rejected the word of the Lord (**1 Samuel 15:23** ²³ **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.**). Saul's kingdom was given to another man, and Saul died without being saved again.

Hidden Sin

Another man who tried to hide his sins was Achan. When the Children of Israel went to battle against the city of Ai, the

people mourn.

³ Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth *his* substance.

⁴ The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

⁵ A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.

⁶ In the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

⁷ The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it*.

⁸ Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise *men* turn away wrath.

⁹ *If* a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

¹⁰ The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

¹¹ A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

¹² If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

¹³ The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

¹⁴ The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

¹⁵ The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.

¹⁶ When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.

¹⁷ Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

¹⁸ Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

¹⁹ A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

Israelites were defeated, instead of having victory as God had promised. Joshua asked God the reason. God told Joshua that there was sin in the camp – someone had “taken of the accursed thing” and had hidden it among his own stuff. God said that He would not be with the Children of Israel unless the sin was destroyed. But Achan did not confess when Joshua gave the message to the Children of Israel. Tribe by tribe, family by family, household by household, and finally man by man, they stood before Joshua. God pointed out Achan as the guilty man. Still Achan said nothing. Then Joshua commanded him to make a confession and tell what he had done. Achan was forced to admit that he had sinned (**Joshua 7:20 ²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:**). He said, “I saw . . . then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent.” When Achan thought his sin was all covered up, God revealed it. Achan was put to death. Achan confessed his sin, but he found no mercy because he had not turned away from his sin nor repented before God.

Promises

Solomon spoke of many promises of blessings that God has for those who will live righteously, among them being: happiness (**Proverbs 29:18 ¹⁸ Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he**), honour (**Proverbs 29:23 ²³ A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.**), safety (**Proverbs 29:25 ²⁵ The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.**), joy (**Proverbs 29:6 ⁶ In the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.**), understanding (**Proverbs 28:5 ⁵ Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.**), prosperity (**Proverbs 28:10 ¹⁰ Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.**), and deliverance (**Proverbs 28:18 ¹⁸ Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but *he that is* perverse in his ways shall fall at once.**). He also spoke of promises of judgment and destruction upon those who repeatedly and continually refuse the call of God.

In these writings of Solomon, we have before us God’s way of salvation, and the opposite – the way of sinners. Which way have you chosen? Life or death? Blessings or cursings? Prosperity or destruction? Solomon said, “He, that being often reprov’d hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy”; but, “A faithful man shall abound with blessings.”

QUESTIONS

1. How does a Christian speak about the future?
2. Who is a “hungry soul”?
3. Who is the best Friend one can have?
4. Who are Jesus’ friends?
5. What is the difference between confessing one’s sins and forsaking them?
6. What is said about one who “robbeth his father or his mother”?
7. Why is it not good to have respect of persons?
8. Why should children be corrected?
9. What is reproof?
10. Who shall “abound with blessings”?

²⁰ Seest thou a man *that is* hasty in his words? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

²¹ He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become *his* son at the length.

²² An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

²³ A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

²⁴ Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

²⁵ The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

²⁶ Many seek the ruler's favour; but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

²⁷ An unjust man *is* an abomination to the just: and *he that is* upright in the way *is* abomination to the wicked.