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Proverbs

Chapter 1

¹{These are} the wise sayings said by Solomon. {He was} David's son and Israel's king.

²{These wise sayings are} for knowing what is wise and instructive.

{They are} for understanding insightful things that people say.

³{These wise sayings are} for instructing someone about what is insightful, righteous, just, and honest.

⁴{They are} for making naive people prudent, and {for making} young people knowledgeable and discreet.

⁵{Let wise people listen {to these wise sayings} and learn more.

Indeed, {let these sayings} guide understanding people so that they know what to do.)

⁶{These wise sayings are} for understanding wise sayings and parables.

{Indeed, they are for understanding} what wise people say and the riddles they tell.

⁷In order to become knowledgeable, a person must begin by deeply respecting Yahweh.

{But} foolish people detest what is wise or instructive.

⁸My child, listen carefully to what I, your father, am teaching you.

Indeed, obey the rules that your mother has commanded.

⁹{Obey your parents' teaching} because then {people will admire and respect you;} it will be as if those teachings were an attractive wreath on your head,

or beautiful necklaces around your neck.

¹⁰My child, if sinful people tempt you {to sin with them}, refuse {to do so}.

¹¹Those sinful people may say, "Join us!

We will hide and wait in order to kill someone {who walks by}.

Indeed, we will hide ourselves in order to suddenly attack an innocent person for no good reason.

¹²We will kill living people completely, as if we were their grave.

{Yes, we will kill} healthy people, as if they could not escape dying.

¹³We will discover many valuable treasures!

We will fill our houses with what we steal!

¹⁴Join our gang!

We will share all the loot between us.”

¹⁵My child, do not associate with those sinful people!

Prevent yourself from doing the things that they do!

¹⁶{Avoid those sinners} because they are eager to do wicked things.

They even rush to murder people.

¹⁷It is useless {for a hunter} to put out a net {to trap a bird}

while the bird is watching {because the bird will avoid the net}.

¹⁸However, {these sinful people are more foolish than birds.} They hide in wait, but they kill themselves.

Indeed, they hide so that they can suddenly attack, but they themselves die.

¹⁹That is what happens to anyone who gains wealth in an unjust manner.

What they gained unjustly will kill them.

²⁰Imagine that everything that is wise is a woman who calls out {to everyone} in public.

Imagine that this woman shouts {to people} in crowded places.

²¹Imagine that she calls out {to people} at the place where busy streets intersect.

Imagine that she speaks her {wise} words at the {crowded} entrance of the city gates.

²²She says, “You naive people have loved being naive for too long!

You people who ridicule {others} have enjoyed ridiculing {others} to benefit yourselves for too long!

You foolish people have hated what you should know for too long!

²³Turn around {and listen} to me when I correct you!

Listen! I will tell you all that I am thinking.

Indeed, I will help you to understand what I have to say to you.

²⁴I called out {to you}, but you refused {to listen}.

Indeed, I invited you to come to me,

but no one paid any attention {to me}.

²⁵You ignored everything that I advised you to do.

Indeed, you rejected what I said to correct you.

²⁶Therefore, as for me, I will laugh at you when disastrous things happen to you.

Indeed, I will ridicule you when you are terrified.

²⁷{Yes,} when you are terrified as if a violent storm has arrived,

{when} disastrous things happen to you violently,

{and} when you become distressed and anguished{, I will ridicule you}!

²⁸At that time, those foolish people will cry out to me {to help them},
but I will not reply {to them}.

Indeed, they will desperately look for me,
but they will not be able to find me.

²⁹{Those foolish people will not find me} because they refuse to learn.
Also, they have decided not to respect Yahweh.

³⁰Those foolish people rejected what I advised them to do.
Indeed, they detested everything I said to correct them.

³¹Those foolish people will suffer rightly for what they have done.
Indeed, they will suffer fully for what they have planned.

³²Ultimately, naive people will die because they refuse {to be wise}.
Indeed, being complacent will destroy foolish people.

³³By contrast, people who listen attentively to what I say will live safely.
They will not fear that something evil might happen to them."

Chapter 2

¹My child, accept what I say.

Consider what I command {you} to be precious.

²{Do this by} listening carefully to what is wise,
{and by} thinking seriously about what you should understand.

³Yes, cry out {to God} for {him to show you} what you should perceive.
Call loudly {to God} for {him to teach you} what you should understand!

⁴Try to learn what is wise as eagerly as you would try to find silver.
Indeed, look for it as you would look for a treasure that someone has hidden.

⁵{If you do those things,} then you will understand how to reverently fear Yahweh.
{If you do those things,} then you will be able to know God.

⁶{This is} because Yahweh provides people with what is wise.
He tells them what they should know and understand.

⁷He gives what is truly wise to upright people.
He protects people who behave honestly.

⁸{He does these things} in order to guard those people who live justly.

Indeed, he keeps safe those people who are faithful to him.

⁹{If you listen to me,} then you will understand what is righteous, just, and honest—
all the best ways to behave.

¹⁰{This is because} you will truly know what is wise,
and knowing {what is wise} will please you.

¹¹Being able to choose wisely will make you safe.

Indeed, being able to understand {what is happening around you} will make you secure.

¹²{Being wise like this} will keep you from doing wicked things,
{and you will stay away} from people who speak perversely.

¹³Those people refuse to behave righteously in order to behave wickedly.

¹⁴They gladly do what is wrong.

They enjoy doing things that are perverse and evil.

¹⁵They behave deceptively.

Indeed, they act deviously.

¹⁶{Being discreet and insightful} will protect you {also} from adulterous women.

{Being discreet and insightful will save you} from immoral women who speak {to you} seductively.

¹⁷Those women left the husbands they married when they were young.

They even forgot what they had promised to God {when they married}.

¹⁸{Being discreet and insightful will rescue you} because {going to} such a woman's house will cause you to die.

Indeed, going with her is the same as going to the place where the spirits of dead people are.

¹⁹No man who acts adulterously with her will live again.

He will no longer be able to live in a way that results in life with God.

²⁰Therefore, behave like a good person.

Indeed, conduct yourself like a righteous person.

²¹This is important because {only} people who live uprightly will live in our land,

Indeed, it is the people who do not act wickedly who will stay in this land for a long time.

²²By contrast, Yahweh will remove people who act wickedly from our land.

Be sure of this: Yahweh will completely remove people who act treacherously from this land!

Chapter 3

¹My child, remember the rules I have taught you!

Always be mindful to obey what I have commanded you!

²{Do this} because {obeying} what I have commanded you will help you live for a long time with many fulfilling and peaceful years.

³Always be faithful and trustworthy.

Let everyone see {how faithful and trustworthy you are, as if} they were a necklace you are wearing.

Remember to be faithful and trustworthy at all times.

⁴As a result of doing so, both God and people will approve of you and consider you an insightful person.

⁵Trust Yahweh completely,

and do not rely on what you understand.

⁶Let Yahweh lead you whenever you do anything.

As a result {of doing so}, he will show you what you should do.

⁷Do not think that you know what is best.

Instead, revere Yahweh and refuse to do what is evil.

⁸Doing so will make your body healthy.

Indeed, {doing so} will strengthen you from the inside.

⁹Revere Yahweh {by giving to him} some of your riches,

and {by giving to him} some of the first {crops} from everything that you harvest.

¹⁰{Doing so} will result in your places for storing crops becoming completely full {of crops}.

Even your containers for wine will overflow with fresh wine.

¹¹My child, do not refuse to listen when Yahweh corrects you.

Do not be resentful even when he rebukes you.

¹²{Do not respond in that way} because Yahweh {only} reproves the people whom he loves,
just as a father reproves the children whom he cherishes.

¹³People who become wise are happy.

Indeed, the people who understand {Yahweh's world are the ones who} are truly happy.

¹⁴{This is} because being wise benefits people more than silver {could benefit them}.

Indeed, being wise is worth more to people than having gold.

¹⁵Being wise is more valuable than precious jewels.

There is nothing that you could desire that is worth as much as being wise.

¹⁶Being wise will help you live for a long time.

Being wise will help you become wealthy and honorable.

¹⁷Being wise will allow you to live pleasantly.

Indeed, in every way being wise will allow you to live peacefully.

¹⁸What is wise is {like} a tree {with fruit} that sustains the people who possess it,

People who are consistently wise live happily.

¹⁹Yahweh made the world through being wise.

Through being skillful, he made the sky and everything in it.

²⁰Through knowing all things, Yahweh made water burst forth from deep {below the earth} and he made water fall from the clouds {above}.

²¹My child, always remember to do what is prudent and brings a good outcome.

Always be mindful to do those things.

²²Doing so will give you a satisfying life

and people will honor and respect you.

²³Doing what is prudent and good will {also} cause you to live safely.

They will keep you from making any serious mistakes.

²⁴When you lie down {to sleep}, you will not fear anything.

You will lie down {to sleep} and sleep peacefully.

²⁵Do not worry about something terrible suddenly happening {to you},

or about {what will happen} when God destroys wicked people.

²⁶{Do not worry} because Yahweh will make you confident.

He will not allow people to harm you.

²⁷Do not refrain from giving what is good to people who deserve it

when you are able to do so.

²⁸When you are with a friend {who needs something}, and you have it with you, do not tell that person,

"Go away and come back tomorrow. I will give it to you then."

²⁹Do not plan to harm people that you interact with, because they live near you and they trust you.

³⁰Do not argue needlessly with someone who has not harmed you.

³¹Do not envy violent people.

Do not imitate anything they do.

³²{Do not do so} because Yahweh detests {such} people who act wickedly,

but he converses like a friend with people who act uprightly.

³³Yahweh causes bad things to happen to the families of wicked people,
but he causes good things to happen to the families of righteous people.

³⁴When people ridicule {others}, it is Yahweh who ridicules them,
but he kindly helps those who are humble.

³⁵People will honor wise people,
but people will shame foolish people.

Chapter 4

¹Children, listen carefully to what I, your father, am teaching you.

Pay attention in order to learn what you should understand.

²{Do this} because what I am teaching you is good.

{So} remember the rules that I am teaching you.

³When I was just a boy with my father,
{and} my mother's delicate, only son.

⁴During that time, my father taught me. He told me,

"Remember what I have told you!

Do what I have commanded you, so that you will keep on living!

⁵Learn what is wise and what you should understand!

Always remember and keep doing the things that I have said to you!

⁶Keep doing what is wise, because doing so will keep you safe.

Love doing what is wise, because being wise will protect you from harm.

⁷Being wise is the most important thing. {So} become wise!

{Even if} it costs you everything that you own, become a person who understands {God's world}!

⁸Prize what is wise, so that you will become great.

People will honor you when you value what is wise.

⁹Being wise will make you {respectable,} as though you had an attractive wreath on your head.

Indeed, being wise will make you {honorable,} as though you were wearing a magnificent crown."

¹⁰My child, listen attentively and accept what I say.

Doing so will increase the number of years that you live.

¹¹I instructed you in how to act wisely.

I directed you in how to live in the right way.

¹²{If you follow my teaching,} nothing will hinder you {from succeeding}.

Indeed, if you attempt great things, you will do well.

¹³Consistently remember the things I have instructed you;

keep remembering them!

Always be mindful of them, because they will keep you alive.

¹⁴Do not do what wicked people do.

Indeed, do not behave in the way that evil people behave.

¹⁵Shun doing what is evil. Do not even consider doing it!

Refuse to act wickedly and do something else.

¹⁶{Do not act wickedly} because {it is as if} evil people cannot even sleep unless they have done something evil {on that day};

{it is as if} they cannot rest unless they hurt someone.

¹⁷{Do not act wickedly} because evil people do wicked things as if they were eating food;

they violently hurt others as if they were drinking wine.

¹⁸As for righteous people, they will live {wisely and safely} as people do who walk in the sunshine;

{they will live more and more wisely and safely,} just as the sun shines brighter and brighter until the brightest time of day.

¹⁹{But} the way that wicked people live is {dangerous,} like people {who walk} in total darkness.

{Like people walking in darkness do not know} what they trip over, wicked people do not know {what hurts them}.

²⁰My child, pay attention to what I am saying to you!

Listen carefully to what I say!

²¹Keep thinking about what I say!

Fully commit yourself to remembering such things!

²²{Do this} because those who live according to my words will have good lives,
and their whole bodies will be healthy.

²³More than anything else, be extremely careful about what you think and desire,
because those things will control how you live.

²⁴Do not say anything that deceives people.

Indeed, never say anything that misleads people.

²⁵{Focus on doing what is right, like} someone who is always looking straight ahead.

Indeed, {act like} someone who is looking straight in front of himself.

²⁶Plan carefully to do things in the right way.

As a result {of doing so}, you will succeed in everything that you do.

²⁷Do not do anything other than what is right.

Prevent yourself from doing what is evil.

Chapter 5

¹My son, pay attention to the wise things that I tell you!

Listen carefully to what I say you should understand!

²{Do this} so that you will be able to choose wisely {what to do},
and {so that} you will know the {right} things to say.

³{Do this} because what adulterous women say seems delightful like the taste of honey.

Yes, their words are more soothing than how olive oil feels on your skin.

⁴However, after being with such a woman you will be miserable, as if you had eaten a bitter plant.

{You will suffer} like a person whom someone has cut with a sharp, double-edged sword.

⁵{Being with} such a woman will cause both of you to die.

Indeed, what she does {with you} will cause you to become a dead person.

⁶She does not want to do what will cause her to live well.

She does not realize that she {lives precariously like someone who} is walking on a broken path.

⁷So now, children, pay attention to what I say!

Always remember what I have spoken to you!

⁸Stay far away from any adulterous woman!

Do not even go near the door of the place where such a woman dwells!

⁹If you go to such a woman, you will be giving the best efforts of your youth to others,
and a merciless person will take away {everything that you would gain in} the best time of your life.

¹⁰If you go to such a woman, people you do not know will satisfy themselves with {what you produced} when you were strong,

and an outsider will fill his house with what you labored to gain.

¹¹Then you will groan when you are about to die

and have worn out your whole body.

¹²Then you will say, "I hated it extremely when people corrected me!

Indeed, I scorned people when they rebuked me!

¹³I did not obey the people who taught me.

Indeed, I did not listen carefully to the people who instructed me.

¹⁴My people are close to considering me as someone who has wasted his life."

¹⁵{So be like} someone who only drinks water from his own well;

have sex with your wife only.

¹⁶{Do not be like} someone who lets his water run out into the streets;

never have sex with other women!

¹⁷Only have sex with your own wife!

Do not have sex with other women!

¹⁸{As a result,} may Yahweh bless your marriage {with children};

enjoy {sexually} the woman whom you married when you were young!

¹⁹{She is as beautiful as} a loving deer and a graceful mountain goat.

Let her breasts satisfy you always.

Constantly be exhilarated by how she loves you.

²⁰My son, you should never be exhilarated by an adulterous woman!

You should never passionately caress an immoral woman!

²¹{Never do that} because Yahweh fully knows what people do.

Indeed, he knows everything that people do.

²²The wicked things that wicked people do are {like} traps that catch them;

the sinful things that they do are {like} ropes by which others can grab them.

²³Those wicked people will die because they did not discipline themselves.

They will do what kills them because they are extremely foolish.

Chapter 6

¹My child, if you guarantee to pay a loan for someone you meet,

{that is, if} you agree to pay a loan for someone you do not know,

²{if in this way} you have said things that you regret

{because} it would be very difficult for you {to fulfill} what you promised,

³then, my child, do this in order to save yourself {from having to pay back this loan}:

humbly go to that person and beg him {to cancel what you have promised}, because he now controls you.

⁴Do not wait until tomorrow; {go immediately!}

do not allow yourself to rest {until you go and talk to him}.

⁵Save yourself {immediately},

as if you were a deer fleeing from a hunter

or a bird fleeing from a trapper.

⁶You lazy person, learn {something} from {watching} ants!

Consider what ants do so that you can be wise.

⁷Absolutely no one tells ants what to do.

⁸{Nevertheless,} they work hard all during the summer,

gathering and storing food {to eat during the winter}.

⁹{But} you lazy person, stop sleeping!

Wake up!

¹⁰{If you say to yourself,} "Let me sleep just a little more!

Let me lay my hands {across my chest} in order to rest comfortably for a little while longer!"

¹¹Then {the result of being so lazy will be that} you will become poor and needy

just as surely as if a thief has robbed you.

¹²{I will describe for you what} worthless, sinful people {do. They} constantly deceive people by what they say.

¹³They make gestures, such as winking their eyes, signaling with their feet, and pointing their fingers {to communicate their evil plans to their friends}.

¹⁴They are always thinking perversely while planning how to do evil things.

They cause people to argue {with each other}.

¹⁵Because of this, disastrous things will suddenly happen to those people.

Someone will destroy them instantly and they will not be able to recover.

¹⁶Yahweh absolutely hates six, no, seven things:

¹⁷being proud, speaking falsely,

someone murdering a person who has not done anything wrong,

¹⁸someone planning ways to act sinfully,

someone eagerly looking for ways to act wickedly,

¹⁹someone who naturally lies when testifying,

and someone causing members of the same family to argue.

²⁰My child, be mindful to obey what I, your father, have commanded {you}.

Indeed, obey the rules that your mother has commanded.

²¹Remember what we have taught you as if it were always a part of you.

Indeed, {remember these lessons as if} you wore them like a necklace.

²²The wise things that we have taught you will help you to know what you should do as you go about each day.

They will cause you to be safe when you sleep.

When you wake up {in the morning}, they will be what will continue to instruct you.

²³{This is so} because what I have commanded {you} is {like} a lamp {that shows you your way}.

Indeed, the rules {we taught you} are {like} a light {to guide you}.

When we rebuke you while instructing you, {we do that} so that you can do what will give you a good life.

²⁴{We taught you these lessons} in order to prevent you from {going to} wicked women,

{and to prevent you} from {believing} the seductive talk of immoral women.

²⁵Do not think lustfully about her beautiful body.

Do not let her seduce you by the {flirtatious} way she looks at you.

²⁶{Do not do so} because, although having sex with a prostitute may only cost you a cheap meal,

{doing so with} an {adulterous} married woman will cause you to die.

²⁷A man cannot hold fire against his chest without burning his clothes!

²⁸No one can walk on burning coals without blistering his feet!

²⁹It is similar with anyone who has sex with another man's wife.

People will certainly punish anyone who does that.

³⁰People do not resent someone who steals if he only steals {food} because he is hungry.

³¹Nevertheless, if people catch thieves, those thieves must pay back seven times {as much as they stole to those from whom they stole}.

They may have to give everything that they own {in order to repay what they stole}.

³²By contrast, a man who acts adulterously with a woman is not thinking.

By doing this, he destroys himself!

³³{The woman's husband} will injure him,

people will despise him,

and he will always be ashamed.

³⁴{This is so} because the jealous husband will become furious.

He will act mercilessly when he revenges himself {on the man who acted adulterously with his wife}.

³⁵That jealous husband will not accept any money {to stop being furious},

no matter how much money you offer him.

Chapter 7

¹My son, obey what I have told you.

Carefully remember the things that I have commanded you.

²Do what I have commanded {you}, so that you will live {long and well}.

Consider the rules I have taught you to be the most precious things that you possess.

³Constantly remind yourself of the things that I have commanded you.

Memorize them!

⁴Love what is wise as if it were your sister.

Indeed, love what you should understand as if it were a close relative.

⁵{Do this} so that you will be able to stay away from adulterous women,
and {stay away} from immoral women who speak {to you} seductively.

⁶{I was} once {standing} near the window {in my house},
and I looked down {from above the street} through the shutters on the window.

⁷Then I observed {someone} among the naive people.

I noticed among the youths a young man who does not think wisely.

⁸He walked down the street near the corner of {the road where} the adulterous woman {dwells}.

Then he walked on the path toward her house.

⁹{It was the time of day when night begins, {and then} it became dark.)

¹⁰Then I saw that an adulterous woman approached the young man.

She was wearing a prostitute's clothing and intended to deceive {the young man}.

¹¹{That woman spoke loudly and acted rebelliously.

She never stayed at home.

¹²She {often} walked around the streets and public places.

At the corner of any road she waited {for a man whom she could seduce}.)

¹³When {she saw the young man}, she firmly took hold of him and kissed him.

She shamelessly told {him},

¹⁴"Today {I have meat in my house, because} I sacrificed an animal {in the temple} to promise friendship {with Yahweh}.

{In this way} I did what I had vowed to do.

¹⁵So I have come out here to meet you.

{I have come out} to look everywhere for you, and now I have found you!

¹⁶I have covered my bed with expensive Egyptian fabric.

¹⁷I have put pleasant-smelling perfumes on my bed:
myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

¹⁸Come {with me}! Let us satisfy ourselves sexually all night!
Let us enjoy ourselves sexually!

¹⁹{Come with me} because my husband is not at home.
He has gone away on a long journey.

²⁰He filled a bag with money and took it with him.
He will not return home until the middle of the month."

²¹{Thus} that adulterous woman persuaded the young man by speaking many persuasive things;
by speaking seductively she allured him {into doing what she wanted him to do}.

²²He quickly followed her {to her home}.

He {unknowingly} went to die like an ox going to the place where its owner will kill it.

{He unknowingly went to die} like a foolish person who lets others lead him by a chain to where they will punish him

²³until {someone kills him by} shooting an arrow into his entrails.

{He was as foolish} as a bird flying quickly into a trap.

He did not realize that going with the adulterous woman would cause him to die.

²⁴So now, children, listen to what I say!
Carefully pay attention to what I have spoken to you!

²⁵Do not desire to be with any adulterous woman.
Indeed, never go with one of them!

²⁶{Do not do so} because they have ruined the lives of many men.
It would be difficult to count all of the men that they have caused to die!

²⁷{Going to} an adulterous woman's house is like choosing to become a dead person.
Those who enter her bedroom will die as a result.

Chapter 8

¹Imagine that there is a woman who represents everything that is wise. Surely such a woman calls out {to everyone}.

Indeed, imagine that this woman represents everything that people should understand.

Surely such a woman shouts {these things to people}.

²Imagine that this woman stands at the highest place next to the crowded crossroads {where everyone can hear her}.

³Imagine that this woman shouts loudly beside the gates at the entrance to a city.

⁴{Imagine that she proclaims:} "I am calling out to all of you!

I am speaking to all people!

⁵You naive people must learn to be prudent.

You foolish people must learn how to be discerning.

⁶Listen {to what I say}, because I will tell you some excellent things.

I will speak to you about what is right.

⁷{Listen to what I say} because I speak what is true.

I detest speaking what is evil.

⁸Everything that I say is honest.

I do not say anything that is false or that deceives {people}.

⁹Everything that I say is plain for people who understand.

{Everything that I say} is right to people who have become knowledgeable.

¹⁰Choose {to learn} what I instruct you instead of silver.

Indeed, {choose to learn} what you should know instead of the finest gold.

¹¹{Do this} because being wise is more valuable than having precious jewels.

Being wise is more valuable than anything that you can desire.

¹²I am what is wise. I am a close relative to what is prudent.

I enable people to know how to decide things intelligently.

¹³Everyone who reverently fears Yahweh hates what is evil.

I{, what is wise,} hate it when people are proud or arrogant.

I hate it when people act wickedly and when people speak perversely.

¹⁴I advise people well and enable them to be truly wise.

I am what people need in order to understand how things truly are.

I strengthen people.

¹⁵I enable kings to rule {well}.

{I enable} rulers to make righteous laws.

¹⁶I enable princes and nobles to govern {well}.

{I enable} every royal official who judges righteously {to do so}.

¹⁷{I am what is wise, and} I benefit anyone who loves me.

Anyone who earnestly tries to become wise will succeed.

¹⁸I enable people to become rich and I cause people to honor those people.

{I enable people to have} riches that will last and {I enable people to become} righteous.

¹⁹What I can give people is more valuable than even the purest gold and the best silver.

²⁰I {always} do what is righteous and just

²¹in order to give property to people who love me.

I will fill up the places where they store valuable items.

²²Yahweh had me{, what is wise,} when he began to create {everything}.

{Indeed, he had me} before he started doing that.

²³Yahweh established me a very long time ago—at the very beginning, before the world existed.

²⁴Yahweh revealed me before the oceans existed

and before there were springs abounding with water.

²⁵Yahweh revealed me before he made the mountains {and} before {he made} the hills.

²⁶{Yahweh revealed me} before he made the land or the fields or the first particles of dirt on the earth.

²⁷I was there when Yahweh made the sky,

{and} when he made the boundary between the sky and the ocean's surface.

²⁸{I was there} when Yahweh made the clouds above {the earth},

{and} when he made the springs flow at the bottom of the ocean.

²⁹{I was there} when Yahweh set boundaries for the seas,

so that the water {in the seas} would not go past the boundaries that he commanded.

{I was there} when Yahweh made the parts supporting the dry land.

³⁰At that time I was {like} someone who was beside Yahweh, skillfully helping him to create {everything}.

I made him happy every day.

I was always rejoicing when I was with him.

³¹{I was} rejoicing in the whole world that Yahweh had made.

I was also happy with the people {he had made}.

³²So now, children, pay attention to what I say!

{Do this} because anyone who obeys my teachings will be happy.

³³Listen to what I teach {you}, so that you will become wise.

Think about what I teach you!

³⁴People who listen to me will be happy.

People who are as eager to listen to me as if they were waiting {for me} at the door of my house every day and watching for me to come out {will be happy}.

³⁵{This is true} because people who learn to be wise will live {well}, and Yahweh will approve of them.

³⁶But those who refuse to be wise hurt themselves.

All those who hate to be wise {act like they are people who} would love to die.”

Chapter 9

¹Continue imagining that there is a woman who represents everything that is wise. Imagine that this woman has built her own {spacious} house

and made seven pillars {to support its roof}.

²{Imagine that she has prepared a meal for guests.}

She has prepared the meat {to eat} and wine {to drink}.

She has {fully} prepared her table for a meal.

³Imagine that this woman has sent out her maids {to invite her dinner guests}.

Then she calls out at the highest place in the city {where everyone can hear her}.

⁴She tells those who are not wise,

“Come into {my house}, all you naive people!

⁵Come {to me}! Eat the food that I have prepared, and drink the wine that I have prepared.

⁶Stop acting naively so that you can live {well}.

Do what will cause you to learn what you should understand.

⁷If you {try to} teach someone who ridicules {other people}, that person will ridicule you.

If you correct an evil person, that person will hurt you.

⁸{So} do not correct a person who ridicules {other people}. If you do so, then that person will hate you. {However,} if you correct a wise person, that person will love you {for doing so}.

⁹If you instruct wise people, then they will become even wiser.

If you teach righteous people, then they will learn even more.

¹⁰If you want to be wise, you must start by revering Yahweh,

and {only} by knowing what is holy will you understand {which teachings are wise and true}.

¹¹Surely being wise will cause you to live for many more years.

¹²Any wise person benefits himself from being wise,
just as anyone who ridicules {other people} will personally suffer for doing so.”

¹³Foolish women speak loudly,
act naively, and are very ignorant.

¹⁴They sit at the doors of the places where they dwell.
{They sit} on seats at the highest place in the city {where everyone can hear them}.

¹⁵{They sit there} in order to call out to the people who are walking past them.
{They call out to} those walking down the road, who are only concerned about where they are going.

¹⁶They tell those who are not wise,
“Come into {my house}, all you naive people!

¹⁷{Come to me, because having sex with someone to whom you are not married is} as sweet as water that you have stolen.

Indeed, {it is} as delicious as food that you eat all by yourself.”

¹⁸But men who go to the houses of such women are not aware that the men who have gone there before have died.

{They are not aware} that the guests of such women are now in the deepest parts of the place where dead people are.

Chapter 10

¹{These are more} wise sayings {said} by Solomon:

Wise children make their fathers glad,
but foolish children make their mothers sad.

²Riches that people acquire by acting wickedly will not benefit them,
but people who act righteously prevent themselves from dying {too soon}.

³Yahweh prevents righteous people from starving,
but he prevents wicked people from getting what they want.

⁴People who are lazy become poor,
but people who work hard become rich.

⁵Sons who collect crops at the right time are insightful,
but sons who sleep during the time to harvest crops are shameful.

- ⁶God blesses righteous people,
but what wicked people say {sometimes} prevents others from knowing about the violent acts {that they do}.
- ⁷People will be happy when they remember righteous people,
but people will forget wicked people as if they were something that decays {and disappears}.
- ⁸People who think wisely are willing to obey the {good} things that people tell them to do,
but people who speak foolishly destroy themselves.
- ⁹People who behave honestly will live safely;
but God will catch people who behave deceitfully.
- ¹⁰People who gesture with their eyes {to deceive others} hurt {people},
and people who speak foolishly destroy themselves.
- ¹¹What righteous people say is like a spring that enables people to live long and well;
but what wicked people say prevents others from knowing about the violent acts {that they do}.
- ¹²When people hate others, they argue with each other;
but when people love others, they forgive people for the wrong things that they do.
- ¹³Discerning people say what is wise,
but someone must punish people who do not think wisely.
- ¹⁴Wise people continue to learn all that they can,
but when foolish people speak, they start to destroy things.
- ¹⁵What rich people own keeps them safe like a strong wall keeps a city safe,
but poor people suffer much because they are poor.
- ¹⁶God rewards righteous people by allowing them to live {for a long time},
but God recompenses wicked people by punishing them for sinning.
- ¹⁷People who heed what is instructive will live for a long time;
but people who do not let others correct them do what will destroy them.
- ¹⁸People who hate {others} but pretend that they do not {hate them} speak falsely.
People who slander others are foolish.
- ¹⁹People who talk a lot sin a lot;
but people who refrain from speaking {unnecessarily} are wise.
- ²⁰What righteous people say is {as valuable as} the best silver;
{but} what wicked people think is worthless.
- ²¹What righteous people say benefits many people,

but foolish people die because they do not think wisely.

²²When people become wealthy, {it is because} Yahweh has blessed them,
and working harder will not make them to become wealthier.

²³Foolish people enjoy doing the wicked things that they planned {to do},
but sensible people enjoy doing what is wise.

²⁴Wicked people will experience what frightens them;
but righteous people will receive what they want.

²⁵When something disastrous happens, it destroys wicked people,
but righteous people are {like} a foundation that lasts forever.

²⁶Lazy people irritate people who send them {to do something for them},
like vinegar irritates teeth and smoke irritates eyes.

²⁷People who revere Yahweh will live for a long time,
but wicked people will live for only a short time.

²⁸What righteous people hope for will make them joyful,
but what wicked people hope for will not happen.

²⁹Yahweh protects honest people like a fortress because they live the way that he directs people to live,
but not living that way destroys people who act sinfully.

³⁰Righteous people will always be secure,
but wicked people will never live in our land.

³¹Righteous people say what is wise,
but Yahweh will stop people from speaking who speak perversely.

³²Righteous people know good things to say,
but wicked people {continually} say things that are not true.

Chapter 11

¹Yahweh detests {people} using weighing instruments in order to deceive others,
but it pleases him when people use correct weights {on their weighing instruments}.

²When people act proudly, they will soon disgrace themselves,
but humble people are wise.

³Upright people know what to do because they are honest,
but being deceitful will ruin treacherous people.

⁴What people own will not help them when Yahweh punishes {wicked people},
but he will not kill those who live righteously.

⁵Being righteous will cause innocent people to live securely,
but being wicked will ruin those who act wickedly.

⁶Being righteous will cause people who act uprightly to escape {harm},
but desiring {bad} things will cause people who act treacherously to trap themselves.

⁷When wicked people die, what they hoped for never happens;
they hoped that being strong would benefit them, but it will not.

⁸Yahweh rescues righteous people from becoming distressed;
but wicked people will become distressed instead.

⁹People who reject God ruin other people by what they say,
but what righteous people know will cause them to escape.

¹⁰People in a city rejoice when the righteous people {there} prosper,
and they shout joyously when wicked people die.

¹¹A city becomes great when people who act uprightly bless {the people there},
but what people who act wickedly say destroys that city.

¹²People who {openly} detest someone they know are not thinking wisely;
but understanding people say nothing.

¹³People who go around gossiping tell {others} what is secret,
but trustworthy people will keep a matter private.

¹⁴Not having anyone to guide a group of people will ruin them,
but having many people to advise them will keep that group secure.

¹⁵People who guarantee {to pay a debt} for someone they do not know will surely suffer,
but people who avoid agreeing {to do such a thing} will be safe.

¹⁶People honor a gracious woman,
but cruel men {only} get wealth.

¹⁷People who are faithfully kind greatly benefit themselves,
but cruel people hurt themselves.

¹⁸People who act wickedly falsely believe that they have gained {something good},
but God truly rewards people who do what is right.

¹⁹People who truly act righteously will live {well},

but people who eagerly do what is evil will die.

²⁰Yahweh detests people who think deceitfully,
but people who act blamelessly please him.

²¹It is certain that Yahweh will punish wicked people,
and that he will not punish those who belong to the righteous group.

²²{It is as unsuitable for} a beautiful woman to refuse to act discreetly
{as it is for} a pig to have a gold ring in its snout.

²³When righteous people get what they want, it results in only good things,
but when wicked people get what they hope for, it results in {Yahweh} being angry.

²⁴Some people generously share {what they have with others} but they receive even more.
Other people keep more {of what they have} than they should keep, but they still become poor.

²⁵People who generously bless others will prosper;
and people who generously give others what the others need will also receive everything that they need.

²⁶People curse anyone who {selfishly} hoards grain {instead of selling it},
but they bless people who sell it {when others need it}.

²⁷If you sincerely want to do what is right, people will treat you well,
but evil things happen to people who try to do what is evil.

²⁸People who depend on their money will not be successful,
but righteous people will thrive like a green plant.

²⁹People who trouble their families will not inherit anything,
and people who act foolishly will serve people who think wisely.

³⁰What righteous people say and do is {like} a tree {with fruit} that keeps people alive,
and people who persuade others {to be righteous} are wise.

³¹Pay attention! Righteous people on the earth will get what they deserve;
but even more so, wicked, sinful people will {also} get what they deserve!

Chapter 12

¹People who love other people correcting them {also} love {learning} what they should know.
But people who hate other people correcting them are foolish.

²Yahweh approves of people who are good,
but he condemns people who plan to do what is evil.

- ³People do not become secure by acting wickedly,
but righteous people are {as secure as} a tree with immovable roots.
- ⁴A virtuous wife causes people to praise her husband,
but a disgraceful wife {destroys her husband} like a disease that destroys his bones.
- ⁵Righteous people plan {to treat people} fairly;
wicked people advise {people} in order to deceive {them}.
- ⁶What wicked people say {is like a trap that} kills people {who pass by};
but what upright people say will enable them to escape.
- ⁷Yahweh destroys wicked people and they disappear,
but the families of righteous people will continue.
- ⁸People will praise someone according to how insightful that person is,
but people will despise someone who thinks perversely.
- ⁹It is better to be a lowly person yet have a servant
than to think that you are important yet have no food.
- ¹⁰Righteous people care for their animals,
but even when wicked people {think that they} act compassionately, they act cruelly.
- ¹¹People who work hard will have enough food {to eat},
but people who waste time doing worthless things do not think wisely.
- ¹²Wicked people want what evil people steal,
but righteous people benefit {others} like a tree with deep roots.
- ¹³The sinful things that wicked people say will destroy them,
but righteous people escape from trouble.
- ¹⁴The {good} things that people say {to others} will {also} satisfy them with what is good;
what people work hard to accomplish will {also} benefit them.
- ¹⁵Foolish people {always} think that what they are doing is right;
but wise people listen to what other people advise {them to do}.
- ¹⁶People know immediately when foolish people are angry;
but smart people ignore it when someone disrespects them.
- ¹⁷People who naturally say what is true speak righteously,
but witnesses who say what is false speak deceitfully.

¹⁸When people speak without thinking {about what to say}, they hurt others like someone who stabs people with a sword,

but what wise people say helps people heal.

¹⁹What people say truthfully will last forever,

but what people say falsely will {only} last for a moment.

²⁰People who plan to act evilly think deceitfully,

but people who advise others to act peacefully will be joyful.

²¹Bad things {usually} do not happen to righteous people,

but wicked people will experience many bad things.

²²Yahweh detests people who speak falsely,

but people who act faithfully please him.

²³Smart people do not reveal {all of} what they know,

but foolish people shout out foolish things.

²⁴People who work hard will reign {over others},

but lazy people will become forced laborers.

²⁵When people worry, they feel sad,

but when others speak kindly to them, it causes them to be cheerful again.

²⁶Righteous people guide their friends {in the right way to live},

but by living wickedly, wicked people destroy themselves.

²⁷Lazy people do not even cook the animals that they catch,

but people who work hard value their possessions.

²⁸People who do what is righteous will live.

Indeed, people who do so will not die.

Chapter 13

¹Wise children pay attention when their fathers instruct them,

but people who ridicule {other people} do not pay attention when people correct {them}.

²The {good} things that people say are {like} good food to them,

and the violent things that treacherous people do are {like} food for them.

³People who are careful about what they say enable themselves to stay alive,

{but} people who speak carelessly destroy themselves.

- ⁴Lazy people want things very much and get very little,
but people who work hard will receive everything that they want.
- ⁵Righteous people detest speaking falsely,
but what wicked people do is disgusting and disgraceful.
- ⁶Acting righteously enables people who act blamelessly to be safe,
but acting wickedly causes sinful people to do what will destroy them.
- ⁷Some people act as if they are wealthy while they are {actually} poor.
Other people act as if they are poor while they are {actually} wealthy.
- ⁸Rich people {might} have to pay money {to someone who threatens them} in order to stay alive,
but poor people do not {even} listen when someone threatens them.
- ⁹Righteous people live joyfully like a light {that shines brightly},
but wicked people {will merely die} like an oil lamp that stops burning {oil}.
- ¹⁰People who act proudly cause people to argue,
but people who let others advise them cause people to be wise.
- ¹¹Riches that people gain effortlessly will disappear,
but people who gain {riches} by working steadily will increase {their riches}.
- ¹²People despair when they do not receive what they have been hoping to receive,
but when people receive what they have been wanting to receive, they feel like they have everything that they need.
- ¹³People who detest what others {try to} teach them will suffer {for doing so},
but God will reward those people who respect what he has commanded.
- ¹⁴What wise people teach continuously benefits people throughout their lives.
It enables people to avoid dangerous things that could kill them.
- ¹⁵People approve of people who are very insightful,
but treacherous people are stubborn in the way that they live.
- ¹⁶All clever people think carefully before they do something,
but foolish people show that they are foolish {by how they act}.
- ¹⁷Bad things happen to messengers who are not reliable,
but reliable messengers make people peaceful.
- ¹⁸People who do not let other people correct them will become poor and ashamed,
but people respect those who let other people rebuke them {for any bad behavior}.

- ¹⁹People feel pleasant when they get what they want,
but foolish people detest refusing to do what is evil.
- ²⁰People who associate with wise people will become wise {themselves},
but people who are companions of foolish people will suffer.
- ²¹Bad things happen to sinful people,
but good things happen to righteous people.
- ²²Good people will leave riches for their grandchildren {when they die},
but righteous people will receive the riches that sinful people have saved.
- ²³Poor people have fields that can produce a lot of food,
but unjust people take it away {from them}.
- ²⁴Parents who do not punish their children {for bad behavior act as if they} hate their children,
but parents who {truly} love their children are careful to discipline them.
- ²⁵Righteous people have enough {food} to eat and satisfy themselves,
but wicked people will be hungry.

Chapter 14

- ¹The wisest women help their families to thrive,
but foolish women ruin their families by {the foolish} things that they do.
- ²People who behave uprightly {show that they} greatly revere Yahweh,
but people who behave deceptively {show that they} detest Yahweh.
- ³What foolish people say causes others to punish them for being proud,
but what wise people say protects them.
- ⁴If a man has no oxen {to plow his field}, he does not need to put grain in their feedbox,
but if he has oxen, they will enable {him to produce} an abundant crop.
- ⁵Honest witnesses do not lie,
but dishonest witnesses lie easily.
- ⁶People who ridicule {other people} try to become wise and fail to do so,
but people who understand {what is right} learn things easily.
- ⁷If you associate with foolish people,
you will not learn {anything} from knowledgeable people.
- ⁸People who have good sense know that it is wise to understand {the consequences of} what they do,

but stupid people deceive {themselves and others}, which is foolish.

⁹Foolish people scorn people who make amends with Yahweh after sinning,
but Yahweh approves of people who do what is right.

¹⁰Only you truly know how miserable you are,
and only you truly know how joyful you are.

¹¹The families of wicked people will die out,
but the families of upright people will thrive.

¹²There is a way to do things that is easy and convenient for people,
but in the end, doing things that way will cause them to die.

¹³People who are laughing may still be suffering,
and people who feel joyful may ultimately feel sad.

¹⁴People who refuse {to live righteously} will receive {from Yahweh} what they deserve {from living that way};
and good people {will also receive from Yahweh} what they deserve {from living the good way}.

¹⁵Naive people believe whatever people say,
but smart people think carefully about what they do.

¹⁶Wise people are careful and avoid doing things that annoy {others},
but foolish people confidently interfere {in other people's business}.

¹⁷People who quickly become angry act foolishly,
and people hate those who plan to do evil things.

¹⁸Naive people only acquire foolish habits,
but the reward for clever people is what they know.

¹⁹{Some day} evil people will {respectfully} bow in front of good people,
and wicked people will bow at the doors of {the houses where} righteous people {dwell}.

²⁰Even the friends of poor people despise them,
but rich people have many friends.

²¹It is sinful to despise your {poor} neighbors,
but God is pleased with those who do kind things for poor people.

²²People who plan to act wickedly are surely doing the wrong thing with their lives,
but people who plan to do what is good are faithful and trustworthy people.

²³If people work hard, they will gain from it,
but if people {only} talk, they will remain poor.

- ²⁴A reward of being wise is to become rich,
but because stupid people are foolish, they {only} become more foolish.
- ²⁵Truthful witnesses save people from dying,
but deceptive people tell lies {that cause harm to people}.
- ²⁶People who revere Yahweh are completely confident {that he will protect them}.
Yahweh will also protect their children.
- ²⁷Reverently fearing Yahweh is like having a refreshing spring that enables people to live well.
It enables people to avoid what could kill them.
- ²⁸Kings who rule over many people are glorious,
but kings who have no people {to rule over} have nothing.
- ²⁹People who do not become angry quickly are very wise,
but people who become angry quickly show everyone how foolish they are.
- ³⁰Feeling peaceful makes a person's body healthy,
but envying others {makes a person's body unhealthy, like something that} rots a person's bones.
- ³¹People who make poor people suffer ridicule Yahweh, who made them,
but people who are kind to needy people respect Yahweh.
- ³²Wicked people destroy themselves by doing evil things,
but righteous people are safe {even} when they die.
- ³³Understanding people think wisely,
but when one is among foolish people what is wise is {especially} obvious.
- ³⁴Acting righteously makes a country great,
but acting sinfully disgraces communities.
- ³⁵Insightful servants please their kings,
but kings are furious with {servants} who act disgracefully.

Chapter 15

- ¹Replying gently to angry people will calm them,
but speaking harshly {to them} will make them angrier.
- ²What wise people say makes others want to know more,
but foolish people constantly say what is foolish.
- ³Yahweh sees everything that is happening;

he observes both evil people and good people.

⁴What people say soothingly is {like} a tree {with fruit} that enables people to live well,
but what people say deceitfully makes people despair.

⁵Foolish people detest what their fathers say to correct them,
but people who let others rebuke them are clever.

⁶Righteous people have houses that contain a lot of riches,
but what wicked people gain disrupts them.

⁷What wise people say informs others of what they should know,
but what foolish people think does not do that.

⁸Yahweh detests the sacrifices that wicked people offer {to him},
but he delights in the prayers of upright people.

⁹Yahweh detests what wicked people do,
but he loves people who diligently try to do what is right.

¹⁰Yahweh will severely punish people who refuse to live righteously,
{and} people who refuse to let other people correct them will perish.

¹¹Yahweh knows everything about the place where dead people are,
so he surely knows everything that everyone thinks!

¹²People who ridicule others despise anyone who corrects them;
they avoid wise people.

¹³People smile when they are happy,
but feeling sad can make people despair.

¹⁴Sensible people are always trying to learn more,
but foolish people satisfy themselves with what is foolish.

¹⁵People who suffer experience bad things every day,
but cheerful people live as though they are always feasting.

¹⁶Being poor while reverently fearing Yahweh
is better than being rich while worrying.

¹⁷It is better for someone to have a small meal of vegetables with people who love each other
than to have a large meal of good meat with people who hate each other.

¹⁸People who easily become angry cause people to argue,
but people who do not easily become angry will help people to be peaceful.

¹⁹Lazy people are {unproductive} like people walking through thorny plants,
but upright people are {productive} {like people} walking on a level road.

²⁰Wise sons and daughters make their parents happy,
but any sons or daughters who detest their parents are foolish.

²¹People who are not wise enjoy acting foolishly,
but understanding people do what is right.

²²People will not accomplish what they plan to do if there is no one to advise them {well},
but when many people advise them {well}, they will succeed.

²³People rejoice when they answer someone aptly.
It is so good to say something at the right time!

²⁴Insightful people live in a way that causes their lives to become increasingly better,
in order for them to avoid living in a way that would result in dying.

²⁵Yahweh will destroy what proud people own,
but he protects the {few} things that widows own.

²⁶Yahweh detests the evil things that people think,
but the pleasing things that people say are pure.

²⁷People who gain wealth in an unjust manner trouble their families,
but people who refuse bribes will live {in a better way}.

²⁸Righteous people think carefully about how to reply to people,
but wicked people quickly say what is evil.

²⁹Yahweh does not listen to {what} wicked people {request him to do},
but he listens {and responds} when righteous people pray {to him}.

³⁰People feel happy when they see someone smile,
{and} people feel healthy when they hear something good.

³¹People who begin to behave in a more life-giving way when others rebuke them {for behaving badly} show that
they belong to the group of wise people.

³²People who refuse to let others correct them {act as if they} despise themselves,
but people who listen when others rebuke them think wisely.

³³Revering Yahweh teaches people to be wise,
and people must be humble before other people can respect them.

Chapter 16

¹People plan what they want {to say},

but Yahweh determines how they will {actually} speak.

²People think that everything that they do is right,

but Yahweh knows why people do what they do.

³Entrust what you do to Yahweh,

and he will make what you plan {to do} succeed.

⁴When Yahweh made everything, he planned what would happen to each thing.

He has even made wicked people for the time when he will punish them.

⁵Yahweh detests all proud people;

he will certainly punish them.

⁶Be loyal to Yahweh and faithfully obey him; if you do that, he will forgive you for having sinned.

People who revere Yahweh will avoid doing what is evil.

⁷When Yahweh approves of what people do,

he even causes their enemies to be peaceful with them.

⁸It is better {for someone} to have {just} a few things while being righteous,

than {for someone} to have a lot of crops while being unjust.

⁹People plan what they want to do,

but Yahweh determines what they will {actually} do.

¹⁰Kings speak for God;

when kings judge, they must {always} speak justly.

¹¹Yahweh made accurate weighing instruments {for us to use honestly}.

Indeed, he made all the stones in the {weighing} bag {so that we would use them honestly}.

¹²Kings {should} detest any wicked thing that people do

because acting righteously causes kings to rule securely.

¹³{Ideally,} kings enjoy hearing people speak honestly.

Indeed, they love people who say what is true.

¹⁴When kings are angry, they cause people to die,

so wise people will appease them.

¹⁵When kings are happy, they let people live;

when they approve of people, it is as refreshing as rain in springtime.

¹⁶Becoming wise is better than having gold.

Indeed, it is better to choose to become understanding than to have silver.

¹⁷Upright people act in a way that avoids doing what is evil;

people who want to stay alive are careful about what they do.

¹⁸Being proud causes people to destroy themselves.

Indeed, being arrogant causes people to ruin themselves.

¹⁹It is better to live humbly among poor people

than to {live proudly and} receive some of what proud people have taken from others.

²⁰People who act prudently in a matter will succeed,

and people who trust in Yahweh are happy.

²¹People will call those who think wisely, "understanding ones,"

and people who speak pleasantly are able to teach others effectively.

²²Being insightful allows a person to live well continually,

but foolish people can only teach others to be foolish.

²³What wise people think causes them to speak insightfully,

and what those people say causes others to learn.

²⁴The pleasing things that people say are {like} a honeycomb:

They cause people to feel pleasant and healthy.

²⁵There is a way to do things that is easy and convenient for people,

but in the end, doing things that way will cause them to die.

²⁶Being hungry helps working people work

because wanting to eat motivates people to keep on working.

²⁷Worthless people plot how to hurt others;

the evil things they say harm others like fire burns {people}.

²⁸Perverse people cause other people to argue with each other,

and people who gossip about others cause friends to stop being friends.

²⁹Violent people tempt other people {to sin},

and they guide them to behave wickedly.

³⁰People who use their eyes to signal to others are planning to do something perverse;

people who use their lips to signal to others are about to do the evil thing {that they had planned to do}.

³¹{The} gray hair {that old people have} is {like} an honorable crown {on their heads};
they achieve it by living righteously.

³²It is better to be someone who does not become angry quickly than to be powerful.
It is better to control oneself than to be {as powerful as} someone who conquers a city.

³³People throw lots {in order to decide what to do},
but Yahweh decides whatever happens.

Chapter 17

¹It is better for someone to have a little stale food {to eat} while living peacefully
than for someone to live in a house where people frequently eat large meals while arguing with each other.

²An insightful slave will become the boss of a disgraceful son {of his master},
and that slave will inherit a portion {of his master's property} along with his master's sons.

³People put silver and gold into very hot furnaces {to burn out what is impure},
and Yahweh tests what people are thinking and desiring to do {in a similar manner}.

⁴People who act wickedly listen carefully when people speak what is sinful;
people who lie pay attention when people say things that destroy {others}.

⁵People who ridicule poor people despise Yahweh, who made them;
Yahweh will certainly punish people who rejoice when other people experience disastrous things.

⁶Old people are proud of their grandchildren,
and children are proud of their parents.

⁷It is not fitting for worthless people to speak eloquently.
It is even less fitting for royal officials to speak falsely!

⁸People who pay bribes think that bribes are magical;
{by paying bribes, they think that} everything that they do will be successful.

⁹If you want people to love you, forgive them for the wrong things that they have done to you.
If you continue to remind them about those {wrong} things, they will no longer be your friends.

¹⁰Rebuking sensible people once causes them to learn
more than hitting foolish people a hundred times {causes them to learn}.

¹¹Evil people only want to rebel,
so a merciless messenger will come and punish them.

¹²A mother bear who is furious because someone has stolen her cubs is dangerous,

but it can be more dangerous to confront a foolish person who is doing something foolish.

¹³If someone does bad things to people who have done good things to him,
then bad things will always happen to his family.

¹⁴When people start arguing with each other, it is {as difficult to stop as it is to stop} water that is leaking out {of a dam},
so prevent yourself from arguing before you start to argue.

¹⁵There are people who acquit guilty people,
and there are people who condemn innocent people;
Yahweh detests both types of people.

¹⁶How useless it is for foolish people to try to pay money in order to become wise
when they are unable to think!

¹⁷A friend loves {you} all the time,
and relatives exist in order to help {other relatives} when disastrous things happen.

¹⁸People who do not think wisely agree to pay someone else's loan
and even guarantee to pay that loan in front of people whom they know.

¹⁹People who love to sin {also} love to cause people to argue;
people who brag a lot cause others to destroy them.

²⁰People who think deceitfully will not experience good things,
and bad things will happen to people who speak deceitfully.

²¹Foolish people grieve their parents.
Indeed, worthless people will cause their parents to be very sad.

²²Being cheerful helps the body to heal,
but being discouraged makes the body weak.

²³Wicked people accept bribes that people give to them secretly,
so that they will decide matters unfairly.

²⁴Understanding people concentrate on what is wise,
but foolish people cannot concentrate on anything.

²⁵Foolish children grieve their fathers
and make their mothers miserable.

²⁶Punishing innocent people is surely very bad,
{and} flogging noble people {would be just as} wrong.

- ²⁷People who refrain from speaking {unnecessarily} are knowledgeable,
and people who can remain calm are {truly} wise.
- ²⁸People will think even foolish people are wise if those foolish people do not speak.
Indeed, if fools refrain from speaking people will consider them to be insightful.

Chapter 18

- ¹People who avoid other people only care about doing what they want to do.
They refuse to do anything that is wise.
- ²Foolish people hate learning.
Instead, they only want to tell others what they think.
- ³People treat wicked people contemptuously,
and people scold people who act shamefully.
- ⁴What {wise} people say is as profound as a deep ocean.
Wise people are {always saying wise things, like} a fountain that flows in a constant stream.
- ⁵It is very evil {for judges} to favor guilty people
in order to prevent judging innocent people justly.
- ⁶What foolish people say makes people argue,
and it makes people want to beat them.
- ⁷What foolish people say will ruin them.
Indeed, what they say may cause them to die, as a trap {may cause an animal to die}.
- ⁸People are eager to listen to what people who gossip say,
and what they say deeply affects those who hear it.
- ⁹People who are lazy when they work
are like people who destroy things.
- ¹⁰Yahweh is {like} a strong tower
that righteous people run into and are safe.
- ¹¹Rich people think that what they own keeps them safe like walls keep cities safe;
they think that what they own protects them as well as a high wall.
- ¹²Before people ruin themselves, they have first become proud;
and before people will respect someone, that person must become humble.
- ¹³It is foolish and shameful

for someone to reply to what a person has said before hearing it.

¹⁴When someone is inwardly strong, he can endure being sick.

However, when someone is inwardly weak and depressed, it is very difficult to make the person feel better!

¹⁵Understanding people are always learning more.

Indeed, wise people are always trying to learn more.

¹⁶Giving something {to someone} can benefit the one who gives it;

doing so can enable that person to meet important people.

¹⁷People who state their cases first seem to be right

until people whom they know arrive and question them.

¹⁸Throwing lots {in order to decide something} can make people stop arguing,

it can also decide who is right between powerful people.

¹⁹It is more difficult to reconcile with a relative {whom you have} offended than {to conquer} a fortified city;

and when people argue, they avoid each other as if a castle's strong gate were between them.

²⁰What people say will satisfy them when they are hungry.

Indeed, what people say will satisfy them.

²¹What people say can cause people to die or to remain alive.

So people who are skillful at talking will strongly influence what happens to themselves {and to others}.

²²A man who marries a {good} wife will experience good things,

and Yahweh approves of them.

²³Poor people plead for others to be merciful {to them}, but rich people reply {to them} rudely.

²⁴Having companions {who only seem to be true friends} will destroy a person,

but there is a type of friend who loves us and is more loyal than any brother.

Chapter 19

¹It is better to be poor and behave honestly

than to speak deceitfully and be foolish.

²Furthermore, it is very bad for people to be enthusiastic {about doing something} while not knowing {anything about it};

people who act hastily do things wrong.

³People who act foolishly destroy themselves,

yet they become furious with Yahweh {and blame him}.

⁴Wealthy people {easily} make many friends,
but when people become poor, they lose {even} the friends they have.

⁵Someone will surely punish lying witnesses.
Indeed, someone will surely punish people who lie easily.

⁶A lot of people want royal officials to favor them,
and many people want to be friends with people who give gifts.

⁷All the relatives of poor people despise them,
and even their friends avoid them!
Although they call out {to them for help}, they do not {respond}.

⁸People who love to learn benefit themselves;
people who are consistently sensible will surely succeed.

⁹Someone will surely punish lying witnesses.
Indeed, people who lie easily will die.

¹⁰It is wrong for foolish people to live luxuriously,
and it is even worse for slaves to reign over princes!

¹¹Insightful people do not get angry quickly,
and people show how honorable they are by forgiving {people who} sin {against them}.

¹²When kings are furious, they frighten people like the roaring of young lions {frightens people},
but when they approve of people, it is as refreshing {for the people} as dew {is} on plants.

¹³Foolish children destroy their fathers,
and when wives argue {with their husbands}, it is {as annoying as} constantly dripping water.

¹⁴People inherit houses and riches from their fathers,
but Yahweh {alone} gives {men} insightful wives.

¹⁵Lazy people sleep well,
but {such} idle people are {always} hungry.

¹⁶People who obey {God's} commandments stay alive,
but people who do not care about {God's} ways will die.

¹⁷Giving things to poor people is {like} loaning them to Yahweh;
he will reward anyone who does this.

¹⁸Discipline your children while {they are young and} you can expect them to learn {to live in the right way}.
{If you} do not {discipline them}, {it is as though you} want them to die.

¹⁹Very angry people will pay {for being angry};
so if you rescue them {once from what they must pay}, you will have to do that again and again.

²⁰Pay attention to what people advise you {to do} and let people teach you.
If you do so, you will become wise for the rest of your life.

²¹People plan to do many things,
but {only} what Yahweh advises will succeed.

²²People want others to consider them to be faithful.
It is better to be poor than to be someone who lies.

²³Revering Yahweh causes people to live for a long time;
such people rest contentedly at night;
nothing will harm them.

²⁴Some people are so lazy that even though they have put their hands in a dish {of food},
they will not even lift the food to their mouths.

²⁵{If you} punish people who ridicule {others},
{then} naive people {who see you do that} will learn to be sensible.
{If you} correct understanding people,
{then} they will know even more.

²⁶Children who act violently toward their fathers and chase away their mothers
are disgraceful and embarrassing.

²⁷My child, if you want to become stupid,
then stop listening to what people teach you.

²⁸Worthless witnesses scorn what is just,
and wicked people enjoy acting sinfully as if they were gulping down delicious food.

²⁹Yahweh is ready to condemn people who ridicule {others},
and he is ready to beat fools on their backs.

Chapter 20

¹Drinking a lot of intoxicating drink causes people to start ridiculing and fighting others;
becoming drunk is very foolish.

²When kings are terrifyingly angry, they frighten people like the roaring of young lions {frightens people};
people who make kings angry cause themselves to die.

³It is honorable to cease arguing with other people,
but all foolish people are eager to argue with others.

⁴Lazy farmers do not plow {their fields} when they should {plow their fields}.

Then when it is time to harvest {crops}, they look {for crops in their fields}, but there are none.

⁵Knowing what people are thinking and planning is {as difficult as} drawing water out of a deep {well},
but discerning people are able to do so.

⁶Many people claim that they are faithful individuals,
but very few people {actually} act faithfully!

⁷Righteous people live honestly;
their children are very fortunate.

⁸{Ideally,} kings who sit on their thrones in order to judge {people}
discern anything that is evil and remove it {from their lands}.

⁹No one can truthfully say, "I do not think sinfully anymore; I do not sin anymore."

¹⁰Yahweh detests {people dishonestly using} both weights that differ and measurements that differ {to benefit themselves}.

¹¹Even young people show others {who they are} by what they do;
how they act shows whether they are innocent and right {or not}.

¹²Yahweh has made both ears with which to hear and eyes with which to see.

¹³If you sleep a lot, you will become poor;
{but} if you stay awake {and work}, you will have plenty of food.

¹⁴Buyers claim that something is not good at all {when they are bargaining with the seller about its price}.

But {after they buy it,} they go and boast {to their friends about the good thing that they bought}.

¹⁵Gold and precious jewels are plentiful,
but the knowledgeable things that people say are rare and precious.

¹⁶Take the coats of people who promise to pay a loan for someone whom they do not know.

Indeed, hold onto the coats of people who do so for a foreigner {because those people are not likely to repay those loans}.

¹⁷Food that people get by deceiving {others} may taste sweet {to them at first},
but later what they have done will be {as unpleasant to them as having} a mouth full of rocks.

¹⁸When people give you good advice, {if you do what they suggest,} your plans will succeed.

Therefore, let others advise you before you start fighting a war.

¹⁹People who walk around gossiping tell {others} what is secret,
so avoid people who speak carelessly.

²⁰People who curse their parents
{will die like} an oil lamp that stops burning {oil} in a totally dark place.

²¹If people inherit {property} hastily before the proper time,
they will ultimately not receive any blessing from it.

²²Do not say that you will harm someone who has harmed you.
Rather, wait for Yahweh {to resolve the matter}, so that he may vindicate you.

²³Yahweh detests {people dishonestly using} differing weights {to benefit themselves}.
Indeed, {using} weighing instruments in order to deceive {others} is very bad.

²⁴Yahweh directs what happens {even} to powerful people.
So then, no one can comprehend what will happen to him!

²⁵It is dangerous for people to declare thoughtlessly that they will dedicate something to Yahweh,
and then later regret that they have promised to do that.

²⁶Wise kings separate the wicked people from the good people
and then punish the wicked people severely.

²⁷Just as the light of a lamp penetrates into and illuminates a dark place, the life-breath that Yahweh puts into each
person penetrates into the person's inner being.
That breath is like the presence of Yahweh, who sees everything that is inside a person.

²⁸Being faithful and trustworthy makes kings safe.
Indeed, being faithful enables them to rule securely.

²⁹People admire young men because they are strong,
but people admire old men because they have become wise.

³⁰Flogging people for doing evil things can stop them from doing those evil things,
and hitting those people {on the outside} can change who they are on the inside.

Chapter 21

¹Yahweh directs what kings think as {a farmer directs} streams of water
to make them go wherever he wants {them to go}.

²People always think that what they do is right,
but Yahweh {rightly} evaluates why they do those things.

- ³Doing what is right and fair is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrificing {animals to him}.
- ⁴Being proud and arrogant guide what wicked people do like a lamp {shows people where to go}; they are sinful.
- ⁵What diligent people plan will certainly profit them, but all those who act too hastily will certainly become poor.
- ⁶When people gain wealth by speaking falsely, that wealth quickly vanishes like mist, {and doing that} will kill them.
- ⁷When wicked people act violently, they cause others to punish them for it because they refuse to do what is right.
- ⁸Guilty people continually do what is wrong, but innocent people do what is right.
- ⁹It is better to live {alone} in a corner of a housetop than to live inside a house with a wife who always argues {with you}.
- ¹⁰Wicked people strongly desire to do what is evil, they will not be merciful to the people around them.
- ¹¹If you punish people who ridicule others, {then} naive people {who see you do that} will become wise, and if you teach wise people, they will become {even more} knowledgeable.
- ¹²Righteous people are able to understand what the households of wicked people do; they let the evil things that wicked people do happen to them.
- ¹³People who refuse to listen to poor people when they cry out {for help} will also cry out {for help themselves}, but no one will help them.
- ¹⁴Secretly giving something to an angry person will stop him from being angry. Indeed, secretly bribing a furious person will calm him down.
- ¹⁵Righteous people are glad when people judge justly, but judging justly terrifies people who act sinfully.
- ¹⁶People who stop behaving sensibly will {soon} go to the place where the spirits of dead people are.
- ¹⁷People who love what is pleasurable will be poor. Indeed, people who indulge themselves in wine and rich food will never be wealthy.
- ¹⁸Wicked people will suffer instead of righteous people,

and treacherous people {will suffer} in place of upright people.

¹⁹It is better to live {alone} in a desolate land
than {to live} with an argumentative and nagging wife.

²⁰Wise people store up precious riches and olive oil,
but foolish people waste everything that they have.

²¹People who diligently try to be righteous and faithful
will live {well}, will be righteous, and people will respect them.

²²Wise people know how to conquer cities that mighty warriors are defending;
they can pull down the walls that people {in those cities} believe will protect them.

²³People who are careful about what they say
avoid becoming distressed.

²⁴People who ridicule others are proud and arrogant;
they behave furiously and presumptuously.

²⁵Lazy people want {food}, but they will die
because they refuse to work.

²⁶Lazy people always want more things for themselves,
but righteous people generously give {what they have to others}.

²⁷{Yahweh} detests the sacrifices that wicked people offer {to him};
it is even more {detestable} when they are offering something {to Yahweh} while intending to act wickedly!

²⁸Witnesses who lie will die,
but when someone who listens carefully speaks, what he says will finish the matter.

²⁹Wicked people pretend to know what they are doing,
but upright people think about what they do.

³⁰Even the wisest and most knowledgeable counselor is nothing compared to Yahweh.

³¹Soldiers prepare to fight,
but Yahweh determines who wins {that fight}.

Chapter 22

¹Being someone whom people respect is more important than being very wealthy.
Indeed, being someone whom others approve of is better than having silver and gold.

²Rich people and poor people have this in common:

Yahweh made all of them.

³Sensible people observe something dangerous happening and avoid it,
but naive people just keep going and suffer {for doing so}.

⁴People who are humble, who revere Yahweh,
will become rich, people will respect them, and they will live {long and well}.

⁵Deceptive people live {dangerously,} as if they were walking down a road covered with thorns and traps,
{but} people who want to stay alive avoid living that way.

⁶Teach children how to behave {properly},
so that when they become old, they will still continue to do so.

⁷Rich people reign over poor people,
and people who borrow {money} from others become like slaves to the people who loaned them {money}.

⁸People who act unjustly will suffer for doing so,
and they will no longer be able to furiously oppress other people.

⁹Yahweh will bless generous people
because they give some of their own food to poor people.

¹⁰If you banish people who ridicule others, then people will stop arguing {with each other},
condemning {each other}, and shaming {each other}.

¹¹People who love being sincere and
speaking graciously are companions of kings.

¹²Yahweh preserves true sayings,
but he makes what treacherous people say fail.

¹³Lazy people {as an excuse to not work} claim that there is a lion outside that will kill them in the street {if they go outside}.

¹⁴What adulterous women say is {as dangerous as} a deep hole {that men could fall into};
those with whom Yahweh is angry will suffer from it.

¹⁵Children naturally think foolishly,
but physically disciplining them will teach them to stop being foolish.

¹⁶People who oppress poor people in order to make more money for themselves
or who give things to rich people {in order to become rich} will only become poor.

¹⁷Listen carefully to what wise people have said;

consider carefully what I am teaching you!

¹⁸{Do this} because if you remember these sayings
and if you are always ready to repeat them {to others},
then you will be glad.

¹⁹I am teaching these sayings to you—yes, you—right now
so that you will trust Yahweh.

²⁰I am indeed writing these 30 sayings
to advise and teach you.

²¹{I am writing them} in order to teach you what is true in trustworthy sayings,
and in order to answer those who sent you with trustworthy sayings.

²²Do not steal from poor people just because they are poor;
and do not oppress suffering people in court.

²³{Do not do these things} because Yahweh will defend those poor people when you dispute with them,
and he will kill the people who stole from them.

²⁴Do not become friends with angry people.
Indeed, do not associate with people who easily become angry.

²⁵{If you do so,} then you will act like them,
and you will endanger yourself like an animal caught in a trap.

²⁶Stay away from those people who agree to pay loans for others.
{Indeed, stay away from those people} who guarantee to pay the loans of others.

²⁷{Because} if you cannot pay back {the loan},
{then} the person to whom you owe money will surely take away even your own bed {in order to pay back the loan}.

²⁸Do not cheat people by moving the stones that their ancestors placed long ago
to mark the boundaries of their land.

²⁹Consider this: People who work skillfully will serve kings
rather than serving unknown people.

Chapter 23

¹When you sit down to eat {a meal} with someone who rules over others,
pay attention to the food that is in front of you.

²Restrain yourself {from eating too much}

if you like eating a lot of food.

³Do not crave the {expensive} food that the ruler has

because that ruler is using that food to deceive you.

⁴Do not work so much that you exhaust yourself in order to become rich.

Be understanding enough to stop doing so.

⁵As soon as you look at that wealth, it will surely be gone!

{This is} because wealth certainly disappears quickly as if it had wings

and flew off into the sky like a fast bird.

⁶Do not eat food that stingy people {give you}.

Do not crave the expensive food that they have,

⁷because stingy people are always thinking about how much the food costs them.

They will tell you to eat and drink,

but they do not mean what they say.

⁸{When you realize this,} you will want to vomit what little food you ate.

You will have wasted the kind things you said {to them}.

⁹Do not {try to} talk to foolish people

because they will {only} despise the insightful things that you say.

¹⁰Do not cheat people by moving the old stones that mark the boundaries of their land.

Do not claim the land that belongs to {defenseless} orphans,

¹¹because {Yahweh is} the one who redeems them {and he} is powerful.

He is the one who will defend them when they dispute with you.

¹²Consider carefully {what people say} when they correct you.

Indeed, listen carefully to what people teach you.

¹³Do not refuse to discipline your children.

If you physically punish them, they will not die.

¹⁴In fact, if you physically punish your children,

you will prevent them from dying.

¹⁵My child, if you are wise,

then surely I myself will be very happy,

¹⁶and I will be deeply joyful

when you say what is right.

¹⁷Do not envy sinful people;

instead always revere Yahweh.

¹⁸{If you do so, then} you will surely have a {good} future,

and what you hope will happen will indeed occur!

¹⁹My child, listen {to me} so that you can become wise.

Make yourself think about behaving rightly.

²⁰Stay away from drunkards and gluttons,

²¹because drunkards and gluttons will become poor.

They sleep so much that they will only have rags to wear.

²²Pay attention to your father, who enabled you to exist,

and continue to honor your mother when she becomes old.

²³Learn what is true and remember it.

Learn what is wise and instructive and what you should understand.

²⁴Fathers of righteous people are very joyful.

Indeed, those who father wise people are happy because of them.

²⁵So do what will make your parents happy!

Do what will make your mother joyful!

²⁶My son, pay close attention to me!

Carefully observe what I do!

²⁷{Do this} because prostitutes are as dangerous as a deep hole.

Indeed, {becoming involved with} an adulterous woman is as dangerous as {falling into} a well that you cannot escape from.

²⁸These very women certainly wait {for men to seduce} like robbers {wait for people to rob}.

They cause many men to become unfaithful.

²⁹These are the kind of people who are woeful, sorrowful, and quarrelsome,

who lament, get hurt for no reason,

and have red eyes:

³⁰those people who drink too much wine

and are always looking around for wine {to drink} that someone has prepared.

³¹Do not let wine become overly attractive to you, even though it is beautifully red, glistens in the cup,

and goes down your throat smoothly.

³²Afterward you will feel as terrible as if a poisonous snake has bitten you.

³³{When you are drunk,} you will hallucinate,

and you will imagine distorted things.

³⁴You will feel {dizzy and sick} as if you were trying to sleep on a ship that the sea was tossing back and forth.

Indeed, you will feel as if you were trying to sleep while swaying at the top of a ship's sails.

³⁵{You will say,} "People hit me, but it did not hurt.

People beat me, but I did not feel it.

I wish I could be sober

so that I could find even more wine {to drink} again!"

Chapter 24

¹Do not envy evil people;

do not want to associate with them,

²because they plan to act violently,

and they talk about doing bad things to people.

³People build households by acting wisely;

they make those households stable by acting sensibly.

⁴By acting knowledgeably, people fill the rooms {of those households}

with all kinds of valuable and delightful riches.

⁵Wise people are strong,

and knowledgeable people make themselves more powerful,

⁶because letting people advise you will make you fight your war successfully,

and letting many people counsel you will rescue you {from losing the war}.

⁷Foolish people cannot understand what is wise;

they have nothing {useful} to say in court.

⁸{Some} people are always planning to do evil things;

people refer to them as schemers.

⁹Foolish plans are sinful,

and people detest those who ridicule others.

¹⁰If you give up during distressful times,

then you are weak.

¹¹Save people whom others are trying to kill;
save the ones who will certainly die unless you do something!

¹²If you {falsely} claim that you did not know that those people were dying unjustly, then think about this:
Yahweh knows exactly what you are thinking and he understands {what you are doing}!
He is the one who keeps you alive and he knows {everything about you}!
He will surely make people receive what they deserve for whatever they have done or not done!

¹³My child, eat honey because it tastes good,
and honey dripping from the comb tastes sweet.

¹⁴Be aware that what is wise is like honey for you.
If you become wise, then you will have a {good} future,
and what you hope will happen will indeed occur!

¹⁵Do not be like wicked people and hide in wait in order to attack the places where righteous people dwell.
Do not devastate the places where righteous people rest!

¹⁶{Do not do so} because righteous people can recover many times when disastrous things happen to them,
but disastrous things will destroy wicked people.

¹⁷Do not be happy when something disastrous happens to your adversaries.
Indeed, do not rejoice when that happens!

¹⁸If you do, then Yahweh will notice and disapprove,
so that he stops being angry with your enemies.

¹⁹Do not worry about people who do what is evil.
Do not be envious of wicked people.

²⁰{Do not do so} because evil people will not have {good} futures,
{but} wicked people {will merely die} like an oil lamp that stops burning {oil}.

²¹My child, reverently fear Yahweh and kings.
Avoid people who rebel {against either Yahweh or the king},

²²because disastrous things will happen quickly to those people,
and no one knows how terribly both Yahweh and kings can destroy {others}! ²³Here are more things that wise people have said:

It is very evil to favor someone when you judge.

²⁴If anyone declares that a guilty person is innocent,

many people will curse him and whole people groups will hate him.

²⁵However, people who condemn {guilty people} will prosper,
and Yahweh will bless them well.

²⁶People who answer honestly show that they are true friends.

²⁷Do the work you must do outside and prepare your fields
before you build your house.

²⁸Do not testify against someone if you do not have a good reason {to do so},
and do not try to deceive people by what you say.

²⁹Do not say, "I will do to him that same {bad} thing that he did to me;
I will pay him back for what he did to me!"

³⁰I walked by the land of a lazy person
and past the vineyard of someone who does not think wisely.

³¹And I saw that thistles and weeds were everywhere in that field and vineyard. Even the stone wall surrounding them had fallen down.

³²When I saw {that}, I considered carefully {what I was seeing}. When I observed {that}, I learned {this}:

³³{If you say to yourself,} "Let me sleep just a little more!
Let me lay my hands {across my chest} in order to rest comfortably for a little while longer!"

³⁴Then {the result of being so lazy will be that} you will become poor and needy
just as surely as if a thief has robbed you.

Chapter 25

¹Here are more wise sayings said by Solomon that the scribes who served Hezekiah, the king of Judah, copied {from a scroll that Solomon had written}:

²God shows how glorious he is when he makes something that is difficult for people to understand.
But kings show how glorious they are when they explain something {that is difficult for people to understand}.

³As people cannot fully understand how high the sky is or how deep the earth is,
so they cannot fully understand what kings think.

⁴People who make things from metal must remove impurities from silver
before they can make {that silver into} something useful.

⁵{In the same way,} people must remove wicked advisers from the presence of kings
so that they can rule securely by being righteous.

⁶Do not promote yourself in front of kings,

and do not pretend to be great.

⁷{Do not do so} because it is better if someone invites you to sit in a place that is closer {to the king},
than for someone to embarrass you in front of a royal official whom you have seen {by telling you to sit farther
away from the king}.

⁸Do not plead your case too quickly against someone you know.

If you do, then you will not know what to do when that person {wins the case and} embarrasses you!

⁹If you do indeed plead your case against someone you know,
{settle it between yourselves and} do not tell {others} any secret about that person.

¹⁰If you do {tell a secret}, then the people who hear you may shame you {for it},
and people will speak badly about you from then on.

¹¹When someone says something that is very appropriate to a situation,
it is {as delightful as seeing} golden apples in a setting of silver.

¹²When a wise person rebukes someone who is willing to listen,
it is {as valuable as} a gold ring or jewelry made from the best gold.

¹³Reliable messengers are {as refreshing} to those who send them as cold snow would be {refreshing} during the
{summer} harvest time;
they refresh the people whom they serve.

¹⁴People who brag about giving something but then do not give it
are as disappointing as clouds and wind that do not bring rain.

¹⁵People can persuade leaders by being patient,
and by speaking gently people can convince those who oppose them {to agree with them}.

¹⁶If you discover some wild honey, do not eat too much of it.
If you do, then you will become sick from it and vomit.

¹⁷{In the same way,} do not visit too often the houses of your friends.
If you do, then they may feel that they have had too much of you and {even} hate you.

¹⁸People who lie when they testify against other people
are {deadly, as if they had attacked them with} a club, a sword, or a piercing arrow.

¹⁹Trusting treacherous people during distressful times
is {like trying to eat with} a rotten tooth or {trying to walk with} a crippled foot.

²⁰Singing songs to someone who is sad
is {as unhelpful as} taking a coat off of someone in cold weather
or pouring vinegar on soda.

- ²¹Feed your enemies if they are hungry;
give them something to drink if they are thirsty.
- ²²{Do so} because by doing so you {will shame them, as if you} were pouring burning coals on top of them,
and Yahweh will reward you {for doing so}.
- ²³When wind blows from the north, that produces rain.
{Similarly,} when people tell the secrets {of others}, {that produces} angry people.
- ²⁴It is better to live {alone} in a corner of a housetop
than to live inside a house with a wife who always argues {with you}.
- ²⁵When people hear something good from a faraway place,
it is as {refreshing as drinking} cold water when one is thirsty.
- ²⁶When righteous people yield to wicked people,
it is {as bad as} a spring that people have made murky by walking in it or {as bad as} a polluted fountain.
- ²⁷{As} it is not good to eat too much honey;
{so it is not} honorable to try to make people honor you.
- ²⁸People who cannot control themselves
are {as defenseless as} a city that an army has broken into and knocked down its walls.

Chapter 26

- ¹Honoring foolish people is just as inappropriate
as snow {falling} in {hot} summer and rain {falling} during the time to harvest crops.
- ²Just as a bird will fly by {and not land on you},
so a curse will not harm you if you are innocent.
- ³As people must whip horses and bridle donkeys {in order to guide them},
so people must physically punish foolish people {in order to guide them}.
- ⁴Do not reply to foolish people according to their foolish way of thinking.
If you do, then you also will be foolish.
- ⁵Reply to foolish people according to their foolish way of thinking.
If you do not, then they may think that they are wise.
- ⁶Anyone who asks a foolish person to take a message to someone
is {doing something as foolish as} cutting off his own feet or drinking poison.
- ⁷{As} the legs of people who cannot walk are useless,

so are the sayings that foolish people say.

⁸Honoring foolish people is just {as useless}
as a harmless weapon.

⁹A drunken person picks up a thorn {and it will hurt someone},
{in the same way} a foolish person says a proverb {that can only be harmful}.

¹⁰People who employ foolish people or random strangers are {as dangerous}
as someone who randomly shoots arrows at people.

¹¹Foolish people who do the same foolish thing over and over again
are like dogs that eat what they have vomited up.

¹²Consider this: Foolish people are more likely to learn
than people who {wrongly} think that they are {already} wise.

¹³Lazy people claim that there is a lion in the path
or in the midst of the streets {so that they can stay inside their houses and do nothing}.

¹⁴As doors swing on their hinges {and do not go anywhere},
so lazy people turn back and forth in their beds.

¹⁵Lazy people put their hands in a dish {of food},
{but} they are so lazy that they will not lift the food to their mouths.

¹⁶A {typical} lazy person {wrongly} thinks that he is wiser
than several people who answer intelligently.

¹⁷People who make themselves angry because of an argument that does not concern them
are {as foolish as} people who grab the ears of a dog that is passing by.

¹⁸⁻¹⁹People who trick others
and then say that they were just joking are {as dangerous}
as a crazy person who shoots deadly flaming arrows {at people}.

²⁰Fires stop burning when they have nothing {to burn}.
In the same way, people stop arguing when no one is gossiping.

²¹{As} charcoal keeps coals burning and wood keeps fires burning,
so people who always argue keep other people arguing.

²²People are eager to listen to what people who gossip say,
and what they say deeply affects those who hear it.

²³People who fervently say {that they are your friend} while thinking about doing evil things {to you}

{are as deceptive as} a {cheap} clay pot that someone has made to look like silver.

²⁴People who hate you will use what they say to hide what they feel,
but they are {really} thinking about how to betray you.

²⁵Do not believe those people when they speak kindly to you,
because they are thinking many detestable things.

²⁶Although those people deceive others by pretending that they do not hate you,
When people gather together, they will discover how wicked those people are.

²⁷People who dig pits to trap others will fall into those pits instead;
and people who try to crush others with stones will become crushed by those stones instead.

²⁸Liars hate the people whom they hurt,
and flatterers cause disastrous things to happen.

Chapter 27

¹Do not brag about {what you will do} tomorrow,
because you do not know what will happen then.

²Do not praise yourself; let someone else praise you.
Indeed, let other people praise you, not yourself.

³Stones and sand are heavy,
but fools are so annoying that they are harder to bear than either of those.

⁴Angry people are cruel and furious people are destructive,
but no one can withstand jealous people!

⁵It is better to correct people openly, than to love them without showing them that you love them.

⁶Friends will be faithful to you by criticizing you {when necessary},
but enemies will deceive you by acting affectionately toward you.

⁷When people have full stomachs, they do not want to eat {even} honey.
But when people are hungry, {even} bitter things taste sweet to them.

⁸People who stray from their homes
are like birds that stray from their nests.

⁹Fragrant oil and perfume make people feel happy,
but having a friend who advises you sincerely is even better.

¹⁰Do not ignore your friends or your father's friends.

Do not {think that you must} go to the house of a relative when something disastrous happens to you.
{Rather,} it is better to go to a nearby neighbor than to relatives who live far away.

¹¹My child, make me happy by becoming wise.

Then I will be able to reply to anyone who argues against me.

¹²Sensible people observe something dangerous happening and avoid it,
but naive people {ignorantly} do not avoid it and suffer {for doing so}.

¹³Take the coats of people who promise to pay a loan for someone whom they do not know.

Indeed, hold onto the coats of people who do so for a foreigner.

¹⁴If you rise early in the morning and loudly call out a blessing to your neighbor {while he is still sleeping}, he will consider it to be a curse{, not a blessing}.

¹⁵A wife who always argues {with you} is as {annoying as}
constantly dripping water on a rainy day.

¹⁶It is as difficult to stop her {from arguing} as stopping the wind,
or catching oil in one hand.

¹⁷{We can use} one iron tool to sharpen another iron tool; {similarly,} when one person shares what he is thinking,
it can help another person to think more clearly.

¹⁸Just as people who take care of fruit trees will also eat the fruit from those trees,
so too will masters honor their servants who guard them.

¹⁹When people look in water, the water reflects their faces.

In the same way, what people think reveals what kinds of people they are.

²⁰Just as the place where dead people go never becomes full;
so people never stop wanting {things}.

²¹People use crucibles and furnaces to test and refine silver and gold.

In the same way, people can know what kind of person someone is {by how he reacts} when people praise him.

²²If you were to crush a fool the way that you would crush grain {into powder},
you would still not be able to find any part of him that is not foolish.

²³Be fully aware of how your sheep are doing.
Indeed, consider carefully how your animals fare.

²⁴{Do so} because riches will not last forever.
Even a king's family will not rule forever!

²⁵Harvest the grass and then you will see new grass.
Collect {and store} the plants that grow on the hillside.

²⁶{If you do these things, then} you will have lambs with wool that you can clothe yourself with. You will also have male goats that you can sell for enough money to buy a field.

²⁷You will even have female goats that produce enough milk for yourself, your family, and your servant girls to drink.

Chapter 28

¹Wicked people run away even though no one is chasing them, but righteous people are as brave as lions.

²When the people in a country sin, they will continually have {new} leaders; but when they have a truly knowledgeable ruler, then they will have a {stable} government that will last.

³A poor person who oppresses other poor people is {as destructive as} rain that washes away {the crops}, leaving nothing to eat.

⁴People who reject {Yahweh's} laws say good things about wicked people; but people who obey those laws oppose such wicked people.

⁵Evil people cannot comprehend what is just, but people who desire to please Yahweh comprehend everything {about it}.

⁶It is better to be poor and honest than to be dishonest and rich.

⁷Young people who obey {Yahweh's} laws are wise, but young people who carouse with gluttons disgrace their fathers.

⁸Money that people gain by charging an unreasonably large amount of interest {from those to whom they loan money} will {eventually} belong to someone who is kind to poor people.

⁹Yahweh detests hearing prayers from people who refuse to obey his laws.

¹⁰People who guide upright people to act evilly will destroy themselves by what they do, but people whom Yahweh does not blame {for acting wickedly} will receive what is good.

¹¹Rich people tend to think that they are wise, but perceptive poor people can tell whether or not this is true.

¹²People celebrate when righteous people become powerful, but people hide when wicked people become powerful.

¹³People who {try to} hide the sinful things that they do will never be successful,
but Yahweh will be merciful to people who confess the sinful things that they have done and stop doing them.

¹⁴People who constantly examine how they are thinking and behaving are happy,
but bad things will happen to people who become uncaring about those things.

¹⁵Wicked people who rule over poor people are {as dangerous as}
a roaring lion or attacking bear.

¹⁶Leaders who are not sensible severely oppress {other people},
{but} people who despise gaining wealth unjustly will live for a long time.

¹⁷People who murder others will keep running away {from those who would punish them} until they die.
Do not help them!

¹⁸Yahweh will rescue people who continually do what is right,
but people who behave dishonestly will ruin themselves in the end.

¹⁹People who work hard will have enough food {to eat},
but people who waste time doing worthless things will only be poor.

²⁰Yahweh abundantly blesses faithful people,
but he will certainly punish people who are eager to be wealthy.

²¹Although it is very evil to unfairly favor one person over another,
some people will sin {by doing so} to get even a small bribe.

²²People who are eager to become rich are greedy.
They do not realize that they will become poor.

²³Afterward, people appreciate someone who has corrected them
more than {they appreciate} someone who has spoken flatteringly {to them}.

²⁴People who rob their parents and say that doing so is not wrong
are as bad as thieves.

²⁵Greedy people cause people to argue with each other,
but Yahweh will prosper people who trust him.

²⁶People who trust in themselves are foolish,
but people who act wisely are the ones who will escape {what is dangerous}.

²⁷People who give poor people {what they need} will have all that they need,
but there are many who will curse people who ignore poor people.

²⁸People hide when wicked people become powerful,

but when those wicked people die, there will be more and more righteous people.

Chapter 29

¹Some people remain stubborn even though other people often correct them;
but someday something will destroy them quickly, and they will not be able to recover.

²People are joyful when righteous people become influential,
but people are miserable when wicked people rule {over them}.

³People who cherish what is wise make their fathers happy,
but people who have sex with prostitutes waste all their money.

⁴Kings make the people in their land succeed by acting justly,
but leaders who take money dishonestly ruin the people in their land.

⁵People who flatter others
are really just preparing to exploit them in some way

⁶Evil people endanger themselves by acting sinfully,
but righteous people sing joyfully and are happy.

⁷Righteous people know that they should treat poor people justly,
but wicked people do not {even} understand that they should know {this}.

⁸People who mock others agitate people throughout a city,
but wise people enable others to remain calm.

⁹If wise people dispute with foolish people,
the foolish people will become angry and sneer and not resolve anything.

¹⁰Murderers despise people who always try to do what is right,
but righteous people try to protect them.

¹¹Foolish people uncontrollably express everything that they feel,
but wise people control how they express what they feel.

¹²Leaders who believe the false things that people tell them
have only wicked servants.

¹³Poor people and the people who oppress {them} have {at least} one thing in common:
Yahweh is the one who causes both of them to live.

¹⁴Kings who judge poor people according to what is true
will always rule securely.

- ¹⁵If parents punish and correct their children, doing so can make those children wise;
but if parents let their children do whatever they want to do, then their children will disgrace them.
- ¹⁶People sin more when wicked people rule over them,
but {someday} Yahweh will destroy those wicked people, and righteous people will see it happen.
- ¹⁷If you discipline your children, then you will no longer feel worried {about their behavior}
and they will make you very happy.
- ¹⁸When the people {of a nation} do not have messages from Yahweh {through his prophets}, then they do not control themselves,
but people who obey {Yahweh's} laws are happy.
- ¹⁹You cannot correct servants by {only} speaking to them
because they will not do what you say even though they understand {what you say}.
- ²⁰Consider this: Foolish people are more likely to do well in life
than people who speak thoughtlessly.
- ²¹If you give your servants everything they want when they are young,
then they will eventually be arrogant.
- ²²People who easily become angry cause people to argue.
Indeed, angry people cause many people to sin.
- ²³People will humiliate proud people for being proud,
but people will honor those who are humble.
- ²⁴People who take a share of a thief's spoils greatly endanger themselves;
They hear that Yahweh will curse them {for not testifying to what they know}, but they do not say anything {about the crime}.
- ²⁵Being anxious is {as dangerous as walking into} a trap,
but Yahweh will protect people who trust in him.
- ²⁶Many {people} want leaders to help them,
but Yahweh is the {only} one who {surely} does for them what is just.
- ²⁷Righteous people detest unjust people,
and wicked people detest people who do the right thing.

Chapter 30

- ¹{These are} the sayings of Agur son of Jakeh, which Yahweh told him to say;
{these are what} Agur declared to both Ithiel and Ucal:

²I am certainly less intelligent than other people.

Indeed, I do not understand as much as everyone else understands!

³I have not learned how to become wise,
nor do I know {much} about {Yahweh,} the Holy One.

⁴{But I will say this;} Surely nobody has ever gone to heaven and returned to earth!

Surely nobody has ever controlled the wind!

Surely nobody has ever gathered the water for rain in the clouds!

Surely nobody has ever formed the boundaries of the earth!

You do not know the name of any such person, or the name of his son.

Therefore, you {also} do not know {much}!

⁵Everything that God says is true;
he is {like} a shield that protects people who trust him to protect them.

⁶Never claim that God has said something other than what he has {actually} said.
If you do that, then he will correct you and he will prove that you lied {about what he said}.

⁷{God,} I ask you to do two things;
please do them for me before I die:

⁸{Please} prevent me from being dishonest or speaking what is not true.
{Please} do not let me become too poor or too rich,
{but} just provide the proper amount of food for me.

⁹because if I become rich, I might say that I do not know you and that I do not need you;
and if I become poor,
I might dishonor you by stealing things.

¹⁰Never say bad things about servants to the people whom they serve.
If you do, then they will curse you, and people will hold you responsible {for what you said}.

¹¹Some people disrespect their parents.

¹²Some people think that they are sinless,
but they have committed disgusting sins, {like} people who have covered themselves with excrement.

¹³Some people are very proud!
They think that they are better than other people. ¹⁴Some people are very cruel toward others;
they harshly oppress and destroy poor people
as fierce animals attack and eat other animals.

¹⁵{Greedy people are like} the offspring of leeches
{because they} always want other people to give them more.

There are three, even four things that always want more:

¹⁶the place where dead people are,
childless women,
soil that never receives enough water,
and fire that keeps consuming more.

¹⁷People who ridicule their fathers,
and refuse to obey their mothers
deserve to {die
and} have wild animals eat their {dead} bodies.

¹⁸There are three, even four things, that are too amazing for me to comprehend:

¹⁹how a bird flies in the air,
how a snake slithers over a rock,
how a ship sails in the middle of the ocean,
and how a young man loves a young woman.

²⁰Acting adulterously is {as easy} for adulterous women as
eating and wiping their mouths.
Afterward, they claim that they have not sinned at all.

²¹There are three, even four, things that {the people in} the world cannot tolerate:

²²what slaves do who become rulers,
what worthless people do when they have plenty of food to eat,
²³what women whom people hate do when they marry someone,
and what servant girls do who replace the wives of their masters.

²⁴There are four creatures in the world that are small
but extremely wise:

²⁵Although ants are not strong,
they store up their food during the summer {so that they have it to eat during the winter}.

²⁶Although hyraxes are {also} not strong,
they are able to make their homes {high up in the rocks} on cliffs.

²⁷Although locusts do not have a king,

they move in orderly groups like soldiers in an army.

²⁸Although anyone can {easily} catch lizards in his hands,
they can freely enter into kings' palaces.

²⁹There are three, even four, things that look very impressive when they walk:

³⁰lions, which are the most powerful animals
and never flee from anything,

³¹strutting male birds, male goats,
and kings whom people are afraid to rebel against.

³²If you have acted foolishly by bragging about yourself,
or if you were plotting {to do what is evil},
then stop doing so immediately!

³³{Stop doing so} because just as churning milk produces butter,
and squeezing a nose produces blood,
making people angry causes them to fight.

Chapter 31

¹{These are} the sayings of King Lemuel; Yahweh had spoken these sayings that his mother had taught him:

²My son, whom I gave birth to
and whom I vowed {to dedicate to Yahweh}, listen to me!

³Do not exhaust yourself by having sex with women;
they can destroy kings.

⁴Lemuel, kings and dignitaries should not {constantly} drink wine,
or {greatly} desire to drink what can intoxicate {them}."

⁵{They must not do this} so that they do not forget the laws {that they have made}
and prevent all suffering people from getting what they legally deserve.

⁶Let dying people drink what can intoxicate {them},
and let miserable people drink wine.

⁷They can drink {what can intoxicate them} to forget that they are poor
and to completely forget what troubles them.

⁸Defend those who cannot speak {for themselves};
{defend} all those whom others are threatening to kill so that they get what they legally deserve.

⁹Defend, judge rightly,
and plead for suffering and poor people to get what they legally deserve.

¹⁰Virtuous and capable women are difficult to find!
This kind of woman is more valuable than precious jewels.

¹¹Her husband completely trusts her,
and he will always gain many things {because of her}.

¹²Such a woman benefits her husband
for as long as she lives.

¹³She gets materials to make clothing for both warm and cool weather,
and she enjoys making that clothing.

¹⁴She is like merchant ships
because she brings food to her home from distant places.

¹⁵She gets up before dawn in order to prepare food for her family
and to prepare some {food} for her female servants.

¹⁶She carefully evaluates a field and then buys it.
{Then} she uses some of what she earned by working to plant a vineyard {in it}.

¹⁷She keeps her body strong,
and she makes her arms strong {by working hard}.

¹⁸She knows that what she does is very profitable.
She works late into the night.

¹⁹She makes thread {for clothing} with her own hands.

²⁰She generously helps people who are poor and suffering.

²¹She is not worried that her family will be cold during cold weather
because her whole family has the best clothing.

²²She makes her own blankets to cover beds.
She wears clothing made from expensive cloth.

²³People respect such a woman's husband at the {city} gates,
when he sits {there} with the {other} leaders of the city.

²⁴This woman makes clothing and sells it.
She also sells belts to merchants.

²⁵People notice how strong and dignified she is,

and she is cheerful about what will happen in the future.

²⁶She speaks wisely,

and when she speaks, she teaches {others} to be faithful and kind.

²⁷She carefully watches what happens in her household,

and she is never lazy.

²⁸This woman's children stand respectfully and declare that she lives well.

Her husband says good things about her, as well.

²⁹He says to her, "Many women have acted virtuously and capably,

but you indeed have done better than them all!"

³⁰Charming women {who are not good} can deceive people into thinking that they are good,

and beautiful women will be beautiful for only a short time.

However, people will {always} praise those women who reverently fear Yahweh.

³¹Give to such women what they have earned,

and praise them publicly for what they have done.

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