

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

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Proverbs

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Proverbs

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.
7 In order to become knowledgeable, a person must begin by deeply respecting Yahweh.
But foolish people detest what is wise or instructive.
8 My 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.
10 My child, if sinful people tempt you *to sin with them*, refuse *to do so*.
11 Those 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.
12 We will kill living people completely, as if we were their grave.
Yes, we will kill healthy people, as if they could not escape dying.
13 We will discover many valuable treasures!
We will fill our houses with what we steal!
14 Join our gang!
We will share all the loot between us."
15 My 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.
17 It 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*.
18 However, *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.
19 That is what happens to anyone who gains wealth in an unjust manner.
What they gained unjustly will kill them.
20 Imagine 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.
21 Imagine 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.
22 She 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!
23 Turn 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.
24 I 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*.
25 You ignored everything that I advised you to do.
Indeed, you rejected what I said to correct you.
26 Therefore, 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*!
28 At 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.
30 Those foolish people rejected what I advised them to do.
Indeed, they detested everything I said to correct them.
31 Those foolish people will suffer rightly for what they have done.
Indeed, they will suffer fully for what they have planned.
32 Ultimately, naive people will die because they refuse *to be wise*.
Indeed, being complacent will destroy foolish people.
33 By contrast, people who listen attentively to what I say will live safely.
They will not fear that something evil might happen to them."

2 My 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.
3 Yes, 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!
4 Try 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.
7 He 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.
11 Being 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.
13 Those people refuse to behave righteously in
order to behave wickedly.
14 They gladly do what is wrong.
They enjoy doing things that are perverse and evil.
15 They 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.
17 Those 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.
19 No 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.
20 Therefore, behave like a good person.
Indeed, conduct yourself like a righteous person.
21 This 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.
22 By 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!

3 My 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.
3 Always 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.
4 As a result of doing so, both God and people
will approve of you and consider
you an insightful person.
5 Trust Yahweh completely,
and do not rely on what you understand.
6 Let Yahweh lead you whenever you do anything.
As a result *of doing so*, he will show you
what you should do.
7 Do not think that you know what is best.
Instead, revere Yahweh and refuse to do what is evil.
8 Doing so will make your body healthy.
Indeed, *doing so* will strengthen you from the inside.
9 Revere 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.
11 My 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.
13 People 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.
15 Being wise is more valuable than precious jewels.
There is nothing that you could desire that is
worth as much as being wise.
16 Being wise will help you live for a long time.
Being wise will help you become wealthy
and honorable.
17 Being wise will allow you to live pleasantly.
Indeed, in every way being wise will allow
you to live peacefully.
18 What is wise is *like* a tree *with fruit* that sustains
the people who possess it,
People who are consistently wise live happily.
19 Yahweh made the world through being wise.
Through being skillful, he made the sky
and everything in it.

20 Through knowing all things, Yahweh made water
burst forth from deep *below the earth* and he
made water fall from the clouds *above*.
21 My child, always remember to do what is prudent
and brings a good outcome.
Always be mindful to do those things.
22 Doing so will give you a satisfying life
and people will honor and respect you.
23 Doing what is prudent and good will *also*
cause you to live safely.
They will keep you from making any
serious mistakes.
24 When you lie down *to sleep*, you will not fear anything.
You will lie down *to sleep* and sleep peacefully.
25 Do 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.
27 Do not refrain from giving what is good to
people who deserve it
when you are able to do so.
28 When 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."
29 Do not plan to harm people that you interact with,
because they live near you and they trust you.
30 Do not argue needlessly with someone who
has not harmed you.
31 Do 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.
33 Yahweh causes bad things to happen to the
families of wicked people,
but he causes good things to happen to the
families of righteous people.
34 When people ridicule *others*, it is Yahweh
who ridicules them,
but he kindly helps those who are humble.
35 People will honor wise people,
but people will shame foolish people.

4 Children, 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.
3 When I was just a boy with my father,
and my mother's delicate, only son.
4 During 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!
5 Learn what is wise and what you should understand!
Always remember and keep doing the things
that I have said to you!
6 Keep doing what is wise, because doing so
will keep you safe.
Love doing what is wise, because being wise
will protect you from harm.
7 Being 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*!
8 Prize what is wise, so that you will become great.
People will honor you when you value what is wise.
9 Being 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."
10 My child, listen attentively and accept what I say.
Doing so will increase the number of
years that you live.
11 I 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.
13 Consistently remember the things I have instructed you;
keep remembering them!
Always be mindful of them, because they
will keep you alive.
14 Do not do what wicked people do.
Indeed, do not behave in the way that
evil people behave.
15 Shun 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.
18 As 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*.
20 My child, pay attention to what I am saying to you!
Listen carefully to what I say!
21 Keep 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.
23 More than anything else, be extremely careful
about what you think and desire,
because those things will control how you live.
24 Do 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.

26 Plan carefully to do things in the right way.
As a result *of doing so*, you will succeed in everything that you do.
27 Do not do anything other than what is right.
Prevent yourself from doing what is evil.

5 My 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.
4 However, 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.
6 She 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.
7 So now, children, pay attention to what I say!
Always remember what I have spoken to you!
8 Stay far away from any adulterous woman!
Do not even go near the door of the place where such a woman dwells!
9 If 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.
10 If 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.
11 Then you will groan when you are about to die and have worn out your whole body.
12 Then you will say, "I hated it extremely when people corrected me!
Indeed, I scorned people when they rebuked me!
13 I did not obey the people who taught me.
Indeed, I did not listen carefully to the people who instructed me.
14 My 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!
17 Only 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.
20 My 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.
22 The 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.
23 Those wicked people will die because they did not discipline themselves.
They will do what kills them because they are extremely foolish.

6 My 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,
3 then, 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.
4 Do not wait until tomorrow; *go immediately!*
do not allow yourself to rest *until you go and talk to him*.
5 Save yourself *immediately*,
as if you were a deer fleeing from a hunter or a bird fleeing from a trapper.
6 You lazy person, learn *something* from *watching* ants!
Consider what ants do so that you can be wise.
7 Absolutely 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!"
11 Then *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.
13 They make gestures, such as winking their eyes, signaling with their feet, and pointing their fingers *to communicate their evil plans to their friends*.
14 They are always thinking perversely while planning how to do evil things.
They cause people to argue *with each other*.
15 Because of this, disastrous things will suddenly happen to those people.
Someone will destroy them instantly and they will not be able to recover.
16 Yahweh absolutely hates six, no, seven things:
17 being proud, speaking falsely,
someone murdering a person who has not done anything wrong,

18 someone planning ways to act sinfully,
someone eagerly looking for ways to act wickedly,
19 someone who naturally lies when testifying,
and someone causing members of the
same family to argue.
20 My child, be mindful to obey what I, your
father, have commanded *you*.
Indeed, obey the rules that your mother
has commanded.
21 Remember 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.
22 The 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.
25 Do 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.
27 A man cannot hold fire against his chest without
burning his clothes!
28 No one can walk on burning coals without
blistering his feet!
29 It is similar with anyone who has sex with
another man's wife.
People will certainly punish anyone who does that.
30 People do not resent someone who steals if he only
steals *food* because he is hungry.
31 Nevertheless, 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.
32 By 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*.
35 That jealous husband will not accept any money
to stop being furious,
no matter how much money you offer him.

7 My son, obey what I have told you.
Carefully remember the things that I have
commanded you.
2 Do 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.
3 Constantly remind yourself of the things that
I have commanded you.
Memorize them!
4 Love 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.
7 Then I observed *someone* among the naive people.
I noticed among the youths a young man
who does not think wisely.
8 He 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.)
10 Then 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.
12 She *often* walked around the streets and public places.
At the corner of any road she waited *for a
man whom she could seduce*.)
13 When *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.
15 So I have come out here to meet you.
I have come out to look everywhere for you,
and now I have found you!
16 I have covered my bed with expensive Egyptian fabric.
17 I have put pleasant-smelling perfumes on my bed:
myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come *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.
20 He 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*.
22 He 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
23 until *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.
24 So now, children, listen to what I say!
Carefully pay attention to what I have spoken to you!
25 Do 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.

8 Imagine 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*.
2 Imagine that this woman stands at the highest
place next to the crowded crossroads
where everyone can hear her.
3 Imagine 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!
5 You naive people must learn to be prudent.
You foolish people must learn how to be discerning.
6 Listen *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.
8 Everything that I say is honest.
I do not say anything that is false or that
deceives *people*.
9 Everything that I say is plain for people
who understand.
Everything that I say is right to people who
have become knowledgeable.
10 Choose *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.
12 I am what is wise. I am a close relative to
what is prudent.
I enable people to know how to decide
things intelligently.
13 Everyone 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.
14 I 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.
15 I enable kings to rule *well*.
I enable rulers to make righteous laws.
16 I 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.
18 I 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.
19 What I can give people is more valuable than even
the purest gold and the best silver.
20 I *always* do what is righteous and just
21 in order to give property to people who love me.
I will fill up the places where they store
valuable items.
22 Yahweh had me*, what is wise,* when he began
to create *everything*.
Indeed, he had me before he started doing that.
23 Yahweh established me a very long time ago—at the
very beginning, before the world existed.
24 Yahweh revealed me before the oceans existed
and before there were springs abounding with water.
25 Yahweh 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.
27 I 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.
30 At 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*.
32 So now, children, pay attention to what I say!
Do this because anyone who obeys my
teachings will be happy.
33 Listen to what I teach *you*, so that you will become wise.
Think about what I teach you!
34 People 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.
36 But 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."

9 Continue 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.
3 Imagine 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*.

4 She tells those who are not wise,
"Come into *my house*, all you naive people!
5 Come *to me*! Eat the food that I have prepared,
and drink the wine that I have prepared.
6 Stop acting naively so that you can live *well*.
Do what will cause you to learn what you should understand.
7 If 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*.
9 If you instruct wise people, then they will become even wiser.
If you teach righteous people, then they will learn even more.
10 If 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*.
11 Surely being wise will cause you to live for many more years.
12 Any wise person benefits himself from being wise,
just as anyone who ridicules *other people* will personally suffer for doing so."
13 Foolish women speak loudly,
act naively, and are very ignorant.
14 They 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.
16 They 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."
18 But 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.

10 *These are more* wise sayings *said* by Solomon:
Wise children make their fathers glad,
but foolish children make their mothers sad.
2 Riches that people acquire by acting wickedly will not benefit them,
but people who act righteously prevent themselves from dying *too soon*.
3 Yahweh prevents righteous people from starving,
but he prevents wicked people from getting what they want.
4 People who are lazy become poor,
but people who work hard become rich.
5 Sons who collect crops at the right time are insightful,
but sons who sleep during the time to harvest crops are shameful.
6 God blesses righteous people,
but what wicked people say *sometimes* prevents others from knowing about the violent acts *that they do*.
7 People will be happy when they remember righteous people,
but people will forget wicked people as if they were something that decays *and disappears*.
8 People who think wisely are willing to obey the *good* things that people tell them to do,
but people who speak foolishly destroy themselves.
9 People who behave honestly will live safely;
but God will catch people who behave deceitfully.
10 People who gesture with their eyes *to deceive others* hurt *people*,
and people who speak foolishly destroy themselves.
11 What 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*.
12 When people hate others, they argue with each other;
but when people love others, they forgive people for the wrong things that they do.
13 Discerning people say what is wise,
but someone must punish people who do not think wisely.
14 Wise people continue to learn all that they can,
but when foolish people speak, they start to destroy things.
15 What rich people own keeps them safe like a strong wall keeps a city safe,
but poor people suffer much because they are poor.
16 God rewards righteous people by allowing them to live *for a long time*,
but God recompenses wicked people by punishing them for sinning.
17 People 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.
18 People who hate *others* but pretend that they do not *hate them* speak falsely.
People who slander others are foolish.

19 People who talk a lot sin a lot;
but people who refrain from speaking
unnecessarily are wise.
20 What righteous people say is *as valuable*
as the best silver;
but what wicked people think is worthless.
21 What righteous people say benefits many people,
but foolish people die because they do
not think wisely.
22 When people become wealthy, *it is because*
Yahweh has blessed them,
and working harder will not make them
to become wealthier.
23 Foolish people enjoy doing the wicked things
that they planned *to do*,
but sensible people enjoy doing what is wise.
24 Wicked people will experience what frightens them;
but righteous people will receive what they want.
25 When something disastrous happens, it
destroys wicked people,
but righteous people are *like* a foundation
that lasts forever.
26 Lazy people irritate people who send them
to do something for them,
like vinegar irritates teeth and smoke irritates eyes.
27 People who revere Yahweh will live for a long time,
but wicked people will live for only a short time.
28 What righteous people hope for will make them joyful,
but what wicked people hope for will not happen.
29 Yahweh 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.
30 Righteous people will always be secure,
but wicked people will never live in our land.
31 Righteous people say what is wise,
but Yahweh will stop people from speaking
who speak perversely.
32 Righteous people know good things to say,
but wicked people *continually* say things
that are not true.

11 Yahweh detests *people* using weighing instruments
in order to deceive others,
but it pleases him when people use correct weights
on their weighing instruments.
2 When people act proudly, they will soon
disgrace themselves,
but humble people are wise.
3 Upright people know what to do because
they are honest,
but being deceitful will ruin treacherous people.
4 What people own will not help them when Yahweh
punishes *wicked people*,
but he will not kill those who live righteously.
5 Being righteous will cause innocent people
to live securely,
but being wicked will ruin those who act wickedly.
6 Being righteous will cause people who act
uprightly to escape *harm*,
but desiring *bad* things will cause people who act
treacherously to trap themselves.
7 When wicked people die, what they hoped
for never happens;
they hoped that being strong would benefit
them, but it will not.
8 Yahweh rescues righteous people from
becoming distressed;
but wicked people will become distressed instead.
9 People who reject God ruin other people
by what they say,
but what righteous people know will cause
them to escape.
10 People in a city rejoice when the righteous
people *there* prosper,
and they shout joyously when wicked people die.
11 A city becomes great when people who act
uprightly bless *the people there*,
but what people who act wickedly say
destroys that city.
12 People who *openly* detest someone they know
are not thinking wisely;
but understanding people say nothing.
13 People who go around gossiping tell *others*
what is secret,
but trustworthy people will keep a matter private.
14 Not having anyone to guide a group of people
will ruin them,
but having many people to advise them will
keep that group secure.
15 People 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.
16 People honor a gracious woman,
but cruel men *only* get wealth.
17 People who are faithfully kind greatly
benefit themselves,
but cruel people hurt themselves.
18 People who act wickedly falsely believe that they
have gained *something good*,
but God truly rewards people who do what is right.
19 People who truly act righteously will live *well*,
but people who eagerly do what is evil will die.
20 Yahweh detests people who think deceitfully,
but people who act blamelessly please him.
21 It 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.
23 When 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.
24 Some 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.
25 People who generously bless others will prosper;
and people who generously give others what
the others need will also receive
everything that they need.
26 People curse anyone who *selfishly* hoards
grain *instead of selling it*,
but they bless people who sell it *when others need it*.

27 If 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.
28 People who depend on their money will
not be successful,
but righteous people will thrive like a green plant.
29 People who trouble their families will not
inherit anything,
and people who act foolishly will serve
people who think wisely.
30 What 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.
31 Pay attention! Righteous people on the earth
will get what they deserve;
but even more so, wicked, sinful people will
also get what they deserve!

12 People who love other people correcting them *also*
love *learning* what they should know.
But people who hate other people correcting
them are foolish.
2 Yahweh approves of people who are good,
but he condemns people who plan to do what is evil.
3 People do not become secure by acting wickedly,
but righteous people are *as secure as* a tree
with immovable roots.
4 A virtuous wife causes people to praise her husband,
but a disgraceful wife *destroys her husband* like a
disease that destroys his bones.
5 Righteous people plan *to treat people* fairly;
wicked people advise *people* in order to deceive *them*.
6 What wicked people say *is like a trap that*
kills people *who pass by*;
but what upright people say will enable
them to escape.
7 Yahweh destroys wicked people and they disappear,
but the families of righteous people will continue.
8 People will praise someone according to how
insightful that person is,
but people will despise someone who
thinks perversely.
9 It is better to be a lowly person yet have a servant
than to think that you are important
yet have no food.
10 Righteous people care for their animals,
but even when wicked people *think that they* act
compassionately, they act cruelly.
11 People who work hard will have enough food *to eat*,
but people who waste time doing worthless
things do not think wisely.
12 Wicked people want what evil people steal,
but righteous people benefit *others* like a
tree with deep roots.
13 The sinful things that wicked people say
will destroy them,
but righteous people escape from trouble.
14 The *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.
15 Foolish people *always* think that what they
are doing is right;
but wise people listen to what other people
advise *them to do*.
16 People know immediately when foolish
people are angry;
but smart people ignore it when someone
disrespects them.
17 People who naturally say what is true
speak righteously,
but witnesses who say what is false speak deceitfully.
18 When 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.
19 What people say truthfully will last forever,
but what people say falsely will *only* last
for a moment.
20 People who plan to act evilly think deceitfully,
but people who advise others to act
peacefully will be joyful.
21 Bad things *usually* do not happen to righteous people,
but wicked people will experience many bad things.
22 Yahweh detests people who speak falsely,
but people who act faithfully please him.
23 Smart people do not reveal *all of* what they know,
but foolish people shout out foolish things.
24 People who work hard will reign *over others*,
but lazy people will become forced laborers.
25 When people worry, they feel sad,
but when others speak kindly to them, it causes
them to be cheerful again.
26 Righteous people guide their friends *in the*
right way to live,
but by living wickedly, wicked people
destroy themselves.
27 Lazy people do not even cook the animals
that they catch,
but people who work hard value their possessions.
28 People who do what is righteous will live.
Indeed, people who do so will not die.

13 Wise children pay attention when their
fathers instruct them,
but people who ridicule *other people* do not pay
attention when people correct *them*.
2 The *good* things that people say are *like*
good food to them,
and the violent things that treacherous people
do are *like* food for them.
3 People who are careful about what they say enable
themselves to stay alive,
but people who speak carelessly destroy themselves.
4 Lazy people want things very much and get very little,
but people who work hard will receive
everything that they want.
5 Righteous people detest speaking falsely,
but what wicked people do is disgusting
and disgraceful.
6 Acting righteously enables people who act
blamelessly to be safe,
but acting wickedly causes sinful people to
do what will destroy them.
7 Some 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.

8 Rich 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.
9 Righteous people live joyfully like a light *that shines brightly*,
but wicked people *will merely die* like an oil lamp that stops burning *oil*.
10 People who act proudly cause people to argue,
but people who let others advise them cause people to be wise.
11 Riches that people gain effortlessly will disappear,
but people who gain *riches* by working steadily will increase *their riches*.
12 People 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.
13 People 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.
14 What wise people teach continuously benefits people throughout their lives.
It enables people to avoid dangerous things that could kill them.
15 People approve of people who are very insightful,
but treacherous people are stubborn in the way that they live.
16 All clever people think carefully before they do something,
but foolish people show that they are foolish *by how they act*.
17 Bad things happen to messengers who are not reliable,
but reliable messengers make people peaceful.
18 People 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*.
19 People feel pleasant when they get what they want,
but foolish people detest refusing to do what is evil.
20 People who associate with wise people will become wise *themselves*,
but people who are companions of foolish people will suffer.
21 Bad things happen to sinful people,
but good things happen to righteous people.
22 Good people will leave riches for their grandchildren *when they die*,
but righteous people will receive the riches that sinful people have saved.
23 Poor people have fields that can produce a lot of food,
but unjust people take it away *from them*.
24 Parents 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.
25 Righteous people have enough *food* to eat and satisfy themselves,
but wicked people will be hungry.

14 The wisest women help their families to thrive,
but foolish women ruin their families by *the foolish* things that they do.
2 People who behave uprightly *show that they* greatly revere Yahweh,
but people who behave deceptively *show that they* detest Yahweh.
3 What foolish people say causes others to punish them for being proud,
but what wise people say protects them.
4 If 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.
5 Honest witnesses do not lie,
but dishonest witnesses lie easily.
6 People who ridicule *other people* try to become wise and fail to do so,
but people who understand *what is right* learn things easily.
7 If you associate with foolish people,
you will not learn *anything* from knowledgeable people.
8 People 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.
9 Foolish people scorn people who make amends with Yahweh after sinning,
but Yahweh approves of people who do what is right.
10 Only you truly know how miserable you are,
and only you truly know how joyful you are.
11 The families of wicked people will die out,
but the families of upright people will thrive.
12 There 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.
13 People who are laughing may still be suffering,
and people who feel joyful may ultimately feel sad.
14 People 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*.
15 Naive people believe whatever people say,
but smart people think carefully about what they do.
16 Wise people are careful and avoid doing things that annoy *others*,
but foolish people confidently interfere *in other people's business*.
17 People who quickly become angry act foolishly,
and people hate those who plan to do evil things.
18 Naive 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*.
20 Even the friends of poor people despise them,
but rich people have many friends.
21 It is sinful to despise your *poor* neighbors,
but God is pleased with those who do kind things for poor people.
22 People 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.
23 If people work hard, they will gain from it,
but if people *only* talk, they will remain poor.
24 A reward of being wise is to become rich,
but because stupid people are foolish, they
only become more foolish.
25 Truthful witnesses save people from dying,
but deceptive people tell lies *that cause
harm to people*.
26 People who revere Yahweh are completely confident
that he will protect them.
Yahweh will also protect their children.
27 Reverently fearing Yahweh is like having a refreshing
spring that enables people to live well.
It enables people to avoid what could kill them.
28 Kings who rule over many people are glorious,
but kings who have no people *to rule
over* have nothing.
29 People who do not become angry quickly are very wise,
but people who become angry quickly show
everyone how foolish they are.
30 Feeling peaceful makes a person's body healthy,
but envying others *makes a person's body unhealthy,
like something that* rots a person's bones.
31 People who make poor people suffer ridicule
Yahweh, who made them,
but people who are kind to needy people
respect Yahweh.
32 Wicked people destroy themselves by doing evil things,
but righteous people are safe *even* when they die.
33 Understanding people think wisely,
but when one is among foolish people what
is wise is *especially* obvious.
34 Acting righteously makes a country great,
but acting sinfully disgraces communities.
35 Insightful servants please their kings,
but kings are furious with *servants* who
act disgracefully.

15 Replying gently to angry people will calm them,
but speaking harshly *to them* will make
them angrier.
2 What wise people say makes others want to know more,
but foolish people constantly say what is foolish.
3 Yahweh sees everything that is happening;
he observes both evil people and good people.
4 What people say soothingly is *like* a tree *with fruit*
that enables people to live well,
but what people say deceitfully makes
people despair.
5 Foolish people detest what their fathers say
to correct them,
but people who let others rebuke them are clever.
6 Righteous people have houses that contain
a lot of riches,
but what wicked people gain disrupts them.
7 What wise people say informs others of what
they should know,
but what foolish people think does not do that.
8 Yahweh detests the sacrifices that wicked
people offer *to him*,
but he delights in the prayers of upright people.
9 Yahweh detests what wicked people do,
but he loves people who diligently try to
do what is right.
10 Yahweh will severely punish people who refuse
to live righteously,
and people who refuse to let other people
correct them will perish.
11 Yahweh knows everything about the place
where dead people are,
so he surely knows everything that everyone thinks!
12 People who ridicule others despise anyone
who corrects them;
they avoid wise people.
13 People smile when they are happy,
but feeling sad can make people despair.
14 Sensible people are always trying to learn more,
but foolish people satisfy themselves with
what is foolish.
15 People who suffer experience bad things every day,
but cheerful people live as though they
are always feasting.
16 Being poor while reverently fearing Yahweh
is better than being rich while worrying.
17 It 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.
18 People who easily become angry cause people to argue,
but people who do not easily become angry
will help people to be peaceful.
19 Lazy people are *unproductive* like people walking
through thorny plants,
but upright people are *productive like people*
walking on a level road.
20 Wise sons and daughters make their parents happy,
but any sons or daughters who detest their
parents are foolish.
21 People who are not wise enjoy acting foolishly,
but understanding people do what is right.
22 People 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.
23 People rejoice when they answer someone aptly.
It is so good to say something at the right time!
24 Insightful 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.
25 Yahweh will destroy what proud people own,
but he protects the *few* things that widows own.
26 Yahweh detests the evil things that people think,
but the pleasing things that people say are pure.
27 People who gain wealth in an unjust manner
trouble their families,
but people who refuse bribes will live *in a better way*.
28 Righteous people think carefully about how
to reply to people,
but wicked people quickly say what is evil.
29 Yahweh does not listen to *what* wicked people
request him to do,
but he listens *and responds* when righteous
people pray *to him*.
30 People feel happy when they see someone smile,

and people feel healthy when they hear
something good.
31 People 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.
32 People who refuse to let others correct them *act*
as if they despise themselves,
but people who listen when others rebuke
them think wisely.
33 Revering Yahweh teaches people to be wise,
and people must be humble before other
people can respect them.

16 People plan what they want *to say*,
but Yahweh determines how they will
actually speak.
2 People think that everything that they do is right,
but Yahweh knows why people do what they do.
3 Entrust what you do to Yahweh,
and he will make what you plan *to do* succeed.
4 When 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.
5 Yahweh detests all proud people;
he will certainly punish them.
6 Be 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.
7 When Yahweh approves of what people do,
he even causes their enemies to be
peaceful with them.
8 It 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.
9 People plan what they want to do,
but Yahweh determines what they will *actually* do.
10 Kings speak for God;
when kings judge, they must *always* speak justly.
11 Yahweh 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.
12 Kings *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.
14 When kings are angry, they cause people to die,
so wise people will appease them.
15 When kings are happy, they let people live;
when they approve of people, it is as refreshing
as rain in springtime.
16 Becoming wise is better than having gold.
Indeed, it is better to choose to become
understanding than to have silver.
17 Upright people act in a way that avoids
doing what is evil;
people who want to stay alive are careful
about what they do.
18 Being proud causes people to destroy themselves.
Indeed, being arrogant causes people to
ruin themselves.
19 It is better to live humbly among poor people
than to *live proudly and* receive some of what proud
people have taken from others.
20 People who act prudently in a matter will succeed,
and people who trust in Yahweh are happy.
21 People will call those who think wisely,
"understanding ones,"
and people who speak pleasantly are able
to teach others effectively.
22 Being insightful allows a person to live well continually,
but foolish people can only teach others to be foolish.
23 What wise people think causes them to
speak insightfully,
and what those people say causes others to learn.
24 The pleasing things that people say are
like a honeycomb:
They cause people to feel pleasant and healthy.
25 There 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.
26 Being hungry helps working people work
because wanting to eat motivates people
to keep on working.
27 Worthless people plot how to hurt others;
the evil things they say harm others like
fire burns *people*.
28 Perverse people cause other people to argue
with each other,
and people who gossip about others cause
friends to stop being friends.
29 Violent people tempt other people *to sin*,
and they guide them to behave wickedly.
30 People 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.
32 It 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.
33 People throw lots *in order to decide what to do*,
but Yahweh decides whatever happens.

17 It 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.
2 An 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.
3 People 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*.
4 People who act wickedly listen carefully when
people speak what is sinful;

people who lie pay attention when people
say things that destroy *others*.
5 People who ridicule poor people despise
Yahweh, who made them;
Yahweh will certainly punish people who
rejoice when other people experience
disastrous things.
6 Old people are proud of their grandchildren,
and children are proud of their parents.
7 It is not fitting for worthless people to speak eloquently.
It is even less fitting for royal officials
to speak falsely!
8 People who pay bribes think that bribes are magical;
by paying bribes, they think that everything that
they do will be successful.
9 If 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.
10 Rebuking sensible people once causes them to learn
more than hitting foolish people a hundred
times *causes them to learn*.
11 Evil people only want to rebel,
so a merciless messenger will come and punish them.
12 A 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.
13 If someone does bad things to people who have
done good things to him,
then bad things will always happen to his family.
14 When 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.
15 There are people who acquit guilty people,
and there are people who condemn innocent people;
Yahweh detests both types of people.
16 How useless it is for foolish people to try to pay
money in order to become wise
when they are unable to think!
17 A friend loves *you* all the time,
and relatives exist in order to help *other relatives*
when disastrous things happen.
18 People 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.
19 People who love to sin *also* love to cause
people to argue;
people who brag a lot cause others to destroy them.
20 People who think deceitfully will not experience
good things,
and bad things will happen to people who
speak deceitfully.
21 Foolish people grieve their parents.
Indeed, worthless people will cause their
parents to be very sad.
22 Being cheerful helps the body to heal,
but being discouraged makes the body weak.
23 Wicked people accept bribes that people give
to them secretly,
so that they will decide matters unfairly.
24 Understanding people concentrate on what is wise,
but foolish people cannot concentrate on anything.
25 Foolish children grieve their fathers
and make their mothers miserable.
26 Punishing innocent people is surely very bad,
and flogging noble people *would be just as* wrong.
27 People who refrain from speaking *unnecessarily*
are knowledgeable,
and people who can remain calm are *truly* wise.
28 People 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.

18 People who avoid other people only care about
doing what they want to do.
They refuse to do anything that is wise.
2 Foolish people hate learning.
Instead, they only want to tell others what they think.
3 People treat wicked people contemptuously,
and people scold people who act shamefully.
4 What *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.
5 It is very evil *for judges* to favor guilty people
in order to prevent judging innocent people justly.
6 What foolish people say makes people argue,
and it makes people want to beat them.
7 What foolish people say will ruin them.
Indeed, what they say may cause them to die,
as a trap *may cause an animal to die*.
8 People are eager to listen to what people
who gossip say,
and what they say deeply affects those who hear it.
9 People who are lazy when they work
are like people who destroy things.
10 Yahweh is *like* a strong tower
that righteous people run into and are safe.
11 Rich 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.
12 Before people ruin themselves, they have
first become proud;
and before people will respect someone, that
person must become humble.
13 It is foolish and shameful
for someone to reply to what a person has
said before hearing it.
14 When 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!
15 Understanding people are always learning more.
Indeed, wise people are always trying to learn more.
16 Giving something *to someone* can benefit the
one who gives it;
doing so can enable that person to meet
important people.
17 People who state their cases first seem to be right
until people whom they know arrive and
question them.
18 Throwing lots *in order to decide something* can
make people stop arguing,

it can also decide who is right between
powerful people.
19 It 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.
20 What people say will satisfy them when
they are hungry.
Indeed, what people say will satisfy them.
21 What 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*.
22 A man who marries a *good* wife will experience
good things,
and Yahweh approves of them.
23 Poor people plead for others to be merciful *to them*,
but rich people reply *to them* rudely.
24 Having 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.

19 It is better to be poor and behave honestly
than to speak deceitfully and be foolish.
2 Furthermore, 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.
3 People who act foolishly destroy themselves,
yet they become furious with Yahweh *and blame him*.
4 Wealthy people *easily* make many friends,
but when people become poor, they lose
even the friends they have.
5 Someone will surely punish lying witnesses.
Indeed, someone will surely punish people
who lie easily.
6 A lot of people want royal officials to favor them,
and many people want to be friends with
people who give gifts.
7 All 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*.
8 People who love to learn benefit themselves;
people who are consistently sensible will
surely succeed.
9 Someone will surely punish lying witnesses.
Indeed, people who lie easily will die.
10 It is wrong for foolish people to live luxuriously,
and it is even worse for slaves to reign over princes!
11 Insightful people do not get angry quickly,
and people show how honorable they are by
forgiving *people who* sin *against them*.
12 When 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.
13 Foolish children destroy their fathers,
and when wives argue *with their husbands*, it is *as annoying as* constantly dripping water.
14 People inherit houses and riches from their fathers,
but Yahweh *alone* gives *men* insightful wives.
15 Lazy people sleep well,
but *such* idle people are *always* hungry.
16 People who obey *God's* commandments stay alive,
but people who do not care about *God's*
ways will die.
17 Giving things to poor people is *like* loaning
them to Yahweh;
he will reward anyone who does this.
18 Discipline 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.
19 Very 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.
20 Pay 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.
21 People plan to do many things,
but *only* what Yahweh advises will succeed.
22 People want others to consider them to be faithful.
It is better to be poor than to be someone who lies.
23 Revering Yahweh causes people to live for a long time;
such people rest contentedly at night;
nothing will harm them.
24 Some 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.
26 Children who act violently toward their fathers
and chase away their mothers
are disgraceful and embarrassing.
27 My child, if you want to become stupid,
then stop listening to what people teach you.
28 Worthless witnesses scorn what is just,
and wicked people enjoy acting sinfully as if they
were gulping down delicious food.
29 Yahweh is ready to condemn people who
ridicule *others*,
and he is ready to beat fools on their backs.

20 Drinking a lot of intoxicating drink causes people
to start ridiculing and fighting others;
becoming drunk is very foolish.
2 When kings are terrifyingly angry, they frighten
people like the roaring of young
lions *frightens people*;
people who make kings angry cause
themselves to die.
3 It is honorable to cease arguing with other people,
but all foolish people are eager to argue with others.
4 Lazy 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.
5 Knowing 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.
6 Many people claim that they are faithful individuals,
but very few people *actually* act faithfully!

7 Righteous 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*.
9 No one can truthfully say, "I do not think sinfully anymore; I do not sin anymore."
10 Yahweh detests *people dishonestly using* both weights that differ and measurements that differ *to benefit themselves*.
11 Even young people show others *who they are* by what they do;
how they act shows whether they are innocent and right *or not*.
12 Yahweh has made both ears with which to hear and eyes with which to see.
13 If you sleep a lot, you will become poor;
but if you stay awake *and work*, you will have plenty of food.
14 Buyers 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*.
15 Gold and precious jewels are plentiful,
but the knowledgeable things that people say are rare and precious.
16 Take 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*.
17 Food 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.
18 When 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.
19 People who walk around gossiping tell *others* what is secret,
so avoid people who speak carelessly.
20 People who curse their parents
will die like an oil lamp that stops burning *oil* in a totally dark place.
21 If people inherit *property* hastily before the proper time,
they will ultimately not receive any blessing from it.
22 Do 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.
23 Yahweh detests *people dishonestly using* differing weights *to benefit themselves*.
Indeed, *using* weighing instruments in order to deceive *others* is very bad.
24 Yahweh directs what happens *even* to powerful people.
So then, no one can comprehend what will happen to him!
25 It 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.
26 Wise kings separate the wicked people from the good people
and then punish the wicked people severely.
27 Just 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.
28 Being faithful and trustworthy makes kings safe.
Indeed, being faithful enables them to rule securely.
29 People admire young men because they are strong,
but people admire old men because they have become wise.
30 Flogging 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.

21 Yahweh directs what kings think as *a farmer directs* streams of water
to make them go wherever he wants *them to go*.
2 People always think that what they do is right,
but Yahweh *rightly* evaluates why they do those things.
3 Doing what is right and fair is more acceptable to Yahweh
than sacrificing *animals to him*.
4 Being proud and arrogant guide what wicked people do like a lamp *shows people where to go*;
they are sinful.
5 What diligent people plan will certainly profit them,
but all those who act too hastily will certainly become poor.
6 When people gain wealth by speaking falsely,
that wealth quickly vanishes like mist, *and doing that* will kill them.
7 When wicked people act violently, they cause others to punish them for it
because they refuse to do what is right.
8 Guilty people continually do what is wrong,
but innocent people do what is right.
9 It 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*.
10 Wicked people strongly desire to do what is evil,
they will not be merciful to the people around them.
11 If 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.
12 Righteous people are able to understand what the households of wicked people do;
they let the evil things that wicked people do happen to them.
13 People 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.
14 Secretly giving something to an angry person will stop him from being angry.
Indeed, secretly bribing a furious person will calm him down.
15 Righteous people are glad when people judge justly,
but judging justly terrifies people who act sinfully.

16 People who stop behaving sensibly
will *soon* go to the place where the spirits
of dead people are.
17 People who love what is pleasurable will be poor.
Indeed, people who indulge themselves in wine
and rich food will never be wealthy.
18 Wicked people will suffer instead of righteous people,
and treacherous people *will suffer* in place
of upright people.
19 It is better to live *alone* in a desolate land
than *to live* with an argumentative and nagging wife.
20 Wise people store up precious riches and olive oil,
but foolish people waste everything that they have.
21 People who diligently try to be righteous and faithful
will live *well*, will be righteous, and people
will respect them.
22 Wise 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.
23 People who are careful about what they say
avoid becoming distressed.
24 People who ridicule others are proud and arrogant;
they behave furiously and presumptuously.
25 Lazy people want *food*, but they will die
because they refuse to work.
26 Lazy 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!
28 Witnesses who lie will die,
but when someone who listens carefully speaks,
what he says will finish the matter.
29 Wicked people pretend to know what they are doing,
but upright people think about what they do.
30 Even the wisest and most knowledgeable counselor is
nothing compared to Yahweh.
31 Soldiers prepare to fight,
but Yahweh determines who wins *that fight*.

22 Being 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.
2 Rich people and poor people have this in common:
Yahweh made all of them.
3 Sensible people observe something dangerous
happening and avoid it,
but naive people just keep going and
suffer *for doing so*.
4 People who are humble, who revere Yahweh,
will become rich, people will respect them, and
they will live *long and well*.
5 Deceptive 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.
6 Teach children how to behave *properly*,
so that when they become old, they will
still continue to do so.
7 Rich people reign over poor people,
and people who borrow *money* from others
become like slaves to the people
who loaned them *money*.
8 People who act unjustly will suffer for doing so,
and they will no longer be able to furiously
oppress other people.
9 Yahweh will bless generous people
because they give some of their own food
to poor people.
10 If you banish people who ridicule others, then people
will stop arguing *with each other*,
condemning *each other*, and shaming *each other*.
11 People who love being sincere and
speaking graciously are companions of kings.
12 Yahweh preserves true sayings,
but he makes what treacherous people say fail.
13 Lazy 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*.
14 What 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.
15 Children naturally think foolishly,
but physically disciplining them will teach
them to stop being foolish.
16 People 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.

17 Listen 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.
19 I am teaching these sayings to you—yes,
you—right now
so that you will trust Yahweh.
20 I 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.
22 Do 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.
24 Do 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.
26 Stay 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.
28 Do not cheat people by moving the stones that
their ancestors placed long ago
to mark the boundaries of their land.
29 Consider this: People who work skillfully
will serve kings
rather than serving unknown people.

23 When you sit down to eat *a meal* with someone
who rules over others,
pay attention to the food that is in front of you.
2 Restrain yourself *from eating too much*
if you like eating a lot of food.
3 Do not crave the *expensive* food that the ruler has
because that ruler is using that food to deceive you.
4 Do not work so much that you exhaust yourself
in order to become rich.
Be understanding enough to stop doing so.
5 As 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.
6 Do not eat food that stingy people *give you*.
Do not crave the expensive food that they have,
7 because 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*.
9 Do not *try to* talk to foolish people
because they will *only* despise the insightful
things that you say.
10 Do 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,
11 because *Yahweh is* the one who redeems them
and he is powerful.
He is the one who will defend them when
they dispute with you.
12 Consider carefully *what people say* when
they correct you.
Indeed, listen carefully to what people teach you.
13 Do not refuse to discipline your children.
If you physically punish them, they will not die.
14 In fact, if you physically punish your children,
you will prevent them from dying.
15 My child, if you are wise,
then surely I myself will be very happy,
16 and I will be deeply joyful
when you say what is right.
17 Do 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!
19 My child, listen *to me* so that you can become wise.
Make yourself think about behaving rightly.
20 Stay away from drunkards and gluttons,
21 because drunkards and gluttons will become poor.
They sleep so much that they will only
have rags to wear.
22 Pay attention to your father, who enabled you to exist,
and continue to honor your mother when
she becomes old.
23 Learn what is true and remember it.
Learn what is wise and instructive and what
you should understand.
24 Fathers of righteous people are very joyful.
Indeed, those who father wise people are
happy because of them.
25 So do what will make your parents happy!
Do what will make your mother joyful!
26 My 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.
28 These very women certainly wait *for men to seduce* like
robbers *wait for people to rob*.
They cause many men to become unfaithful.
29 These are the kind of people who are woeful,
sorrowful, and quarrelsome,
who lament, get hurt for no reason,
and have red eyes:
30 those people who drink too much wine
and are always looking around for wine *to drink*
that someone has prepared.
31 Do not let wine become overly attractive to
you, even though it is beautifully
red, glistens in the cup,
and goes down your throat smoothly.
32 Afterward 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.
34 You 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!"

24 Do not envy evil people;
do not want to associate with them,
2 because they plan to act violently,
and they talk about doing bad things to people.
3 People build households by acting wisely;
they make those households stable by
acting sensibly.
4 By acting knowledgeably, people fill the rooms
of those households
with all kinds of valuable and delightful riches.
5 Wise people are strong,
and knowledgeable people make themselves
more powerful,
6 because letting people advise you will make you
fight your war successfully,
and letting many people counsel you will
rescue you *from losing the war*.

7 Foolish 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.
9 Foolish plans are sinful,
and people detest those who ridicule others.
10 If you give up during distressful times,
then you are weak.
11 Save people whom others are trying to kill;
save the ones who will certainly die unless
you do something!
12 If 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!
13 My child, eat honey because it tastes good,
and honey dripping from the comb tastes sweet.
14 Be 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!
15 Do 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.
17 Do not be happy when something disastrous
happens to your adversaries.
Indeed, do not rejoice when that happens!
18 If you do, then Yahweh will notice and disapprove,
so that he stops being angry with your enemies.
19 Do 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*.
21 My child, reverently fear Yahweh and kings.
Avoid people who rebel *against either
Yahweh or the king*,
22 because disastrous things will happen quickly
to those people,
and no one knows how terribly both Yahweh and
kings can destroy *others*! 23 Here are more
things that wise people have said:
It is very evil to favor someone when you judge.
24 If anyone declares that a guilty person is innocent,
many people will curse him and whole people
groups will hate him.
25 However, people who condemn *guilty people*
will prosper,
and Yahweh will bless them well.
26 People who answer honestly show that they
are true friends.
27 Do the work you must do outside and
prepare your fields
before you build your house.
28 Do 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.
29 Do 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!"
30 I walked by the land of a lazy person
and past the vineyard of someone who
does not think wisely.
31 And I saw that thistles and weeds were everywhere in
that field and vineyard. Even the stone wall
surrounding them had fallen down.
32 When 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!"
34 Then *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.

25 Here 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*:

2 God 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*.
3 As people cannot fully understand how high the
sky is or how deep the earth is,
so they cannot fully understand what kings think.
4 People 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.
6 Do 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*.
8 Do 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!
9 If you do indeed plead your case against
someone you know,
settle it between yourselves and do not tell *others*
any secret about that person.
10 If 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.
11 When someone says something that is very
appropriate to a situation,

it is *as delightful as seeing* golden apples in
a setting of silver.
12 When 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.
13 Reliable 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.
14 People who brag about giving something but
then do not give it
are as disappointing as clouds and wind
that do not bring rain.
15 People can persuade leaders by being patient,
and by speaking gently people can convince those
who oppose them *to agree with them*.
16 If 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.
18 People 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.
19 Trusting treacherous people during distressful times
is *like trying to eat with* a rotten tooth or *trying
to walk with* a crippled foot.
20 Singing songs to someone who is sad
is *as unhelpful as* taking a coat off of
someone in cold weather
or pouring vinegar on soda.
21 Feed 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*.
23 When wind blows from the north, that produces rain.
Similarly, when people tell the secrets *of others*,
that produces angry people.
24 It 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*.
25 When people hear something good from
a faraway place,
it is as *refreshing as drinking* cold water
when one is thirsty.
26 When 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.
28 People who cannot control themselves
are *as defenseless as* a city that an army has broken
into and knocked down its walls.

26 Honoring foolish people is just as inappropriate
as snow *falling* in *hot* summer and rain *falling*
during the time to harvest crops.
2 Just as a bird will fly by *and not land on you*,
so a curse will not harm you if you are innocent.
3 As people must whip horses and bridle donkeys
in order to guide them,
so people must physically punish foolish people
in order to guide them.
4 Do not reply to foolish people according to
their foolish way of thinking.
If you do, then you also will be foolish.
5 Reply to foolish people according to their
foolish way of thinking.
If you do not, then they may think that they are wise.
6 Anyone 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.
8 Honoring foolish people is just *as useless*
as a harmless weapon.
9 A 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.
10 People who employ foolish people or random
strangers are *as dangerous*
as someone who randomly shoots arrows at people.
11 Foolish people who do the same foolish thing
over and over again
are like dogs that eat what they have vomited up.
12 Consider this: Foolish people are more likely to learn
than people who *wrongly* think that they
are *already* wise.
13 Lazy 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*.
14 As doors swing on their hinges *and do not go anywhere*,
so lazy people turn back and forth in their beds.
15 Lazy people put their hands in a dish *of food*,
but they are so lazy that they will not lift
the food to their mouths.
16 A *typical* lazy person *wrongly* thinks that he is wiser
than several people who answer intelligently.
17 People 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.
18–19 People 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*.
20 Fires 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.
22 People are eager to listen to what people
who gossip say,
and what they say deeply affects those who hear it.
23 People 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.

24 People who hate you will use what they say
to hide what they feel,
but they are *really* thinking about how to betray you.
25 Do not believe those people when they
speak kindly to you,
because they are thinking many detestable things.
26 Although those people deceive others by pretending
that they do not hate you,
When people gather together, they will discover
how wicked those people are.
27 People 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.
28 Liars hate the people whom they hurt,
and flatterers cause disastrous things to happen.

27 Do not brag about *what you will do* tomorrow,
because you do not know what will happen then.
2 Do not praise yourself; let someone else praise you.
Indeed, let other people praise you, not yourself.
3 Stones and sand are heavy,
but fools are so annoying that they are harder
to bear than either of those.
4 Angry people are cruel and furious people
are destructive,
but no one can withstand jealous people!
5 It is better to correct people openly, than to love them
without showing them that you love them.
6 Friends will be faithful to you by criticizing
you *when necessary*,
but enemies will deceive you by acting
affectionately toward you.
7 When people have full stomachs, they do not
want to eat *even* honey.
But when people are hungry, *even* bitter
things taste sweet to them.
8 People who stray from their homes
are like birds that stray from their nests.
9 Fragrant oil and perfume make people feel happy,
but having a friend who advises you
sincerely is even better.
10 Do 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.
11 My child, make me happy by becoming wise.
Then I will be able to reply to anyone
who argues against me.
12 Sensible people observe something dangerous
happening and avoid it,
but naive people *ignorantly* do not avoid it
and suffer *for doing so*.
13 Take 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.
14 If 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*.
15 A wife who always argues *with you* is as *annoying as*
constantly dripping water on a rainy day.
16 It 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.
18 Just 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.
19 When people look in water, the water
reflects their faces.
In the same way, what people think reveals
what kinds of people they are.
20 Just as the place where dead people go
never becomes full;
so people never stop wanting *things*.
21 People 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.
22 If 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.
23 Be 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!
25 Harvest 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.
27 You will even have female goats that produce enough
milk for yourself, your family,
and your servant girls to drink.

28 Wicked people run away even though no
one is chasing them,
but righteous people are as brave as lions.
2 When 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.
3 A poor person who oppresses other poor people
is *as destructive as* rain that washes away *the
crops*, leaving nothing to eat.
4 People who reject *Yahweh's* laws say good things
about wicked people;
but people who obey those laws oppose
such wicked people.
5 Evil people cannot comprehend what is just,
but people who desire to please Yahweh
comprehend everything *about it*.
6 It is better to be poor and honest
than to be dishonest and rich.
7 Young people who obey *Yahweh's* laws are wise,
but young people who carouse with gluttons
disgrace their fathers.

8 Money 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.
9 Yahweh detests hearing prayers from people
who refuse to obey his laws.
10 People 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.
11 Rich people tend to think that they are wise,
but perceptive poor people can tell whether
or not this is true.
12 People celebrate when righteous people
become powerful,
but people hide when wicked people
become powerful.
13 People 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.
14 People who constantly examine how they are
thinking and behaving are happy,
but bad things will happen to people who become
uncaring about those things.
15 Wicked people who rule over poor people
are *as dangerous as*
a roaring lion or attacking bear.
16 Leaders who are not sensible severely
oppress *other people*,
but people who despise gaining wealth unjustly
will live for a long time.
17 People who murder others will keep running away *from*
those who would punish them until they die.
Do not help them!
18 Yahweh will rescue people who continually
do what is right,
but people who behave dishonestly will ruin
themselves in the end.
19 People who work hard will have enough food *to eat*,
but people who waste time doing worthless
things will only be poor.
20 Yahweh abundantly blesses faithful people,
but he will certainly punish people who
are eager to be wealthy.
21 Although it is very evil to unfairly favor one
person over another,
some people will sin *by doing so* to get
even a small bribe.
22 People who are eager to become rich are greedy.
They do not realize that they will become poor.
23 Afterward, people appreciate someone who
has corrected them
more than *they appreciate* someone who has
spoken flatteringly *to them*.
24 People who rob their parents and say that
doing so is not wrong
are as bad as thieves.
25 Greedy people cause people to argue with each other,
but Yahweh will prosper people who trust him.
26 People who trust in themselves are foolish,
but people who act wisely are the ones who
will escape *what is dangerous*.
27 People 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.
28 People hide when wicked people become powerful,
but when those wicked people die, there will be
more and more righteous people.

29 Some 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.
2 People are joyful when righteous people
become influential,
but people are miserable when wicked
people rule *over them*.
3 People who cherish what is wise make
their fathers happy,
but people who have sex with prostitutes
waste all their money.
4 Kings make the people in their land succeed
by acting justly,
but leaders who take money dishonestly ruin
the people in their land.
5 People who flatter others
are really just preparing to exploit them in some way
6 Evil people endanger themselves by acting sinfully,
but righteous people sing joyfully and are happy.
7 Righteous people know that they should treat
poor people justly,
but wicked people do not *even* understand
that they should know *this*.
8 People who mock others agitate people
throughout a city,
but wise people enable others to remain calm.
9 If wise people dispute with foolish people,
the foolish people will become angry and sneer
and not resolve anything.
10 Murderers despise people who always try to
do what is right,
but righteous people try to protect them.
11 Foolish people uncontrollably express everything
that they feel,
but wise people control how they express
what they feel.
12 Leaders who believe the false things that
people tell them
have only wicked servants.
13 Poor 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.
14 Kings who judge poor people according to what is true
will always rule securely.
15 If 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.
16 People sin more when wicked people rule over them,
but *someday* Yahweh will destroy those
wicked people, and righteous people
will see it happen.

17 If you discipline your children, then you will no
longer feel worried *about their behavior*
and they will make you very happy.
18 When 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.
19 You cannot correct servants by *only* speaking to them
because they will not do what you say even though
they understand *what you say*.
20 Consider this: Foolish people are more likely
to do well in life
than people who speak thoughtlessly.
21 If you give your servants everything they want
when they are young,
then they will eventually be arrogant.
22 People who easily become angry cause people to argue.
Indeed, angry people cause many people to sin.
23 People will humiliate proud people for being proud,
but people will honor those who are humble.
24 People 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*.
25 Being anxious is *as dangerous as walking into* a trap,
but Yahweh will protect people who trust in him.
26 Many *people* want leaders to help them,
but Yahweh is the *only* one who *surely* does
for them what is just.
27 Righteous people detest unjust people,
and wicked people detest people who do
the right thing.

30 *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:
2 I am certainly less intelligent than other people.
Indeed, I do not understand as much as
everyone else understands!
3 I 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*!
5 Everything that God says is true;
he is *like* a shield that protects people who
trust him to protect them.
6 Never 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.
9 Because 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.
10 Never 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*.
11 Some people disrespect their parents.
12 Some people think that they are sinless,
but they have committed disgusting sins, *like*
people who have covered themselves
with excrement.
13 Some people are very proud!
They think that they are better than other people.
14 Some 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:
16 the place where dead people are,
childless women,
soil that never receives enough water,
and fire that keeps consuming more.
17 People who ridicule their fathers,
and refuse to obey their mothers
deserve to *die*
and have wild animals eat their *dead* bodies.
18 There are three, even four things, that are too
amazing for me to comprehend:
19 how 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.
20 Acting adulterously is *as easy* for adulterous women as
eating and wiping their mouths.
Afterward, they claim that they have
not sinned at all.
21 There are three, even four, things that *the people
in* the world cannot tolerate:
22 what slaves do who become rulers,
what worthless people do when they have
plenty of food to eat,
23 what women whom people hate do when
they marry someone,
and what servant girls do who replace the
wives of their masters.
24 There are four creatures in the world that are small
but extremely wise:
25 Although ants are not strong,
they store up their food during the summer *so that
they have it to eat during the winter*.
26 Although hyraxes are *also* not strong,
they are able to make their homes *high up
in the rocks* on cliffs.
27 Although locusts do not have a king,
they move in orderly groups like soldiers in an army.
28 Although anyone can *easily* catch lizards in his hands,
they can freely enter into kings' palaces.

29 There are three, even four, things that look very
impressive when they walk:
30 lions, which are the most powerful animals
and never flee from anything,
31 strutting male birds, male goats,
and kings whom people are afraid to rebel against.
32 If 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.

31 *These are* the sayings of King Lemuel; Yahweh had spoken these sayings that his mother had taught him:

2 My son, whom I gave birth to
and whom I vowed *to dedicate to Yahweh*,
listen to me!
3 Do not exhaust yourself by having sex with women;
they can destroy kings.
4 Lemuel, 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.
6 Let dying people drink what can intoxicate *them*,
and let miserable people drink wine.
7 They can drink *what can intoxicate them* to
forget that they are poor
and to completely forget what troubles them.
8 Defend those who cannot speak *for themselves*;
defend all those whom others are threatening to kill
so that they get what they legally deserve.
9 Defend, judge rightly,
and plead for suffering and poor people to
get what they legally deserve.
10 Virtuous and capable women are difficult to find!
This kind of woman is more valuable
than precious jewels.
11 Her husband completely trusts her,
and he will always gain many things *because of her*.
12 Such a woman benefits her husband
for as long as she lives.
13 She gets materials to make clothing for both
warm and cool weather,
and she enjoys making that clothing.
14 She is like merchant ships
because she brings food to her home
from distant places.
15 She gets up before dawn in order to prepare
food for her family
and to prepare some *food* for her female servants.
16 She carefully evaluates a field and then buys it.
Then she uses some of what she earned by
working to plant a vineyard *in it*.
17 She keeps her body strong,
and she makes her arms strong *by working hard*.
18 She knows that what she does is very profitable.
She works late into the night.
19 She makes thread *for clothing* with her own hands.
20 She generously helps people who are poor
and suffering.
21 She is not worried that her family will be cold
during cold weather
because her whole family has the best clothing.
22 She makes her own blankets to cover beds.
She wears clothing made from expensive cloth.
23 People respect such a woman's husband
at the *city* gates,
when he sits *there* with the *other* leaders of the city.
24 This woman makes clothing and sells it.
She also sells belts to merchants.
25 People notice how strong and dignified she is,
and she is cheerful about what will
happen in the future.
26 She speaks wisely,
and when she speaks, she teaches *others*
to be faithful and kind.
27 She carefully watches what happens in her household,
and she is never lazy.
28 This woman's children stand respectfully and
declare that she lives well.
Her husband says good things about her, as well.
29 He says to her, "Many women have acted
virtuously and capably,
but you indeed have done better than them all!"
30 Charming 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.
31 Give to such women what they have earned,
and praise them publicly for what they have done.