

- sy 3 To deal rightly and fairly
 is more desirable to the Lord than sacrifice. ¹
- s 4 Haughtiness and pride ---
 the lamp of the wicked, --- are sin. ²
- a 5 The plans of the diligent surely lead to gain (*or, abundance*) ³
 but those who are hasty only come to loss (*or, want*).
- sy 6 To acquire treasures through dishonesty
 is like a fleeting vapor and a deadly snare. ⁴
- sy 7 The violence of the wicked destroys them, ⁵
 because they refuse to act justly.
- a 8 The way of the guilty ⁶ is devious,
 but the conduct of the pure (*or, innocent*) is right.
- sy 9 It is better to live in a storeroom ⁷ on the housetop
 than in a house shared ⁸ with a quarrelsome (*or, nagging*) wife.
- sy 10 The desire of the wicked is to pursue evil;
 their neighbors have no mercy (*or, consideration*) in their eyes. ⁹
- a 11 When an arrogant person is punished, the ignorant become wise;
 when the wise are instructed,
 they increase their knowledge (*or, insight*),
- s 12 The Righteous One ¹⁰ observes the house of the wicked;
 the wicked are brought to ruin.
- sy 13 Whoever is deaf to the cry of the poor
 will also cry ¹¹ out and not be heard. ¹²

1 Literally: "the choice of the Lord above sacrifice."

2 Hebrew uncertain. The word *rm* can mean "lamp," "plowing" or "fallow ground."

3 Literally: "surely to abundance" with no verb.

4 Hebrew uncertain. The vowel points of the Masoretes do not appear to be satisfactory. So: LXX. Hebrew: "seekers."
TAN: "are like a driven vapor, heading for extinction."

5 There is an interesting alliteration and assonance in this line in Hebrew.

6 Hebrew uncertain. *rwz* = guilty *w* = and *rz* = strange. The word is only used here." A possible translation might be: "A person's path may zigzag and be strange" if the Hebrew words are read as being morally neutral.

7 The flat roofs of houses had small storage rooms at a corner of the rooftop. The Hebrew says, literally: "in a corner."

8 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "house of a companion." This verse is repeated in 25:24.

9 Regrettably the Hebrew play on words cannot be translated into English and convey the Hebrew sounds.

10 The reference is either to The Lord or to a righteous person. The Lord has been chosen for this translation. Literally: "a righteous regards the house of the wicked overturning wicked ones to evil."

11 A different Hebrew word for "cry" is used in each stich.

12 Literally: "shall not be answered."

- a 14 A gift in secret averts (*or, allays*) anger;
and a concealed bribe halts violent anger. ¹³
- a 15 When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous,
but ruination to evildoers.
- sy 16 Whoever strays from intelligence,
will come to rest ¹⁴ in the company of the dead.
- sy 17 Whoever indulges in luxuries will become poor;
whoever loves wine and rich food will not become rich.
- sy 18 The wicked bring on themselves the suffering
they try to cause the righteous; ¹⁵
and the faithless will suffer in place of the upright.
- sy 19 It is better to live in the desert
than with a quarrelsome (*or, nagging*) and complaining woman.
- a 20 Desirable treasure and luxury ¹⁶ remains in the dwelling of the wise,
but a fool consumes it.
- sy 21 Whoever pursues ¹⁷ righteousness and kindness
will receive life ¹⁸ and honor.
- sy 22 A shrewd general can prevail over a city's mighty warriors,
and brings down the powerful stronghold on which they rely.
- sy 23 To be careful what you say ¹⁹
protects one from disaster.
- sy 24 "Insolent" is the name of the proud, haughty person
who acts inconsiderately.
- sy 25 The craving of the lazy is fatal
because of the refusal to work.
- a 26 All day long the wicked crave, ²⁰

13 Hebrew uncertain. Several emendations have been suggested by scholars but there is no agreement on their part.

14 The Hebrew word can mean "the end of a journey" or "death."

15 The thought might possibly be that the wicked get into the trouble they planned for the righteous.

16 Omitted by LXX. Hebrew adds "and oil."

17 Hebrew: "to hunt down" or "intense pursuit." Cf. footnote 3 on pg. 1.

18 So: LXX. Hebrew: "life and righteousness."

19 Literally: "To guard over mouth and tongue."

20 "wicked" is omitted in Hebrew. So: LXX. Hebrew literally: "all day long he covets covetously."

whereas the righteous give without stinting.

s 27 A sacrifice from the wicked is an abomination,
and even worse when it is offered with evil motives.

a 28 A false witness ²¹ will perish,
but the word of a good listener will endure.

a 29 The wicked put on a bold front,
but the upright carefully consider ²² their actions.

sy 30 No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel,
can avail against the Lord.

a 31 The horse (*or, army*) is readied for the day of battle,
but the victory belongs (*or, comes from*) the Lord.

<CHAPTER 22>

s 1 A good reputation is preferable to riches,
and good favor (*or, esteem*) is better than silver or gold.

sy 2 The rich and poor have this in common:
the Lord made them both.

a 3 The sensible (*or, shrewd*) sense danger and take cover;
but the unthinking (*or, naive*) go on, and pay the penalty.

sy 4 The reward for humility ²³ and reverence of the Lord
is riches, honor and long life.

a 5 Thorns ²⁴ and snares are the way of the perverse;
those who are cautious (*or, value their lives*) will stay away from them.

sy 6 Train ²⁵ a child in the way it should live, ²⁶
and it will be stable ²⁷ when it is old.

s 7 The rich rule the poor,
and the borrower is the slave of the money lender. ²⁸

21 Literally: "a witness of his."

22 The Hebrew word translates as "establishes" or the ketiv. It is read "consider" or the qere.

23 This is understood by the Hebrew word as "lowliness" or "the virtue of humility."

24 One Hebrew manuscript has "traps."

25 It might possibly be translated as "dedicate."

26 MFT: translates: "for his proper trade."

27 Literally: "swerve away."

28 Literally: "the one who causes to borrow."

- s 8 Whoever sows injustice will reap misfortune,²⁹
and the power of the oppressors will end.³⁰
- sy 9 The gracious (*or, generous*)³¹ will be blessed,
for they share their food with the poor.
- s 10 Expel the conceited³² and strife will depart,
and quarreling and abuse (*or, insults*)³³ will cease.
- sy 11 Those who love integrity;³⁴
and whose speech is gracious will have the king as their friend.³⁵
- a 12 The Lord watches over knowledge,
but he disapproves of the actions of the faithless (*or, perjurers*).
- s 13 The lazy person says, "There is a lion outside!
I will be slain if I go into the street!"³⁶
- s 14 The wiles of an adulterous woman are a trap³⁷
(*or, Adultery is a trap.*)
and the Lord is angry with those who become entrapped.
- a 15 It is the nature of children to be silly,
but punishment³⁸ teaches them to behave.
- a 16 Whoever profits by oppressing the poor,
and gives to the sick will also be led into poverty.

29 The LXX has: "God blesses the cheerful and generous person."

30 Hebrew uncertain. The reference seems to be to the tyranny of the bad and powerful or oppressors. The word translated "power" is "rod" in Hebrew. This word could also mean "a threshing flail."

31 Hebrew uses an idiom: "a bountiful eye." The LXX has: "Whoever gives gifts wins victory and honor for himself and takes away the life of those who possess them."

32 The LXX implies expulsion from a public meeting.

33 Literally: "disgrace."

34 Literally: "purity of heart."

35 Hebrew uncertain. The last phrase has no connection with the previous text. Numerous emendations have been suggested but there is no agreement on a satisfactory one.

36 Literally: "the square." The implication is: "if I go to work," Cf. the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Matthew 20:1-16. There is always an excuse for laziness. An example of sardonic humor.

37 Literally: "The mouth of a foreign woman is a deep pit."

38 Literally: "the rod" or, a beating. There is no connecting word in Hebrew so "but" is inserted into the translation.

THE SAYINGS OF THE WISE ³⁹

<Proverbs 22:17 - 24:34>

Introduction

17 Listen! Hear the words of the wise, and be attentive to
(*or, carefully consider*) my teachings. ⁴⁰ 18 for it will be pleasant
if you remember them,⁴¹ 19 so that you will place your trust in the Lord.
For this reason I have made this known to you today. Yes, to you!⁴²

20 I have written thirty sayings ⁴³ of advice and knowledge
21 to teach you what is true and proper, so that you may give correct
answers to those who sent you!

The First Collection

<Proverbs 22:22 - 23:14>

-1-

sy 22 Never take advantage of the poor just because they are poor,
or oppress (*or, deny justice to*) the afflicted in court, ⁴⁴

sy 23 for the Lord will act in their defense,
and threaten the lives of those who threaten them.

-2-

sy 24 Do not become a friend of a person with a violent tempter,
nor with a hotheaded person,
s 25 lest you learn such habits
and get yourself ensnared.

-3-

sy 26 Do not be one who promises help,
by being responsible for someone else's debts,
sy 27 for if you are unable to pay,
your bed will even be taken from you.

-4-

sy 28 Do not remove the ancient property lines (*or, boundary stones*) ⁴⁵
which were set up by your ancestors.

39 There is a remarkable similarity in this section to the "Instructions of Amen-em-Otep," an Egyptian wisdom writer from ca. 1100 BCE. Scholars are divided as to whether there was borrowing from Amen-em-Otep or whether Amen-em-Otep borrowed from some earlier Hebrew source.

40 There is a slight difference in the LXX.

41 Literally: "in your belly."

42 Hebrew uncertain. Some scholars have attempted to make the name of a person out of the line: "Yes, to you."

43 Hebrew unclear. MT: "three days ago." "thirty sayings" could possibly be translated "excellent sayings." The thirty sayings will be clearly marked: -1-, -2- etc. in the translation.

44 Literally: "at the gate." Cf. Ruth 4:1 where justice is meted out at the gate of the city.

45 In Israel boundary stones were virtually sacred since property was a gift from God.

-5-

t 29 Do you see those who are skillful in their work?
They will be attentive to kings;
and will not serve those who are obscure.

<CHAPTER 23>

-6-

sy 1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler,
carefully observe what (*or, who*) is before you;⁴⁶
(*or, think carefully about all the food on the table...
or, in whose presence you are;*)
sy 2 control yourself,⁴⁷
if you have a huge appetite.
sy 3 Do not crave for the ruler's delicacies,
for they are not satisfactory nourishment.⁴⁸

-7-

s 4 Do not wear yourself out trying to become wealthy;
be wise enough not to.
t 5 When you see⁴⁹ wealth, it is suddenly gone;
for suddenly it takes wing,
flying away like an eagle.

-8-

s 6 Do not eat the bread of anyone who is an unwilling host (*or, stingy*);⁵⁰
or crave for their delicacies;
t 7 for an unwilling host is inwardly keeping account.⁵¹
"Eat and drink!" is said to you;
but it is not really meant.
sy 8 The food you have eaten will cause you to be nauseous,
and you will have wasted your courteous words
(*or, You will have wasted your compliments*).⁵²

-9-

sy 9 Do not try to talk sense to a fool
for he will despise your sensible words.

46 The Hebrew text can be translated "what" or "who." There is a play on words in this text.

47 Literally: "put a knife in your jaw." A figure of speech expressing self-restraint in eating.

48 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "the bread of lies." The MT has verse 3 in the form of a question.

49 Literally: "do our eyes fly to it."

50 The translation is based on the writing of the Egyptian wisdom writer Amen em Otep. Cf. footnote 39, pg. 53. Hebrew says: "stingy."

51 Hebrew unclear. Some emend the stich to read "they (the delicacies) will stick in our throat like a hair."

52 Literally: "and you will spoil your pleasant words."

-10-

s 10 Do not remove the ancient⁵³ property lines (*or, boundary stones*)⁵⁴
or encroach on the fields of orphans;
s 11 for their redeemer (*or, defender*)⁵⁵ is strong;
and will plead their cause against you.

-11-

s 12 Pay attention to instruction,
and listen to wise sayings (*or, do your best to learn*).

-12-

s 13 Do not refrain from disciplining children,
they will not die if you punish them.
sy 14 If you punish them with a rod
you will save their lives from Sheol (*or, the abode of the dead*).

-13-

sy 15 My child, if you become wise,
I will be very happy.⁵⁶
sy 16 I will rejoice
when you speak words of wisdom.

-14-

a 17 Do not become envious of sinners,
but daily continue to serve the Lord.
sy 18 Surely you will have a bright future,
and your hope will not fail.

-15-

s 19 Listen, my child, and obtain wisdom,
set your mind on the right course.⁵⁷
s 20 Do not associate with those who guzzle wine
or with those who gorge themselves with food,
s 21 for the guzzlers and the gluttons will become impoverished,
and stupor will cause their clothing to be reduced to rags.

-16-

s 22 Listen to your father,
and do not neglect your mother when she is old.

53 Some scholars emend the word to have it read "widow's."

54 Cf. footnote 45 on page 53.

55 The Hebrew word *lag* can mean a human defender, champion or guardian as in Ruth 4:4-6; Leviticus 25:25, 47-49; Jeremiah 32:6-12. It can also mean a divine Redeemer.

56 In Hebrew in both stichs the word "heart" is used to convey the thought, making a pleasant union between the parent and child.

57 Literally: "make your heart straight."

s 23 Truth, wisdom, learning and intelligence
are valuable. Cherish them! ⁵⁸
s 24 A righteous father will be very happy;
he who has a wise son will be proud of his son.
s 25 Your father and mother will rejoice;
she who bore you will be happy.

-17-

s 26 My child, pay attention!
Follow my example.
s 27 A prostitute ⁵⁹ is a deadly trap.
It is difficult to escape from an adventuress. ⁶⁰
s 28 They lie in wait like a robber
to increase the numbers of those who are unfaithful.

-18-

s 29 Whose is the woe? Whose is the remorse?
Whose are the quarrels? Whose are the complaints?
Whose are the bruises that could have been avoided
(*or that are not remembered being received*)?
Whose eyes are bloodshot?
s 30 Those who linger late over wine,
those who relish blended wines.
t 31 Do not be tempted by wine even if it has a nice color,
sparkling in the glass (*or, cup*),
and goes down smoothly.
s 32 In the end you have a hangover,
and feel as if you experienced a poison bite.
s 33 Your eyes will see weird things,
and your speech will be confused.
s 34 You will be like one who is sea sick,
swaying as if you were lying in a ship's rigging. ⁶¹
t 35 You will say, ⁶² "They must have hit me, but I don't remember it.
They must have beaten me, I am numb.
When will I get over my hangover?
I will need another drink."

58 At this point scholars differ on the division of the 30 statements of 22:7. This division is that of the United Bible Societies.

59 Hebrew: "foreign" The translation is an emendation.

60 Literally: "alien" thus being a foreigner and forbidden. Hebrew scholars feel that line a refers to one who is unmarried and line b refers to a married woman who is unfaithful to her husband.

61 Hebrew obscure.

62 So: LXX, Vulgate and Targums. Hebrew omits "You will say."

<CHAPTER 24>

-19-

- sy 1 Do not envy the wicked;
or desire their friendship;⁶³
sy 2 for they plot violence in their thoughts,
and they only speak of making trouble.

-20-

- s 3 A house is built by using wisdom,
and made secure (*or, established*) by understanding.
sy 4 By knowledge the rooms are filled
with all that is precious and delightful.

-21-

- s 5 Wise warriors are more powerful than strong ones,⁶⁴
and a knowledgeable person than those who have power;⁶⁵
s 6 for by wise guidance you can wage war,
and victory comes as the result of many stratagems (*or, counselors*).

-22-

- s 7 Wisdom is too lofty for fools to grasp;
they say nothing in court.⁶⁶

-23-

- sy 8 Whoever devises plans to do evil
will be called a mischief-maker (*or, schemer*).⁶⁷
s 9 The devising of intrigue is sinful,
and people who feel arrogant are an abomination.

-24-

- sy 10 If you are lax (*or, indifferent*) in the day of adversity (*or, crisis*),
your strength will wane.⁶⁸

-25-

- s 11 Rescue those who are led to their execution;⁶⁹
and deter those who are staggering to their deaths.⁷⁰

63 Literally: "to be with them."

64 "Strong" in Hebrew implies might or force. Hebrew: "a man of wisdom and strength." The translation is based to a large degree on LXX, Syriac & Targums.

65 The Hebrew idea of power implies ability or efficiency. Literally: "a man of knowledge increasing strength."

66 Literally: "at the gate." Cf. foot note 21, page 2.

67 Literally: "lord of plans."

68 Literally: "narrow."

69 Literally: "being taken away to death."

70 G. R. Driver in *Zeitschrift der Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* points out an Aramaic root word supporting the translation:

sy 12 You may say, "Look! We did not know this,"
(*or, This doesn't pertain to me,*)
sy Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it,⁷¹
and will God not repay as is deserved?

-26-

s 13 My child, eat honey, for it is good,
and the drippings of the honeycomb taste sweet.
t 14 Realize: such wisdom is good for your soul;
if you find it you will have hope for the future,
and your future (*or, hope*) will not be a disappointment.⁷²

-27-

s 15 Do not lurk around the homes of the righteous,⁷³ as do the wicked,
do not act violently against their dwellings;⁷⁴
a 16 for as often as the righteous fall, they overcome adversity;
but the wicked are tripped up (*or, overthrown*) by misfortune.

-28-

s 17 Do not rejoice when your enemies experience disaster;
for if that happens, do not be happy about it;⁷⁵
s 18 or else the Lord will know, and be displeased,
and will withhold his anger from them.

-29-

s 19 Do not become worried because of the wicked,
nor be envious of them;
s 20 for there is no future for those who are evil;
they will soon be gone.

-30-

s 21 My child, have respect for the Lord and the king,
and do not be disobedient toward either of them;⁷⁶
s 22 for disaster suddenly comes from them,
and who can fathom the doom that either the Lord
or the king can cause?⁷⁷
sy [22a *A child obeying a commandment will avoid destruction,*

"are at the point of death."

71 A possible emendation might be: "seek it."

72 Literally: "be cut off." There is a play on words in these two verses in Hebrew.

73 Hebrew: "pasture."

74 Literally: "lair."

75 German has a single word to express this feeling: "Schadenfreude."

76 So: LXX. Hebrew: "do not associate with those who change."

77 The LXX adds the following verses in brackets and italics. These verses are not found in the MT. The numbering is provided by H. Rahlfs.

s *for such a person has received it totally.*
 22b *Let no falsehood be expressed by a king's words;*
let there be no falsehood issuing from his tongue.
 s 22c *The words spoken by a king are a sword, and not flesh;*
whoever receives his judgment will be destroyed.
 sy 22d *If the king's wrath is aroused,*
he will kill people with bowstrings;
 t 22e *and devour the bones of people;*
and cremate them;
so that there is no carrion left for the eaglets to devour.]

COLLECTION OF OTHER WISE SAYINGS ⁷⁸

<Proverbs 24:23 - 34>

a 23 These are the sayings of the wise:

 sy 24 Partiality in judging is wrong.
 sy 24 Whoever pronounces the wicked to be innocent,
 will be cursed by everyone and abhorred by nations,
 sy 25 but those who correct the wicked will prosper ⁷⁹
 and they will be well blessed.

 sy 26 Giving a correct reply
 is like receiving a kiss on the lips. ⁸⁰

 t 27 Put your affairs in order,
 get everything ready for your labor in the field;
 and after that build your house.

 s 28 Do not be a witness against your neighbor without a good reason,
 and in speaking do not tell lies. ⁸¹

 s 29 Do not say, "I will repay him for what he did to me;
 I will repay according to his deeds (*or, I will get even*).

 s 30 I passed by the field of a lazy man;
 the vineyard of a man lacking sense;
 t 31 and it was entirely overgrown with thorns; ⁸²
 the ground ⁸³ was covered with nettles (*or, covered with chick weed*);

78 This collection has a different order in the LXX. A. Meinhold in *Die Sprueche* in the Zurich Bibel Kommentar Vol. 16 finds an interesting arrangement by the editor of these verses into parallel groups. Cf. the note at the end of this chapter.

79 Literally: "To them will be delight."

80 Literally: "kisses the lips returning straight words."

81 Literally: "and will you deceive."

82 Literally: "grew up all of it thistles."

83 Literally: "the face."

and it's stone wall in ruins. ⁸⁴
 s 32 Then I observed and pondered on it;
 I looked at this and learned a lesson.
 s 33 "A little more sleep, a little more slumber,
 a little folding of the hands to rest,"
 s 34 and poverty will come upon you like a bandit (*or, vagrant*)
 and scarcity like an armed bandit (*or, like a beggar*).

{ A summary of A. Meinhold's arrangement of Proverbs 24:23 - 34 into parallel groups.

The law court:	1. Judges: verses 23-25	4. Witnesses: verse 28
Speaking and thinking:	2. Helpful speech: verse 26	5. Harmful speech: verse 29
Labor:	3 Positive: verse 27	6. Negative: verses 30-34 }

<CHAPTER 25>

<The Second Collection Attributed to Solomon>

<The Hezekiah Collection>

<Proverbs 25:1 - 29:27>

1 These are also proverbs of Solomon which the officials
 of Hezekiah, King of Judah transcribed: ⁸⁵

a 2 It is the glory (*or, honor*) of God for things concealed,
 but the glory of kings who seek to fathom them
 (*or, It is the glory of God to conceal things,*
and the glory of a king to search out things).

sy 3 Like heaven in its height, and the earth in its depth,
 so is the unfathomable nature ⁸⁶ of kings.

sy 4 Remove the dross from silver,
 and the smith has material ⁸⁷ to make an object,
 sy 5 remove the wicked advisors from the presence of the king
 (*or, as the king's advisors*)
 and his throne will be known for it's righteousness.

s 6 Do not exalt yourself in the king's presence
 or occupy the place designated for important guests;
 t 7 for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
 then to be humiliated in the presence of the prince (*or, noble*).

84 The Hebrew implies this was because of a lack of care, not because of some person's deliberate action.

85 The Hebrew word *qt[* originally meant "removed" but in later Hebrew it became "copied" or "transcribed." This was perhaps transcribed from one collection to another.

86 Literally: "search."

87 Hebrew: "and a vessel emerged for the smith." LXX: "it will be purified, wholly pure."

- t 8 What your eyes have seen,
do not rashly use as evidence in court;
for⁸⁸ what will you do later (*or, at the conclusion of the case*),
when your neighbor puts you to shame?
- sy 9 Defend yourself against your neighbor directly,
and do not reveal any one's secrets
(*or, Settle problems with your neighbor privately,
and do not involve others*):
- sy 10 or else someone who hears you reveal a secret will bring shame on you,
and your bad reputation will never end.
[*Favor and friendship set one free;
keep them for yourself lest you become an object of reproach,
but guard your ways peaceably.*]⁸⁹
- sy 11 A word appropriately spoken
is like apples⁹⁰ of gold in a filigree setting (*or, tray*) of silver.
- sy 12 Like a gold ring⁹¹ or a golden ornament,
is a wise rebuke (*or, warning*) to an attentive ear.
- t 13 Like a drink of cold water⁹² in the heat of the harvest season,
is a reliable messenger to those who send him,
[he lifts the spirit of his master who is refreshed.]⁹³
- sy 14 Like clouds⁹⁴ and wind without rain,
so is one who boasts about a gift that is never given.
- s 15 With patience a ruler may be persuaded,
and gentle speech can overcome resistance.⁹⁵
- sy 16 If you have found honey, eat only as much as you need,
or else, having eaten too much you will vomit.
- sy 17 Do not visit your neighbor too often,
or else your neighbor will get tired of you and despise you.

88 So: emended. Hebrew: "or else."

89 Added by the LXX.

90 Hebrew unclear: Often translated "apples" however they were not known in that part of the world. It could possibly be "quince."

91 Literally: "nose ring."

92 Literally: "cold of snow."

93 This stich is omitted in the LXX.

94 Literally: "mists" or "vapors."

95 Literally: "break bones."

- sy 18 One who testifies falsely concerning a neighbor
is as deadly as a mace, a sword or a sharpened arrow.⁹⁶
- s 19 Depending on an unreliable person in time of trouble
is like a loose tooth or an unsteady foot.
- t 20 Like one who disrobes on a chilly day,
and like vinegar on a wound,
so is whoever sings songs to someone who is depressed.⁹⁷
[*Like a moth to a garment and a worm to wood
sorrow gnaws at (or, harms) the human heart.*]⁹⁸
- sy 21 If your enemies⁹⁹ are hungry, give them bread to eat,
and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink;
sy 22 for you will be heaping coals of fire on their heads,
and the Lord will reward you.
- sy 23 Just as the north wind produces rain:
so also whispered words¹⁰⁰ produce angry glares.¹⁰¹
- sy 24 It is better to live in a storeroom on a housetop,
than in a house shared with a quarrelsome (*or, nagging*) wife.¹⁰²
- sy 25 To hear good news from a distant country,
is like cold water to a parched throat.
- sy 26 Those who yield to the wicked
are like a muddied spring or a fountain that has unpotable water.
- s 27 It is not good to eat much honey,
or to be sparing of complementary words
(*or, to seek honor upon honor*).¹⁰³
- sy 28 A person without self-control
is like a city that has been breached and left without walls
(*or, like a city with nothing to protect it*).¹⁰⁴

96 These two stichs have been transposed from the Hebrew order.

97 Hebrew unclear. Stich 2 is based on LXX. Hebrew: "lye or vinegar on soda."

98 Added in the LXX, Syriac and Targums. Some scholars feel a Greek copyist simply added his own thought.

99 Literally: "one who hates you."

100 Literally: "tongue of secrecy."

101 Interestingly rain rarely comes to the area in which the writer lived when the wind is from the north. It is the west wind that brings the rain. "North" was chosen to have a word play with the Hebrew word for "secrecy."

102 Cf. Proverbs 21:9, also footnotes 7 & 8 on pg. 49.

103 Hebrew unclear. Emended to be closer to the LXX, Syriac & Targums. Hebrew: "searching out their glory is glory."
These two stichs do not seem to fit together.

104 The Hebrew is transposed in these two stichs.

<CHAPTER 26>

- a 1 To praise a fool is as unprofitable
as snow in summer or rain at harvest time.
- sy 2 Just like flitting¹⁰⁵ sparrows and darting swallows,
an undeserved curse fails to harm.
- sy 3 A whip for a horse, a bridle for a donkey,
and a rod for the back of fools.
- a 4 Do not answer fools in accordance with their folly,
or else you will put yourself at the level of a fool.
- a 5 Give an answer to fools as their folly deserves,
or else they will think themselves to be wise
(*or, If fools are given a reasonable answer
they will assume they have wisdom*).¹⁰⁶
- sy 6 Whoever sends a message¹⁰⁷ to be delivered by a fool
will wear out his own feet¹⁰⁸ and put up with¹⁰⁹ violence
(*or, be worn out seeing that the message is properly understood*).
- sy 7 A proverb in the mouth of fools
is as useless as a disabled persons legs, which dangle limply.
- sy 8 Anyone who would tie a stone in a sling¹¹⁰
would give honor to a fool.
- sy 9 A proverb spoken by a fool
is like a thorn being brandished about by a drunkard.
- sy 10 An archer who wounds everybody¹¹¹
is like one who hires a passing fool or a drunkard.
- sy 11 A fool who repeats his folly
is like a dog who returns to his vomit.
- sy 12 If you see someone who thinks "I am really wise;"
be assured that there is more hope for a fool than for that person.
- s 13 The lazy person says, "There is a young lion on the road!
There is a lion in the streets." (*or, It is too dangerous to go to work.*)

105 Literally: "wandering."

106 Verses 4 & 5 are antithetic to each other. Some Rabbis felt verses 4 & 5 were inconsistent and therefore doubted the canonicity of Proverbs.

107 The Hebrew word implies a verbal message.

108 Literally: "cut off his own feet."

109 Literally: "drink."

110 Hebrew unclear. The translation follows the LXX where "sling" is used. Hebrew: "bundle bag." It would be nonsensical to tie a stone into a sling.

111 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "much wounds all and he who hires a fool, and he who hires passers by." Numerous emendations have been suggested but none seems satisfactory. This is possibly the most obscure passage in Proverbs.

- sy 14 Just as a door turns on hinges,
so also a lazy person only turns in bed.
- sy 15 The lazy person buries a hand in the bowl;
but is too weary to bring it back to his mouth.
- sy 16 The lazy person thinks he is wiser
than seven men who can give good advice.
- sy 17 One who seizes a passing dog by the ears ¹¹²
is like one who is embroiled in a quarrel that is not his business.
- sy 18 A maniac who throws firebrands, and shoots
deadly arrows, ¹¹³
- sy 19 is like one who cheats a neighbor
and says, "I am only joking."
- sy 20 Without wood the fire goes out;
and where there is no gossiping quarreling ceases.
- s 21 Just as charcoal ¹¹⁴ makes hot embers and wood makes a fire burn,
so also a quarrelsome person makes trouble.
- sy 22 The words of the whisperer (*or, gossip*) are like tasty morsels;
they penetrate the inner parts of the body. ¹¹⁵
- sy 23 The glaze ¹¹⁶ covering an earthen vessel
is like the insincere (*or, glib*) speech of a person with an evil ¹¹⁷ mind.
- s 24 An enemy speaks hypocritically,
and harbors treachery within;
- sy 25 even though words are spoken graciously, ¹¹⁸ do not believe them,
for there are many wicked thoughts; ¹¹⁹
- sy 26 though one who hates is concealed by trickery,
evil (*or, wickedness*) will be exposed publicly.
- sy 27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
and those who start landslides will be trapped
(*or, whoever rolls the stone will have it roll back*).
- s 28 A liar hates those to whom lies are told ¹²⁰

112 i. e. an irrelevant quarrel.

113 Hebrew uncertain. Stich 2 is too brief. to fit the guidelines of Hebrew poetry.

114 A few scholars have tried to translate this as "bellows" based on the LXX.

115 Hebrew unclear. Cf. Note 63 on pg. 42.

116 So: emended based on study by H. L. Ginsberg found in the ASOR bulletin 98 (1945). Hebrew: "silver of dross."

117 So: LXX. Hebrew: "burning."

118 Literally: "when he makes gracious his voice."

119 Literally: "seven abominations in his mind."

120 Hebrew unclear.

and with flattery, speech is able to ruin.

<CHAPTER 27>

- sy 1 Never boast (*or, flatter yourself*) about tomorrow,
for no one knows what will happen each day.
- s 2 Let someone else praise you, do not brag,
let praise come from a stranger and no self praise.¹²¹
- a 3 A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty,
but trouble caused by a fool outweighs both.
- a 4 Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming;¹²²
but who can withstand jealousy?
- sy 5 Open rebuke is better
than love that has been concealed.
- a 6 Well intentioned corrections from a friend may hurt,
but kisses from an enemy are dangerous.¹²³
- a 7 When you have eaten your fill, honey is refused,
but to a ravenous appetite even that which is bitter seems sweet.
- sy 8 Just as a sparrow strays¹²⁴ from its nest.
so is a person who wanders from home.
- a 9 Oil and perfume (*or, incense*) make the heart glad,
but the sweetness of a friend is better than one's own counsel
(*or, but trouble upsets your peace of mind.*)¹²⁵
- t 10 Do not forsake (*or, desert*) your friend or your parent's friend;
and do not go to your family member's house
on the day of your calamity.
A nearby neighbor is better than a family member who is far away.¹²⁶
- sy 11 Be wise, my child, and make me happy,
that I may answer those who are my critics.¹²⁷

121 There is a play on words in Hebrew. The verse conveys the thought: "Honor is granted, not taken."

122 Literally: "cruelty of wrath, flood of anger."

123 Hebrew unclear. LXX, Syriac & Vulgate translate this stich as a "better than" colon, as in verse 5.

124 Some scholars think of the word "stray" meaning "exile."

125 So: LXX.

126 I. e. "Go to someone who is impartial."

127 Literally: "That I may return a word to my reproachers."

- a 12 The sensible (*or, shrewd*) sense danger and take cover,
but the unthinking (*or, naive*) go on and pay the penalty.
- sy 13 Seize the garment of a person who has given surety for a stranger
and seize the pledge given as surety for foreign women. ¹²⁸
- t 14 If you call out a loud blessing (*or, greeting*) to your neighbor,
very early in the morning,
it will seem like cursing.
- s 15 A continual dripping on a rainy day,
and a quarrelsome (*or, nagging*) wife are alike;
- s 16 to keep her quiet is as hopeless as restraining the wind,
or grasping oil in one's right hand. ¹²⁹
- sy 17 Just as iron can sharpen the edge of iron,
so also one sharpens (*or, hones*) the wit of another.
- sy 18 Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit
and whoever cares for one's master will be honored (*or, respected*).
- s 19 Just as water is able to cause a reflection,
so one's mind is influenced by that of another. ¹³⁰
- s 20 Sheol (*or, death*) and Abaddon (*or, destruction*) ¹³¹ were never satisfied,
nor are human eyes (*or, greed*) satisfied.
[*Whoever concentrates on an abomination to the Lord,
as well as the untaught do not control their tongue.*] ¹³²
- sy 21 Just as a crucible is for silver, and a furnace for gold,
so we are tested by the praise (*or, recognition*) received from others.
[*The heart of a lawless person seeks evil,
but the upright heart seeks knowledge.*] ¹³³
- t 22 Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle,
along with unshelled grain, ¹³⁴
but you will not be able to get rid of his foolishness.

<Herds and flocks are important>

128 Cf. Footnotes 102 & 103 Proverbs 19:16.

129 Literally: "Those who hide her, he hides wind and oil meets his right hand."

130 Literally: "Like water, a face to a face, so a heart of a man to a man." LXX omits "Just as."

131 Cf. footnotes 1 & 2; Proverbs 15:11.

132 Added in LXX.

133 Added in LXX.

134 This stich is omitted in several manuscripts and by some scholars.

<Proverbs 27:23 - 27>

- s 23 Know well the condition ¹³⁵ of your flocks,
and pay close attention to your herds,
s 24 for property (*or, wealth*) does not last forever;
nor does wealth ¹³⁶ endure to all generations.
s 25 When the grass has been cut for hay and the tender shoots appear,
and the hay of the mountains has been stored,
s 26 the lambs will provide wool for your clothing, ¹³⁷
and the male goats a source of income
(*or, You can make clothes from the wool of your lambs,
and buy land with the money you get
from selling your (male) goats*),
s 27 but there will be enough cheese to feed
both you and your household
as well as nourishing your servant girls.

<CHAPTER 28>

- a 1 The wicked flee when no one is in pursuit,
but the righteous are as confident as a lion.

t 2 When there is rebellion in the land
there are many rulers;
but with intelligent rulers stability will endure. ¹³⁸

sy 3 Poor ¹³⁹ who oppress (*or, mistreat*) the poor
are like a cloudburst that destroys the crops. ¹⁴⁰

a 4 Those who are lawless praise the wicked,
but the law-abiding oppress the wicked.

a 5 Those who are evil do not understand justice,
but those who seek the Lord understand it well. ¹⁴¹

sy 6 It is better for the poor to live with integrity (*or, above reproach*)
than to be perverse, even though being rich.

a 7 An intelligent child observes the law
but parents are disregarded by children whose companions are gluttons.

135 Literally: "face" or "appearance."

136 So: LXX. Hebrew: "crown." "Crown" is not found in LXX, Syriac or Targums.

137 Literally: "the lambs for you clothing."

138 Hebrew uncertain. LXX reads: "Through the sins of the unholy ones cries arise, but a person of understanding quenches them."

139 A possible emendation: "Rulers." MT: "poor."

140 Literally: "there is no bread."

141 Literally: "all." In verses 5 - 25 the Hebrew word *hwhy* is used.