

Proverbs Chapter 17 Continued

Proverbs 17:15 "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both [are] abomination to the LORD."

We see, here, that judgment should be righteous. We should not overlook sin because we love the sinner, neither should we punish someone just because we do not like them. God wants us to deal fairly with everyone. He is displeased when we are prejudiced.

This is saying that the unjust judge is controlled by his pride, prejudice, bribes, and passions.

Proverbs 17:16 "Wherefore [is there] a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing [he hath] no heart [to it]?"

We see here a person who is trying to buy himself an education. This is really a good example of our society today. Many people cost their parents an awful lot of money trying to get them a degree from college.

These same people will not put out any effort to learn and have no business going to college. It is a waste of time and money because they have no desire to learn, only to get the degree.

Even wealth cannot buy wisdom for those who do not love it.

Proverbs 17:17 "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

In Proverbs 18:24, we will read there is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother. A true friend will not leave you when you are in trouble but will stand beside you through it all.

In Job, we read of Job's friends who give him all sort of bad news on top of the heartaches he has already endured. This type of friend is one that no one needs. In the end, Job had to pray and ask God to forgive them so that God will not punish them.

Brothers may fight in the good times; but when a great tragedy occurs they are by your side to comfort you and help you. A truly good friend is like a brother in the fact that tragedy makes them love you even more.

A true friend is a constant source of love, while a brother in one's family may not be close, but is drawn near to help in trouble. Friends are closer than brother's because they are available all the time, not just in the crisis.

Proverbs 17:18 "A man void of understanding striketh hands, [and] becometh surety in the presence of his friend."

We see, here, a man going on someone else's note and putting himself in danger. This is not a wise thing to do. You are actually obligating yourself to pay the full amount of the note when

you sign someone else's note. If they don't pay, you have to. You see, it is very serious business to go on another's note.

We covered this in our lesson on chapter 6:2-4. The situation is so serious that it is imperative to take control on one's own God given resources and get out of such an intolerable arrangement immediately. (Deliver yourself before coming to poverty or slavery)

Proverbs 17:19 "He loveth transgression that loveth strife: [and] he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction."

We see that a sinner enjoys causing heartache for others. Sin and strife walk hand in hand. We see, also, in this someone who builds a house that is real fancy from the outside so the neighbors will be envious of him. This can only bring destruction. Pride goes before a fall.

Plainly put: This is an image of a proud person who flaunts his wealth with a huge house having a large front door and who thus invites death.

Proverbs 17:20 "He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief."

A sinful heart brings forth sinful words. Ugly speaking, dirty jokes, and cursing bring even more sin. It is a never ending cycle that feeds upon itself and gets worse and worse. This person is not honest, and those who are trading with him cannot believe anything that he says. His deceit shows, and no one wants to trade with him. God will not bless him and destruction is what he is headed for.

Proverbs 17:21 "He that begetteth a fool [doeth it] to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy."

When a son or daughter does some terrible sin, it breaks the heart of the parent. There is nothing sadder than for a parent to realize that their child has done some terrible crime. We struggle trying to raise our children the best we can and it looks bad on us, as well as the children, when they go bad.

Proverbs 17:22 "A merry heart doeth good [like] a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

It is a medical fact that depression brings on many diseases such as arthritis. It is also a fact that being happy inside tends to bring good health. The spirit of man is the spark that keeps him alive. The breath of life that God breathed into man in Genesis, in my opinion, is the Spirit. We were just a glob of clay until God breathed life into us. A non-Christian is just a chunk of clay {very earthly} today, until God breathes His Spirit into us and gives us new life. We are dead bones in trespasses and sins until God gives us new life.

Remember the bones in Ezekiel?

37:1-14 "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which [was] full of bones," "And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, [there were] very many in the open valley; and, lo, [they were] very dry." "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest." "Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD." "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: "And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD." "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. "And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but [there was] no breath in them." "Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts." "Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." "And ye shall know that I [am] the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves," "And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken [it], and performed [it], saith the LORD."

Proverbs 17:23 "A wicked [man] taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment."

This is not a gift at all, it is a bribe. He waits until no one is looking and sneaks a bribe so that he can sway your judgment toward him.

Proverbs 17:24 "Wisdom [is] before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool [are] in the ends of the earth."

This fool is never satisfied. He is always looking somewhere else to move to solve his problems. He needs to realize that the problem lays within him self. This is speaking of a fool's roving fixation in the absence of wisdom.

The wise person is aware that moving will not make problems go away. He looks straightforward and faces each problem as it comes. He never wavers. He stays on the path that leads to righteousness.

Proverbs 17:25 "A foolish son [is] a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him."

We see, here, something similar to verse 21. This grief he brings his father is in the fact that he did not take his father's instruction. Most people commonly think "like father, like son". You can

see how this would be a grief to his father. This bitterness of the mother, I think, just speaks of her disappointment. Parents want their children to be even better than they were themselves.

Proverbs 17:26 "Also to punish the just [is] not good, [nor] to strike princes for equity."

The injustice of punishing those who have done no wrong is easily seen by everyone, and God will not tolerate it. This prince, here, is not speaking of title, but of someone who is honorable and fair. Only someone who was evil would strike out and punish the just or those with a princely nature. Many saints have been martyred for the Word of God, but God will judge harshly those who punish the just.

In the New American Standard Edition translation, this says "It is also not good to fine the righteous, Nor to strike the noble for their uprightness." This then gives a clear statement on political and religious injustice, focusing on the equally bad mistreatment of the innocent and the noble.

Proverbs 17:27 "He that hath knowledge spareth his words: [and] a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit."

Talking too much shows a lack of knowledge; especially talking too much about things you know nothing about. If you listen, instead of talk, you can learn a lot more. This speaks of a man who is incapable of restraining his words.

The man of understanding, as we have said before, considers all the facts before he speaks. Have you ever noticed that a man of few words really has something special to say when he opens his mouth?

Proverbs 17:28 "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: [and] he that shutteth his lips [is esteemed] a man of understanding."

It is a natural thing to like to hear your own voice, and people without understanding talk too much. People associate quietness with intelligence. If a man is quiet, then he is thought to be intelligent. If you are not real smart, just keep quiet and no one will know but you.

Translation: This is not saying that fools show wisdom in their silence, but that silence conceals their folly.

Proverbs 17 Continued Questions

1. If you justify the wicked and condemn the just, how does God feel about you?
2. We see by this that judgment should be _____.
3. What is meant by a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom?

4. What injustice to parents have many children of our day done?
5. When does a true friend love?
6. When will a brother come to your rescue?
7. Who in the Bible had to pray for his friends for God to forgive them?
8. Who striketh hands and goes on others' notes?
9. What could happen to you if you go on a friend's note?
10. What 2 things go hand in hand that is not of God?
11. What is meant by exalting your gate?
12. Where do sinful words originate?
13. The mother who has a fool for a child has what in her life?
14. What doeth good like a medicine?
15. It is a medical fact that depression does what?
16. What does the author believe the breath of life that God breathed in man in Genesis is?
17. What does taketh a gift out of his bosom mean?
18. This gift in verse 23 is really what?
19. What is meant by the eyes of the fool being in the ends of the earth?
20. Who is a grief to his father?
21. What is bitterness of the mother?
22. Who has been martyred for the Word?
23. What will God do to those who came out against them?
24. If a fool doesn't talk too much, who is he thought to be?