

## **The Book of Proverbs – Moral Instructions on Everyday Living**

### **Be Dissed and Grow Wiser – Chapter 12**

This chapter continues praising righteousness and denounces wickedness. The wise and righteous don't mind and actually benefit from being rebuked, but the wicked don't—for one thing. This chapter continues to recapitulate earlier points—being good pays, and being bad doesn't, basically. The proverbs praise good wives, disses bad wives; hates on wicked speech, loves good speech; celebrates good sense, hates on bad sense.

The author says that kindness to animals is a good trait, attacks worthless pursuits and coveting wickedly gained goods, and praises the words of the righteous (yet once more). Fools get hung up on insults, and only stick with whatever they want to do. Repeating the same important points again, the author says that the wise speak words of healing, whereas the wicked and liars cause destruction and disruption. Fools can't help broadcasting their folly to others. Laziness, anxiety, and bad advice come in for the author's disapproval, and he or she again reiterates the point that righteousness leads to more life—there is no death in it.

#### Chapter 12

1. Who obtains favor of the LORD? (2)
2. What is a crown to a husband? (4)
3. Who regards the life of a beast? (10)
4. In whose eyes are the ways of a fool right? (15)
5. How does the LORD consider lying? (22)
6. What makes a person glad? (25)
7. What doesn't a slothful man roast? (27)

### **Get Fulfilled – Chapter 13**

This chapter goes through some more of the same advice: wise children don't mind discipline; stupid scoffers do. The proverbs attack aimless blabbering, uncurbed appetites, and falsehood. Some people pretend to be rich, but are in reality poor, while people who pretend to be poor or seem to be are often truly rich (you can take that literally, metaphorically—as in spiritually or emotionally poor—or both). Wealth, however, can cause you difficulties, while being poor or having less can leave you content with simplicity.

Then again, if you want to pursue wealth, do it gradually and it will be more likely to play out. If you're stuck hoping for something, your heart will be sick, but if you go ahead and fulfill your desire (whatever it is), you'll be content—it'll be a tree of life.

#### Chapter 13

1. Who hears his father's instruction? (1)
2. What is the end result of one who opens wide his mouth? (3)
3. From what comes contention? (10)
4. Who shall increase? (11)
5. What makes the heart sick? (12)
6. What will come to him that refuses instruction? (18)
7. Who should be your companions? (20)
8. What does a good man leave? (22)
9. What does a father do to a son whom he loves? (24)

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### **Trapped in Your Own Feelings – Chapter 14**

A foolish woman tears down her own house in the end, but a wise woman builds it. Fools hate God, and end up beating themselves with their own foolish words. Also, out of nowhere the author mentions that you can't harvest grain without some oxen. The author also reminds us that faithful witnesses tell the truth and false witnesses tell lies (like... yeah, that's kind of the definition of a "faithful witness" and a "false witness"). Fools can never get on the right track; they mock offerings, can't figure out where they're headed, and mislead others. The wise are the opposite. In another out-of-nowhere statement, the author notes that only each individual's heart feels its own sorrow and pain: our basic emotions and experiences are private to ourselves.

Everyone, good and bad, are repaid according to their deeds. The simple and foolish believe anything and fail to act with caution, and schemers and quick-tempered people end up going wrong. The poor are disliked, but if you're rich it's easier to make friends (even if they're false friends). You should be kind to the poor, and work instead of talking too much. Telling the truth helps save lives, and the fear of God gives both confidence and life. Having a tranquil mind and not getting angry easily are helpful traits.

#### Chapter 14

1. What is in the mouth of the foolish? (3)
2. When is the crib clean? (4)
3. What do fools do regarding sin? (9)
4. What is the end of the way that seems right to man? (12)
5. Who believes every word? (15)
6. Who is happy? (21)
7. What is needed besides just talk? (23)
8. What benefit is there in fearing the LORD? (26-27)
9. Who has great understanding? (29)
10. Who reproaches his Maker? (31)
11. What exalts a nation? (34)

### **Speak Softly; Speak Wisely – Chapter 15**

Speaking softly helps calm the wrath of other people, and if your tongue is gentle, it's "a tree of life." God watches over everything, says the author, measuring it all up. Fools don't listen to their parents, and end up having money problems. Their sacrifices don't please God—but the prayers of the righteous do. Yet again—rebukes are good for you. Deal with it, says the author. God can see into all human hearts, in addition to the underworld. Gladness of heart is good, sadness is bad. Cheerfulness is like a continual feast—you create your own enjoyment. It's better not to have too much and still fear God than to be overloaded with treasure and trouble. Similarly it's better to have love and eat a simple meal of vegetables than to eat a meaty feast while in a mood of hatred.

#### Chapter 15

1. What turns away wrath? (1,18)
2. Where are the eyes of the Lord? (3)
3. What is a tree of life? (4)
4. What is an abomination to the LORD according to this chapter? (8,9,26)
5. What is the delight of the LORD? (8)
6. To whom is correction grievous? (10)
7. What is better than great treasure with trouble? (16)
8. A dinner of herbs is better than what? (17)
9. What is said about a word spoken in due season? (23)
10. What is before honor? (33)