

31 HLH Proverbs 25_28 BS 770805p3

I have, this evening, the Jewish Publication Society rendering could have used another, but I think it is effective, especially when we come to forms like proverbs, which are especially idiomatic.

I have tried carefully to go over the area in which the King James Version might significantly differ.

I won't take time, of course, to go through the revised standard, or many other versions, we'll limit ourselves to an evaluation where an understanding in the English-speaking world three hundred and seventy years ago should be somewhat updated or clarified on occasion to make it cleaner.

So, when I read from the Jewish Publication Society, beginning with Chapter 25-28 of the Book of Proverbs, in whatever version you have, you will find sometimes significant differences, generally great similarity, and once in a while you will find the reverse order that is where the last part of the thought is put first, why this was done in Old English, why the Hebrew does it differently, many of these things are just a matter of expression, and the English translation of the Jewish Publication Society seems to read nicely in the manner in which it is given, and I think it important, of course, to realize when going through some Old Testament material where such material is found.

We're in the third division in which the Old Testament has been preserved to the synagogue to this day called the Writings, and we're in the Book of Proverbs which follows the introductory book which is the Psalms. Now, in the 25th chapter we come to a very interesting introductory statement that is not so important with respect to Proverbs as it is incidentally giving us an insight into how the canon of Scripture was formed.

In verse 20, sorry, in verse 1 of Chapter 25, we read, these also are Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out, and that is all that is said.

Now, from this we may draw a number of clear conclusions that God may use a man to write material, but that it is not a part of Scripture until such a decision is made.

In this case, from Solomon to Hezekiah are two and a half centuries.

So these Proverbs are also of Solomon which follow unless we are told that there are Proverbs of someone else, and until we get to that, of course, all those tonight will be of Solomon.

And we discovered that they were available, so they were copied out. There was access to them, but they had not been defined as a part of Scripture. The presumption is that the other the other Proverbs had already been a part of Scripture prior to the time of Hezekiah.

In the introduction, we merely have the Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.

The implication there is a contemporary event. Solomon must have then, through life experience, wrote ideas or communicated orally and somebody copied them down the court's scribe throughout much of his life. There was a time when he was certainly close enough to God that God heard and were midway through the reign of Solomon. But toward the close of his reign, a matter happened in which though he read the teaching, that is Torah or the law, which said he should not multiply either horses or wives, which is an interesting word of advice.

Horses was the military problem, and wives was the personal social problem that he dealt with and failed in each, for his kingdom was torn apart internally into external intrigue.

And Solomon also discovered that he had a kind of love-hate relationship with God when it was all over. It's a very sad situation. Whereas earlier in his reign, he issued Proverbs that clearly give the indication that they were published as a part of Scripture when he was king. We're not told that there was any other aspect about the first 24 chapters. How he issued them is not important this evening, but that he wrote or spoke Proverbs that he never was used to make a part of Scripture is clear because he had departed sufficiently from the Almighty, that God chose not to use him to complete his own works. Now, some, like Isaiah, might have been executed by enemies before they were used, and others gathered the works of Isaiah together.

There may be a man who is not called upon, like Daniel, to make a decision as to what should be in Scripture of all that has been revealed, and someone else does. There is reason to think that decisions normally were made in Palestine and not in Babylon. Hence, Daniel had the revelations, but in terms of gathering them in a book form, as we know them, it appears that we must wait a little while until the return of the prophets to Palestine.

Now, it does also appear that God used on occasion the prophets to bring a message, but in this case, certainly a king who was the leader, the reformer, and through him an order was issued that certain Proverbs, perhaps based on the judgment of the men of the king who may have been advisors, counselors, priests, it's not defined, were led to see that these reflected very special thoughts not sufficiently elaborated earlier in the Proverbs.

Now, God has not revealed in this statement how he put in men's minds that certain material should be preserved, but it seems rather clear that in Hezekiah's state it was quite important that material which could otherwise be lost that did come from a man who served God when the knowledge and understanding was coming to him, but who didn't live to convey it as a form of Scripture, that his message should not be lost to succeeding generations. And this does indicate that other material, beside what was in the Bible, was circulated separately, like other pieces of literature, and we do not conclude that because something is not in the Bible, it is therefore always an error, or if it's true, it must be a part of the Bible. So Solomon must have written other Proverbs not in here that may not be necessary, that may not even have fully reflected the wisdom of God. There are some proverbial statements that men make that are very sound, that I could say, well, look, that's just another way of saying this Scripture.

Then there are others that I can say, well, that's true under most circumstances, but you have to face the fact that there are exceptions. So in any case, of the Proverbs which Solomon wrote that were not initially a part of canon for preservation by the church, there was made a choice out of the literature that had come down in circulation for two and a half centuries, additional Proverbs, and the authority rested with the king, higher authority there was none. The head man on earth, who made decisions in the church, was the king. Remember, the church was actually also a state, and the high priest had administrative religious functions, but in terms of command, the king was supreme. The king, in this case a converted mind, was led to make this decision.

Now, of the various Proverbs, we will discover that the earlier ones copied out tend to be longer, that is, they are involved sometimes one, two, or three. I think three is about the longest, where verses are put together to make a completed thought. This evening, since I have already mentioned the importance of going over the Proverbs in terms of our prophet, I will try to cover as many specific ones in this area, as we can tonight, and emphasize or re-explain whenever there are some difficulties, especially in the King James Version. It is the glory of God, we begin in verse 2, chapter 25, to conceal a thing, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter. Now, what we have here is a recognition of the nature, if you please, of scientific knowledge as an illustration. The more men

discover, or then the more kings discovered, the more we see what is concealed in nature. That is, the more we probe into the atom, or the more we probe into the universe, or into the psyche or human mind, the more we realize what makes up or what is hidden within. Such a simple thing is wine.

Man only partly knows the constituents. They are very variable things that have not even been fully understood. Man is not able to completely synthesize such simple things as wine.

He can pervert, but he can't synthesize. He has never been able to make a real substitute for honey, something so simple that even the bees make. They don't know how, but they make it. Mother's milk is not quite like carnation milk in a can, but no woman really knows how it's made.

Such simple things that we are aware of throughout our lives actually have within them knowledge, divine origin, so complex that we still have not been able to guess how it can be done.

We can come close in some ways, but you see, if we could substitute and make it cheaper, a man would long since have done it, but it cannot be done in the manner in which God has made it possible in the quantity that human beings need some of these gifts. Kings and ancient times were the leader in searching out matters or scientific investigations for the simple reason that most individuals who were of royal descent descended from individuals of significant competence, and so the honor of leaders like recently the aged king of Sweden who died was one of the world's recognized patrons and actual investigators in archaeology. He was very interested in this particular science and placed Sweden near the head in terms of a nation interested in the human past.

The heavens for height, the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

Now, I think the first two might seem reasonable. Man is unable by any means that he is thus far acquired to fully comprehend the heavens for height. The further we investigate with our tools, the greater the universe seems, and by the very nature of the earth and the inability of man to really penetrate, we do not have a full comprehension of what lies within the earth.

Equally difficult it would be to fathom the thinking of rulers.

You see, if we were able to, we would know in advance what other people would think.

We barely understood what President Ford was thinking. It was very difficult to grasp what former President Nixon was thinking, and men still do not know really what went on in the mind of that administration they may speculate. I think we have to recognize that people in responsible position are sometimes very difficult to fathom. This is just a reality. You will find it true through history. Two verses that go together, four and five, take away the dross from the silver, and there comes forth a vessel for the refiner. King James Version has the word refiner, it means one who does refining. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness. The former is obvious, the latter should be, that if people and wickedness has to do with the transgression of law, if you surround a man with individuals of devious and evil motives and conduct, you will threaten the permanency of a throne or of a government or of an institution. If you remove individuals whose philosophy is contrary to the law of God, the throne or whatever institution it may be will be established on right principles. It is very important therefore that individuals in positions of authority recognize that the survival of an institution of whatever sort greatly depends on whether or not the men around are either living and thinking and acting in accordance with the law of God or contrary to it, because one who is wicked is one who violates the law of God. Verses 6 and 7, I will not read but merely state that when Jesus spoke of the scribes and Pharisees who loved the chief seats in the synagogue, the scribes and Pharisees were apparently overlooking verses 6 and 7, and it

is remarkable in this area of the Psalms, sorry, of the Proverbs, how often Jesus referred to some of these to illustrate the hypocrisy of the generation in which he lived. So you read verses 6 and 7 and see if Jesus' own reference to human conduct, when you come before prominent people, is not in fact derived from this fundamental statement revealed to Solomon and preserved in Scripture from Hezekiah's day on. Verses 8 through 10 act as a unit. Go not forth hastily to strive, lest you do not know what or lest you know not what to do in the end thereof when your neighbor has put you to shame. Now we want to be very careful and not be hasty to bring a controversy, shall I say, to a head. We want to be careful that we have first thought as to what we would do in the end. For instance, if one's neighbor puts us to shame in the sense that he has facts that we do not have. Debate your cause with your neighbor, but reveal not the secret of another. There are things that you should deal with your neighbor about and not reveal to someone else. Lest he who hears it revile you and your infamy turn not away. Now this was an age in which people who heard others as tail-bearers rebuked them and the rebuked they got, they had to live with. I think unfortunately we are in an age in this country in which the newspapers primarily and the newsmen in particular have had, well this could be for television as well as the various other media of publication, believe that you should debate the cause of your neighbor with the public and you should reveal the secrets of everybody so that he who hears you praises you. You know they've got the whole thing turned around today.

I wish that in the church of God and or the college or any institution you might be associated with also that we could learn that if you have a controversy with someone and it ought to be discussed you discuss it with the person himself and keep the problem between the two of you.

Jesus said of course there is a way to handle it if there is no resolution but to reveal things is in fact to place yourself in a position if you reveal these things in a public manner that you can bring down reproach or infamy on you. Now in our society whether in the church or not this doesn't seem to be a problem anymore because discipline has fallen by the wayside but this was the way it was and ought to be. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver is a way of defining in perhaps a little better English verse 11 that should be self-explanatory and I think the wording there makes it even more logical the two most appreciated precious metals of that day are like a word fitly spoken or the most valuable thing in nature that one can set his heart on is like a word that is fitly or appropriately spoken hence the importance of the spoken word I think we have too much that is unfit to be heard that is spoken we assume that there are places in which we quote can let our hair down unquote and I think that one needs to reconsider this I do know that in general many individuals in the church are going to be brought up short in the judgment whose words have not been fitly spoken because they think that in private God doesn't hear as an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold so was a wise reprovor upon an obedient ear now there are two points in the latter to remember one is a wise reprovor there's also a man who's not wise but who likes to reprove also and then there is the ear that's not obedient that is you can reprove someone who is disobedient and it means nothing nothing is accomplished and if you reprove you should do it wisely that is you should know when and how you can turn someone away who needs correction because you do it unwisely I once had an individual offer reproof of another area in this work the reproof was valid the place in which it was done was public and I had to refuse the information because it should never have been presented in a public manner verse 13 is like a number of verses that you will find here and there in this area as the cold of snow in the time of harvest so was a faithful messenger to him who sends him the cold of snow in the time of harvest in the Middle East or Palestine was important in bringing everything to a proper conclusion and produced something for the next season so is a faithful messenger to him who sends him now the importance then of one who when held responsible to convey a message is very obvious here if the church is like the messenger Christ was a messenger and if we are the body of Christ the church is also a messenger we must be faithful to him

who sends us he refreshes the soul of his master that is a literal simple understanding but I think it means that we also have to be very important I should say we have to be very careful because what we do is important to the one who is sent to church I am sure that what characterizes the church today is not the kind of unity that is reflected in a faithful messenger that's reflected in the various ideas about practically anything you can imagine from the amount of alcohol that you should consume to the meaning of divine healing to whether we're doing the work we ought to rethink how much liberty we allow ourselves because it reflects on the fact that if one is a faithful messenger and we deviate very greatly then the question would be whether we are as faithful as we think we are as individuals a faithful messenger when applied to the church clearly indicates a greater sense of unity than many of us allow ourselves to date as vapors in wind without rain verse 14 so is he who boasts himself of a false gift that is there is nothing of it there are individuals who are proud of what they have achieved or proud of what they've gotten and we want to be very careful of this kind of boasting it's not a common sin but when it is a sin it is about as meaningful as a wind that produces no rain just ask yourself whether this is a problem some people I would say the biggest illustration of this proverb we find in people who assure the work that they will be able to take upon themselves a great share of the financial burden because they are in a position you know to make money usually they die paupers having borrowed from the third tithe fund we've had this happen over and over again that's where I find this proverb very pointed be grateful for the small amount you do what you may have acquired by your business acumen may not be as great a gift as you think by long for bearing or patience is a ruler persuaded the soft tongue breaks the bone you'd think a hammer would you know well a hammer will break a bone but Solomon is using a proverb here and the illogic of a soft tongue being used to break a bone should be obvious but what he is saying is that indeed the way to deal with people is just the opposite of the way most people do if you want to persuade Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong you don't act impatient and rant and rave you need to know when to speak to him and how and you do it without deceit and duplicity that's true of anybody the way to approach someone in verse 16 Solomon sets out an example of being temperate in all things if we're to be temperate in honey which is from the hand of God how much more should we be with desserts which are from the hand of people just give some thought to that let your foot verse 17 be seldom in your neighbor's house lest he be sated with you and hate you but he doesn't say it he just tolerates you you see so you want to be very careful about imposing yourself on other people and you should teach your children we have neighbors and as my wife said they sit around our house waiting for our son to come home like crows on a telephone wire let your feet be seldom in your neighbor's house is a wise proverb in terms of instructing your children about their relationship with neighbors as well as instructing yourself a man who bears false witness against his neighbor in verse 18 is compared with someone who uses a mallet or a sword or a sharp arrow on someone therefore if you think that it would be wrong to cut someone in two with a sword or to pierce his eye with an arrow you better be careful about dealing in false witness because it is equally damaging i think this is one of the fundamental proverbs that ought to be used when dealing with the issue of gossip how much of what we hear today in the world how much of what we hear in the family or in the church in the college all of these things in the institution where you work doesn't matter where false witness is a very common problem and we need to examine ourselves as to whether we have verified the material whether we have the evidence from a reputable source and that we know how to use it i am very sorry that misunderstandings is the common word we use so easily arise that people want to believe the evil confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth and a foot out of joint that should be clear enough and then proverb number 20 verse 20 points up that there is a time to be joyous or the opposite the time not to sing light and hearty songs to one who is of a heavy heart you should know how to behave before someone the last part of verse 20 who is in need of being comforted there is a time to be sorrowful with those who sorrow and you need to be careful

how you think you're cheering up someone who is distressed i know that some people try to make light of a heavy burden when in fact that is the unwise way to handle a problem you have to perceive how the other person will react and what will be good for the other individual verse 21 if your enemy be hungry give him bread to eat if he be thirsty give him water to drink now Jesus quoted this in Matthew chapter 5 indirectly when he told us how to behave toward our enemies so Solomon here was led to see that the way you deal with an enemy is not the way most people do and the new covenant in fact is predicated on the principle laid out here in verse 21 and it is quite obvious that what you're doing is like keeping coals of fire upon such an individual's head that is it finally burns through and gets to him he would still hate you you see if when he were hungry you kept him from food and when he's thirsty you gave him sand in a cup he would hate you but when you do this it really gets to him you ever had hot coals you know on your hand or put them on top of your head that's just an ill a proverbial expression you will realize how weighty and how painful and distressing it is to realize that the one whom you have been hating where you have been the enemy of that person that that one now is treating you in this manner you can reach a person and convict a person by behaving in this manner and in no other way as effectively it talks about a backbiting tongue in verse 23 i think verse 23 is one that i should read carefully the jewish translation makes it much clearer the north wind brings forth rain not drives it away the north wind brings forth rain and a backbiting tongue you know the words brings forth an angry countenance that you can't backbite but what you create anger somewhere now the expression backbite of course it should be reasonably clear if you've never had the problem just read it in webster and if you do you know exactly what i mean what you do and say behind someone else's back in order to whittle him away or to diminish someone's stature and elevate yourself creates ultimately nothing but anger that is not the way to create peace verse 24 is a wise proverb for any man to consider verse 25 as cold waters to a faint soul so is good news from a far country i just had good news today Jean-Pierre Alay wrote me from Kenya and he's ready to go to Zaire to use money over half the money he has this year was raised by members of the church of god and probably half of it alone was raised through our brethren in and around minneapolis minnesota and i was very appreciative of the fact that he remembers us and the church of god itself is probably now more responsible than any organization for the survival of the aphepygmes in the ituri forest in zaire or what used to be the congo verse 26 needs an evaluation as a troubled fountain and a corrupted spring so is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked now that is a very clear and definite translation someone who gives way before the wicked now it does mean that we must be careful to maintain righteousness and not to give way and to collapse into sin verse 27 should be clear to everyone you can't cover all of it verse 28 i want to emphasize like a city broken down and without a wall so is he whose spirit is without restraint it is very important that you govern yourself the word spirit here of course has reference to the ultimate mental spiritual intellectual emotional motivation which lies in the realm of spirit within the human being and it is more important to govern this than even to govern that city though they are very comparable and he likens the one to the other but the conquest of course Solomon has said elsewhere it's more important to govern one's spirit than to break down the wall and conquer a whole city this i think is very significant in terms of those people who cannot govern their tempers verse 20 pardon me chapter 26 now we've covered a quarter of the proverbs in half the time but i think that we have actually seen some of the significant proverbs or at least for this evening i've tried to be careful in showing you the importance or how to approach so we can't possibly cover all proverbs and we will now begin to make a choice i will choose now those which are a little difficult when i read the king james or that should be reevaluated let us take verse 2 chapter 26 as the wandering sparrow as the flying swallow so the curse that is causeless or without a base shall come home now when there is a cause for a curse it's likely properly to fall where it belongs but if you try to bring a curse on someone else without a basis it's going to come home to roots it's the old

principle you dig a hole for someone else and you will fall in it we'll drop to verse 10 i think we should do that here in terms of the question of meaning then i want to get back to one other one that you'll certainly all want to ask about verse 10 says in the king james the great god that formed all things both rewardeth the fool and rewardeth transgressors a marginal note says text of this verse hopelessly corrupt the jewish translation i think makes it reasonably simple and plain a master you see the word god or elohim in this sense we're dealing with someone who is skilled and the word can have the sense of judges someone who is a master craftsman a master performeth all things he's consummate in his skills and in his natural gifts but he who stops a fool is this one who stops a flood that is you can be skilled in any number of other things but it is more important that you be able to stop a man who is a fool than be the greatest musician in the world if you can bring a man who is a fool one who doesn't take advice and counsel and bring him up so short it's like being able to stop a flood you know the old dutch picture little children putting fingers and holes in the dike so a very great emphasis is put on the ability to change and to have the wisdom to change and persuade another hence i want to read verses four and five because these are probably the most enigmatic answer not a fool according to his folly lest you also be like unto him answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own eyes now a very good explanation would be that this is sound advice the question is how do you apply it what you realize is that sometimes to answer a man in the manner in which he poses a question is to seem like the fool that he is certain people don't deserve an answer if you're told not to answer a fool according to his folly there mean that means there's a time not to answer one because to do so would put you in a position to be like him he doesn't deserve an answer he ought to be put down with no answer his own behavior is sufficient condemnation but sometimes there is a time to answer a fool according to his folly because you've got just the right answer which when you give it prevents him from being wise in his own eyes the meaning therefore is that sometimes you should answer sometimes you shouldn't and you should discern the difference that when you have clearly the insight to know how to put him in his place where you let's say shut him up stop him then it's time to answer but if all you do is give another foolish response then you need to learn that it's better not to deal with some people who are of this attitude just let the question go you have to know when there are questions that come up we deal with them from time to time sometimes they're on the telephone sometimes in a memo and sometimes personally of course most often they're the questions that are posed in a public situation where the attempt is to enhance the question or and to put down the one who is responsible for giving answers we'll move along to a later section of this chapter in which a number of difficulties occur in renderings i would point up the importance of verse 13 the sluggard says there is a lion in the way yes a lion's in the streets now when we deal with people who are often in need we discover that some are not like sluggards they get right out and solve their problem they need a little advice and counsel but there are others who assure us that there's no use proceeding on our advice because nothing's gonna turn out all right they're just plain too lazy to put to action what advice is given and they make all these excuses when in fact there is no reason now i learned the meaning of this proverb i once in the senior year was just before the senior year uh came down early to this area and was looking for a job and i saw a job that was interesting but i felt that it was just not advisable to go and this was lucy martin i counseled with her head of the music department said to go anyway so i went down there and here were certainly must have been 10 or 20 other people and i said verse 15 needs a slight evaluation it isn't that the slothful hides his hand in his bosom it's grievous to him to bring it to his mouth this fellow is so lazy that he buries his hand even in the dish in which he should be eating out of and it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth to feed himself the implication is that some people are so lazy that they even go hungry because they don't have ambition enough to keep what we call body and soul together many sluggards of course are like verse 16 wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give wise answer that's a very sad situation but what it means is that

very often people who are unambitious can think of more reasons why nothing is going to work out that they ought to be doing some of those people are going to have to learn the hard way they're not many of them but there are enough of them that we deal with that Solomon thought it wise to at least give us two or three proverbs here on the subject now i would point up that verses 18 and 19 act as a kind of unit as a madman who casts firebrands arrows and death so is the man who deceives his neighbor and says am not I in sport that is people who take advantage and make fun of others and delude others and of course this is always the basis of the halloween pranks as well i think those who practice such pranks in a quote harmless manner should give second thoughts to it and once in a while in the news you will hear somebody who does something like that shouting fire when there is none i remember one minister recently had to he came to his neighbor who was a church member and they were having a party inside and something was a fire in the fireplace and a few fragments went up and the wind caught it under the shingles and the minister came in he saw what was happening there was smoke on the roof he went into the house and he said your house is on fire and the the the master of the house just laughed because there was no fire in the house and he had to actually grab him and shake him and tell him that there was a fire in the house that's on the roof there wasn't a joke and of course by then it was a serious matter so we want to be very careful that anybody who thinks that he can have fun and make sport of deceiving a neighbor is in fact a little mad so what Solomon is saying we move along here verse 22 is a much more interesting way of describing it the king james says the words of a tail bearer are as wounds that go down into the innermost parts of the body the Jewish translation speaks this way the words of a whisperer are not as wounds but as dainty morsels you know you like them but they go down into the innermost parts of the body you know you eat them the dainty morsels say people like the secret things that others say you know that i'm sure your neighbor does likes to hear what you whisper i got you there it's like dainty morsels say and they go down into the innermost parts of the body people just want to make it a part of them they want to hear it that's the nature of human beings verses 24 25 and 26 act as a unit and should be read together and i think it is significant to note that whoever hates dissembles with his lips he lays up deceit within himself and the end result that his is that his conduct is going to be revealed before the congregation that when we find that individuals behave in such manner that either they act this way and we have to discover it or they make it known by blowing out of the church it's going to be revealed before the congregation and some unfortunately who have have certain hatred who cannot forgive sin who cannot forget lay aside the past who nurse hatred and grudge who deceive others who speak fair words that can't be believed their conduct has been and shall continue to be made known and i hope that no one falls in that category but very likely people still will chapter 27 i will pick up a few verses here we have about 35 minutes to go in this chapter we have a statement in verse one that james quotes so you should read the book of james who picked up the same thoughts what we find is that many of these proverbs are in fact the basis of judgment and responses that are found in the new testament in such varied areas as the book of james or the mafios quotation of jesus now to pick up a few areas that need a further explanation i'm just checking to see those which need to be restated yes verse 13 my son in fact inadvertently asked me of this question yesterday evening he happened to be reading the same section in proverbs and as the king james version says it isn't very clear verse 13 chapter 27 king james says take his garment that is surety for a stranger and take a pledge of him for a strange woman uh what that might have meant to the translators is hard to fathom but the implication is wrong we shall now read it as it ought to be take his garment that is surety for a stranger a fellow who is likely to back up or guarantee the payment of a stranger's debt is likely not to have the money to pay you and you better take his garment to be sure that you have some guarantee who's he's going to pay you and hold him in pledge this is the important one be sure you get a pledge from him who acts as surety for an alien or strange woman the implication here is not directly that of the king james version the meaning is

that if you have anyone who has borrowed money from you and of his behavior is such that he's an easy mark for some stranger whether man or woman and you know there are men who come around and play on the sympathies of women and there are women who come around you'll be surprised how many of the so-called pigeon drops if you've ever read in the newspapers what is some of these methods of getting money from the elderly especially they are perpetrated by women as well as men and when somebody is likely to be taken in by a stranger and to say well look he has an honest face or she has certainly an honest look i'll back up that debt that you've got to be very careful when you deal with such a person because he's likely not to be responsible in paying his debt to you that's the sense of verse 13 now moving on here verse verses 15 and 16 act as a unit a continual dropping is in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike not too much is accomplished very much is interrupted he who would hide her hides the wind it's not it's not possible any man who's married is such a woman can't hide the fact that his judgment was weak when he married her it's like trying to hide the ointment that's on your right hand when you greet someone else you can't do it the proverb here would certainly indicate that one should be very careful in making a choice for the person you marry whether man or woman because you're going to have to live with such an individual and the choice you make in some way is going to reflect on you the rest of your life and you'll never be able to hide it i appreciate the fact that my wife is not contentious and is not like someone who's continuously nagging and i have on occasion not often met individuals like that sometimes i find that church women have a minor part of this trait and they live with a unconverted husband and they're constantly nagging him about the fact he's not converted that he doesn't see that if only he had seen and you know they just go on and on and on and i usually bid the woman a do in the house you know when i'm their guest and i bring the man to the car and praise him for his patience and that he is going to be rewarded in the judgment there be such you know verse 20 is interesting in the original the Hebrew points up the king james has hell and destruction the Hebrew is she all and a badden and the sense of she all is the grave or the nether world the world of the dead so to speak they're never full so the eyes of man are never satisfied i must turn a page here i think we realize that that's just a natural statement it's like a camera you can just keep taking pictures and the human eye keeps perceiving things it is never satisfied it is only providing a means to an end that is never ever really fulfilled as long as the eye can see human beings are never satisfied with what they see in their eye there's always something more this is just natural now what we must learn to do is govern that because when there's something so insatiable it's likely to demand sin as well as righteousness and goodness that to please the person and hence jesus pointed up how important it is that you govern what you let enter your eyes you remember eve had this problem she's the you know the great ancestral mother of us all she saw that the tree was good her eyes didn't tell her the real story they only told her what she could see but she needed to have more knowledge than the eyes would convey and this is true of other senses as well out of the stomach as well as the eyes or the ears for hearing the tongue for taste there's some things like one man told me he said now i know what the bible says about oysters but i just like the taste of them now he had to have more knowledge than the tongue would convey there's some people who just like what they call the smell of tobacco it's really taste in that sense but their olfactory senses don't give them a sufficient amount of information there's some things that might not even look pleasant that are perfectly good and the things that really look pleasant that are not and this is certainly true in the modern area of merchandising so we must learn that whenever there is an area of human nature that is never in itself satisfied there is always the potential of pleasing it without which is not good i would like to read verse 21 which i think is better than the king james as the finding pot or refining pot for silver and the furnace for gold so is a man to his praise that's very awkward and i don't think that that is a clear or proper meaning it would be better to say the refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold and a man is tried by his praise if the hot heated pot

separates the draws from the silver and the furnace the draws from the gold so a man is tested that is his work is tested by the praise that he gets does he let it go to his head or does he prove the kind of character he is now if he is spoken evil of that's another kind of problem altogether but when a man is praised or a woman you test the quality of that person by how they respond to that do they eat it up do they want more do they want to constantly have approbation and approval of others that's not good i will just read also verse 22 though it is probably clear to all of you i'll read it in the king in the jewish translation only though you should bray a fool in a mortar with a pestil among growth that's course but partly fractured grain yet well not his foolishness depart from him that is if you even put him through the ringer if we might use another term you know we have the ringer for wash that time they had the mortar and pestil that there is practically nothing you can do no matter how hard you tackle him with whatever mental spiritual means you use it's an extremely difficult matter it's like we read before you will have achieved something greater than the greatest musician if you can stop a fool now why do people become fools i think we should look at that just a little bit i would suspect from the experience we have and we see both in the world and in our own midst that the greatest problem of fools starts when they're very little and the foolishness which is bound up in the heart of the child is never removed and most of it is parental failure if you teach a child which i think is extremely important teach a child to take advice teach a child to give advice and how to do it you have to start and some it's more difficult than for others but it is very unfortunate that most people in this category are probably that way because of the way the father and more often the mother behaves it is reflected in fools who lead a criminal life i mention this because you hear it in the newspaper on television of the radio so-and-so is being charged with such and such and they interview the mother and i'll tell you if you listen to the mother you would think the victim was the guilty person and yet this son can be in and out of jail over and over again and the mother will never believe and the father sometimes will never believe that their johnny could have done it and i apologize to any johnny's here but this is just an expression that illustrates to what extent this goes back to childhood and infancy a problem that is never removed human beings of course don't know how to govern themselves it has to be taught and when parents fail to teach children how to govern themselves it's a very serious problem we'll just take one quick look versus 23 through 27 all should act as a unit they're not separate ones and i like the jewish translation which tends to group things together that should be together and in grouping this section together we get a proper picture in the jewish translation and undoubtedly in other good modern translations of what we would call responsibility in taking care of one's own property or estate and in so doing you will also be blessed and it does mean that you have to exercise responsibility and do things at proper times and then you will get the results verse one of chapter 28 and now we are the last chapter signed for this evening and we have 20 minutes and we will try to cover all the important ones in this chapter the wicked flee when no man pursues the righteous are secure as a young lion now what we are dealing with here is a general statement that what we have is a strange thing that people who don't trust god who trust themselves violate the law are often fearful now the wicked can also be pretty bold but there comes a time when the wicked also flee when nobody's pursuing that is their guilt their fears come upon them now it doesn't say that the wicked always flee it is just a statement that whereas the wicked flee when no man pursues which is often a state of mind that does afflict the criminal and be surprised how many criminals for instance who break in houses flee away when there's really nobody around just a noise they have a sense of guilt the righteous are secure as a young lion and the reference here of course is to people who trust god i think the best national illustration of this is what happened in the sixth day war in 1967 between the arabs and the israelis there was no doubt that indeed and i can i think speak plainly here that there was an attempt on the part of some nations to obliterate another and there was the attempt on the part of that one that was to be obliterated to protect their home and it is remarkable how often when no one was pursuing just

noises caused the enemy to flee because they weren't actually having to protect their homes they were out to take the homes of another this can have national import it can have also individual import if you know you're right you never need to be concerned even unto death but those who go contrary to the law are constantly afraid because of their own consciences i like the jewish translation closing verse two so we'll read the long proverb for the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof this could be rendered because of the conduct of people in the United States we are blessed with a bureaucracy but by a man of understanding and knowledge established order shall long continue if there is a man of understanding and knowledge established order long continues i would think that the greatness of this nation in part is dependent still on the wisdom of george washington who warned this nation against foreign entanglements but because of transgression we have a host of rumors you know a host of people who are managing things when a government breaks down that is a land ruled by kings than many local princes rise to power and it's true that when any organization loses significant power at the central authority more and more power is vested locally that's true in the church more and more men exercise authority today because Mr Armstrong is more often away than here a poor man who oppresses the weak is like a sweeping rain which leaves no food the wind comes right afterwards you know and dries out the land one of the worst things that can ever happen to any society is depicted in verse three where the poor oppress the weak now there might be some logic in the strong doing it and the wealthy taking advantage but when the poor take advantage of others you will really have a society that is gone to the dogs now let's look and see if there is another i'd like to read verse five i think there is a slight alteration of one word the meaning is basically the same but it helps us evil men understand not justice but they did seek the lord understand all things now you the more you're seeking the more you understand knock and it shall be open you don't knock and it won't be open but then maybe you're not seeking god evil men understand not justice i think this is very important because if there was any sense of justice in criminals we wouldn't have criminals better is the poor who walks in his integrity then he was perverse in his ways though he be rich there are some rich people who are just peculiar and perverse in their conduct tragic lives and it's much better to be poor and to be upright and honored in your local area even in poverty so riches don't compare to the basic state or attitude of mind verse seven king james says whoever keeps a law is a wise son i would point up in verse seven a real meaning of this in the jewish is of course basic a wise son observes the teaching the word tara translated law actually means teaching or instruction law in this sense is but divine teaching god is the parent i think we think of law often as something dull that you find in the statute books it ought to be regarded as teaching and instruction not something to be avoided by those who proclaim to be christians but have turned the law of god out of doors whoever keeps the teaching is a wise son the poor that is understanding i'm sorry i've put two together don't belong my eye fell in the wrong place but he that is a companion of gluttonous men shames his father you need to be very careful of the choice of people you keep company with i think every young man ought to be aware that the kind of company he keeps will rather determine the outcome of his life and it pays to take note of this proverb there are a few others i would like to read here that i think will be of help let me read the end of verse 10 read the whole thing whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way it's misleading misguiding putting pressure wrongly on people he shall fall himself into his own pit but the whole hearted shall inherit good now the whole hearted you know abraham was asked to walk before god and be perfect and there the sense is also whole hearted and so rendered i believe in this jewish translation we can sometimes cause someone who is upright to go astray under pressure duress misguidance and especially when you use deceit from the pulpit as is so often done in this world but one who is whole hearted will inherit good that means you really have to be on your guard and to keep in this state that abraham was asked to achieve perfection or to be whole hearted in your service to god and not to be carried away verse 12 very interesting in terms of political situations in

the world when the righteous exalt there is great glory but when the wicked rise that is to power men must be sought for when when evil men come into power responsible men are hard to find responsible men have to be sought for but when righteousness rules through leadership great opportunities come to many people moving along let's take verse 17 where we can have a better rendering a man that does violence to the blood of any person we would probably find a more interesting rendering here a man who is laden with the blood of any person shall hasten his steps into the pit and none will support him now we're talking here again of some of the fundamental approaches to life a man who is laden with the blood of a person hastens his own steps to the pit now in the end none will support him he's going to fall down in and nobody's going to stop now somewhere along the way undoubtedly we have situations as in the Nazi regime in Germany where indeed it seems that though men were laden with sins there were many others who supported them but when it was all over nobody helped them because they deserved what they had inherited and what they were carrying with them in their consciences so this is a general statement now there may be indeed along the way apparent exceptions but it is a warning that this is the ultimate consequence take the case of of eichmann i think good characteristic of the character to illustrate the type that ruled in Nazi Germany in the 1930s 1940s he was a man laden with the blood of many people and he ultimately fell into the pit death and there was nobody in the world who was able or even stood out to support him even though some might have condemned the jews for doing what they did there was nobody who was willing to step out and actually risk life to help you know this is often true the person who is a criminal is not really trusted by others you realize how many gangland slayings there are that is slayings of criminals by criminals being paid by other criminals to do this criminal act you can't trust them and in the same way when we have like in the government or in any organization when you once begin to feel you can't trust others you have to spy on others like the criminal world that's a sign that somewhere in any organization or any government that allows this that there is some unrighteousness some guilt in this case Solomon uses the guilt of blood it might be the guilt of false witness it can be the guilt of other moral sins we need to be very careful that any sin that we are laden with is taken away by Jesus Christ and then we're no longer subject to it we are free of that burden he will support but it demands repentance i'm going to speak tomorrow in our congregation and this is not meant as an invitation because we have our regular congregations to be in but i think that we need to have a sermon and i am only suggesting that you consider the topic yourself i think too few people know what it means the forgiveness of sin i think it's talked about but i think more people who sit in our congregation than we realize do not know what it means to be forgiven they live with condemnation and so when they leave they feel free of guilt it's because they were never forgiven when they were among them and when they have convinced themselves they don't have to keep the law of god then they don't feel any guilt but when they knew they had to and weren't forgiven they did feel condemned and that should have been proof that they needed to straighten out their lives and repent instead of rejecting the law moving along the last five minutes here to a very few others that we have toward the close of the chapter i will read verse 21 i think we'll pick it up there to have respect of persons is not good for a man will transgress for a piece of bread now the two put together may seem peculiar until you reflect on the fact that when individuals have respect of persons they can be bought even for something as little as a piece of bread when they're hungry to have respect of persons is a very dangerous thing people tend to respect the wealthy you know because they feel that they might get something now there is the tendency to go to the reverse and to be a respecter of persons in the sense of someone who is poor the minority we want to go the reverse and we can jeopardize ourselves in society to have respect of persons no matter who it is not good we should deal fairly whether we deal with men or women young or old black or brown or white english speaking or non-english speaking church member or non-church member we'll look at verse 25 he that is of a proud heart stirs up strife is what verse 25

says but he that puts his trust in the Lord shall be made fat now that i think needs a slight reevaluation we'll read it in the jewish translation he that is of a greedy spirit stirs up strife a greedy spirit is the margin even in my king james version but he that puts his trust in the Lord shall be abundantly gratified not you know just fat the Hebrew i think should convey this proper and elevated meaning and not the grosser translation he who trusts in his own heart is a fool whoever walks wisely shall be delivered or shall escape i think that's very interesting in terms of a promise made in revelation 12 if you trust in your own heart you're a fool you rely on yourself instead of god but if you walk wisely in your conduct walk means how you live and you do it wisely you will escape the implication meaning a calamity and god has promised that such is possible he that gives to the poor i'll read the last two here he that gives to the poor shall not lack he who hides his eyes shall have many a curse who hides his eyes from the poor it is important that we individually do it and that we also collectively do it i think it is perfectly right that you should make some contribution to people whom you know that we don't you make it to the church where we know people who are in need that you don't or that you make it even to organizations who have a good reputation in the news bureau can tell you that there are some organizations who do take care of the poor where you can be generous and even help in other areas where help is necessary we have a responsibility first to help our own but we should even go beyond that when the wicked rise men hide themselves remember the other proverb we just had that when the wicked are in power then you have to search for men men tend to hide themselves because and i found this true in the Soviet Union that prominent people able people in the Soviet Union don't let their abilities be known because then they become caught up in the web of blaming somebody you know when things go wrong they only rise to a certain level we talked victor cubick my wife and i to a responsible man who didn't want to go beyond being the head of a local factory because he would be held responsible for things and would be chargeable and people would blame him so that in fact an evil system where men are wrongly selfishly motivated is one that tends to cause people of ability not to be used because either there's jealousy when it is known or men of ability know when they should draw the line because if they get any higher they're going to be blamed for something or they can be held responsible and this is true in society as a whole it's true in institution it's true in the state when the wicked rise men hide themselves but when they perish the wicked who have risen to power the righteous increase there's little doubt that when things like this have taken place in the world and bad and evil regimes have been removed as we had in the end of the second world war people whose conduct was otherwise unknown could flourish the Solomon here is speaking as a ruler as a king and he sees many of these things and the highest level the institutional level the state level the world level it may not always be possible to apply every one of these to the local individual situation and he is taking a broad look and you should see these proverbs in that light not next week but at a later time in the schedule the remaining chapters of the book of proverbs will be covered want to thank you for your attention and if you have ever read the proverbs only in the king james version it would certainly be good or whatever version you have sometimes to read them in another translation have a good night