

October 7, 1981

Proverbs
Proverbs Background
Rev. Cummins

We're going to the Book of Proverbs tonight but I want you to turn first of all to the Book of Deuteronomy. I want to cover some background information. And the way we're going to handle this over the next few weeks...we're going to...you know Dr. Wierwille is going to be back here teaching Ephesians in approximately three weeks and then he'll be gone again for a time and be back. And on those times that he's gone, I'll be covering different things from the Book of Eph...of Proverbs.¹

And I want to begin tonight with a background for the Book of Proverbs so we can see how the Book of Proverbs sits in the scope of the rest of the Old Testament and the whole Word and exactly what the purpose of Proverbs was as far as the background. Then, next week, I'd like to get into an introduction to the Book of Proverbs itself, going into the opening verses in order to understand exactly what the purpose and function of Proverbs is, how it was used in Old Testament times. And once we get through this background and the introduction, then we're going to cover difficult verses. We're not going to take Proverbs and go all the way through it like we've done in the Book of Ephesians or like we are doing in Ephesians; we're going to select those verses that are difficult to understand or there's problems in translation.

And, of course, if something doesn't fit, you know it has to be in one of those two categories. And a lot of the problems result from a lack of understanding the culture. And in the Old Testament you have a lot more Eastern culture than you do even in the New Testament 'cause there was a...somewhat of a Greek and Roman influence in the New Testament like you see...you saw last night in the Book of Ephesians in verse 5 of chapter 1.² But culture is a big thing. Figures of speech play a very important part in the Book of Proverbs. Language presents some difficulty as far as understanding different Hebrew words. There are six different Hebrew words that are translated "wisdom" in the Book of Proverbs and they can't all mean the same thing. So we're going to look at each of those things and evaluate it and...and we may be moving around week after week (or session after session, I should say, because they come here and there) to try to unlock some of those difficult verses.

¹ These teachings on the Book of Proverbs were done on Corps Nights in the ministry year that ran from September 1981 to August 1982. The Way Corps that were in-residence and heard these teachings live were the 10th and 12th Corps and the Family 6 and Family 8 Corps. In this year leading up to the 40th anniversary of the ministry and the transfer of the presidency from Dr. Wierwille to Rev. Martindale, Dr. Wierwille was traveling a great deal. At the time of the first two teachings on Proverbs, he was on his Latin American Presidential Itinerary which lasted from October 7-21. On the occasions when Dr. Wierwille was not present on Corps Night to continue with Ephesians, Rev. Cummins would teach these sessions on Proverbs.

² In his teaching the night before this one to the Way Corps on Ephesians 1:5, Dr. Wierwille spent a good bit of time explaining the phrase "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself", explaining the Roman society's customs around adoption and why God chose to use that comparison.

I might recommend at least four different research papers³ that I've found on the Book of Proverbs. One by Cookie Lofstedt which does a tremendous and very comprehensive work on chapter 1 of the Book of Proverbs. It's an extensive paper but it...and it centers on chapter 1, just covering the figures and customs and everything involved in that chapter. Another one by Rick Galbraith of the Sixth Corps, (he's Sixth Corps I believe, right?) he did a background, a concise background on Proverbs. Peter Qualtieri's work on "prudence" in the Book of Proverbs and how it ties into Ephesians and a number of other things, but it dwells primarily on prudence. And then there's one by Joe Wise which I've ordered but haven't received yet and so I'm not sure what that's on but I hear it's on the book...some facet of the Book of Proverbs.⁴ So those are four you might want to look at if you have access to them in the library, and especially if your research project this year is dealing with anything on the Book of Proverbs.

Think I mentioned last night that it's a book of wisdom. The Book of Proverbs is wisdom. And so we need to know and understand what wisdom is. And it's addressed to whom? To youth, to young people; to young people. It was like their retemories.⁵ The manner in which it teaches young people is through proverbs, and proverbs are wise sayings which they memorized or retemorized and they were designed as rules of faith and practice. To teach the student, first of all he would memorize that particular proverb. But it's one thing to know the words, it's another thing to know what it means. I thought back on the Martin Luther film where he was drilling his student...students and he asked them what such and such was and the student rattled off a definition he had learned in catechism but he couldn't tell what it meant and that's what Luther was after.⁶ And that's what a person who was teaching the youth did. They not only had to know what it said, but what it meant; what the point was being covered as far as what they were saying.

Now, the Book of Proverbs appears in the Old Testament and the Old Testament was begun by Moses, the first writer who wrote the five books of the law as we know them.⁷ And you know the Old Testament is divided into the law, the prophets and the psalms.⁸ Just like the New Testament, any part of the Bible, it's God's Word. Holy men of God spake...moved by the

³ One of the requirements for graduation into The Way Corps was for each student, in his or her last year of in-residence training, to complete a research paper on a topic chosen from among a variety that Rev. Cummins and the Research Department outlined. It was to be of the quality and scope of a Master's thesis.

⁴ Many of the Way Corps research papers were stored at the library at The Way College of Emporia in Emporia, Kansas. Rev. Cummins worked out of the Research Department at The Way International Headquarters in New Knoxville, Ohio, so he would have to "order" or request that a copy be sent to him from Emporia.

⁵ "Retemories" is a word coined by the Way Ministry that combines the two words "retain" and "memory". Retemories are Scriptures that you memorize and "retain in your memory".

⁶ Rev. Cummins is referring to a scene in the 1953 Louis de Rochemont movie titled "Martin Luther". It was nominated for two Academy Awards and he would frequently show the film to The Way Corps and to the students in the advanced classes on Power for Abundant Living to teach people about the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation and what it takes to take a stand on God's Word.

⁷ The five books of The Law (the Torah, in Hebrew) are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

⁸ In Luke 24:44, Jesus Christ divided the Scriptures available up until that time as follows: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."

Holy Spirit.⁹ All scripture is what? God-breathed.¹⁰ All scripture is God-breathed. It's God's Word, although the theories today try to show how the Book of Genesis was produced at different times by different individuals. And then Leviticus and Numbers, Exodus, were produced at another time by the priests. And then the Book of Deuteronomy, another addition. This is commonly known as the JEPD theory,¹¹ but we don't buy that. We believe it was God-breathed, that Moses wrote the books.

They were known as "the book of the law". And in Deuteronomy chapter 17 we have an early indication of the...the existence of this law because it's one of the commandments of Moses in regards to a king (if they were ever to have a king). Remember it wasn't God's will for them to have a king¹², but in chapter 17, you get down to verse 15, God made provision that if they ever *did* have a king, that here's how you are going to have him. It says in verse 15:

Deuteronomy 17:15:

Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt [shalt...] thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother.

So he's given provision in here. And one of the provisions for a king is in verse 18 where it says:

Deuteronomy 17:18:

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write...a copy of this [what?] {law} in a book [or a scroll] out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites:

The Levites (or priests who were out of the Levites) were those who were the guardians of the scroll, the law. They were the ones that kept it. And if there was ever a king, that king, one of his responsibilities was to write him his own personal copy of the law. So there had to be a law in existence if there was a commandment here to write it. See? Now that's one thing.

In Deuteronomy chapter 31, in verse 9, it says:

Deuteronomy 31:9-12:

⁹ And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi,

⁹ 2 Peter 1:20-21

¹⁰ 2 Timothy 3:16 says "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." The words "given by inspiration of God" in the Greek text are just one word, *theopneustos*, which literally means "God-breathed".

¹¹ The JEPD theory (sometimes referred to as the "documentary hypothesis" or the "Wellhausen hypothesis") was a theory developed among Bible scholars in the 18th and 19th century that proposes that Moses was not the writer of the Torah, the five books of the law, but that there were at least four different sources for the material in those books that were combined to form what we have in the Bible. The sources were referred to as the Yahwist or "J" (because J is the German equivalent of the letter Y and the theologians who came up with this were Germans); the Elohist or "E"; the Deuteronomist or "D"; and the Priestly or "P". Together, they are referred to as JEPD.

¹² 1 Samuel 5:4-9, 19-20.

which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

¹⁰ And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

¹¹ When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

¹² Gather the people together, men,...women,...children,...thy stranger...within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law:

That was a commandment to read the law year after year. And again it had to be in existence if they were to read it, if it's a commandment of God. In verse 25 of the same chapter:

Deuteronomy 31:25–26:

²⁵ ...Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant...saying,

²⁶ Take this book of the law [this book of the law], and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.

They were to keep this book of the law in the ark of the covenant. The priests were the custodians of it, the careteepers...careteep...care...what do you call them? The keepers of it. OK.

In Joshua chapter one, when God is instructing Joshua, it says:

Joshua 1:8a:

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night,...

If the book of the law wasn't to depart from Joshua's mouth, it must have been there. You know one of the difficult things they have with Moses [is his] writing about his own death and their mourning for him afterwards.¹³ Well, God told Peter and Paul they were...before they were going to put off the tabernacle and so on, before they were going to die.¹⁴ He could have told Moses as well, and some of the details. So, anyway, this is...that's no argument. But they must have had the book of the law, because there it talks about it again.

And then you get to Joshua chapter 8 and in verse 30:

Joshua 8:30–34:

³⁰ Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,

¹³ The death of Moses and the children of Israel's mourning for him are recorded in Numbers 34:1-8, one of the books written by Moses.

¹⁴ Peter talks about his impending death in 1 Peter 1:14-15. You can see that Paul knew that the end of his earthly life was approaching in 2 Timothy 4:6-7.

³¹ As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the [what? the] book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.

³² And he wrote there upon the stones a copy [Joshua wrote a copy] of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

³³ And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as...as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over...mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

³⁴ And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings...cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

He read every single word. He wrote a copy and then he read it.

Then you get to Joshua chapter 24 and you have a very interesting verse of scripture. In verse...chapter 24, verse 26. Well, look at verse 25.

Joshua 24:25–26:

²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

²⁶ And Joshua wrote these words in the [what? the] book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, [and the oak represented the presence of God] that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.

So Joshua not only wrote him a copy of the law of Moses, the book of the law, but now he added to that book of the law. And there were others that added to it as time went by, because we know that the Old Testament was more than just the law, the five books that Moses wrote, because there are also prophets and then there are psalms, or writings. So there were other men, Joshua being the first to add to it.

In 1 Samuel we'll see that Samuel added to the book of the law. Chapter 10, verse 25.

1 Samuel 10:25:

Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book [or in *the* book], and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

So Moses began it (the book of the law), and then the prophets added to it - Joshua, Samuel, others. And it doesn't tell us who wrote every book of the Old Testament; it's not laid out so nice like the New Testament is. If you want to know who wrote it was, you know, you can look and at least there is a name on the book. But God's still the author so it doesn't matter who wrote it. It's a matter that some men of God wrote it.

It's God-breathed and it fits all the way through. It's not like other writings where you find contradictions in their work, but God's Word will fit. In God's Word, God's the author of the whole thing. It's just that there's different writers using their vocabularies but it's still God's Word. And so, throughout the...the Old Testament, you have even books like the Book of Kings that was probably written by different people, different portions of it. Somebody would keep a record, somebody else would come along and add more to it, but they were men of God, prophets, and others that kept these things going.

Again, there are three divisions: the law, the prophets and the psalms. And I'd like you to look at the Book of Jeremiah chapter 18. You know that the priests were responsible for the law like we read in some of those verses. The prophets wrote some of the books of the Old Testament, but who wrote the psalms? Who wrote the "writings," the other writings?¹⁵ There's the law, the prophets and the psalms. That's the question.

In Jeremiah 18:18 you have a very interesting verse because here were some people, they knew the situation at the time, but they were fighting against Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 18:18a:

Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet....

The law from the priests, the counsel from the wise and the word from the what? Prophet. There's three groups of people. The priests were responsible for the law. The prophet was responsible for the word that he spoke. You have the law, the prophets, and then the wise men. The wise were responsible for counsels, for wisdom, giving counsel in situations, practical situations. See? When I think of wisdom and I think of practical situations, I think of Uncle Harry and Ermal.¹⁶ Two of the greatest examples I know. Men that put into practice the Word of God in their lives. They were men that lived it. They believed it and practiced what the Word said.

So you have the law that the priests were responsible for. You have the word of the prophets, and the word of the prophets was, "Get back on the Word." And then you have the counsels of the wise. And of course the Book of Proverbs is a book on wisdom, written by the wise. As a matter of fact it starts out the proverbs of whom? Solomon, the son of David, who is supposed to be the wisest man in the world.¹⁷ So the priests teach the law; the prophets spoke

¹⁵ In Luke 24:44 where Jesus Christ divided the Old Testament Scriptures between "the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms", the word "psalms" is the Greek word *kethubim*, simply meaning "other writings".

¹⁶ Rev. Cummins is referring to Harry Ernst Wierwille, Dr. Wierwille's older brother, and Ermal L. Owens, who were, respectively, The Way Ministry's first Secretary-Treasurer and Vice-President on the Board of Trustees. Mr. Owens had fallen asleep awaiting the return of our lord less than three months before this teaching, on July 24, 1981. Uncle Harry was Rev. Cummins' stepfather, married to his mother, known as Aunt Naomi.

¹⁷ Proverbs 1:1

the word (and that word was to get back on the Word and...like reproof); and then the wise were there for counsel: to give wisdom, to correct individuals, for training, that type of thing. Again you have the doctrine, reproof and correction that it talks about in 2 Timothy.¹⁸

But now when we're talking about the writings or the psalms, we're not talking about what you think of as the poetry book that you may have learned in catechism class. We're talking about the psalms of the Hebrew canon or the writings of the Hebrew canon.¹⁹ And to know that...have you ever...have you gotten a paper on the Hebrew canon? Well, there might be one forthcoming. If not, if you can get a hold of the first appendix in Bullinger's...or in the Companion Bible, it has these, the breakdown.²⁰ The law, of course, was the first five books. And then the prophets were not everything we call a prophet or it in...it included some other things. It's a little bit different order.²¹ And then the "writings" included book like...books like Psalms, Proverbs, Job, the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (was treated as one book). And then Chronicles was also a "writing", which it would explain why Chronicles is written from God's viewpoint, whereas Kings, when you see complementary information in the Book of Kings, it's from man's viewpoint, see?²² It's still God's Word, but one's man's viewpoint and one's God viewpoint, and that's how you have to look at those things. But Chronicles was part of the writings in the Hebrew canon. Now, we're not concerned with all of these, we're concerned with the Book of Proverbs. But...but I wanted you to see how it fit in the scope of the Hebrew canon.

Of these writings (Psalms, Proverbs, Job and all these others), there are three major types of writing. The first is songs or poems. Poems really fall under the category of songs, okay? The Book of Psalms, of course, is made up of songs (s-o-n-g-s) or poems. If you put a poem to music then you have a song, don't you? Alright. And proverbs is the second category of writings, which are sayings, wise sayings, used as rules for faith and practice. And the third type of writing are didactic narratives; didactic narratives. The Book of Job is a great example of a didactic narrative where it tells a story that has a teaching point to it. Now it's a true story of Job, okay? But there's a point to it. Same way in Chronicles. There are a number of true stories, records of things, but it's to teach a certain principle. See? They're didactic narratives rather than proverbs or poems.

Nehemiah, chapter 8. These writings were written by wise men. Men who had wisdom.

¹⁸ 2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁹ The word "canon" comes from the Greek word *kanon* which means 1) A cane, straight rod; 2) a measuring rod; and 3) a norm, a law. The canon of the Scriptures is the body of books that constitutes the Word of God and "canonical" indicates that a book is inspired of God. "The Canon of the Bible", Daniel L. McConaughy, *The Way Magazine*, March-April 1986, pp. 17-20.

²⁰ "Appendix 1: The Structure of the Books of the Old Testament According to the Hebrew Canon", E.W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1995), p.5.

²¹ According to Dr. Bullinger in *How to Enjoy the Bible*, "the prophets" would include such books as Joshua, Samuel and Kings, books that most theologians do not list as being among the prophets. *How to Enjoy the Bible*. E.W. Bullinger, (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1980) pp. 30-31.

²² For further information on the relationship between and different perspectives of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, see: Chapter 7 - "Viewpoints: God's — Man's", Victor Paul Wierwille, *The Word's Way* (New Knoxville, OH: American Christian Press, 1971), pp. 109-130.

Among the men who had wisdom in the Old Testament, I think you know the elders of the gate.²³ I think you've heard of men called scribes.²⁴ I think you've heard of those called teachers, or masters even in the gospel period.²⁵ See? These were wise men, men who had wisdom. And wisdom is more than knowledge, it's knowledge applied, Okay? Knowledge applied. In Nehemiah 8, verse 1.

Nehemiah 8:1:

And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses [there you have that book again], which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

Ezra was a scribe. A scribe couldn't be somebody without knowledge. He had to be a wise person, because a scribe was somebody that was responsible for the care of the Hebrew texts and the Aramaic texts until the establishment of the Massorah, the Massoretic text.²⁶ I think mu...most of you have heard of the Massorah. The Massorah is...(M-A-S-S-O-R-E-H...A-H, I guess)...the Massorah was the Hebrew scriptures that has the "fence" around it that tells how many words, how many letters there are in this passage of scripture, so that when somebody is copying the scripture they can check all these statistics and make sure they haven't skipped a letter or a word or a yod; you know, a little letter, smallest letter, or a jot or a tittle, those little marks over the letters.²⁷ But that Massorah was not established until...the earliest we have, I think, is from around the tenth century and it was established sometime between the first century and the tenth century. Exactly when is not known.

Before that, you have...before the Massorites you have the Sopherim (spelled S-O-P-H-E-R-I-M). A Sopher...the Sopherim were scribes. The Hebrew word that's used for scribe here is *s-a-p-h-a-r* and Sopherim comes from that. That's this Hebrew word for scribe in Ez...in Nehemiah, used of Ezra here. *Saphar* is a verb that means to count, to number or to tell. To count, number or tell. And the participle form is used here. That's why it's translated "scribe" as a noun. In others words, he is Ezra — the one who counts, numbers or tells. That's what a scribe is — a person who counts, numbers or tells.

²³ Among the places that elders of the gate are mentioned are Deuteronomy 21:19; 22:15; and 25:7; Joshua 20:4; Ruth 4:11; Proverbs 31:23; and Lamentations 5:14.

²⁴ Scribes appear 122 times in the King James Version. A search of the word "scribe" in a concordance will show you many who are mentioned by name in the Bible.

²⁵ The Greek word *didaskalos* is used 73 times in the Gospels, of which 69 are in reference to Jesus Christ. It is translated "master" 72 times and "teacher" one time. The word "Rabbi", a title of respect applied by the Judeans to their teachers appears eight times, seven of which are in reference to Jesus Christ.

²⁶ "Appendix 30 — The Massorah" of the *Companion Bible* explains that "the oldest and best manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible contain on every page, beside the Text...a varying number of lines of smaller writing, distributed between the upper and lower margins." "The Massorah is called "A Fence to the Scriptures" because it locked all words and letters in their place." For a more detailed explanation, see this appendix. E.W. Bullinger. *The Companion Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1995), p. 31.

²⁷ In Matthew 5:18, Jesus Christ said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The "jot" refers to the *yod*, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. A "tittle" or *kerai'a* were small adornments to the letters in the Hebrew and Aramaic manuscripts or small lines and projections that differentiated between similar letters.

Now think about that. If you have a...a fence around the Scripture which was established later, they could easily count up the letters and...and...and words in a passage and see if it comes out. They could count; they could number them; and then they could also tell what it was saying. Before the Massorites, you have this group or these people known as these Sopherims, okay? They were the scribes and their job was to protect that text without a fence. They didn't have a fence, they worked more or less like I guess we do today with...where you have different texts and you compare to try to get back to the original. Of course Ezra was a man of God, and he worked the Word to try to get back to the original because maybe the law of Moses...that people had added things, subtracted things, just like they've done to texts today. And so it was his responsibility to count, to number and to tell exactly what that was saying. I, when I think of count and number, I think of that 2 Timothy 2:15: rightly divide.²⁸ See? He had to know his mathematics spiritually when it came to the texts, the Word. That was a scribe. So he couldn't be stupid, he had to be a wise person, he had to know wisdom.

Now down in verse 5.

Nehemiah 8:5a:

...Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people;...

And then, between him and these different priests, they explained it. And you get down to verse 8.

Nehemiah 8:8a:

So they [Ezra and all the priests that were helping him] read in the book in the law of God [haphazardly? No! They read how?] distinctly...

They didn't skip words. They didn't read "thoroughly" instead of "throughly".²⁹ They read distinctly! What does the Word say, exactly?

Nehemiah 8:8b:

...and [they] gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

They taught the Word. They read it distinctly, exactly what does the text say, and then they would teach it, explain it that everybody could understand. That was the job of a man of wisdom, one of these wise people, a scribe.

This word for "understand" — "caused them to understand the reading" — is also found

²⁸ 2 Timothy 2:15: Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

²⁹ In Session 2, Segment 9, of the foundational class on Power for Abundant Living, Dr. Wierwille uses 2 Timothy 3:17 which says "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" as an example of how people do not read exactly what is written in the Bible. They will read it as "thoroughly" rather than what it says which is "throughly".

in Proverbs chapter 1. It's a related word, same root. In verse 2, which gives the purpose of Proverbs.

Proverbs 1:2:

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

And that word “understanding” (and we’ll get into this more next week, but) basically it means discernment, discernment or discrimination in the sense of being able to separate truth from error, again rightly dividing.

They not only read the Word distinctly, but they caused the people to understand exactly what was written, to separate truth from error. Not just read the Word and understand the words as far as, “Oh ‘the’ means it’s a definite article and ‘wisdom’ means knowledge applied”. Well what does that mean? Let’s put it into application. But they could utilize that...those scriptures, the book of the law, separate truth from error. They’d understand when it says in the book of the law “thou shalt not kill”, what that meant. You know you could...when the enemy attacked you, what do you do? Oh! “Don’t kill”. Let them kill you. See? No! ³⁰ They could understand it. They could rightly divide it. They knew that if you’re in a war, somebody is running, breathing down your neck with a javelin or something, that you’d better fight back. Right? Sure, see? They were able to separate, understand; separate truth from error; rightly divide; discernment. That’s what Nehemiah did and that’s the...one of the functions of wisdom, as it says here in Proverbs. They weren’t... One of the things that the application of knowledge is, as far as wisdom, it is discernment – to be able to separate truth from error. That’s a very important part of wisdom. Now there’s other things related to wisdom and we’ll see these later on.

Now while you’re in chapter 1 of Proverbs, I want you to look at verse 6. The introduction of Proverbs is verses 1 to 6, the first part of 6.

Proverbs 1:6a:

To understand a proverb, and the interpretation;...

Then “the words of the wise and their dark sayings” begin the first section of the Book of Proverbs. Again, somebody wrongly divided the verses here, okay?³¹ It should begin:

Proverbs 1:6b:

...the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

³⁰ Although the King James Version translates the commandment against killing that appears in the ten commandments in Exodus 20 as “thou shalt not kill”, the Hebrew reads “thou shalt not murder” or, perhaps more broadly rendered “you shall not commit an unjust killing.” God did provide in the Mosaic law for accidental killings, capital punishment or judicial killing, and the killing of someone breaking into your home (personal self-defense) as well as for national self-defense, none of which would fall under the category of “unjust” killing. This can be seen, among other places, in Nehemiah 4:8-23 and Esther 8:11-12 and 9:1-5.

³¹ The first versions of the Bible to divide the text into verses were produced in the 15th and 16th centuries. At times the editors and translators split the text into two verses at places that further investigation show should have been divided elsewhere or left together. According to Rev. Cummins, this verse division is one of those.

And their “dark sayings”, simply means their morals or the point of what those words are saying. That they not only...not only are these just the words, but it also includes the point of what these words are saying. Okay? It’s the words of the wise and the point of what is being said.

The question is, again, who are the wise? Like Ezra was a scribe, he had to be a man of wisdom. In Jeremiah 18:18, we saw that distinction between the priest, the wise and the prophet. In Jeremiah chapter 8, I would like you to look at that. Jeremiah 8, verse 5.

Jeremiah 8:5:

Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.

That’s to pick up the context here, the...what he’s talking about — Israel had “slidden back”. Then you get down to verse 8, this is why he says this here:

Jeremiah 8:8a:

How do ye say, We *are* wise, and the law of the LORD *is* with us?...

Yet they were what? Backslidden. But they said, “we are wise.”

Jeremiah 8:8b-9a:

⁸ ...Lo, certainly in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.

⁹ The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the [what? the] word of the LORD...

Those who were supposed to be wise, who were supposed to be scribes, instead of being able like Ezra to rightly divide the Word, to make people to understand it, to read it distinctly, they had...had rejected the Word of God and consequently these wise guys were ashamed. And these scui...scribes, their work was all in vain, their pens using invisible ink.

Jeremiah 8:9b:

...and what wisdom *is* in them?

So they had a problem because they forsook the Word. Now, in every culture, basically, there has been the study of wisdom, okay? We have it in our culture: philosophy. Philosophy is a combination of two Greek words: *phileō*, which means what? Love. And *sophos*, which means wisdom. So the “love of wisdom”, that’s philosophy. See?

And in Greek culture you had the sophists who were the wise ones. In Egyptian culture you had people who were supposed to be wise people, wisdom people. They wrote what they called “wisdom literature” in all the cultures of the East; the Greeks had it, the Romans. Every culture...civilized culture, basically, has had the study of wisdom and they had people that were

known as wise people: Plato, Aristotle, Socrates.³² But the thing is, if they reject the Word, what wisdom is really in them? World wisdom. That's why you get the...the word for "wisdom" in German is *wissenschaft*. You all ought to know that, W-I-S-S-E-N-S-H-A-F-T, I believe. Sound good? *Wissenschaft*. But the word for philosophy is *weltwissenschaft*. Spelled...just add W-E-L-T? It means "world wisdom". World wisdom is philosophy in German, and in English its philosophy which is the love of wisdom. So wisdom, in basically every civilized culture, has stood at the top. As a matter of fact, the top degree you can earn in college is a doctor of what? Philosophy. The love of wisdom. A doctor of the love of wisdom, see?

Now "doctor", if you ever look it up in the Bible in the New Testament, it's a translation of the Greek word *didaskalos*, which means "teacher". So all a doctor of philosophy is is a teacher of wisdom, basically. And again in every culture, you've had those who were supposed to be teachers of wisdom, doctors of philosophy, who were supposed to be the smart ones in the culture. But without the wisdom of God, without going to God's Word, you'll never have real wisdom. The wise are ashamed, the scribe's pen is in vain, like it said here in Jeremiah.

In Job chapter 29 you have another group that falls in this category as wise, and that's the elder of the gate. The elder of the gate. He's the one that was supposed to be one of the wisest in the community that sat at the city gate in order to judge things that came up, problems that they encountered. And, matter of fact, you might want to jot down Deuteronomy 22:15 and Ruth 4:1 and 2, where it talks about elders of the gates. But here is a good description, I thought, of an elder, because Job says (talking about his previous status):

Job 29:7:
When I went...

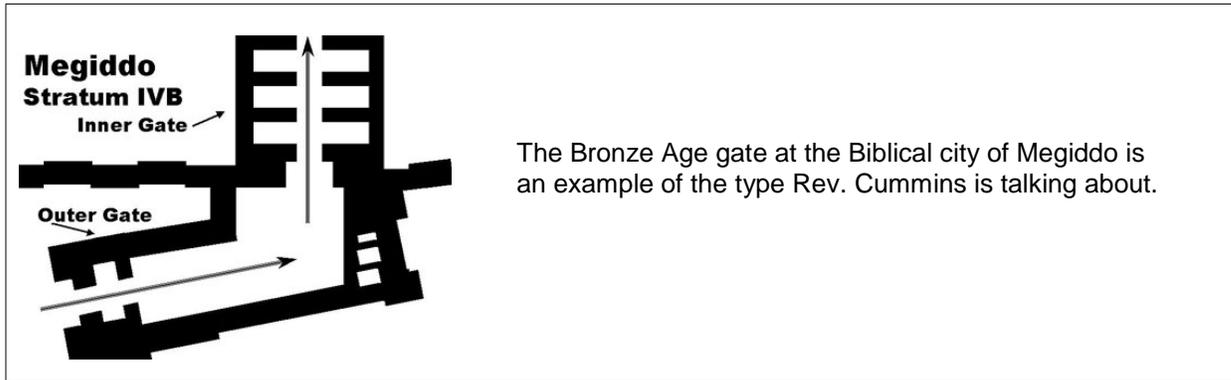
Verse 7...verse 7 of chapter 29:

Job 29:7:
When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street!

And that's where the elders sat — the city gate — in the street going out. By the way, this was right inside the gate, they have benches they've found in ruins in some of these different sites. They were not...they didn't sit outside the city. It was right inside the gate. And you don't have a gate like you think of — here is a doorway, you just walk through and you're inside the city. But the...the gate ran parallel, generally, ran parallel with the wall for a ways. That way, if the enemy was ever coming, they had to travel a little ways right under the wall through the gate in order to get into the city and people could be pouring oil on them and stones and things like that. So this gate was a...like a passageway running parallel with the wall in

³² Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are perhaps the most famous of the ancient Greek philosophers. Many scholars consider them the basis of all Western philosophy. Plato was Socrates' prize pupil, as Aristotle was later for Plato.

many of the cities. And it was always...the gate always came (if you were facing it) from the right side running parallel, because there weren't too many left-handed archers or spear throwers. Think that through. They were smart. Okay, you have to ask John Schoenheit about this because he's been over and seen some of this in the tells where he dug over in that area.³³ But this, I thought that was interesting. That's the gate. They were inside that walkway there.



Well...

Job 29:7b-8a:

⁷ ...I prepared my seat in the street!

⁸ The young men saw me, and hid themselves:...

It just means they were respectful; they didn't go around the corner and hide.

Job 29:8b-12

⁸ ...the aged [elders] arose, *and* stood up [in respect].

⁹ The princes refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth.

¹⁰ The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth [out of respect for the elder].

¹¹ When the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me:

¹² Because I delivered the poor [the wretched] that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him.

See, he was the wise one so he was the one capable of helping those that came in for help.

Job 29:13-16:

¹³ The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.

¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

³³ John Schoenheit, of the Sixth Way Corps, participated as a volunteer in the archaeological dig at Tel Dan in northern Israel. One of the main finds at Dan were gates from both the Middle Bronze and Iron ages.

¹⁶ I *was* a father to the poor [or helpless]: and the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.

You know, if he didn't know the cause, he was wise enough to go search it out, find out. "Well, what's the cause of the matter? Let's solve this problem here."

Job 29:17–23:

¹⁷ And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

¹⁸ Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply *my* days as the sand.

¹⁹ My root *was* spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

²⁰ My glory *was* fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.

²¹ Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel [see he gave counsel, wisdom].

²² After my words they spake not again [in other words, he had the final word]; and my speech dropped upon them [just like pearls].

²³ And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain [just waiting to receive].

Remind you of anybody we know? Where you just sit and wait for the words of wisdom.³⁴

Job 29:24–25:

²⁴ *If* I laughed on them, they believed *it* not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

²⁵ I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* comforteth the mourners.

That was the elder of the gate, Job, who had that great respect. He was a wise person.

In Ecclesiastes chapter 8. But yet, if you'd reject the Word, the Word of God, you don't have too much wisdom left. You might have *weltwissenschaft*, you might have a doctor of philosophy degree, but you don't have wisdom. In Ecclesiastes chapter 8, verse 1.

Ecclesiastes 8:1a:

Who *is* as the wise...? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?

See, the wise man, like the scribe, not only read distinctly but he also could cause people to understand, show the interpretation of a thing.

Ecclesiastes 8:1b:

...a man's wisdom [makes] his face to [what?] shine, [and especially when that wisdom is the wisdom of the Word] and the boldness of his face shall be

³⁴ Rev. Cummins is making reference to The Way Corps and others wanting to receive the wisdom of God's Word from Dr. Wierwille.

changed.

In verse 5 it says:

Ecclesiastes 8:5:

Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

He's able to discern in categories of time as well as judgment. A wise man wouldn't waste his time. A wise man knows how to redeem the time. A wise man knows how to judge matters because he has discernment, he's able to separate truth from error. And if he doesn't know, it says he searches out a matter. He goes; he gets the facts; then he can make a wise decision. That's the wise man.

In Daniel chapter...well wait a minute. Yeah, Daniel chapter 2. Remember...ever read that verse in Proverbs 24:6? It says something about a multitude of counselors.³⁵ You know, if you want advice, you go to a multitude of counselors. Proverbs 24:6 that was. You don't just want one, but especially if you're going to make a decision that'll affect a nation like some of the kings did, see? Or the Presidents, things like that.

In Daniel chapter 2, here was a king who consulted his counselors, his wise men. In chapter 2, in verse 12, he consulted all these counselors.

Daniel 2:12:

[And] For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise *men* [all of his top brains, his PhD's] of Babylon.

Because they couldn't interpret a dream. Well, he asked for more than the interpretation; he asked them to tell him what the dream was and then give the interpretation! [Laughter.] Nobody could do that.

Daniel 2:13–14:

¹³ And the decree went forth that the wise *men* should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

¹⁴ Then Daniel answered with counsel and [what?] wisdom [two great things] to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise *men* of Babylon:

And Daniel kept them from killing those wise men because among them was Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and Daniel was another one. But Daniel, because his wisdom was not the wisdom of the world but it was the wisdom of God and he received revelation, he could tell the king the dream *and* the interpretation, the point of the dream, his vision. And so you get down to verse 46, says:

³⁵ Proverbs 24:6: For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

Daniel 2:46–48:

⁴⁶ Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.

⁴⁷ The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth *it is*, that your God *is* a God of gods, and a Lord of [lords], and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.

⁴⁸ Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him...great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the [what?] wise *men* of Babylon.

Over all the wise men. That means Daniel had to be wiser than the wise men, wiser than the PhD's of Babylon. And he was, because he had the wisdom of whom? God. See? Wisdom of God.

Chapter 4. Who were these wise men? I'll tell you who they were, verse 6.

Daniel 4:6:

Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

Somebody else had a dream. Now he wants another interpretation. Well they couldn't do it either.

Daniel 4:7a:

Then came in...

Here he called in the wise men. Who are they?

Daniel 4:7b:

...the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, ...the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

Who were the wise men? The soothsayers, the astrologers, the hooky-pooks, remember?³⁶ Verse 18.

Daniel 4:18:

¹⁸ This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou *art* able; for the spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee.

Well, he missed it a little bit [laughter]. In chapter 6...no, chapter 5, verse 7.

³⁶ “Hooky-pook” is derived from “hocus pocus”, a phrase used by magicians when bringing about some kind of transformation by magic. From there it became a more general term for practitioners of magic and sorcery.

Daniel 5:7–8:

⁷ The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, . . . the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

⁸ Then came in all the king’s wise *men* [there you go, see?]: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

So, the king was troubled. So who did he call for? Daniel. You get down to verse 15.

Daniel 5:15:

And now the wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

This was the handwriting on the wall when he had the big feast. Remember that? “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.”³⁷ Okay? Daniel had greater wisdom than all the wise men of Babylon.

In . . . well, you know Joseph, in Genesis 41, more discreet and wise than anybody in the kingdom, so what did Pharaoh do with Joseph? He put him second in command, gave him his signet ring.³⁸ Joseph was second in command over all of Egypt because of his wisdom. Where did he get his wisdom from? God. Not from astrology school, not from soothsaying school, see? Not from world wisdom but from God, the wisdom of God.

You’re acquainted with the men in the Old Testament that were chosen to build the things of the tabernacle. They had to be men of wisdom.³⁹ See? Same thing. When (what’s his name?) Moses couldn’t rule over the people anymore; he chose a . . . chose judges to help him to watch over all the people - judges over so many and so many and so many, on down the line.⁴⁰ And these men, in order to be judges, had to be wise. They had to be wise men. See?

In Matthew chapter 2, verse 1 and 2, who came to see Jesus after he was born, sometime after? The wise men, the Magi.⁴¹ They were men probably from the Persian culture who had rubbed . . . you know, their ancestors had rubbed shoulders with Daniel who was over there and others of the wise men and so they knew a little bit about what made this universe tick from God’s perspective. Not just astrologers, but astronomers, studying the stars in their courses because of the way God put them there.⁴²

³⁷ Daniel 5:24-28

³⁸ Genesis 41:39-44

³⁹ Genesis 31:1-6

⁴⁰ Exodus 13:18-27

⁴¹ Matthew 2:1-12

⁴² For more information on how God revealed His truths in the stars, see “Chapter 1: The Bible and

Matthew, Matthew 23. I'd like you to look at that. Jesus is talking here to the scribes and Pharisees, and he calls them hypocrites. And in verse 34, now he's talking to scribes and he says:

Matthew 23:34:

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

That's what they did with prophets, wise men and scribes, and they were supposed to be the scribes, the wise men. But they forgot one thing: the Word. They rejected the Word of God, see?

Romans 16. There are so many scriptures on wisdom. We could spend four different sessions just doing that, but we're not going to look at all of them. But these were some of the ones I thought were fascinating to help you see how the scribes and elders and how all these guys had to be wise men. And yet, sometimes, they were wise men, scribes, as far as the world was concerned, but they rejected the Word and so they really didn't have number one wisdom. Okay? They had number two wisdom, sometimes number ten wisdom [laughter]. In Romans 16 is a great key. Verse 27. It says:

Romans 16:27a:

To God only [what?] wise...

That's right! When you get right down to it, God is only wise; He's the only real wise one. So if you really want wisdom (and every culture, I said, has been after wisdom, *wissenshaft*, sophism, the wisdom literature of all the Eastern cultures) then, if you really want it, you got to go to the Word. But they've all had their own brand of wisdom which is watered down, diluted wisdom. It's not Word of God wisdom, it's not God only wise, because only God is wise.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, you have this great record here starting in verse 19.

1 Corinthians 1:19:

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will [bear...] bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Those who seem to understand, I will bring all that to nothing.

1 Corinthians 1:20:

Astronomy," Victor Paul Wierwille, *Jesus Christ Our Promised Seed*, (New Knoxville, OH: American Christian Press, 1982), pp. 3-11. For more on the Magi, see "Chapter 2: Who were the wise men?" in the same work, pp. 13-21.

Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer...

You know, the scribe is the one who is supposed to protect the text.

1 Corinthians 1:20–24:

²⁰ ...where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

²¹ [And] after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom [by their wisdom didn't even know God], it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

²² For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

²³ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, ...unto the Greeks foolishness;

²⁴ But unto them [that] are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and [what?] {the wisdom of God}.

So it's not just preaching, it's wisdom. But it's the wisdom of God, as opposed to the wisdom of the Greeks, the wisdom of the world, which is stupidity.

1 Corinthians 1:25–27:

²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than [what?] {men}; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶ For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men [those that are supposed to be wise] after the flesh [doesn't say none, it says not many], [and] not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:

²⁷ But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...

'Cause when you've got the wisdom of God, you're just way above, and that's what we want, that's what Proverbs is all about: the wisdom thing. The wisdom, Okay?

1 Corinthians 1:27b:

...God hath chosen the weak...

Verse 28:

1 Corinthians 1:28-30:

²⁸ [the] base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

²⁹ That no flesh should glory in his presence.

³⁰ But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us [number one] wisdom,...

He "is made unto us". Now that verse really means something to me. Solomon was the wisest one in the world. What does it say?

1 Corinthians 1:30b:

...in Christ Jesus, who of God [has] made unto us wisdom...

We have that wisdom in us. And, as we walk, as we study the Word, put it on, then we're going to manifest that wisdom. Wiser than Solomon, wiser than what's in Proverbs, but Proverbs is a great foundation. Proverbs is where we need to start, because most of us haven't even mastered the little diddly things, let alone going on to real wisdom sometimes.

And Ephesians is the apex of all revelation to the Christian Church.⁴³ It's the tops. So to really understand wisdom, we ought to make sure that when we're reading Proverbs we really understand what's going on there so that we can understand the real wisdom when we get to Ephesians. Huh-huh-huh. How's that? I knew I could tie this in to Ephesians somehow! [Laughter.]

Chapter 10. He's made unto us wisdom. Verse...chapter 10, verse 15. It says:

1 Corinthians 10:15:
I speak as to wise men; judge [you] what I say.

I'm speaking to you as to wise men. Well, why shouldn't he speak to us as wise men if God's made unto us wisdom? Why shouldn't he speak to us as to Daniels, to the scribes, Ezra, as to the men of the Old Testament that really believed God's Word and had that wisdom. Solomon. See?

Ephesians chapter 1. Here we are back in Ephesians. Verse 8.

Ephesians 1:8–9a:
⁸ Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence [and prudence is “good sense”];
⁹ Having made known unto us the [what? the] mystery of his will...

He's abounded to us in wisdom, knowledge applied. Think of the wisdom of Solomon; think of the wisdom of Ezra; think of the wisdom of other men who really believed God in the Old Testament. They were wise men, the elders of the gates, the scribes that really walked, the daysmen⁴⁴, the men who had wisdom. And yet God has abounded to us in all wisdom and good sense 'cause one of the facets of wisdom is that it has to be good sense. It's not just wisdom. You know if it says in the law that when the enemy comes after you, what do you do? Shoot him! Kill him!⁴⁵ What happened when...when Saul let Agag, the king of the enemy, live?⁴⁶ He

⁴³ For more on the divinely-inspired structure and order of the Church Epistles, including the special place Ephesians holds among them, see “Chapter 10: The Church: The Great Mystery Revealed”, Victor Paul Wierwille, *God's Magnified Word*, (New Knoxville, OH: American Christian Press, 1977), pp. 171-211.

⁴⁴ The “daysman” was a wise man in a village to whom people went to resolve disputes. He would help resolve the problems in a way that the parties would be reconciled. For more on the daysman, see K.C. Pillai, *Light Through an Eastern Window* (New Knoxville, OH: American Christian Press, 1986), pp. 76-83.

⁴⁵ For further on this, see footnote 29 previous.

⁴⁶ 1 Samuel 15:1-35

lost it.⁴⁷ And the prophet had to hew Agag up into little pieces because the king, Saul, did not carry out the Word of God. That's the law. That's the Word of the Lord. So it's good wisdom when you're attacked by the enemy, you don't make any exceptions. Chop their heads off according to the Old Testament law, right?

And yet Elisha...when Elisha...the king of Syria sent his soldiers out to find Elisha and God blinded their eyes and Elisha came up and says: "Well, who are you looking for?" They said, "Elisha." And they said...he said, "Well, let me take you and I'll show you where he is." So he leads them to the city of Samaria.⁴⁸ Samaria is the capital of Israel! That's their enemy! And when they're inside the city, the king says. "Shall I kill them? Shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" And Elisha says, "No." He says, "You wouldn't kill somebody unless you took them with the sword" or something like that. He said, "Feed them, give them food and water and send them back home." And by doing that—by feeding them, warming them and then sending them back—they...the king of Assyria...king of Syria never attacked Israel again at that time. That is good sense. [Laughter.] Where did he get this good sense from? God. Even though the law would have been [makes a chopping sound] chop heads. Right? See? But there's more to wisdom than just exactly what it says, the letter of the law. There's the spirit of the law or whatever you want to call it. It's the spirit of God working within your heart. It's spiritual perception and awareness.⁴⁹ That's wisdom; wisdom.

And God has abounded to us in all wisdom and good sense because he's made known to us the what? {The Mystery.} That's the key to our wis...our wisdom because you know the Mystery and the greatness of what you have: Christ in you; Jew and Gentile, fellowheirs; there's no discrimination, no respect of persons. You can read in the Old Testament (I just read it today) that there is no respect of persons but nobody really believed it because it was Judeans and Gentiles.⁵⁰ Today this is not Judeans and Gentiles, it is the Church of God. There is absolutely no respect of persons. That's the greatness of the Mystery! It's one Body.⁵¹ *One* Body. We're all in one. All you have to do is believe and you're in, see? Grace; totally by grace. Mercy. See? Christ in you. Power. He's made unto us wisdom. Man alive! We have got it! Wisdom beyond what the Old Testament guys ever thought of!

In...go back to Proverbs chapter 1, verse 2.

Proverbs 1:2–3a:

⁴⁷ By "lost it", Rev. Cummins is referring to the fact that God rejected Saul from being king over His people going forward. He lost his kingship.

⁴⁸ 2 Kings 6:8-23

⁴⁹ Rev. Cummins is teaching the Way Corps here and this makes reference to Corps Principle #1 — Acquire and in-depth spiritual perception and awareness.

⁵⁰ God's teaching in the Old Testament on not being respecters of persons can be found in Leviticus 19:15, Deuteronomy 1:17 and 16:19, 2 Samuel 14:4, 2 Chronicles 19:7, Proverbs 24:23 and 28:21. It mainly appears in the context of not being influenced by people's wealth or position (or lack of it) in rendering judgment. Gentiles, nevertheless, we're still considered unclean and no Judean would enter the house of a Gentile or have other dealings with him.

⁵¹ Ephesians 2:16, 4:4; Colossians 3:15

- ² To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding [which I said was “discernment”];
³ To receive the instruction of...

And that word “wisdom” is “good sense, prudence”. It’s a different word than wisdom up in verse 2.

Proverbs 1:3:

- ³ To receive the instruction of [good sense, which involves] justice, ...judgment, and equity;

Equity is fairness, it’s equality. Talk about equal rights. Equal rights — no Judean, no Gentile, but Church of God — no respect of persons. That’s equal rights. Okay? That’s equality; that’s good sense! What they call equal rights today isn’t always equal rights, see? But equal rights, no respect of persons, put it in light of the Word, see? That’s good sense, and good sense is another very important part of wisdom. Understanding or discernment, being able to separate between truth and error, is another very important part of wisdom. And there’s others that we’re going to be getting into next week.

Now this is wisdom. And in all cultures, I said that there was wisdom literature. As a matter of fact, there’s a writing I think you ought to be acquainted with called “The Wisdom of Amenemope”. Spelled A-M-E-N-E-M-O-P-E. It’s an Egyptian writing.⁵² Chronologers aren’t sure when it came from, they date it as early as 1300 B.C. and as late as 700 B.C. I’ve...some...read that some say that 23 of the 30 proverbs in Proverbs 22:17 to 23:14 come from this work. I don’t believe that. I believe, if anything, the wisdom of Amenemope came from the proverbs. Okay? But, regardless, it’s still the Word of God.

And what the...you know, the critics and so on are always trying to do is tear down the Word of God, make it look like a word of man, that somebody just pieced this thing together, it doesn’t make much sense. “Do what you like as long as you like what you do.” That’s not the Word, see? But like I say, there was other writings in other cultures, in other cultures of the time. But I think they don’t give credit to where credit’s due. I think if it hadn’t been for God working with the children of Israel, there never would have been much knowledge and wisdom throughout the East. Couldn’t have been, see?

Solomon was the wisest man in the East of his time. I want you to look at 1 Kings, because he’s the one that it says, “the proverbs of Solomon, the son of David”⁵³, that’s how it starts out. In 1 Kings chapter 2, when David was charging Solomon as to what to do as king, you get down to verse 9.

⁵² More discussion of the parallels between the Wisdom of Amenemope and the Book of Proverbs can be found in *Proverbs 10-31 — The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries*, Michael V. Fox (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁵³ Proverbs 1:1: The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

1 Kings 2:9:

Now therefore [talking about one of their enemies] hold him not guiltless: for thou [Solomon (this is what David is telling his son Solomon), thou] *art* a [what?] wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him;...

In chapter 3, in verse 5, this is where God appeared to Solomon and asked, God asked or said, “ask what you want to receive”.⁵⁴

In verse 6:

1 Kings 3:6–9:

⁶ ...Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

⁷ And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* to go out or come in.

⁸ And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

⁹ Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may [be...] discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

To discern between good and bad, that’s what Solomon asked for. And remember I said discernment was a phase of wisdom: to be able to separate truth from error; to be able to discern between good and bad. As a matter of fact, keep your finger here but look at Chronicles.

2 Chronicles, chapter 1 and in verse 10. Solomon this is the same incident...Solomon says:

2 Chronicles 1:10:

Give me now [what?] wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people,...

See? So he was asking for knowledge and wisdom which was to be able to discern between good and bad, that he was able to judge the people, that he knew how to go out and come in. All these things center on wisdom, see?

In...back to Kings. Chapter 10. I want you to look at chapter 10, verse 4.

1 Kings 10:4:

And when the queen of Sheba had seen all [of] Solomon’s wisdom, and the house that he had built,

⁵⁴ 1 Kings 3:5: In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

We're in 10:4. 1 Kings.

1 Kings 10:5-8:

⁵ And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he [came] up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.

⁶ And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.

⁷ Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and [my eye...] mine eyes had seen *it*: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I [had] heard.

⁸ Happy *are* thy men, happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and*...hear thy wisdom.

So Solomon habit...had it. As a matter of fact, it says down in verse 23:

1 Kings 10:23–24a:

²³ So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

²⁴ And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his [what?] {wisdom},...

Which he thought up himself. No!

1 Kings 10:24b

...which God had put in his [what?] heart.

Look at chapter 4. Pretty smart guy, wise guy [laughter], wise person. Chapter 4, verse 29.

1 Kings 4:29a:

And God gave Solomon wisdom...

1 Kings 4:29.

1 Kings 4:29-30a:

²⁹ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore.

³⁰ And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country,...

Would that include the wisdom of Amenomope? It certainly would!

1 Kings 4:30b

...and all the wisdom of Egypt.

Well, that's got to include Amenomope, 'cause he was Egyptian.

1 Kings 4:31-32

³¹ For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan [and all these other guys]: and his fame was in all nations round about.

³² And he spake three thousand proverbs:...

That's a lot of things to say. You know, in the Book of Proverbs there's only 915 verses. And, according to Dake's Annotated Bible⁵⁵, in those 915 verses there's only 560 proverbs. And yet it says "he spake 3,000 proverbs". Not only that, he was a songwriter like Cliff Adelman.⁵⁶

1 Kings 4:32b:

...his songs were a thousand and five.

He wrote 1,005 songs. Remember songs and proverbs are two of the teaching techniques that you find in the writings. The other was didactic narratives. Thirty-four. Verse 34.

1 Kings 4:34:

And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

That's the wisdom of Solomon.

Back to Proverbs chapter 1. That's why it starts out:

Proverbs 1:1-3:

¹ The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

² To know wisdom [that's the first thing] and instruction; to perceive the words of [discernment];

³ To receive the instruction of [good sense, prudence], justice, ...judgment, and equity;

Then verse 4.

Proverbs 1:4

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

The "subtilty to the simple" means not "simple" 'cause he's stupid, just that it's a young

⁵⁵ *Dake's Annotated Bible* is a Bible consisting of the text of the King James Bible with some 35,000 notes by Finis Jennings Dake, a pastor with the Pentecostal Assemblies of God denomination and later the Church of God. One notable thing about his approach is that he believed in the dividing of the Bible into spiritual administrations.

⁵⁶ Cliff Adelman, of the Fourth Corps, was a long-time member of Way Productions, writing many of the songs that ministry groups performed throughout the years.

person does not have the skill and dexterity that an adult has or should have. But it's still the young people or those who are growing up, maturing, to learn wisdom, discernment and all these other things. Written "to the young man". See that? It shows you exactly who it's addressed to: to the young man (which includes wis...women, okay? Not just male "man", but man, mankind.) Alright.

In the Eastern culture, the mother was a child's first teacher. She taught the child. The father was the child's second teacher. The wise men, the scribes, the teachers, were the child's third teacher, which ultimately lead (if they walked on the Word) to God as their teacher. The father is the father. The teacher was called a "father". Remember the sons of the prophets and they called their head prophet "father"?⁵⁷ God is also called what? Father. See?

So this instruction here in the Book of Proverbs is to young people from a father to a son, from the teacher to the pupil. The teacher was the father, the pupil was the son. That's why in this book the phrase...while the word "son", "child" and "children" occur 63 times; the phrase "my son" occurs 23 times; the phrase "ye children" occurs four times. And a proverb was like the retemory that helped the youth to remember the things that he was taught.

I'd like you to look at Ecclesiastes chapter 12. Remember they had to know it and the point of what was said, their dark sayings. It's one thing to memorize something, it's another thing to understand it. Ecclesiaster...Ecclesiastes chapter 12, and in verse 9 it says:

Ecclesiastes 12:9:

And moreover, because the preacher was wise [he was one of the wise men, one of the teachers], he still [did what?] taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out [he would work it through], *and* set in order many [what?] proverbs.

That was the teaching technique. He would use proverbs to teach the people the knowledge and wisdom that they needed, see? Because he was a wise man.

Ecclesiastes 12:10:

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

They couldn't just be any old words, they had to be the Word of God, the words of truth.

Ecclesiastes 12:11a:

The words of the wise...

There you have that phrase again. It's the words of the wise. And the words of the wise...

⁵⁷ Some examples of people referring to God's prophet at the time as "father" can be seen in 2 Kings 2:12; 6:21; and 13:14.

Ecclesiastes 12:11

...are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

You know the Eastern culture...doesn't mean they used those things to jab people with. Those were...the "goads" were what the farmer held behind the ox as he was plowing and he just held it there. And if the ox turned out of the way, he'd run right into that goad. You know, the farmer didn't sit there and jab him, but the ox would run into the goad so he knew he'd better get back over. If he'd go over to the other side, then he'd run into that goad. See? That's what God does, you know: just goads. The words of the wise are as goads, to help you keep going down the straight path according to the Word, see? If you like to get jabbed, go ahead, but that's the Word. And that one "shepherd", "the LORD is our shepherd", remember that.⁵⁸

Ecclesiastes 12:12–14:

¹² And further, by these [words of the wise, by these], my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and [of] much study *is* a weariness of the flesh.

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the...matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good...whether *it be* evil.

So with all the words of the wise. There's no real words of the wise without a fear or respect of God. As a matter of fact, it says in Proverbs chapter 10, or chapter 9 and in verse 10, that... Better just read it so I can get it verbatim. It says in chapter 9, verse 10:

Proverbs 9:10a:

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom:...

So if you don't respect God, is there really any wisdom? "God only wise." He made the fooli...the wisdom of the world look foolish, and yet He's put into us what? Wisdom, wisdom... He's made unto us wisdom.⁵⁹ He's made unto us...He's caused us...caused us to abound in wisdom and good sense having made known to us the mystery of His will.⁶⁰ God's given us the wisdom today, the wisdom of Solomon, even bigger than that.

Look at Matthew chapter 12; Matthew chapter 12. These are your memories...re-memories for next week that I'm giving you tonight. There is just so many things in this and I wanted to give you an overview of the thing, and I suggest you just work some of these verses 'cause they are absolutely great. In Matthew chapter 12, verse 42, it says:

Matthew 12:42:

⁵⁸ Psalms 23:1-6

⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁶⁰ Ephesians 1:9

The queen of the south shall rise up [talking about the Queen of Sheba, remember her?⁶¹ the judgment, up in judgment] in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear [what?] the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

Jesus Christ was smarter than Solomon, had more wisdom. “A greater than Solomon is here.” Solomon was the greatest man, wisest man, at his time, but Jesus Christ was wiser than Solomon. “A greater than Solomon is here.”⁶² Isn’t that something! And we have Christ in us! God has made unto us what? Wisdom. So we’ve got it, spiritually, but for some reason we still haven’t mastered even the Old Testament principles in the Book of Proverbs. Sometimes I even wonder if we’ve mastered that one about the door turning upon the hinges that I mentioned, you know.⁶³ See, there’s so many things written in there. If there are 560 as Dake’s says, there’s a lot of different things that we can learn from in God’s Word and I think it’s a great opportunity to study it.

Well, that’s the background of the Proverbs. It’s a book of wisdom. You ought to know:

[1]. what a wise person is; who a wise person is;

[2]. and it’s addressed to the youth.

[3]. and know these different characteristics, how they used the Proverbs.

And then next week, we’re going to go into exactly what a proverb is and then the introduction of this thing.

I also wrote down some other proverbs ’cause, like I said, there were other cultures that used wisdom literature or techniques. And they had different proverbs and I wrote a few of these down that I thought might bless you:

- If anyone offers you a buffalo, do not ask if she gives milk⁶⁴ [laughter]; or
- If you send an ass on its travels, it will not come back a horse⁶⁵ [laughter];
- A donkey may groan but he will never be an elephant; or
- What is the use of reading the Vedas to a wild buffalo?⁶⁶; or
- When an old dog barks then see what the matter is⁶⁷ [laughter];
- If you knew where you would fall, you would put down straw⁶⁸ [laughter];
- Pray to God, but row towards shore [much laughter];
- We cannot go to church for the mud, but we may get to the tavern [laughter].

And, finally:

- Fleas do not bite each other.

⁶¹ The Queen of Sheba’s visit to King Solomon is recorded in 1 Kings 10:1-13.

⁶² See also Luke 11:31.

⁶³ Proverbs 28:18

⁶⁴ A proverb from the Tamil-speaking Badaga people of southern India.

⁶⁵ Attributed to English churchman and historian Thomas Fuller in the 17th century.

⁶⁶ The Vedas, together with the Upanishads, were the sacred writings of the Hindus, so this appears to be a another proverb from India although we were unable to find the origin of the quote.

⁶⁷ Traceable back to the mid-1600s in various European countries.

⁶⁸ A Russian proverb, as are the next three.

Now you have to know the interpretation of all those things. We won't go into that; we'll stick to the ones in the Book of Proverbs, and we'll get into some of that next week, okay?

October 14, 1981

Proverbs
Proverbs 1:1-6
Rev. Cummins

[Clapping.] You may be seated. Thank you very much. And I'd like you to go to the Book of Proverbs. Where else would we go if we are going to study the Book of Proverbs. I think sometimes we're...we're all youth. Maybe we weren't raised in the Book of Proverbs, but then when you reach that point when you stop learning, why, it's better to better be (what is it?) "a young a child that's learning than old and foolish king who ceases to be admonished"...uh, that's uh, vague translation. Well anyway.

Proverbs chapter 1. And tonight I want to go into the first five and a half verses which is the introductory section of the Book of Proverbs and lays out the purpose and the objectives of the entire book very beautifully here in these first five and a half verses. But before we look at those, I want to mention a paper that I had the opportunity to look at by Joe Wise, another one of our research papers that's available in the library. And he covers these first five and a half or really the first seven verses in the paper and does a very thorough job on these words that are used here. And tonight we're going to go into this section and look at the Word because they're very important. But before we do, I want to share with you some of the obvious divisions of the Book of Proverbs.

Now this is not necessarily the structure of the Book of Proverbs. The reason I hesitate to give you that at this time is because I am not absolutely certain; there are various structures that have been suggested and um...they don't all agree. And so at this time we're just going to let it set. But there are some obvious divisions here in the Book of Proverbs. First of all you have the first five and a half verses. In other words [verses] 1- 6a, which is like an introduction. Then in [verse] 6b, it starts out:

Proverbs 1:6b-7:

⁶ ...the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

It starts out with "...the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." That is the second section then, or the first one after the introduction. Then that goes all the way through chapter 9, verse 18. Then chapter 10:1...10, verses 1 through 24:34 is the next section and this is the proverbs of Solomon. I'd like you to look at chapter 10, verse 1. It says:

Proverbs 10:1:

The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

It starts out with “The proverbs of Solomon.” Before this we had, this “...the words of the wise and their dark sayings.” The words of the wise. And that first section is divided up into 15 didactic narratives. Remember I mentioned to you, didactic narratives, proverbs and poems or songs that the...this wisdom literature is divided into. This section of Proverbs is divided into 15 didactic narratives which are longer sayings than the proverbs that you have in chapter 10, verses...verse 1 through chapter 24, verse 34. Because in chapter 10:1–24:34, you have actual proverbs. Not that they’re aren’t proverbs in that first section, but these are two line proverbs. It starts with a line and then either gives an antithetic parallel line, meaning opposite, or a cognate parallel line which is saying basically the same thing. It says the same thing in two ways or it says the same thing in opposite ways.

Now in those... in that first section, verses 1...chapter 1, verse 6b to 9:18, those 15 didactic narratives are all introduced by the word...words, “my son” or “my children”. It’ll start out (each of those sections) with either “my son” or “my children”, which literally means “my sons”. And then, in this next section 10:1 to 24:34, you have these parallel lines, either antithetic or cognate. But in those didactic narratives in the first part, you’ll also have some proverbs or specific sayings that are common sayings.

Now the next section is 25:1 to 29:27. 25:1 to 29:27; I’d like to take a look at 25:1. It says here:

Proverbs 25:1:

These *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

Now, if you remember back in the background material, I gave you last week, I mentioned that some Old Testament books were written by a variety of people, still God-breathed, but each one came along and added something to it. Like Samuel, it said, added to the book of the law and Joshua and the Book of Kings had to be written by a number of people, keeping the record of the kings. And so, here you have Hezekiah’s men adding proverbs of Solomon to this book at a later time. Still God’s Word, still God-breathed. And these again are two parallel lines either antithetic or cognate.

The next section is chapter 30, verse 1 to verse 33. Chapter 30, verses 1-33. And in chapter 30, verse 1 it says:

Proverbs 30:1:

The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

So it’s the words of Agur. Now the question is, who is Agur? Since he’s not mentioned

any place else in the Word...and there's been little speculation on it outside that some believe that this was another name for Solomon. That these again are the proverbs of Solomon and that this was simply another name for Solomon. Or that Agur was another person like Hezekiah's men that wrote down the proverbs of Solomon. Okay? It's still God's Word.

Chapter 31 verses 1-31 are the final section. And that starts out:

Proverbs 31:1:

The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

Now who is king Lemuel? Since he was not mentioned any place else in the Scripture, and again the same thing holds. This could have been another name for Solomon or it could have been king Lemuel writing the proverbs of Solomon, but it distinctly says they were proverbs which, whoever he was, his mother taught him. And it's in this section that his mother tells him what kind of a woman to look for: the virtuous woman. And that is the closing section, closing part of this section. The poem or song, it's an acrostic of the virtuous woman. So, really you have all three types of writing here in the Book of Proverbs. You start out with didactic narratives, then you come to just plain old proverbs, their sayings, and then finally you get at the end here to this poem or song, an acrostic. An acrostic means that each successive verse starts with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first verse starts with *aleph*, the second with *beth*, then *gimel* and so on down the line. So these are the obvious divisions of the Book of Proverbs. Okay? It may not be the actual structure but we're not going into that at least at this time. Now we go back to chapter 1.

Proverbs 1:1:

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

Clearly says they're the proverbs of Solomon in this introduction, so no matter whether Agur, Lemuel, this man of Hezekiah or whoever collected them, they're still the proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel and it's still God's Word. Because Solomon's wisdom was built on a knowledge of God and His Word. We read it last week. God or...Solomon never asked God for riches and honor; he asked Him for wisdom, the ability to discern between what's good and what's evil, what's right and what's wrong...separate truth from error so that he could judge the people and watch over them, so he knew how to go out and come in. He wanted wisdom and so God gave him the wisdom. Therefore it has to be God's wisdom. God's Word, not the wisdom of men that you read in the newspapers and a few other places. So it's the proverbs of Solomon. And this word "proverb" in the Hebrew is the word *mashal*, spelled M-A-S-H-A-L. *Mashal*. And it's from the verb of the same spelling *mashal*. And the verb means "to rule"; the verb form means "to rule". And *mashals* or proverbs were short sayings which were designed to rule a person's life. And that's where we get the idea of a "rule of faith and practice" or "a ruling principle" is another common expression, "a ruling principle". That's

where you get this idea. They were sayings designed to rule a person's life to help guide his life as a rule for his life. The Greek word is *paroimiai*. Spelled P-A-R-O-I-M-I-A-I. *Paroimiai*. And *paroimiai* means "proverb" and it is a figure of speech. A *proverb* is a figure of speech. It is that there must be a close connection since the word *mashal* means "rule". There has to be some close connection between this idea of a rule and a proverb. And I mentioned the term...or phrase "ruling principle". So they're rules for guiding your life. The figure is defined as any sententious saying which controls and influences life. Any sententious saying which controls and influences life. There's many proverbs, well, there's a number of proverbs throughout the Word that are not in the Book of Proverbs and some of them are so called or there's a phrase that indicates that they are. Like Genesis 10:9 says:

Genesis 10:9:

He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said,...[like] Nimrod [a] mighty hunter before the LORD [or against the LORD].

...is the accuracy of the text. "It is said", it's the same. Or in 1 Samuel 10:12.

1 Samuel 10:12:

...Therefore it became a proverb [quote], *Is Saul also among the prophets?*

See? that became a proverb. Or "as saith the proverb of the ancients"; this is 1 Samuel 24:13.

1 Samuel 24:13:

As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

Now those are other proverbs and there are many other proverbs in the Word. Not just in the Book of Proverbs. It's any wise saying (wise saying) designed as a rule for life and especially for the youth. A rule of faith and practice. It's not only faith or your doctrine, what you believe, but also for practice in your life. How to act. How to put it into application. Proverbs are both practical and empirical. Practical means that they work. You can put them into practice. They're not just an idea, a concept that someone has, but they are practical; they're functional. And secondly they are empirical, which means that they have been tried and tried and tried and they work and work and work. They're not just again an idea that someone has but has never tried it out. They are things that have been tried and proven. That's empirical evidence. One man said: A proverb contains the wisdom of many and the wit of one—a proverb contains the wisdom of many and the wit of one. In other words it's what many have experienced and put into practice as far as wisdom, but one put it in words. You know wit; words of wit, that "communi-kit"[laughter]. Now this words...this word "proverb" is used in verse 1, then it's used again in verse 6. To understand a proverb, a *mashal*, a wise saying

designed as a rule for faith and practice and their dark, oh no...and the interpretation.

Then you have the words of the wise and their dark sayings. Now that, the words of the wise, the wise ones, were those who made the proverbs and utilized the proverbs to teach their pupils, their students. And what they utilized to teach them were the proverbs or as it's called here, their dark sayings. Now this word "dark sayings" is another word. It's the Hebrew word *chidah*. Spelled C-H-I-D-A-H. A *chidah*, which corresponds to the Greek *enigma* or the figure of speech *enigma*, (spelled E-N-I-G-M-A) differs from a parable in that a parable is generally explained, whereas an *enigma* is without explanation. It's a dark obscure saying. It's the word translated "riddle" in Judges 14 when Samson told 'em, if you can explain my riddle, then I'm going to give you thirty changes of garment, and if you can't, then you give me thirty changes of garment. And he says, you'll have seven days to figure out this riddle. Well, after three days his... they encouraged his wife to cry to him and that kind of thing, and finally on the seventh day, he told his wife the answer to the riddle and she went and told them. And then he made a proverb. He says, "You wouldn't have known if you hadn't plowed with my heifer." (Something like that.) A proverb you can understand pretty well, but an *enigma* is some dark, obscure saying. And many times, these words of the wise are things...they are statements that are laid out. Have you ever heard somebody do this? Lay out a statement. But then you have to really think it through, what it means, and maybe it takes you a couple of years to figure it out, what it really means. Never had that happened? I have. Well it's because discovery, I think, is one of the great ways of learning. Instead of somebody just telling you everything, because sometimes somebody can tell you something, you don't hear it. But if you start working it on your own, it's a way of learning. And that's what these wise men used to teach their students.

Alright. So we have proverbs there used in verse 6, as well as *enigma* which is another figure of speech. And there are many other figures of speech in the Book of Proverbs. Cookie Lofstedt outlined, what was it? 6...63 different figures in the first chapter, kinds of figures. And there was 281 uses of them, and I'm not sure if she got them all. But she got a bunch of them. 281 uses of those 63 figures in the first chapter of Proverbs which I think is real interesting. Keep your finger here and look at Psalms 78, verse 2. Psalm 78, verse 2.

Psalm 78:2a:

I will open my mouth in a parable:...

And by the way, the word "parable" in the Old Testament is the same as the word for "proverb". The distinction is made in the New Testament but it's the same word in the Old Testament in the Hebrew. So...

Psalm 78:2:

I will open my mouth in a [in a...either a parable or a proverb; and]: I will utter dark sayings [that's the enigma] of old:

Chidah is Hebrew; enigma is Greek or the figure of speech is enigma. “I will utter dark sayings,” obscure sayings, so; both were used.

Psalm 78:3a:

Which we have heard...

They are all says which we have heard.

Psalm 78:3b

...and known, and our fathers have [what?] told us.

“...our fathers have told us.” Who are our fathers? Well, our fathers in the flesh as well as our teachers; the teachers were referred to as fathers. Remember? School of the prophets.

Psalm 78:4:

We will not hide them [these parables or proverbs or enigmas; we will not hide them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

That was the form of teaching the children, the students, the young people...was through proverbs, parables, enigma. Some of the basic forms of teaching.

Now, we’re going to see this, because back in Proverbs chapter 1, one of the things is in verse 2, the last part of the verse.

Proverbs 1:2b:

...to perceive the words of understanding;...

You see that word “words”, that’s not the normal Hebrew word for “word”. It’s the word emer, spelled E-M-E-R. E-M-E-R. And it means a saying, not just a word, but the sayings. To perceive the sayings. And it was these proverbs which were sayings, or the enigma which were obscure sayings, that the wise men used in order to teach their children, their pupils. And they used parables, didactic narratives of various kind to teach their pupils their retories...which they hung around their necks on things or around their forehead or on their arms until they memorized them. Then they had them in their heart. Now, let’s start out with verse 2. While verse 1 is the proverbs of Solomon, then verse 2. Here’s the purpose of the book, in the first line.

Proverbs 1:2a:

To know wisdom and instruction;...

That's the purpose of the Book of Proverbs, to know wisdom and instruction. The word "wisdom" is the Hebrew word *chokmah*, spelled C-H-O-K-M-A-H. *Chokmah*. And it means "wisdom". There are five other words translated wisdom in the Book of Proverbs and I'll give you some of those later on as they come up but none of them mean wisdom. They all have another meaning, like one of them is the Hebrew word *leb*. L-E-B; *leb*. And that means heart; heart. Like "trust in the LORD will all your heart." "Out of the heart come the issues of life." That's the word *leb* but that word *leb* is translated wisdom four different times in the Book of Proverbs. So it means "heart" though, it doesn't mean wisdom. The word *chokmah* means "wisdom" which is knowledge applied and we've gone over wisdom before. So you know what wisdom is. This word *chokmah* is used 39 times in the singular and three times in the plural in the Book of Proverbs. Making a total of 42 times that it's used. We're not going to look up all of these. By the way the reason it's used in plural three times, I'm going to give those to you it's used in 1:20, 9:1 and 24:7. The reason it's used in the plural in those three places is just...is the same reason that *Elohim* is in the plural all the time because of the immensity of it. You just can't describe it in little terms. It's a figure, *heterosis*, to describe the immensity of it, where you put the plural for the singular, exchanging accident.

It's used (this word *chokmah*) in chapter 4, I want you to look at that. Show you why the...why this is the purpose of Proverbs. Chapter 4, verse 5 it says:

Proverbs 4:5-7a:

⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

⁶ Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

⁷ Wisdom is the [what? the] principal thing; *therefore* [get *chokmah*] get wisdom:...

Get with it. Get wisdom, that's the principal thing.

Proverbs 4:7b:

...and with all thy getting get understanding.

In chapter 9, in verse 10. It says:

Proverbs 9:10:

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom:...

So if the principal thing is wisdom and in order to get wisdom, you have to start where? Not with a knowledge of science, not with a knowledge of mathematics, a knowledge of...you name it. It's a knowledge of God, the fear of God. The respect of God is the beginning of

wisdom. And that's the principal thing. That's why the overall purpose for this course in Proverbs is to know wisdom. To know wisdom, number one. In chapter 15, verse 33. It says again.

Proverbs 15:33:

The fear of the LORD [or respect of the LORD, Jehovah] is the instruction of [what?] wisdom;

Wisdom. So we start with wisdom. That's the principal thing. That's the overall purpose for the Book of Proverbs; the course that the wise men taught to their pupils. To know wisdom AND instruction. Now this word "instruction" is the Hebrew word *musar* M-U-S-A-R, *musar*. And it sort of corresponds to the word *paideia* in the Greek in the New Testament. It's a...the word is translated chastisement a lot of times. But chastisement does not mean beating somebody. It means "discipline". It means: training in right conduct, moral discipline, instruction. So it's ...there two... a twofold purpose then; it's to know wisdom and secondly the moral discipline that goes along with that wisdom. It'd be one thing to have a lot of head knowledge but it's another thing to be able to live it ethically, morally. And that's why the moral discipline goes along with wisdom as the overall purpose. You see that? You have two things: to know wisdom and moral discipline (or right conduct, instruction). Then we start enumerating the objectives of this course starting in the end of verse 2, "...to perceive...". This is objective one.

Proverbs 1:2:

...to perceive the words of understanding;

The word "perceive" is the Hebrew word *bin*, B-I-N. It's the word translated "understand" many times. The word "understanding" in this verse is the word *binah*, B-I-N-A-H; *binah*. They look familiar...or similar? They're from the same family. (We're having a great Greek class here on this campus. I hope you are on others too. We almost sang, [unknown] tonight [laughter] but...) Alright. Understanding is *binah*, B-I-N-A-H. Now it's normally translated understanding, for understand, understanding. However, this is one of those words that is translated "wisdom" in Proverbs in 23:4. It's translated wisdom. But normally it's translated "understanding". In 1 Kings 3:9 when Solomon asked for under...wisdom or whatever it was...to be able to discern between truth and error, I forget, good and evil...something like that, that was the word *bin*, to discern. In Nehemiah 8:8 (we read that last week) where he read in the scroll distinctly and caused them to understand. That's a form of this word. He caused them to be able to discern, to understand to the end of discerning, separating it, rightly dividing it, separating truth from error. That's the essence of this word. Discernment, I think communicates the best because it has that idea of separating truth from error, like rightly dividing the Word of truth.

And since these two words come from the same root, it's the figure of speech, *polyptoton*. Spelled (which you've had many times before) P-O-L-Y-P-T-O-T-O-N, *polyptoton*. In other words, to discern the sayings of discernment. Now I already gave you the word for "sayings". It's *emer* in the Hebrew. That word for "sayings" is used in Psalms 19 (I want to read that to you.) where it's talking about the stars. Remember the Word was first written in the stars. And in Psalms 19, verse 2 and 3. It says:

Psalms 19:2a:
Day unto day uttereth speech...

That word "speech" is this word *omer*, sayings.

Psalms 19:2, 3:
² Day unto day uttereth [sayings] and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
³ There is no speech [that's "sayings"] nor language [or "words"], where their voice is not heard.

And this is talking about the stars. The word that's written in the stars. The sayings were written in the stars. Now here, they're written in the Word. It's the sayings of the wise. And one of the objectives of this course (I speak as the Book of Proverbs as a course, okay?), one of the objectives of this course is to be able to discern (rightly divide) the sayings of discernment. These sayings of the wise. To be able to discern them, to be able to rightly divide them, to separate truth from error. In the Septuagint, this word "words" is two words. It's...I'll give you the word, S-T-R-O-P-H-A-S, *strophas* and then *logōn*, L-O-G- long O -N. *Strophas* means "revolving". Revolving. It's the "revolving of words" is what the phrase means. And this word *strophas*, is used in Greek literature of the constellations revolving around the heavens. And that's how the Word was first written and how they read it. At night they'd go out, they'd see the stars and they could follow the Word as it revolved around. Now here it's written in here. I thought that it was interesting how the Septuagint translated it from the Hebrew. The revolving of words, isn't that neat? That's the sayings. So they knew these things even before they were written. They knew them from the ancients. To perceive or to discern these sayings, the revolving of words of discernment.

That's one objective, that the student be able...(By the way, you could insert the word "student" in front of each of these objectives.)...for the student to perceive or to discern the sayings of discernment. That's number one objective. To be able to rightly divide. I would call that objective, a truth judgment objective. In *The Life-style of a Believer*, Dr. Wierwille lays out in this opening when you get to "Ethics and the Individual" on page five:

There are five basic types of judgments which a man can make: truth judgments, ethical judgments, expediency judgments, esthetic judgments, and judgments of fact...

This first one, “truth judgments”, is what the student has to be able to make. Judgments of truth. To be able to discern the sayings of discernment. In other words, the proverbs, the *enigma*, the parables, the didactic narratives, they have to be able to not only memorize, but to know what they mean. They have to be able to separate truth from error. When they read something else, they have to be able to separate the truth in it from the error in it. That’s objective number one. It’s a “truth judgments”. Then in verse 3:

Proverbs 1:3:

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

...is objective number two. To receive the discipline, the instruction. The word “instruction” is *musar* again (M-U-S-A-R) which means, you know, discipline or moral discipline. Instruction, right conduct. So you not only want the knowledge to be able to discern the sayings, but also the moral discipline that goes along with it, the right conduct. To receive the discipline of wisdom. Now this word “wisdom” is not *chokmah*. It’s another word *sakal*. S-A-K-A-L, *sakal*. *Sakal* is translated wisdom here. *Sakal* is translated...I think this is the only place it’s used. There are other related words that are translated, wise, wisely and so on. But this...I believe if I checked this right, that’s the only place it is used, but it’s translated wisdom. But it’s the word that really means prudence or good sense. I often wondered why Dr. Wierwille chose that when he defined prudence as good sense because I always thought of it as common sense, common sense. But you know good sense is not always too common [laughter]. I think that’s the reason. So, if it was very common, it might be common among us, but then it would be common sense. But it’s not common among everybody so it’s just good sense. Horse sense might be better, I don’t know. Well, good sense, it’s prudence. So it’s the moral discipline of good sense...and there’s three categories: justice, judgment and equity. Justice is really righteousness or what is right. What is right, righteousness. Judgment has to do with justice or payment for what is wrong, in other words you know what’s right; you also have to know what is proper payment for what’s wrong. And equity (is a pretty good translation)...it’s what is just and equal. In other words the penalty fits the crime...type of thing. Fairness, equal, equality. Equity is good. So this good sense in moral discipline has three aspects to it: righteousness, justice and equity. What’s right, payment for what’s wrong, and fairness (equity). This would be the second type of judgment that Dr. Wierwille suggested here, ethical judgments in *The Lifestyle of a Believer*. First we have truth judgments, being able to read the sayings and to discern them. Know what they mean, separate truth from error, rightly divide the Word. That’s truth judgment.

Then ethical judgments are judgments like this...where it’s moral discipline of good sense. The moral discipline of good sense, prudence in the categories of righteousness, justice and equity. So that when somebody does something that you think might be wrong, you have to know from the Word. Is it wrong? Or is it right? What’s right, what’s righteousness? And if it’s

wrong, what ought to be done about it? What's fair? See that? And this is one place where many times as youth in our minds, whether we are adults or youth, we miss it in making judgments that are not good sense. We might judge people or judge certain things. You might be a Twig leader, a Branch leader, a Limb leader, whatever...(coordinator, excuse me. Now don't judge me on that [laughter]); but you've got to be able to do what's right, what's just and what's fair. And it may not be the same thing for every individual. See that? But this is one objective of our curriculum here in Proverbs. One of our course objectives is to be able...or to receive that moral discipline of good sense in righteousness, justice and equity. And that is "ethical judgment".

The fourth...or third objective.

Proverbs 1:4:

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

The word "subtilty"...well, first let's take the word "simple"; "simple" does not mean stupid. It just means inexperienced or unskilled because he's a youth, he hasn't had time to mature, so he's inexperienced, he's immature, he's unskilled. And the word for "subtilty" is *ormah* (spelled O-R-M-A-H), which is another one of those words translated wisdom in chapter 8, verse 5. But it doesn't mean wisdom. It means shrewdness or skillfulness, dexterity, craftiness, subtilty. It's related to the word in Genesis...no it isn't...yes it is...it's related to that word in Genesis 3:1, more "subtle" than any beast of the field (the serpent was), more wise. He was shrewd. Now shrewdness can have either a negative or a positive connotation. Subtilty definitely has that negative feeling. That's why I thought shrewdness might communicate it better, where you can be shrewd in a good way or shrewd in a bad way. Because both ideas are communicated by this word. It's also related to the word "naked" in chapter two of Genesis. They were naked before, but then the shrewd one from the field came and they thought they would become more shrewd. They ended up getting less naked, less shrewd. I mean, there's a tie in there, if you think about it, it's neat.

Alright. So now we want to get shrewdness. This is our third objective to the inexperienced ones. In other words, to the youth, to the young; to the youth. Two things that fall in the category of shrewdness: knowledge and discretion. This word "knowledge", is the Hebrew word *daath* (D-A-A-T-H), it's the normal word for "knowledge". The verb form means "to know" and it has the idea of...you see it, so you know it. You perceive, you see it, hear it, smell it, taste it or touch it. Perception is involved in knowing. Okay. Perception. It's knowledge by perception. Now what you can see, hear, smell, taste or touch, (what you can see, hear, smell, taste or touch); that you can acquire until you get born again of God's spirit. Then you have another means for perception. Right? You can see, hear, smell, taste or touch by your spiritual senses. I think perception would be a good translation here, although knowledge is its basic meaning, but that knowledge is through perception. Whether it's spiritual or five senses. And of course the youth has to start where? With his five senses gathering information until he's born again. And discretion, this word "discretion" is...oh, I was going to tell you something else

about perception if you don't mind. It's where Lot... the same word, it's used where Lot, his daughters got him drunk and then they had an affair with him so they could keep his bloodline going, you know. And it says that he didn't perceive what was going on because his senses were dulled by the wine. See? It's knowle...it's that same word knowledge, see. He didn't have perception of what was going on, knowledge. Well, it ties in [laughter].

Now, this word "discretion" is the Greek word *mezimmah*. It's a big *mezimmah*; M-E-Z-I-M-M-A-H, *mezimmah*. It's the word used in chapter 8, verse 12 where it talks about witty invention, the witty invention. It's the word that talks about evil devices or techniques in various places. You know, where they devise evil things. This is that word *mezimmah*, where they really "mezz" it up. But it can be used in that good sense of witty inventions (or sagacious inventions) or it can be used in the evil sense of bad devices, evil devices. And so I translated it "inventive technique". To the youth perception and inventive techniques. I steered away from the word creative, because no one can create. But that idea is sort of inherent in it. But inventive techniques, where he can plan, he can make plans that are solid plans and he's capable of carrying out those plans; that's being inventive. Not only making something physically (that's inventions), but being inventive with his ideas. Like how to be a better Twig leader, how to plan for your twig, how to carry out those plans for your twig, how to build a new auditorium, how to do those things which will...which are best in your planning and carrying out those plans. That's the inventive technique. See that verse? To...to give subtilty or shrewdness to the inexperienced, that is to the youth perception and inventive technique.

Because so many people don't perceive what's going on around them. They're not aware. And one of the goals...one the objectives in the Corps is to develop an in-depth spiritual perception and awareness. Perception and awareness. We've got to not only be physically (five-senses) perceptive and know what's going on, but spiritually perceptive. And the youth has to learn that. That's a part of his curriculum. As well as being inventive, having inventive techniques in his planning, being able to dream, come up with ideas. Now some people have a lot of ideas, that's not a problem. It's coming up with *good* ideas, see? The problem I have is that I have a lot of ideas, but I have a lot of *good* ideas too. The thing is they're a hundred years ahead of their time, so I just have to wait a hundred years. [Laughter.] No. It's being inventive, creative is the word they use, inventive; having inventive technique for planning and carrying out the plans. And I called this, for lack of a better word, "functional judgment", where you make judgments in your functioning, in what you're doing, carrying out things. And I think that sort of wraps up these other three judgments that Dr. Wierwille mentions: expediency judgments, would be involved in functional things, esthetic judgments is involved in functional things and judgments of fact are certainly involved with functional judgments. Okay.

Expediency, esthetic and facts are all functions in different categories of life and that I think is wrapped up in here. Because as the youth is perceptive and he's inventive as he learns and grows in this category, he becomes shrewd which means he's going to be able to make

good expediency judgments, good esthetic judgments and good judgments of fact in carrying out his responsibilities. So, those are the three objectives plus the overall goal for this course in Proverbs. Isn't that neat?

Then, verse 5 and the first part of verse 6 are like a summary. Maybe you'd call it a course description (Nick, I'm not sure what you'd call it), but it sorts of summarizes the thing. Again, it's:

Proverbs 1:5a:
...[the] wise *man*...

...[man] is in italics. It's talking about the students, the wise student.

Proverbs 1:5b:
...will hear, [will listen] and will increase learning...

He's going to keep on learning. When you stop, you might as well call the undertaker.

Proverbs 1:5:
A wise *man* will hear, and will [keep learning, keep increasing in that learning];
and a man [or student] of understanding [discernment]...

That's the word *binah* again, one who can discern, those who can discern, discern what? the sayings, being able to rightly divide.

Proverbs 1:5c:
...shall attain unto wise counsels.

Now the words "wise counsel", is a...in the Hebrew is a nautical term, (not naughty, nautical, boats) used of steering. It's related to the word for rope; it's a nautical term (and I forgot to write the word down. So look it up in Young's or Wilson. Okay.) But it's a nautical term used for steering, when you steer a boat. You know? [Makes noises.] Steering. That's this word "wise counsels". You might want to look at some of the other places that it's used: Proverbs 1:5; 11:14; 12:5 and 24:6. But it's steering or guidance. A...those who discern the sayings shall find guidance, proper guidance, proper steering. Like the rules, a proverb is a what? A rule of faith and practice to guide to steer the student. So this student who is wise...he's going to keep learning. He's one who is able to discern these sayings, he's going to find the proper guidance, the proper steering. His boat's going to go in the right direction. Isn't that neat? He shall find proper guidance, then verse 6 carries right on, find proper guidance...

Proverb 1:6:

To understand [to discern, to rightly divide] a proverb, and the interpretation...

Or the point of what is meant by the proverb. He's going to find the proper guidance to understand or rightly divide, discern a proverb and the interpretation. I have some wonderful quotes here from Clement of Alexandria who lived in the second and third century. When he quoted or paraphrased this section, that's exactly what he did. He put these two verses together. His rendering from one...one of the times he quotes it, he says: "He who hears these prophets being wise, (this is a paraphrase) will be wiser and the intelligent man will acquire rule and will understand a parable and a dark saying, the words and *enigmas* of the wise." Now he put the whole thing together. Or in the other place he quotes it...this...well, talking...really paraphrases this whole section: "That I may give subtilty to the simple to the young man sense and understanding. For the wise man having heard these things will become wiser, the intelligent man will acquire rule and will understand a parable and a dark word, the sayings and *enigmas* of the wise." See, how he put these two verses together.

Now, I think there is good reason to put them together. Because, I think it's like a summary of this course, description. It's that the wise student will listen and will increase his learning. The man who is a...or the one who is able to discern, rightly divide these things, will find the proper guidance to rightly divide a proverb and the point of what is meant by that proverb. See that? That's the whole purpose, the method (if you will) of the course, is via proverbs, to learn how to rightly divide. Specifically how to rightly divide the sayings, being on top of truth and error. And then in ethical judgments to receive moral judgment or moral discipline of good sense in righteousness, justice and equity. And then to give shrewdness to the inexperienced, that is to the youth. Perception and inventive technique. That he's able to function as an adult, as an individual that knows what he's doing, to make the right functional decisions, judgments.

(Here it is [flipping papers]). I wrote it this way. The purpose: for the students to know wisdom and the corresponding moral discipline. That's the purpose. I've already told you. The objectives: number one is truth judgments. To discern or rightly divide the wise sayings of discernment, able to separate truth from error. That's the first objective, it's truth judgment. If you're not able to separate truth from error in God's Word then you'll never be able to separate truth from error in...I mean there's all truth in the Word but I mean is able to rightly divide it then you'll never be able to separate truth from error in what you read in other places. This is philosophy, philosophy is the love of wisdom, it's the wisdom of the Word and if you can't understand the wisdom of the Word, you cannot understand the wisdom, or lack of it in the wisdom of man. The philosophy of man. So that's primary, to be able to discern the sayings of the wise, to be able to separate truth from error. That's truth judgment. You've got to be able to judge things based on the truth of God's Word.

Then secondly is ethical judgment, to receive the discipline of good sense or prudence in

righteousness, justice and equity. And that's where we fall flat sometimes in the practical end, in advising others, in watching over people. Maybe we say the wrong word at the wrong time. It's an error in ethical error; an error in ethical judgment. It's ...you know, we've got to be sharp on God's Word and how to you get sharp unless you're perceptive spiritually, aware of what's going on and know according to the Word what's right and wrong then being able to make those proper judgments, and being fair in what you do. Good sense, good sense. Again I always think of Uncle Harry and Ermal as good sense men. They applied it, prudence. See? Ephesians, God has made known unto us in all wisdom and prudence, good sense, see? Good sense; not only the wisdom but the good sense to go along with it to make the right decisions, ethical judgments.

And then functional judgments to give shrewdness to the inexperienced, that is to the youth perception and inventive technique in formulating plans and carrying out the plans, that he learns to be sharp as a business person as a person in the ministry and on staff and in the Corps and on the different campus locations. I think this speaks real loud to us now, where we have got to be shrewd. And if we're not shrewd in certain points then we've got to learn from the Word, from the sayings of the wise, how to be shrewd. When do I spend money? When do I not spend money? When do I carry out a plan? When do I not carry out a plan that I had? What's the best way to carry it out? What's expedient. But you don't just do something because it's immediately expedient, it has to be expedient in the long run. See? A lot of things to evaluate in functional judgment. We've got to be perceptive, knowing everything that's going on around us, five senses wise and spiritually. And then have inventive technique for knowing the best way to carry it out. You have responsibilities, whether you're on staff, whether you're in the Corps, whatever you're doing. And you're responsible to be inventive to figure out the best way to carry those things out in accordance with God's Word in accordance with the ethical standards, in accordance with the truth, the saying of the wise and separating truth from error. Okay?

I thought this was real timely for us, all of us here, to learn these things. We're still youth. Isn't that something? And then the summary, the wise student will listen and increase his learning. Those students who discern these wise sayings will find good and proper guidance in order to rightly divide the proverbs and what they signify, the point of what they're saying. That's the purpose of this course in Proverbs. That's the course goal and the objectives, why Proverbs exists. That's the introduction. Okay.

[Prayer] Well, Father, we thank you for your Word and the greatness of the love that we see in your Word and how we can understand and grow and never cease to learn but continue to grow in the greatness of what your Word signifies to us and the sayings of those wise individuals who have followed your teaching, who have listened to you and set the example and set the words for us, Father, to follow, that we can follow in their footsteps as great believers of yours, walking upon your Word. Thank you for this night and our Corps around the world in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen! God bless you!

November 4, 1981

Proverbs
Proverbs 6:1-19
Rev. Cummins

And let's go to the Book of Proverbs, chapter 6 tonight. In our last session together, we went through the first five and a half verses and we saw the introduction to the Book of Proverbs and how it lays out the course goals and objectives through the entire curriculum for the students that are learning the Book of Proverbs. We saw that the two main things that are being covered in the book are wisdom, it teaches wisdom, and the corresponding moral discipline that goes along with it. And that there are three types of judgment involved in this learning: truth judgment, ethical judgment and functional judgment. And we'll see these three types of judgments as we work the Book of Proverbs because that's what the student of the Book of Proverbs needs to learn; how to make truth judgments, judgment based on ethics, and proper functional judgments in his operation in life, in business and whatever he's involved with. And I also told you briefly that the first nine chapters are broken up into 15 didactic narratives or 15 sections that are each introduced by the terms "my son" or "my children". And tonight we want to look at one of these sections in chapter 6. We're not going to go through the whole Book of Proverbs verse by verse, but rather we're going to take some of the difficult sections each time we get into it and work those individually now that we have the background of the Book of Proverbs. And tonight we're going to look at these first 19 verses of chapter 6. You'll notice that it begins with this phrase "my son", so it's introducing this section. Then you get down to verse 20 and it opens with "my son" again. So, this is one of those sections, one of those fifteen sections I told you about, verses 1-19. And this section deals with business principles. And it's broken up into three parts. There are three parts in this...these 19 verses. Verses 1-5 and then verses 6-14 and then verses 15-19. Now, I'd like to read to you this first section. It starts out:

Proverbs 6:1-5:

¹ My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,

² Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

³ Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.

⁴ Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.

⁵ Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

Now in here you have some difficult things, especially in verse 3 where it goes...where

it talks about humbling yourself and making your friend sure, when you've already been surety for him up in verse 1. And delivering yourself from a roe. Well, what is a roe? Some of these things that are not a part...a regular part of our vocabulary and our culture. Well, back in verse 1.

Proverbs 6:1:

My son, if thou be surety for thy friend,...

“Surety” is an English word. Not too many of us use it too often but it is... one who is supplying surety for another person is like a co-signer on a mortgage, or he pledges himself to another. It's one who makes himself liable for the default or miscarriage of another person. It doesn't have to deal with money, although generally, we think in terms of being surety for a friend when he borrows money and then you co-sign for him so that you'll...if he doesn't pay or isn't able to pay that you'll be able to pay his mortgage for him or his loan. But it doesn't always deal with that. It could be being a co-signer or making yourself a surety for someone who is supposed to appear in court or someone who is supposed to show up for a contest that you're the one that's responsible to see that he gets there. Maybe the best man is like a surety for the groom at a wedding, where he's supposed to make sure that the groom gets there. There's different types of surety, but generally we think in terms of it from a financial standpoint.

“If thou be surety for thy friend,”...then it has the word “if” in italics because it's not in the Hebrew text. And if you leave it out, it makes perfectly good sense. It says, “My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger.” Because your friend has made an agreement, a contract, an arrangement with someone else, who perhaps you do not know. But you are co-signing for your friend, so in essence you are shaking hands with that other person. You are making the agreement yourself with that other person who you may not know, he's a stranger. So you've stricken your hand with a stranger. And that phrase “to strike the hands” is used frequently in the scripture of agreeing with someone. Just like we shake hands when we agree over something, you shake hands with someone. Proverbs 17:18; chapter 17, verse 18 also uses this expression.

Proverbs 17:18:

A man void of understanding striketh hands,...

The word “understanding” there is “heart”. The Hebrew word is *leb* (L-E-B) which was one of those words I gave you last week that means...or that's translated “wisdom” in a couple of places, but it means “heart”. It means “heart”.

Proverbs 17:18:

A man void of [heart] strikes hands [he makes these types of agreement], and becomes surety in the presence of his friend.

There you have it again. Only a person that's dev...that's void of heart strike hands and become surety in the presence of his friend. Then again in chapter 22. Chapter 22, verse 26.

Proverbs 22:26:

Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

It's not a good business principle to strike hands, to make that agreement and of them that are sureties for debts.

Proverbs 22:27a:

If thou hast nothing to pay,...

If you don't owe no one anything or if you're not a co-signer for someone...

Proverbs 22:27b:

...why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

Who is going to repossess your bed? Or who is going to repossess your furniture? If you don't owe anyone anything. See?

Proverbs 22:28, 29:

²⁸ Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

²⁹ Seest thou a man diligent in...business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean [or average] *men*.

He's going to stand before kings when he does these good business principles and one is not getting yourself in over your head to where you cannot handle a responsibility like becoming a surety for someone else, and especially if that person isn't capable of handling it himself. In chapter 11 of Proverbs, verse 15.

Proverbs 11:15:

He that is surety for a stranger shall smart *for it*: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.

So the west way...the best way to be sure is not to get involved in suretiship. Okay. Not being surety for someone else. Now you have to understand this in light of the love of God in the renewed mind in helping your brothers and sisters, because when people are growing up in the Word we've got to become broken bread for them until they learn to walk on their own. That's one of the principles, where you let people walk on your feet until they're able to walk on their own feet. But it doesn't mean getting yourself into the point where they're capable of pulling you down. Where you can't cover for whatever you're doing trying to help someone

else. Like it says in Galatians 6:1, where you don't let...you help other people but not to the point where they get to you. See? Where they pull you down. In chapter 22 of Proverbs, in verse 7.

Proverbs 22:7:

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* servant to the lender.

Now this ties in with suretiship. Because if you owe someone something, then you're a servant to that person that you owe it to. You're not in control of the situation. The...the lender is in control. He's the boss because he's the one you owe money to, or owe a responsibility to. So if you're a borrower you become a servant or a slave to the one that's loaned you the money. Or if you're co-signing for someone, you're still in that category and it says: we're going to smart for it and the best way to be sure is to hate suretiship, avoid it. See?

Back to chapter 6. So if you're "surety for your friend" in essence you've shaken hands with a stranger, you've made an agreement with a stranger. And the result is you are:

Proverbs 6:2a:

...snared with the words [of your mouth] of thy mouth.

You're snared; you're trapped with the words of your mouth.

Proverbs 6:2b:

...thou art taken [or captured] with the words of thy mouth.

Now he says the same thing twice in two different ways. Once he says, "you're snared or trapped with the words of your mouth" and then he says it again, "you're taken or captured with the words of your mouth." This is a figure of speech, called *pleonasm*; (P-L-E-O-N-A-S-M), *pleonasm*. Where it's said twice for emphasis.

Now, I left out the "if" in verse 1. Clement of Alexandria in his quotation of this verse around the year 200 A.D. quotes it as follows: "My son, if you become surety for your friend you will be giving your hand to your enemy. For a man's own lips are a strong snare to him and he's taken by the words of his mouth." So he left it out too. And there are other...certain translations that leave it out; there are certain translations that put "if" in front of "thou are snared and thou art taken" in verse 2. But they're not in the Hebrew text, and that's why I'd leave them out. "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, you have shaken hands with a stranger."

"You are snared with the words of your mouth (you are trapped), you are captured with

the words of your mouth.” There’s...you’ve just...you’ve signed for someone else and all of a sudden that friend decides he doesn’t want to pay, and your friend maybe becomes your enemy at the same time. And now you’re in trouble, because you’ve made an agreement. You’ve signed the contract so to speak. Except in the East they didn’t sign contracts. What did they do? Took the covenant of salt, where they ate food after their agreement that had salt in it, which meant that they said what they meant and meant what they said.

By the way I was reading a book just the other day about honesty in business today and how people try to get out of doing good, sound business principles. They bend over backward to avoid honesty in business today. Some salesman had made a sale for a sizable amount to some company or individual, and he showed the contract to his superior. And the superior says, “It’s too tight. You’ve got to put a loophole in us...in there for us.” And he says, “Well you can put it in if you want to,” but he says, “I’ll draw attention to it to the customer. Then if he still wants to make the purchase, fine. Otherwise that’s just the way I’m going to be because I’m honest in it.” So they put the loophole in the contract to keep the superior happy; the superior put it in. The salesman took it to the customer and told the customer about it, and the customer still signed it anyway. But at least he brought it to his attention; he was honest about that part of it. But the fact is, people’s words don’t mean what they say anymore. They’re looking for loopholes, ways that they can avoid things or get out of things rather than practicing honest business principles.

When they made the covenant of salt, they were trapped by their words, so to speak. They were taken with the words of their mouth if it happened to be a bad agreement. But what they said, they meant. And there was no way out of the covenant of salt except death. So that’s why if the agreement was not good, to where the individual they agreed to back up decided they didn’t want to pay off their debts, then they were snared, they were trapped. They couldn’t get out of it because it was a covenant of salt. See that? That’s why that verse 2 is so emphasized here by *pleonasm* here, said twice. Because your words are what? They’re salted. See? So how do you get out of it if your words are salted, if it’s a bad agreement?

Proverbs 6:3:

Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself [rescue yourself, save yourself], when [you are] come into the hand of [your] friend;...

And the word “hand” is the figure of speech, *metonymy*, (M-E-T-O-N-O-M-Y). *Metonymy*, where one noun is used that stands in place of another noun. The noun that’s used here is “hand” and what it stands for is “power”. The hand is used for power. When you’re coming into the power of your friend. The hand of your friend is the power of your friend. give you a couple of examples...other places where this is used. Judges 8:6. I’ll read it to you, Judges 8:6.

Judges 8:6:

And the princes of Succoth said, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand [are they in your power], that we should give bread unto thine army?

And then again in verse 22. Judges 8:22.

Judges 8:22:

Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand [the power] of Midian.

The “hand” representing the “power”. That’s the figure of speech *metonymy*, where the hand stands for something else which in this case is power. And that’s used quite frequently in the Old Testament. When...do this when you come into the power of your friend. Here’s what you do; here’s the way to get out of suretiship:

Proverbs 6:3c:

...go, humble [yourself], and make sure thy friend.

Now what does that mean? It doesn’t mean much at all. The word “humble” does not mean “humble”. It’s not the normal word for “humble”. It means to stamp yourself down; to tell how destitute you are. Tell’em about all your bills; tell’em you’re going to go broke if he doesn’t pay off his debt. Go show him how pathetic your situation is.

Proverbs 6:3d:

...and make sure [your] friend.

The words “make sure” are, to act stormily or boisterously, to be set, besiege or assail. To plead with him or pester him is better, to pester him. “Go humble yourself or stamp yourself down, and pester your friend.” Go really work on him. The word...this word “make sure”, pester or act stormily is used in Isaiah 3. Isaiah 3, verse 5.

Isaiah 3:5:

And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient [or the older people],...

To behave yourself proudly. This word “proudly” is the same word as “make sure”. He shall act with pestering. What does a child do when he acts proudly, does he pester you? He acts stormily, he puts on a big...big show. That’s this word. So when your friend...when you’re surety for your friend and he doesn’t pay his debt, you go and stamp yourself down, act stormily, pester your friend. Go to him and tell him, “You’ve got to pay this off; you’ve got to

take care of your debt; you can't let this slide by." Do anything you can to get out of that suretiship. Lamsa translates these first three verses: "Then you are snared...". Well, starting with verse 2:

Proverbs 6:1, 2: [Lamsa translation]

² Then you are snared with the words of your mouth, you are caught with the words of your lips.

³ Do this now, my son, and deliver yourself because, for the sake of your friend, you have fallen into the hands of your enemies; go, therefore, and stir up your friend for whom you have become surety to meet his obligation.

Go stir him up. Do whatever you have to do to get to him to take care of his responsibility. In the first place, you shouldn't have gotten into this mess but now my son since you're in this mess, this is what you do. Go pester your friend, stir him up. King Solomon, he says, is admonishing his son in case he has become a surety to his friend and thus has fallen into the hands of his enemies. The son is told to stir up his friend, to pay the debt for which he had become a surety. In the East a good man's word is accepted as surety. That's because they're salted. And at times a man may become surety for his friend who being poor is unable to give a pledge. The good man may incur the enmity of the lender because of the failure of his friend to pay his debt. Most lenders would hold the pledge at a high rate of interest until the debt was paid either by the borrower or by the one who has been a surety for him. On the other hand some borrowers take advantage of the good men who becomes surety for them and they refuse to pay the debt.

So, if you ever get in that situation where you're surety for somebody else, go bug them, pester them, stamp yourself down. And it says:

Proverbs 6:4

Give not sleep to [your] eyes, nor slumber to [your] eyelids.

In other words don't let up. Don't go to sleep until you've taken care of this. Okay. See the urgency of it, what he's putting into it? And again, this is that figure of speech *pleonasm*. You have the same thing said twice. "Don't give sleep to your eyes, or slumber to your eyelids." And the eyes and eyelids are another *metonymy*. Where those eyes and eyelids represent the individual. "Don't give sleep to yourself"; don't give slumber to yourself. See it? And it is said twice so it's *pleonasm* so you've got two figures involved here which means it's very urgent. Don't go to sleep until it's absolutely taken care of. Don't stop half way through bugging your friend. Then verse 5 says:

Proverbs 6:5a:

Deliver [yourself or rescue yourself] as a roe from the hand of the hunter...

And there the word “hand” again is...represents the “power”. It’s that figure *metonymy* where the hand represents the power.

Proverbs 6:5:

Deliver [yourself] as a roe from the [power] *of the hunter*, and as a bird from the hand [or power] of the fowler.

And a fowler is a hunter of birds. The “roe” is a gazelle. A gazelle is a small wild animal which is very swift, very beautiful, very gracious. And being very swift, I think is the key to understanding this. That when that gazelle would escape the hand or power of anyone that’s trying to capture him, he would run very fast, to get away. So, you go pester your friend and you don’t give sleep, you keep trying, keep at it. And then, run like crazy from the suretyship without breaking your covenant of salt. Do whatever you can to get your friend to take care of his responsibility, to pay off his debt or do his obligations, whatever he’s supposed to do. And like the bird from the hand of the fowler...What does the bird do when he gets out of the hand? Does he just stand around and hum? No. He flies, to get away. So there’s that first part of this section. If you become surety for a friend, this is what you do. Get out of it, without breaking the covenant of salt. Become surety, but it’s better not to get into surety to begin with like it said other places. But remember as brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, you sometimes have to become broken bread for other people and let them walk on your feet for a while. But you don’t let them walk on your feet forever. They’ve got to learn to walk on their own.

Now, the second section, verses 6 to 11.

Proverbs 6:6-11:

⁶ Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

⁷ Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

⁸ Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

⁹ How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

¹⁰ *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

¹¹ So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

Now this is pretty well self-explanatory. If you know what a sluggard is, it’s a lazy person. It’s pretty obvious from the context that a sluggard is someone that’s lazy, just can’t get around to doing things. And there are people in the Eastern culture, not true in our culture, that would rather die than work. [Laughter.] I think there are some in our culture too. There are people that would rather die than work. They’re that lazy. But he says:

Proverbs 6:6-8a:

- ⁶ Go to the ant, thou sluggard [thou lazy man]; consider her ways, and be wise:
⁷ Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,
⁸ Provideth her meat in the summer...

When does she provide her meat? When it's meat time; when the things become ripe; when your crops are ready to harvest, that's when you...when she gathers her meat. She gathers...she:

Proverbs 6:8b
 ...[gathers] her food in the harvest.

Consider that. Don't get out to work when there's no food to gather in. That's what some people do, "Well, I'm ready to go to work now"...when it's time to go to bed. See? You gather food, when it's food gathering time.

- Proverbs 6:9, 10:
⁹ How long wilt thou sleep, O [lazy man]? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
¹⁰ Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

[Laughter]. Why are some of you laughing? [More laughter]. The folding of the hands is because what do you do when you relax? You just fold your hands. You don't do anything with them. You fold your hands. I don't know if that's body language or not. [Laughter]. Don't...folding of the hands is a sign that you're not doing something. See? A little folding of the hands to sleep. Then this next verse is the difficult one in this section.

Proverbs 6:11:
 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth,...

Now, have you ever seen any travelers, any world travelers. Now generally speaking they're not too poverty stricken. And so you have a little difficulty with that phrase. "Poverty coming as one that travelleth,..." It doesn't make too much sense and Lamsa assures us (or Bishop, I forget which one it was) that in the Eastern culture, the travelers were not generally poor either.

Secondly, "...and thy want as an armed man." Now soldiers, armed people, this literally in the Hebrew is a man of a shield. A man of a shield, but it means an armed person, a soldier. They generally were not too poor either. But in the culture what happened is, as you as a traveler were traveling along the highway, outside of the protection of the city walls, there were robbers all over the land. For some people in the East that's their occupation. I guess it's true here too. But out in the open areas there are robbers everywhere along the roads. And so, if you're traveling along and the robbers come, they take all your money and material goods away, then

you have nothing. And you're as one that is traveling and overcome by these robbers. Or as an armed man, a man of a shield where these robbers, those that are armed, take up...your money away from you. And again in the culture there were two ways people lost money: one was from those robbers along the highway; the other was by the exploitation and taxation of the soldiers. Both were in the category of armed men. And poverty in the East was due to one of two things. Either people were taxed, exploited or robbed, where they lost all of their possessions, or number two was laziness. So a person that folds his hands to sleep a little longer that just wants to keep sleeping, keep going, a little sleep a little slumber...doesn't consider the lesson of the ant, doesn't work, would rather die than work...He's going to be in the same state as a traveler who's been robbed, or someone who's been taxed of all of his money, or exploited in some way or another. He's in the same situation. And that's the second principle in this section, is laziness. Don't. Don't be lazy. Get up and get to work. When there's something to be done, do it. What does the ant do? Have you ever seen an ant sit down on the sidewalk and take a break? Have you ever watched ants? You ought to watch them sometime, see what they do. And nobody is there shouting orders at him, he just keeps moving on. I understand in some colonies of ants they have sort of a hierarchy of things that go on. But not...but in this one...these...in this culture, maybe it was a different type of ant then....There are different types of ants I know, but they have no guide, overseer or ruler. But they still go out and get the job done. Because they know they need food. It's food time, harvest time. So they go out and get it, bring it back in, they don't stop along the way to smoke a cigarette. They just keep going. See? That's the lesson of the ant, just keeps moving. So that's lesson number two.

Number one was don't be...don't get involved in suretiship; and if you do and you got trouble, here is how you get out of it. And number two was don't be lazy. Get to work. See? Work. And then number three. Number three is hon...dishonesty. Before we get into the third one I want to read you Proverbs 26 that ties into this section here on laziness. Proverbs 26, verse 13. "The slothful man..." A slothful man is the lazy man.

Proverbs 26:13:

The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

And he's too lazy to get up and do anything about it. He's hoping somebody else will go out and chase him away but he won't do anything about it. See?

Proverbs 26:14:

As the door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

[Laughter.] I love that one.

Proverbs 26:15:

The slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his

mouth.

He's so lazy, he even wants other people to feed him. He just hides his hand, a little folding of the hands. He doesn't want to really overexert himself. I was never in that situation, but I know what it means to do more work to get out of work than work that you would do while working. [Laughter.] You know, until I got involved...you know, renewed my mind to the Word, that I had better work, see? Because that's what it says. So I understand this from experience. Some of you are shaking your head. You understand too. [Laughter.] So those are some of the great ones on...for the young persons, get to work. Now we go back to chapter 6, verse 12.

Proverbs 6:12-19:

¹² A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

¹³ He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

¹⁴ Frowardness *is* in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.

¹⁵ Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

¹⁶ These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

¹⁷ A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

¹⁸ An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

¹⁹ A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Now this is the third section. And it deals with dishonesty. First of all a “naughty person” in the Hebrew is the word *beliyaal*. Now you know who Belial is? “A man of Belial” literally is what it is. A naughty person, in other words, a man of Belial. Belial is one of the names of the Devil, Advanced Class, remember? Which means “worthless”. Someone translated it, a man of worthlessness. Literally it's a man of Belial. One who is void of understanding. A man of Belial, which as wicked as you can get. As dishonest, as low on the totem pole as you can go. To be born of the wrong seed, a man of Belial.

Proverbs 6:12:

...a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

Not forward [laughter], *froward*, which means a perverse mouth. His mouth is crooked, twisted. Have you ever seen a twisted mouth? His words are twisted. He has a perverse mouth. In other words, a perverse walk. You see our expression, “if your feet smell and your nose runs you're built upside down.” Have you ever heard that? [Laughter.] It's right here in Proverbs. He walks with a mouth...with a perverse mouth. See it? You don't walk with your mouth. To walk

is that Hebrew expression that means “to conduct your life.” (That was a joke.) Walk with a perverse mouth....

Proverbs 6:13a:

He [winks] with his eyes, [and speaks] with his feet,...

There's the other part of it: to speak with your feet. See I told you. It just lines right up with that expression we use: walk with your mouth and speak with your feet. These guys are built upside down. But he...

Proverbs 6:13b:

...[winks] with his eyes, he [speaks] with his feet, [and] he [teaches] with his fingers;

Now that's real interesting. Not so much to us as it would be to someone in the Eastern culture. Because in the market place in the East, men, business men who were dishonest would make signals to each other. There would be like an in-between man who would be talking with the customer and the boss would be standing over to the side and they'd be making signals with each other. Either winking with the eye or maybe they'd do certain things with their hand, like the coach does in a baseball game, you know. Or at an auction where somebody wants to buy something, he holds up two fingers or three or does something sort of secretive, makes signals with the hands, with his fingers, “he teaches with the fingers.” And they would draw in the sand with their feet...would be another way of doing it. They were dishonest. Those are all things that the business...dishonest business men, especially these men of Belial would do in that culture.

In verse 14, in their heart is frowardness or deceit. There was perverseness, deceit, deception in their heart.

Proverbs 6:14b:

...he deviseth mischief continually...

From his heart he's always thinking how can he screw the customer, like I was saying about putting that loophole in the contract. And people today in business are always thinking how they can cheat the company they're working for out of something, how they can cheat the customer. How they can...

There was a conference I read in this...that book I was telling you about, on honesty in business...a conference where the salesmen were told—You know, “you're always supposed to make the customer happy; a satisfied customer.” Have you ever heard that?—their principle was just the opposite, you want dissatisfied customers. Because if you have satisfied customers, they won't buy anything else. But if they're dissatisfied, then they'll buy something else. If they're

dissatisfied with the automobile they own, then they're going to buy another automobile. Right? See, just the opposite of honesty in business and that's the way the world is going. Our times, other times have gone the same way. Dishonesty. "Teaching with the finger... deceit in their heart; devising mischief continually;..." Now, you see, you've had five parts of the body here. You've had the froward or perverse mouth, the winking of the eyes, (the feet) speaking with the feet, teaching with the fingers and now the heart, deceit in the heart, devising mischief out of the heart continually. Five different parts of the body. But there's a sixth one. He soweth discord. Now where do you sow? From your reproductive organs, right? So, there's a sixth part of the body. Only instead of sowing good seed, what is he sowing? Discord, discord where he tries to break people up. Break up families, break up companies, break up groups, break up believers. He sows discord among people. And what's the result of such business practices?

Proverbs 6:15:

Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

There's no cure, no remedy. Suddenly he's going to be broken. It may take a while sometimes, because sometimes these guys go on and on. But eventually it catches up with them. (That's why it says not to envy sinners.) But it catches up with them and then calamity comes. And there's no remedy. When calamity comes to a believer—it says this some place too: that where a righteous man falls seven times, but he always gets up again. But when the wicked fall, then there's no remedy. There's no coming back, it's calamity.

Proverbs 6:16a:

These six *things*...

How many things did he name? Six. And they were all parts of the body.

Proverbs 6:16a:

These six *things* doth the LORD hate:...

Now wait a minute, there's seven that...

Proverbs 6:16b:

...*are* an abomination unto him.

Now this is a figure of speech called *epanorthosis* (E-P-A-N-O-R-T-H-O-S-I-S), *epanorthosis*; or it's also called correction. Where he says six things—now wait a minute there are seven. It's not done accidentally; it's done on purpose. And it simply means that the list is inexhaustible. Right. That there are so many more things that you could say. You could go on and on. But it's a recalling of what was said in order to correct it, with the idea that there is more that could be

said. And then he lists these six things and adds that seventh thing to it. And if you look through here you have the same six plus that one that you had before. You have, verse 17:

Proverbs 6:17:
A proud look....

Before it was “he winks with the...” what? The eyes. It’s the eyes. He’s filled with pride; he’s haughty. He has...

Proverbs 6:17b:
...a lying tongue,...

He had a “froward mouth” or perverse mouth up above, remember? A perverse mouth. Here it’s called “a lying tongue”.

Proverbs 6:17c:
...hands that shed innocent blood.

Up above, “he teaches with his fingers”; here it’s the hands. And by being dishonest in making all these signals with each other to cheat the customer, he’s...it’s just like the man that sheds innocent blood. That’s what dishonesty is. Just as bad as Cain’s killing Abel. Just as bad as slaying someone else, shedding innocent blood. All these things tie together because they’re dishonest. See? I thought of the high priest in the...you know, the Sanhedrin that passed judgment on Jesus, that shed his blood, because of their dishonesty in their agreements. They got false witnesses, the whole thing, a mock trial that wasn’t right on.

Proverbs 6:18a:
An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations,...

There’s the heart, that’s another part of the body. You have the eyes, the tongue or mouth, the hands, and now the heart. And then the feet...

Proverbs 6:18b:
...that be swift in running to mischief,

The heart devises wicked imaginations; it’s got “deceit in his heart” up above. Down here, his “heart that deviseth wicked imaginations,...” Always thinking of how he can get more out of another person. And then feet that be swift in running to mischief. If you’re making signals like they did in the market with their feet, writing things in the dirt with their feet. They’re like those that are running to mischief, always trying to do something to take advantage of someone else; using people, exploiting people, instead of using things and loving people. “If

you don't walk on the Word you'll run into mischief" is the key here. Then you have verse 19.

Proverbs 6:19:

A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

...are the last two things. Now the sowing of discord among the brethren is the same as the sixth one up above in verse 14, "...he soweth discord". Here it reaffirms that. Sowing discord and that's the reproduction area. Instead of sowing proper seed, he's sowing discord among the brethren. And what you sow is what you reap. He's going to reap trouble later on. He sows discord among the brethren. Then he adds, right before that in verse 19, "...a false witness that speaketh lies." That's the seventh thing. That's the seventh thing; the thing that he adds. A false witness is someone outside of the body. It's another body that you get to cheat with his hands, his eyes, his mouth, his heart, his feet, his reproduction sowing. It's another witness but it's a false witness. Reminds me of commercials, where we had this hidden interview. Have you ever seen any of those hidden interviews? They didn't know the camera was there. And boy these people just thought that product was absolutely the greatest in the world. I wonder. Huh? False witnesses in business or in any other facet of life. Calling in someone else, outside of the body as a false witness to speak lies about whatever it is that you're doing. Paying someone with a well-known name to say that your product is good. To say, "I tried your product and it worked; it was better than Bufferin or something else." Those six things or seven because, he adds the false witness...six of them are all parts of the body: the eyes, the tongue, the hands, the heart, the feet and the sowing reproductive area, and then he adds the false witness that speaketh lies. In order to cheat somebody out of something, to exploit someone. Dishonesty in business.

And I thought of those six...or seven (counting the seventh one) in light of our walk, our walk of honesty as athletes of the spirit, in Roman...or in Ephesians 6. Because they have feet that run to mischief, but our feet are shod with what? "...the preparation of the gospel of peace." Their feet run to mischief, the sons of Belial. We're sons of God. Our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. They sow discord among the brethren. Our loins are gird about with what? Truth. They sow discord. Our loins, our reproductive area, is "gird about with the truth". What do we sow? The Word. See? We sow truth. Their hearts devise mischief. There's deceit in their heart. We have the "breastplate of righteousness" over our heart. They wink with their eyes in order to deceive or they have that proud or haughty look in their eyes. "The eyes of our understanding are enlightened" and on our head we have the crown of wholeness, the crown of salvation. With their hands they teach and shed innocent blood. In our hands is the discus of believing which we have because of the believing of the one whose innocent blood was shed. With their mouth, their crooked, twisted, perverse mouth, they speak lies. Out of our mouth comes the javelin of the spirit; the Word of God is what we speak. And then to this list of six things, God added a seventh: a false witness. And to the list of six things in Ephesians God adds "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit..." which is the true witness. Perfect prayer, the true witness. The witness of speaking in tongues. When you

can speak in tongues, you know that you're born again of God's spirit. You have the true witness as opposed to their false witness. Good business principles, being honest in business centers around walking by the spirit, being good athletes of the spirit and speaking in tongues a lot. Isn't that neat?

So those are three great business principles (principles of life and business; business is life) in this section of Proverbs 6-19 dealing with suretiship, with laziness, and with dishonesty. Showing the young man or the young woman how to get out of suretiship or why he should avoid it, why he should be industrious rather than lazy and why he needs to practice honesty in his walk with God and with other people in life.

[Prayer] *Father, we sure thank you for the greatness of your Word and that we can work these sections of your Word and see the principles that we can apply practically in life and in everyday situations. Thank you Father for every person here in the Corps and all the campuses and those listening around the country and Father for your love and goodness to us in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen! God bless you!*

November 11, 1981

Proverbs
Proverbs 6:20-7:27
Rev. Cummins

Now tonight, we're going to go back to the Book of Proverbs chapter 6 where we left off last week. We finished that one section. And of course in verse 20 we begin another section because it begins with those words "my son". And the subject I want to treat tonight is the strange woman of Proverbs [laughter]. We get into this section here in Proverbs 6, but there's a number of other proverbs that tie into the strange woman that we're going to be picking up. Somebody said this week that a woman is like a piano; either she's upright or she's grand [laughter]. I kind of think the women can be both; upright and grand. And we'll see this in Proverbs. If she's the other way, she's not so grand, as we'll see as we're working this. In Proverbs chapter 6.

Proverbs 6:20 and 21:

²⁰ My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

²¹ Bind them continually...

By the way, it's the father and mother where the child first begins to learn. And then after that he goes to this particular school where the wise men, as we covered in chapter 1...how the wise men of the time were responsible for teaching the children and then carrying on that education in the Word, like the school of the prophets and so on. Well, here he says don't forsake those things that your father and mother were responsible for teaching you.

Proverbs 6:21:

Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

Now in our Christian culture some of these words are perhaps a little bit foreign. To bind the Word upon your heart...I think we can see that in a metaphorical sense where you put it in your heart. But there's a greater significance to this from the Judean culture and the culture of Israel in the Old Testament, that has been carried on to some extent today in modern...among the modern Jewish people. And same way with tying it about your neck. This reflects back on a custom they had, because in the Old Testament culture...and there's commandments in the Old Testament where they're told to bind these things on their forehead as well as on their hand. In Matthew chapter 23. Jesus makes reference to this in Matthew chapter 23 and in verse...verse 5 talking about the Pharisees. It says:

Matthew 23:5:

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: [the Pharisees did anything

they could do to be seen of men] they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments,

Phylacteries are those things that they tie about their head, the Pharisees did it back in this time, the modern Jews do it and in the Old Testament among Israel they were told to bind the Word upon their head and upon their hand. And here Jesus says well they do it just for the show of it, so people see them, so people recognize what they're doing. And they make big phylacteries, put them on their head, put them on their hand, and boy they look real religious while they're doing it. Deuteronomy chapter 11, I'll show you another one here in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy chapter 11, verse 18.

Deuteronomy 11:18a:

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your [what?] {hand},...

Your hand, your to bind them upon your hand.

Deuteronomy 11:18b:

...that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

See that? On the hand and on the forehead, between your eyes, as frontlets. They would wear these little boxes (is what looked like) that had scripture in them. They were like their retemorries. Only today I don't think they look at them because they're pretty well bound in. You can't get them out. But they're like their retemorries. We do this in a similar sense, only we carry them in our pocket over our heart or you carry them in your purse. Where you have your retemorries, you carry them around. And then throughout the day, you're working on memorizing what's in those retemory packs. So you've got the Word not just on the cards, but where? In your heart. See? In your heart. And if they carried them on their forehead, it would be too hard to not think about them once in a while through the day. Or if they had them on their hand, the same way, because you use your hand quite a bit.

Deuteronomy 11:19a:

And ye shall teach them...

You don't just have them there, but you teach them. See?

Deuteronomy 11:19b and 20:

¹⁹ ...[to] your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

²⁰ And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

They also had phylacteries that they would put on the door posts of their house; they do this today sometimes too. “That your...”—This is the reason:

Deuteronomy 11:21:

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

In other words to prolong your days, that you may have long days upon the earth. You learn the Word, put the Word in your heart. It gives you that long life. It talks about this in Proverbs too, about giving you long life as you study the Word, put it on in your heart, trust in God and you’re going to have that long life and an abundance of life. In chapter 6 of Deuteronomy. And this one, I think is real significant. We’ll start in verse 4. Says, “Hear, O Israel...” Deuteronomy 6:4.

Deuteronomy 6:4:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD [Jehovah] our [Elohim] is one [Jehovah]:

“...the LORD our God is one LORD.” How many? One. Does it say three in one? {No!} It says what? One. These pagans on the other hand had three in one. And 20 and 50 and 100 different gods, many different gods. But we have one LORD. The LORD, our God is one LORD, just one.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7:

⁵ And thou shalt love the LORD thy God [Jehovah thy Elohim] with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

⁶ And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be [where?] in thine heart:

⁷ And thou shalt teach them...

Teach what? that the Lord our God is one LORD, one Jehovah; not many, not three in one.

Deuteronomy 6:7, 8

⁷...thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

⁸ And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine [what? thine hand, upon your] hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

Again you have this particular custom where they would keep them right before them,

where they wouldn't forget God's Word and more important than having them physically there, was to have them in the heart. To put it in the heart. The context of this one I think is great, that the commandment was that the LORD our God is one LORD and that it comes up in the Book of Proverbs in regards to idolatry, as we'll see in just a little bit.

In the *Way Magazine*, the March/April 1972 issue, is an article on Orientalisms of the Bible regarding the talismans and phylacteries. As a matter of fact it has a picture of the wall phylactery and one of the phylacteries that they put on their forehead. And it's written by Bernita Jess, some of the things that Bishop Pillai taught us. And tonight...I wish all of you could see this...but I have Mark Gluckin here (I'd like you to come out here Mark) and he has an example of these particular phylacteries that they used. [Laughter as Mark enters the room.] "Hi Mark."

[Mark] Hi; Shalom.

He's got on his head, for those of you that can't see it, it's a box about an inch by an inch tied with a strap, a black strap that goes around the back of his head and this is right—can you see it Mark? It's on your forehead.

[Mark] Yes.

[Walter] Very easily. [Laughter.] And then on your hand you have another one?

[Mark] Yes.

[Walter] And what is this called?

[Mark] This is called my *tepillin*. This is what we call them today.

You call them "*tepillin*" today. They're called phylacteries in the Bible.

[Mark] Right.

[Walter] And inside of that, underneath you have—

[Mark] In here, are the scriptures.

[Walter] The scriptures are inside of it, underneath the thing.

[Mark] Same thing up top here; and scriptures on the inside.

[Walter] And then you have the shawl over you; I call a shawl. What do you call it?

[Mark] *Tallit*.

[Walter] This is the *tallit*. And this is also mentioned in that article in the *Way Magazine*. And that has scripture on it too. Do you remember what it says?

[Mark] I remember the beginning...[speaks Hebrew].

[Walter] Sounds good [laughter], must be Hebrew. Right?

[Mark] Right.

Okay! Well that's...does that give you an idea of the phylacteries that it's talking about? Now what they looked like in the Old Testament may or may not have been similar. They found some from a...you know, in archeological digs and things, but not from that old. [Laughter.] So, what they used exactly in the Old Testament, I don't know. Thank you Mark. Bless you!

Now, that gives you some idea. For the rest of you, you'll have to look at the Magazine

article to get some idea of what these things look like but they are very obvious. An inch cube on your forehead, can you imagine that? You couldn't hardly miss it. It would constantly bring the scriptures to your mind throughout the day if you were wearing it and if it was on the hand that you're using all the time. You know they wear it on the left hand. And I couldn't figure that out because the right hand is the right hand of blessing and there must be some more to it. But all we could figure out is that the left hand was closest to the heart or something like that. It might be the reason; I'm not sure. So, in case you were wondering why he had it on his left hand. Alright, now we go back to Proverbs chapter 6. That 20th verse; 21st verse, says:

Proverbs 6:21a:

Bind them continually upon thine heart...

And they're bound upon them, but it's more important to get them where? In your heart. See? To get them in your heart,

Proverbs 6:21b:

...and tie them about thy neck.

Now like I say, here it talks about tying it about your neck. Perhaps they had a different form that hung around the neck in those times, we don't know today. But whatever it was, it was something like your retemorries. It keeps that Word in front of you constantly. Verse 22.

Proverbs 6:22:

When thou goest, [she] shall lead thee;...

The word "it" is she. Because it's referring back to the commandment. The commandment, she. It's like the word "wisdom". The word "wisdom" throughout Proverbs is called a she. Remember Proverbs chapter 8 has a lot of it. Where she has builded her house [wisdom]. Her price is far above what? Rubies. See? Her price is far above rubies.

Proverbs 6:22:

...she shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, [she] shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest [she] shall talk with thee.

Wisdom which is this woman, represented by a woman at different places in the Book of Proverbs. This is the commandment which you keep close to your heart; like your woman you keep close to your heart. Like the scripture that says there's one God, you keep that close to your heart. See? "The LORD our God is one LORD."

Proverbs 6:23 and 24:

²³ For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light [it lightens your path];

and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

²⁴ To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.

Now “wisdom” is treated as a woman in the Book of Proverbs. Same way worldly wisdom or idolatry, pagan wisdom, is treated as a woman. She’s the strange woman. That’s the context in which it’s used. That’s why I think it’s significant that where it talked about binding them on your forehead and your hands to keep it in front of you, bind it in your heart, in Deuteronomy 6, the context was that there is how many gods? One. The LORD our God is one LORD. Not three in one. Not six, not ten, not 50, not 500, but He’s one. As opposed to the strange woman who represents many gods.

There are two words for “strange” that are used of the woman in the Book of Proverbs. One is zar (spelled Z-A-R). Zar means an apostate or one who has turned away. A believer who has turned to pagan idolatry for example, a woman who has left her husband, one who has turned away from what they were formally with. A zar. That’s why they’re strange. The other word is nakar (spelled N-A-K-A-R); nakar (N-A-K-A-R) which means a foreigner. She’s a foreign woman who also is idolatrous. She worships strange gods into idolatry. The word zar is used in Deuteronomy 32. I’d like you to look at that, Deuteronomy 32, this word “strange”. Verse 16. Well, look at 15; 32:15.

Deuteronomy 32:15:

But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

God was his rock. And instead he started worshiping other rocks, you know, idols made out of stone.

Deuteronomy 32:16:

They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods

And the word “strange” there is zar, because he was apostate. He had left God to serve these other gods.

Deuteronomy 32:16 and 17:

¹⁶ ...with abominations provoked they him to anger.

¹⁷ They sacrificed unto [what?] devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

In Psalms, the Book of Psalms, chapter 81, verse 9.

Psalms 81:9a:
There shall no strange god be in thee;...

The word “strange” there is zar.

Psalms 81:9b:
...neither shalt thou worship any strange god [nakar].

That word is nakar. Don't worship any strange god in an apostate sense, where you leave the true God. Neither shalt thou worship any strange, foreign god from another country, in a sense. Both words used together there.

Now this is back in Proverbs chapter 6, the word nakar that is used in verse 24. She's a foreign woman. And God's Word, that you keep before your eyes, keep in your heart, you bind it in your heart, put it about your neck...She's going to keep you, that woman, so to speak, from the strange woman, idolatry, the foreign woman, the one with other gods.

Proverbs 6:25:
Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

Very picturesque. And that's what idolatry does. Whether it's the trinity or worshipping any other gods today. The same as it was back in the Old Testament times. She takes you with her eyelids, you know, she flaps them around and tries to attract you away from the one true God.

Proverbs 6:26a:
For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread:...

Isn't that wonderful?

Proverbs 6:26b:
...and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

Now you see those...that verse does not make just a whole lot of sense. The reason is because the Hebrew as rendered by one of the translations is: a prostitute's price is a loaf of bread. What's a loaf of bread? How much is it worth? Not very much. Now, most prostitutes charge more than a loaf of bread. (I don't speak this by experience. You know, just from what I've heard. [Laughter.] Don't want some of you to get the wrong idea.) But the adulteress is a married woman, a married woman hunts for the precious life. You fool around with a prostitute, it costs you a pi...a loaf of bread compared to what it costs messing around with a married

woman. And keep in mind, the context here is idolatry; following this strange woman as opposed to following wisdom, the commandment of God, the one true God. This married woman will hunt for the precious life. She's married to other gods. That's the context...that's the context of it. And many of these cases compares idolatry to fooling around with a married woman, not with a prostitute, which is much more costly, because the married woman, spiritually speaking, is married to another god or other gods. And if you mess around with the married woman it costs you a lot; not just money, but in terms of your life. Look at verse 27.

Proverbs 6:27 and 28:

²⁷ Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

²⁸ Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

You can't mess around with a married woman.

Proverbs 6:29-31:

²⁹ So he that goeth in to his neighbour's [what?] wife [his neighbor's wife]; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.

³⁰ *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

³¹ But *if* he be found,...

Same way if you be found messing around with this man's wife.

Proverbs 6:31 and 32a

³¹ ...he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house [the thief will].

³² *But* [in contrast] whoso committeth adultery with a woman...

Talking about a married woman in the context.

Proverbs 6:32b:

...lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

Now, I'd say, that's a little more costly than with the prostitute which is, relatively speaking, a loaf of bread. See? Compared to the married woman, a prostitute is a loaf of bread. That's what it's saying.

Proverbs 6:33-35a:

³³ A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

³⁴ For jealousy is the rage of a man [the husband]: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

³⁵ He will not regard any ransom;...

You might even try to buy him off with a ransom.

Proverbs 6:35b:

...neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

You might try to pay him off. You might say, look, I'll write you out a check today for a million dollars. His soul still will not rest because you've messed around with his wife. And so when you leave the one true God, and go whoring around with other gods, spiritual adultery or spiritual fornication, then you've got some real problems on your hand. You're taking fire into your bosom, you're walking on coals. See how it compares this. And it's the strange woman, which is world wisdom, which is idolatry, compared to the wisdom whose price is far above rubies. The commandment, the Word of God that you bind upon your heart that says, the LORD our God is one LORD rather than worshiping all the other gods.

Chapter 7 goes into another section, but this section also deals with the same "strange" woman. And again it's a married woman as we'll see. Starts out:

Proverbs 7:1 and 2:

¹ My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

² Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

The apple of the eye is the pupil of the eye. How do you guard or keep the pupil of your eye? When something comes toward it, what do you do? Blink. You guard it. If the sun is too bright, what do you do? You squint or close your eyes or turn your head. Or if the room is very dark, what do you do? You try to get more light in to affect your pupils. The law has to be the pupil of your eye and you're to guard His commandments, His law, His Word like you do your pupils. They're very delicate. And you keep that law in your heart in that sense.

Proverbs 7:3a:

Bind them upon thy fingers,...

There you have it again.

Proverbs 7:3b and 4:

³ ...write them upon the table of thine heart.

⁴ Say unto wisdom, [You are] my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

The reason for this is because in the Eastern culture, it was the women, your sister, your mother, other women of the family that chose your wife for you. It was part of their culture. So,

you say to wisdom, you chose my wife. You're my sister and call understanding your kinswoman. Why?

Proverbs 7:5a:

That they may keep [you] from the strange woman,...

Now the context here is, binding the Word upon your heart again. Serving the one true God, to keep you from the strange gods. And this word "strange" is zar, apostate woman, a woman who left the one true God, so to speak.

Proverbs 7:5b-7a:

⁵ ...from the stranger [and that's nakar, a foreign woman] *which* flattereth with her words.

⁶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

⁷ And beheld among the simple ones...

It means simple; they don't...they haven't matured enough to understand. It doesn't mean they were stupid...just haven't matured enough to really know all the facts of life.

Proverbs 7:7b:

...I discerned among the youths,...

See. This is to whom the proverbs are addressed: to the simple ones, the youths, those who need to grow up in their understanding.

Proverbs 7:7c, 8:

⁷ ...a young man void of understanding

⁸ Passing through the street near her corner;...

Sounds just like today doesn't it.

Proverbs 7:8-10:

⁸ ...and he went the way to her house,

⁹ In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:

¹⁰ And, behold, there met him a woman *with* the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

You see, the harlot is not much different, in practice, than the philosopher or those who teach more than one God, standing on the street corner trying to entice you to worship their gods; to get married to their gods...to whore around with their gods as opposed to the one true God. The Elohim...our Jehovah is one Jehovah...or Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah. One

God. Is there much difference? Stop and think about it. You have those that stand on the street corners to get you to go in and lay with them. Then you have those that stand on the street corners to get you to go in and lay with their gods, their “three in one” or whatever.

Proverbs 7:11:

(She *is* loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

She’s always out sticking her feet in somebody else’s bed.

Proverbs 7:12:

Now is *she* without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

It’s not only true of the woman, it’s true of those who are promoting their gods.

Proverbs 7:13-15:

¹³ So she caught him, and kissed him, *and* with an impudent face said unto him,

¹⁴ *I have* peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

¹⁵ Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

It sounds like some promoters of the idolatry today.

Proverbs 7:16-19:

¹⁶ I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with fine linen of Egypt.

¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

¹⁸ Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

¹⁹ For the goodman [the master] *is* not at home [her husband was not there];...

Married to another. When you stop and think about it. All these idolaters, all the pagan gods, are really married to devil spirits. Behind every statue, there’s a devil spirit. When you’re worshiping the statue, you don’t worship the statue, you worship the spirit that’s behind it. So here she...here it is represented again, the strange woman dealing with that knowledge and wisdom that is contrary to the wisdom of God.

Proverbs 7:19b:

...he is gone a long journey:

He’s not at home....He hath taken a bag...but yet what do you do when you mess around with a married woman. It’s says you are taking fire into your bosom, walking on coals, you are going

to get burned.

Proverbs 7:20-27:

²⁰ He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed [he's going to be gone a long time].

²¹ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

²² He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

²³ Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.

²⁴ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

²⁵ Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.

²⁶ For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her.

²⁷ Her house is the way [to the grave], going down to the chambers of death.

That is exactly where worshiping other gods and the wisdom of the world, idolatry, leads you; to death and to the grave. This strange woman is also mentioned in chapter 2. We'll pick up the context in verse 6. Says:

Proverbs 2:6:

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

Who gives wisdom? {The LORD.} And she is good wisdom. Then you get to verse 10.

Proverbs 2:10-12:

¹⁰ When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

¹¹ Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

¹² To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh [perverse] things;

Then you get to verse 16: "To deliver thee..." First of all wisdom is going to keep you from the perverse man. And the context then...that's the context. We pick up in 16.

Proverbs 2:16-22

¹⁶ To deliver thee from the strange [the *zar*] woman [the apostate woman, the one who has left her God], *even* from the stranger [that's *nakar*, the foreign woman]

which flattereth with her words;

¹⁷ Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, [who] forgetteth the covenant of her God.

¹⁸ For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

¹⁹ None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

²⁰ That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.

²¹ For the upright shall dwell in the land,...

(There's one of those pianist.) This is the woman that walks with God or you, as you walk with the true God as opposed to the strange woman, the idolatrous woman or the wisdom of the world, worshiping other gods.

Proverbs 2:21 and 22

²¹ ...the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

²² But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

In chapter 5, you have again the strange woman presented in the context of wisdom again. "My son..."; chapter 5, verse 1.

Proverbs 5:1 and 2:

¹ My son, attend unto my [what?] wisdom, *and* bow thine ear to my understanding:

² That thou mayest [guard; regard is "guard"] discretion, and *that* thy lips may keep knowledge.

This is what we read in the first part, chapter 1. Remember a couple weeks ago? Attend to wisdom, understanding, discretion, knowledge.

Proverbs 5:3:

For the lips of a strange woman...

Zar, an apostate woman (a believer who has turned to pagan idolatry, one who does not follow the wisdom of God) who turns away from that wisdom whose price is far above rubies; turns to the strange apostate woman.

Proverbs 5:3-6:

³ For the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:

⁴ But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.

⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

⁶ Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them*.

She sneaks around. Very deceptive, those that lead you to idolatry.

Proverbs 5:7 and 8:

⁷ Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

⁸ Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

The door of who house...whose house? The apostate woman. Those that are teaching wisdom contrary to the wisdom of God, that want to get you to serve the other gods.

Proverbs 5:9 and 10:

⁹ Lest thou give thine honour unto others,...

¹⁰ Lest strangers [zar, apostates, those who have left the true God] *be* filled with thy wealth;...

Your money, your wealth ends up in a stranger's pockets, rather than a believer's pockets.

Proverbs 5:9:

...and thy labours be in the house of a [nakar];

A foreigner, someone who has always worshiped other gods.

Proverbs 5:10 and 11:

¹⁰ And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

¹¹ And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;

Why didn't I listen when I went to wisdom school?

Proverbs 5:13a:

And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers,...

Sounds like us when we grew up, after we were...you know, so delinquent when we were young. Why didn't I listen when my teacher said:

Proverbs 5:13b:

...nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

Then verse 15 picks up this whole sexual comparison to serving of the one true God and the serving of other gods.

Proverbs 5:15:

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

Drink out of your own wife, spiritually speaking. Let...then it says:

Proverbs 5:16a:

Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad,...

The Hebrew reads: let not thy fountains overflow in public. Very descriptive sexually. Let not...King James is just the opposite of what it says in the Hebrew.

Proverbs 5:16 and 17:

¹⁶ Let thy fountains be dispersed [or overflow in public], [as] rivers of waters in the streets.

¹⁷ Let them be only thine own [keep your waters in your own house, in your own well], and not strangers' with thee.

You don't want to lay with strangers. You don't want your fountains to overflow in public.

Proverbs 5:18:

Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the [what? the] wife of thy youth.

With your wife. The one you are married to. And spiritually you're with God. Not...then why go whoring around with other gods, why let your fountain spill in public with the strangers? And the word "strangers" is zar, apostates.

Proverbs 5:18-20:

¹⁸ ...and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

¹⁹ Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe [or gazelle]; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

²⁰ And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

Isn't that a beautiful illustration? You stay with your own fountains, you own cisterns. Let your fountain be blessed at home. Don't let your fountain overflow in public, as rivers of

water in the streets. Be satisfied with your own wife at home, not with strangers. Not with the...and the word “stranger” in verse 20, the strange woman, that’s *zar*. And the second one “embrace the bosom of [thy] stranger” is *nakar*. So whether it’s the strange apostate woman or a foreigner, they’re still both worshiping other gods. And God just doesn’t want you to do that. It’s a violation of the first and great commandment. Be satisfied with your God. Why go whoring around and let your rivers overflow in public?

Proverbs 5:21-23:

²¹ For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

²² His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

²³ He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

It’s interesting, this strange woman back in chapter 2 forsook the covenant of her God too. Just thought of that. She’s a...she’s both an apostate as well as a foreigner. Because once you’re an apostate, you become a foreigner to God. You’re forsaking his covenant. And here you have those that go their own way and their iniquities overtake them because instead of serving the one true God, now they’re whoring around with other gods. They’re whoring around with those that are married to other gods. Just like having fellowship with darkness, communion with darkness, whoring around with other gods.

So you have it in chapter 2, you have it in chapter 5, and then in chapter 6 where we read it and again in chapter 7. In chapter 9 and in verse 13, it doesn’t use the word “strange” but it uses the illustration of the woman. It says:

Proverbs 9:13a:

A foolish woman...

Or a woman who has a false sense of confidence, she acts confidence...confident, but it’s a false confidence.

Proverbs 9:13b:

...*is* clamorous:...

And the word “clamorous” means clamorous or loud, like someone that’s drunk is loud, clamorous. You know, they say what they think, but they don’t know what they’re saying. That’s this clamorous woman, foolish, false confidence. See?

Proverbs 9:13c:

...*she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

But boy, she's loud.

Proverbs 9:14 and 15:

¹⁴ For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,

¹⁵ To call passengers who go right on their ways:

But she's out there calling to them, it sounds like some people that believe in more than one God, standing on the street corners, yelling to passersby, "Come and worship our three gods"...or others. See?

Proverbs 9:16-18:

¹⁶ Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

¹⁷ Stolen waters are sweet, and bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant.

¹⁸ But he knoweth not that the dead *are* there; *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of [the grave, *sheol*, gravedom].

This is the...it doesn't call her a strange woman, but the illustration is still the same here. Where instead of walking with wisdom, the woman whose price is far above rubies, which is the wisdom of God and wisdom...the beginning of wisdom is what? The fear of the LORD. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Fear of God; respect of God is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom. And if you don't follow the true wisdom of God, then you're going to end up with the apostate wisdom, the foreign wisdom. First of all it's those who have turned away from the true God and secondly it's those who are of a foreign god, your married...whose married to another, other than the true God. Beautiful illustration. And it's just as subtle, just as deceptive as the strange woman, the woman that entices you. And what do people do today? Oh, they're real honest, real sincere, even in Christianity, yet they want to promote their three gods. And same way with anybody else who is of any religious nature at all, enticing you with whatever they have to offer. What I love about the Word is it's beautiful and it's logical. It's easy to understand. You can go to God's Word and study it and it fits. There's no...no things that you have to accept as a "mystery" [quote, unquote]. "The Mystery" has been revealed so it's no longer a mystery. God never expected you to believe something you couldn't understand, so He just didn't reveal it to you.

But when the time came, He told you what it was. The only reason it was a mystery is because it was kept secret from the foundation of the world. But when it was made known, then you knew what it was, you know: Jew and Gentile, fellow-heirs and so on. But what they call mysteries are things that...the reason they are mysteries, you can't understand them today. Why they call them sacraments. Things that you can't...you just do it. The blind lead the blind, they

both fall into the ditch. So it is following this type of wisdom as opposed to God's wisdom. The wisdom of the world versus the wisdom of the Word. And here is this foolish loud woman out on the street corners yelling, promoting her wares, the same thing. The strange woman is found a couple of other places. This is just mentioned briefly in chapter 22, in verse 14.

Proverbs 22:14:
The mouth of [a] strange [woman]...

That's the word zar, apos...“strange women”; zar, apostate women, those who have forsaken their God and who have turned to idolatry.

Proverbs 22:14:
...is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

Fall...if you abhor the...you know, if you go away from God what is going to happen? You're going to fall into this pit of woman...of the strange woman which is pagan idolatry, pagan wisdom, worldly wisdom. It is used again in chapter 23, in verse 27.

Proverbs 23:27:
For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

The strange woman is nakar, a foreign woman is a narrow pit; again, to draw you away from the true God.

Proverbs 23:28-33:

²⁸ She also lieth in wait as *for* a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

³⁰ They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

³³ Thine eyes shall behold strange women [zar], and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

Apostate women. This pit, the deep ditch and the narrow pit, something interesting on that in a certain writing by Maundrell, who described a passage way out of a certain location in the East. He says:

They descended into a low valley, at the bottom of which is a fissure into the

earth of a great depth; but withal so narrow, that it is not discernable to the eye until you arrive just upon it, though to the ear, notice is given to it at a great distance, by reason of a noise of a stream running down into it from the hills. We could not guess it to be less than thirty yards deep, but it is so narrow that a small arch not four yards over, lands you on the other side. They call it “the sheik’s wife”; a name given it from a woman of that quality who fell into it and perished.

The reason is because she didn’t see it. You’re walking along, it’s very narrow, it’s very deep and you can’t see it until you’re almost upon it. And if you’re not careful...you can hear it but you can’t see it, like the loud woman. You can hear her. She’s loud and clamorous, but she’s a deep ditch, a narrow pit. And you don’t see...catch it until you’re right upon her. See? The same way with the wisdom of the world. Another thing we found about pits is that: In the East, until recent days, pits were common in cities and villages and in some countries they’re still in use. Pits were used to store wheat and other grain supplies. When the grain was used up, the pits were left open to be filled again during wheat harvest. These pits were dangerous during the dark hours and both men and animals sometimes fell into them. The Hebrew prophets and Jesus used them metaphorically meaning traps, that is, evil devices. Jesus said, “When the blind leads the blind both of them fall into the pit.” Well if you’ve got an empty wheat pit out there in the middle of the field and you’re walking along, it’s dark at night, or somebody is blind, the blind leading the blind, what’s going to happen? You fall into the pit. And if you’re not conscious of God’s Word and keep that Word in front of your eyes constantly you’re going to be drawn away by this strange woman, this other philosophy, this other wisdom of the world, which is idolatry. It gets you to worship more than one God, and you will fall into that pit. Because you don’t have your eyes open or you’re not listening to the sounds of the river nearby.

I found this in the *Anchor Bible* regarding these sections in Proverbs about wisdom. “Since wisdom is correlated throughout with reverence for the Lord, by inference, the adulteress represents both folly and the seductive way of life associated with pagan religion.” That’s exactly what it is in the context. The strange woman or the adulteress represents folly and the seductive way of life associated with pagan religion, idolatry, worshiping other gods. “The figure of marital unfaithfulness for the lapse of Israel into idolatry is familiar from the writings of the Prophets.” You might want to check Hosea, the first three chapters and Jeremiah chapters two and three. “The figure was particularly appropriate because of the practice of cultic prostitution associated with Canaanite religion.” Which was true of a lot of other religion too...that there’s a lot of prostitution associated with the religions, like in Corinth, they had a thousand whores on top of the hill that did worship to their gods. “Here in Proverbs also, the stern warning against adultery, has in view, not only the looser morals of the foreign or non-Jewish members of the community, but specifically the offering of themselves by female devotees of the Astarte or similar cult.” You’ve heard of Astarte in pagan worship. And again it’s used chiefly of married women because...they mention this too...it’s used chiefly of

married women because of the comparison between serving the one true God and whoring around with a god...or someone that's married with another god. Pagan idolatry, in other words. And you see that throughout these different records in the Book of Proverbs. Now that the strange woman. But it tells us in Corinthians, that we're not to keep fellowship with darkness. Our fellowship is to be with God and with His Son Jesus Christ. We're to worship the one true God. The first and great commandment is to love God. Right? See? We worship the one true God and violating that first and great commandment of worshiping God is the one thing that turned God off, so to speak, in the Old Testament. Whenever Israel did things wrong, God put up with a lot of it but whenever they started worshiping other gods, pagan gods (Other than the one true God and a lot of it was three-in-one worship. And when you trace this back to the origin of the trinity.) that's what really upset God and what caused Israel to go into captivity so many times. And why the encouragement in the Book of Proverbs is to worship the one true God. To bind His Word upon your heart. Keep it in your heart, in your life, put it in the front of your eyes so that you don't forget it. See.

Why...why we have four books (and at least three of them...ah, four of them)—are absolutely the most misunderstood things in the world: *Jesus Christ is Not God - Are the Dead Alive Now?* - *Receiving the Holy Spirit Today* and *Jesus Christ Our Passover*. So many things misunderstood in the world and that is where idolatrous worship leads you. Most people don't care about the accuracy of God's Word and beyond that trinity is the corner stone of [quote, unquote] "Christianity" but not [quote, unquote] "real Christianity" . We're nter...in here to learn what the Word has to say, the wisdom that God has to offer and it's to serve the one true God and not to be enticed. And Satan does everything he can to entice you away from the worship of the one true God. That's the one thing that he will really hit us on to try to get us, to persuade us, to do anything but serve the one true God. And why there is so much time dwelt upon it in teaching the youth in the Book of Proverbs, to stay in the wisdom of God. Because it's just like that woman down on the street corner who pulls up her slip and says come into my house. So there's others standing out on the street corners saying come and worship my gods and very deceptive, but yet that's one of the things we have to teach our youth and which we've got to learn ourselves and keep constantly in front of our eyes, upon our hands, to bind it in our hearts, that nothing can tear us away from God, that we can maintain that worship of the one true God. Okay!

[Prayer] *Well, Father, we thank you for the greatness of your Word and the reality of your Word living in our hearts and lives that we can know you and know your Son Jesus Christ and be able to walk with you and fellowship with you and with your Son in this day and time. And Father, that nothing can sway us from the greatness of your Word and from the greatness of this worship of you. Because Father there's no greater life than we have as we keep your Word hidden in our hearts and lives. And we thank you tonight again for the Corps on our campuses and all over the country and around the world and for Dr. Wierwille and for the Board of Trustees, and all those who work together, Father, to see your Word move out over the*

world. Thank you Father in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen!

Good night and God bless you!

December 2, 1981

Proverbs
Proverbs 8:1-36
Rev. Cummins

Two weeks ago I shared on, I think it was, chapter 6 in Proverbs and we covered the subject of surety...that you're not to be a surety for your friend when it comes to loans and things like that. And then after that, Paul Cooper gave me this clipping, it's entitled "Consumer Checklist" and the subtitle is "Loan Trouble". Co-signing a loan may seem like a nice thing to do for a friend but you could wind up in big trouble if you do. A recent study by Purdue University indicates that almost half of the people who co-sign loans are asked to pay them. They also may be asked to pay late charges or fees and court and attorney fees. So check all papers to be signed and make sure you understand them, or you might be one of those 50% that are paying the surety for their friend...who used to be their friend. [Laughter].

All right, tonight, I'd like to go to Proverbs chapter 8. And here is wisdom personified. You know what personification is? Personification is when you take something inanimate or a quality or something of that nature and treat it like it is a person. And here you have wisdom treated as a person. As a matter of fact, wisdom is talking to us, in the first person. Wisdom is calling itself "I" or "me". It starts out:

Proverbs 8:1:

Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

Actually it doesn't get to the personification until you get down to verse 4, in the sense of it being in the first person. Although there still is personification because it's talking about wisdom as a she, as a person. Okay.

Proverbs 8:2a:

She standeth in the top of high places,...

Talking about wisdom, not talking about some goddess or a woman, but talking about wisdom.

Proverbs 8:2a:

She standeth in the top of high places, by the way...

(That's a pretty good place to stand.)

Proverbs 8:2b:

...in the places of the paths.

In the places of the paths is where the roads or paths meet. Where they come together; they would sometimes have an elevated platform there that they would speak from. That's the high places. In the synagogues, many times they would have an elevated platform or they generally did. This is later times. But in the synagogue, they would have a raised platform and the Greek word they used for it was a *bēma*. I'm not sure of the Aramaic or Hebrew word but they called it a *bēma*. And I'm sure you know what a *bēma* is from the Greek athletics and a few other things. But that *bēma* was the platform on which they read from the scroll. It was an elevated platform. And here is wisdom crying from this high place, elevated platform, which was a normal place where you would read the Word. And what is wisdom? Well, you could have wisdom of the world but that wouldn't be the Word. It wouldn't be true wisdom; it wouldn't right wisdom. But we're talking about wisdom of God. And that wisdom was read from the *bēma*, where the scrolls were read, where it was the Word of God that was taught. That's the kind of wisdom we're into here.

By the way, that *bēma* is any type of raised platform. How many of you know what a podium is? I'll bet you don't. How many of you think a podium is what you stand behind and put your Bible on when you lecture? That's what I thought. You don't know what a podium is. A podium is what you stand on. I am now seated on a chair, but the chair and this desk are on the podium. A podium is this raised platform on the floor. Now in other circles, it could be also some type of bench that goes around the room. But our normal use of the word is a podium that you stand on. Something that's on the floor, a raised platform, that's a podium. The thing that you stand behind that you put your Bible on when you teach is a lectern. Okay? So after this, don't anybody ever ask me. Do you want a desk or a podium to teach from? [Laughter] That is wrong terminology. You don't teach...you teach *on* the podium, but you mean lectern or desk, okay? All right, we've just corrected some practical error. Now, that's the high place, a podium, not a lectern. You may have a lectern on it though. And also, where else does wisdom cry?

Proverbs 8:3:

...at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

Because, remember I told you this before that a gate into the city generally in the Old Testament times...they had two gates. They had the outer gate and then the inner door on the gate. And that whole thing in between was called the gate. And there were benches in there, where the elders would sit. They also might have had a raised platform where they carried on their court room activities, where they judged certain matters. But that's where the elders of the gate, the wise men, sat to determine things. So it's wisdom coming from the elders of the gate who were supposed to be the wise men, as well as from the *bēma* where the Word is taught. That's where wisdom stands and cries out. Beautiful personification, isn't it?

Proverbs 8:4-9:

⁴ Unto you, O men, I call [who? wisdom personified]; and my voice *is* to the

sons of man.

⁵ O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

⁶ Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

⁷For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.

⁸ All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.

⁹ They *are* all [what?] {plain}...

Plain words. It's only when you get into world wisdom, secular wisdom that you run into intricate wisdom, wisdom that's so difficult that nobody can understand it, but true wisdom is plain...

Proverbs 8:9-11

⁹ ...to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

¹⁰ Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

¹¹ For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Beautiful introduction, wasn't it? See wisdom standing on the *bēma* or at the door, the gate to the city and yelling these things: Listen to me! It reminds me of Advanced Class 1979, that portrayal on "The Epistle Speaks". Then wisdom continues in verse 12.

Proverbs 8:12a:

I wisdom dwell with prudence,...

And prudence there is the word for shrewdness. Where wisdom, you know, is knowledge applied, your ability to utilize knowledge, to put it into practice. But shrewdness is being able to put it into practice to where it works in everyday situations, in the practical side of life. The functional side of life: in your business, your profession, in your school or whatever you're involved with in the practical side of life.

Proverbs 8:12b:

...and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

Now, the word for "witty inventions" means an inventiveness or inventive technique. It's one of the words I gave you in chapter 1 on the opening night. Perhaps the world would call it creativity, which is impossible...for the world. But they don't know what they're talking about anyway. It's inventiveness. To be able to come up with new ideas and inventions that are sagacious, that bless people. A true godly invention or idea will be a sagacious idea, or

invention. It will show sound judgment; it will show knowledge, perception and foresight. In other words, you're not just coming up with an idea, running it off and then throwing it out to the public. But, you're able to evaluate that idea or that invention and see what will be its affect in the future. You have foresight in what you come up with. Will it be detrimental to people? Will it hinder them? Will it make them frustrated, defeated? Or will it bless them? Will it encourage people? Will it help people? That's a true sagacious invention or witty invention. True inventions are progressive in the right sense of the word. Meaning that they move forward, they don't drag back. But they move forward in a positive way. What many times, people call progressive today, really isn't progressive, because it moves forward to frustrate people, to defeat people...to steal, kill and destroy. God's inventions always are progressive and they'll bless people, they'll help people. Modern inventions don't always do that. So if we're going to have true wisdom, if we've got true wisdom and prudence, then we're able to find out that knowledge that it takes to come up with an invention or an idea that will be sagacious, that will allow for the future, that will bless people.

Heard a report recently of some sheep farmers out West, who have had hundreds of their sheep year after year killed by coyotes. And with all their helicopters, guns, automatic weapons and everything else, they haven't been able to really help the situation. The coyotes still sneak in, grab their sheep and off they go. So somebody came up with another invention. And I thought this was a real neat invention. It's called a sheep dog. [Laughter.] They bought a couple of sheep dogs, and now they only lose a few sheep every year to the coyotes. The sheep dogs, which are God's invention, do a much better job than all the helicopters, everything else that they've had...jeeps...you know, to keep the coyotes off. And that really hit a bell, because I thought of this as far witty inventions or inventions that allow for the future that show foresight. Because true scientific inventions or ideas make use of God's resources in the best way He designed them to be used. True scientific inventions, or inventiveness, is using God's resources the best way He designed them. Not the plastic, chemical, detrimental inventions that you so often see on the market today. But something that utilizes what God has made in the best way possible. We talk about...have you ever heard this thing, that in the last thirty, forty years or something like that, there has been more increase in knowledge than in all the rest of the history of man? Well, that doesn't agree with the Word, because the Word says, there's nothing new under the sun.

And I just happen to think that some of those people in the Old Testament, were just as smart as people are today. And perhaps "more smarter" [laughter]. More smarter. Probably knew Aramaic better than I do. But, they utilized the resources that God made available in the best possible way, that were the most helpful. Caused them to be rulers; caused them to be abundant, financially and in every other category of life. Because they used God's things in the right way, rather than dreaming up something that was detrimental. And if our scientists, inventors, our idea people do the same thing today, we're going to come up with some great ideas and things that will really bless people in our day and time rather than things that tear

down, that give you indigestion. Like the ads. If you happen to see any. Like Anacin and Bufferin, these have been around for years; Excedrin and all those other things. You know, one out does the other because it works in half the time. But yet the same pills come from the same factory. So, how do you explain it? Why should one work better than the other? Well, they don't. And they're only temporary anyway. So...why not find some inventions that really work, ideas that work, and that bless people and help people. In Proverbs chapter 12, in verse 2 it says:

Proverbs 12:2:

A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

This is that same word that's translated witty inventions. Here it's used of evil inventions, wicked devices. A man of wicked inventions or evil inventions, he will condemn. See that? In Romans, chapter 1. Romans chapter 1, verse 30. Well...it's talking here about people that are against God, reprobate minds, filled with unrighteousness, wickedness, all these other things. And verse 30...part of this description of them is.

Romans 1:30:

Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of [what?] evil things...

Inventors of evil things. They're always...got ideas, inventions, but they're things designed to defeat people, make people more anxious, make people more frustrated, evil inventions. In Job chapter 21, verse 27. 21:27.

Job 21:27:

Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.

There...that's the word that's translated inventions again. The inventiveness. And these would be in the category of evil inventions because they're those that you wrongfully imagine against me. See, evil inventions. In Job...or in Psalms chapter 10; the tenth Psalm. Chapter 10 and in verse 2.

Psalm 10:2:

The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

In other words, they come up with their evil inventions, their devices, and their devices are going to take them. A man that lives by the sword dies by the what? Sword. Their own inventions. Chapter 37 of Psalms. Psalm 37, verse 7.

Psalm 37:7:

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

You just wait on God. Don't worry about the guy who's out there inventing things left and right, that's getting all the patents. That's...you know...and they're evil devices, evil inventions to begin with. Don't worry about him because God is going to take care of him. We read that in...in Proverbs 12. Okay? Just wait patiently on the LORD because God is going to give you good ideas. He's going to give you good inventions; things that will bless and uplift and help people and make you prosperous and abundant in your life. Back to Proverbs chapter 8. To find out knowledge of inventiveness. And these are good inventions. It takes wisdom along with shrewdness. And it also takes the number one ingredient to all wisdom in verse 13.

Proverbs 8:13:

The fear of the LORD...

The respect of God. If you don't have that respect of God, you'll never come up with any really great inventions or ideas that really help and bless people. Your inventions will always be short-lived, or if they're longer-lived like some of them have been, they're generally detrimental or the adversary grabs them up and utilizes them in the wrong way. It starts with the respect of God. And the respect of God is to hate what? Hate evil.

Proverbs 8:13:

...hate evil:...

Evil is what the other inventions produce, but the respect or fear of God is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way. See, pride and arrogance are the same thing. Evil and the evil way are essentially the same. It says the same thing twice to establish it.

Proverbs 8:13a:

The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, arrogance, and the evil way...

See that? And at the root of most inventions and ideas... And inventions and ideas would include songs that people write, performances, productions, the fine arts. It would include things in science, things in business, things in all facets of life. Everything they do is built on pride, if they don't have the respect of God. And it's done with evil intent in mind. How can I short change the other guy? How can I get more out of him? How can I make myself look good to the rest of the world? Stars in their eyes...want to go to the top of the world... And also, by the way:

Proverbs 8:13b:

...[the perverse or] froward mouth, I...hate.

Wisdom hates the perverse mouth. Because when they've got that pride and that evil intent, what's going to come out of their mouth? Perverse words. What does it take to come up with good ideas and inventions? Counsel is one.

Proverbs 8:14a:
Counsel is mine....

Counsel...remember counsel from chapter one again? Where you don't just act impulsively but you think a thing through. You go to others that have wisdom for counsel. You don't make war without counsel. You don't make war without counting up how many the enemy is and how many yours are. You don't build a building, unless you count up how many dollars you've got and see if you can finish it. Otherwise when you've laid the foundation, there's nothing left to build with. You go to...you have to have counsel if you're going to have an idea, an invention. Counsel.

Proverbs 8:14b:
...and sound wisdom:...

Which is stability. Sound wisdom is stability where your invention, your idea that's built on wisdom, is stable. It's not going to fall apart tomorrow. It's not something that's only good for today, but five years from now it's outlived its usefulness. It's got stability, it's a lasting invention or a lasting idea.

Proverbs 8:14c:
...[and] understanding...

And there is that word for discernment again, to where you're able to see, "Is it a good invention or bad invention?"...Separate truth from error. Will it help people or hinder them? Will it hurt people or bless them? You have to have that discernment in coming up with a good idea or invention.

Proverbs 8:14d:
...[and] I have strength.

And that again means; it's not going to fall apart tomorrow. You don't make a motor so that it wears out in two years after the guarantee runs out, so that they have to buy a new one. You don't make something that's going to fall apart so you get more business later on. You make something that's going to last.

I really saw this, working with Uncle Harry in the furniture business. Because we'd go into homes that people wanted to have their furniture reupholstered. And there was a couch. It looked about 25, 50 years old. The cover was worn through, the padding falling out of it, what little padding was in it. Looked like a piece of junk. Sometimes the wood had come apart inside, so the frame was broken. Asked 'em, "How old is it?" "A year, two years." And then I'd go to other houses...and there was a piece of furniture; the cover was still on it, wasn't a wear in it...I mean, you know, a hole in it. But it would be perfectly covered over. The only thing, it was old, it was dirty maybe and it...it had worn; you could see that it had worn a little bit. Ask them how old was it? Sometimes 20, 25 years old. Where did you get that? H.E. Wierwille Upholstering, 25 years ago. Because he put quality in his work. He put pride in his work to the end that it blessed the people. He always said half of his pay was customer satisfaction. So it's got to be lasting. It's got to have strength to it, whatever you come up with, your ideas, your inventions. That all enters into wisdom that you utilize when you're coming up with these things. Then, it goes on to another category.

Proverbs 8:15 and 16:

¹⁵ By me [wisdom] kings reign, and princes decree justice.

¹⁶ By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

So, not only is it by wisdom that you have great ideas and inventions that really help and bless people and really last and are stable. But also by wisdom is how people are able to rule, how people are able to reign over people and to make the proper ethical judgments that need to be made. As a Twig leader...coordinator, as a Branch coordinator, Limb coordinator, Region coordinator, whatever coordinator you are...as head of a house, as head of a Way home, as head of a business, or a foreman or a supervisor in your business, or as a manager. Whatever position you are in of rulership, by wisdom you're able to rule. Then it goes on, verse 17.

Proverbs 8:17 and 18a:

¹⁷ I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

¹⁸ Riches and honour *are* with me...

Riches and honour are with wisdom.

Proverbs 8:18b:

...*yea*, durable riches and righteousness.

What kind of riches? {Durable.} That means riches that last, not riches that come in today and they're gone tomorrow. You know how the world operates. Where...you know...like the report on those millionaires that got together back in the 1920's; 25 years later, they were all dead or they had committed suicide or were on skid row, alcoholics, that kind of thing. These are durable riches, like Joseph brought to Egypt, like the children of Israel had when they

walked on the Word. Durable riches and righteousness, like Abraham had.

Proverbs 8:19:

My fruit *is* better than gold yea, than fine gold;...

So, it's not just talking money but talking about all kinds of riches, having that rich life. I thought about this when Vince was sharing last night. Those people in some of those countries live in huts. They don't have television, they don't have refrigerators...many of them. They don't have electric stoves, they don't have running water maybe. They don't have a lot of the modern convenience, the things that we think are essential to stay warm and build a fire. But yet they're rich, in the Word, when they sit through the class. They're rich.

Proverbs 8:19b-21:

¹⁹ ...my revenue than choice silver.

²⁰ I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

²¹ That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

Who does the filling? Wisdom. You don't fill your own treasures, wisdom does. Treasures of all kinds: mentally, spiritually, physically, in every category of life. God supplies your needs in abundance. So three categories in which wisdom is vital. Number one is in the category of inventions, ideas. Another is in the category of being able to help or rule over people. And the third is in the substance, the reward, the result of it, the treasures that follow wisdom. Then you ask yourself, "Well where did wisdom come from?" And of course, if you ask this in any classroom today...or most classrooms, they would simply tell you that wisdom has evolved over the centuries. You know, the apes had one type of wisdom. And then, the primitive man had another type of wisdom. And today of course, there's more wisdom than has ever been. Like 30 times...you know, in the last 30-40 years a greater increase in wisdom and knowledge than there has been at any time in history. Baloney! Two theories. I just read Ken Petty's paper, his revised edition of that paper on the *Origins of Modern Spiritualism*. And it shows in the mid-1800's, how spiritualism had its beginning to Modern Spiritualism, along with Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, and the Darwin's *Origin of Species* and the changes in Wagner and the music field. Then changes in theology that were a result of that and another area is psychology...ought to be included in that. Because that's when some of the psychologists start...you know, forerunners of modern psychology started really developing things. And how everything from that time on was built on materialism. On the idea that knowledge is evolving, that we're constantly continuing to develop, which opens the doors for...(what do you call it? The life after death thing? Where you don't...you know, where you die and then you live in somebody else later on.) yeah, reincarnation...to where you're constantly developing, getting smarter. The other way, is wisdom was there with God. And that's what this says. And I will still go the Word's way.

Proverbs 8:22a:

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way,...

Didn't evolve. It was there with God. See it? So, who do you think was smarter? Well, God certainly was, and I'll bet the people of the Old Testament were smarter than a lot of people are today. I would just bet. Well anyway, the word "possessed" is not right. God doesn't possess. The devil possesses. The word should be "acquired". The LORD "acquired me". Now remember this was personification. God was wis...you know, He had the wisdom. But it's making it like, you know, a person. God bought me; God acquired me. God went out to the store and said, "I'll take a pound of wisdom." See, it's personi...making it a living story, making wisdom a person. "The LORD acquired me in the beginning of His way." When? In the beginning.

Proverbs 8:22b:

...before [his what?] his works of old.

In other words before God could create the heavens and the earth, He had to have one ingredient. And what was that? That's why He had to acquire wisdom first. So God first acquired wisdom, then He could do all of His works...create the heavens and the earth. Beautiful personification of wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23:

I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Wherever the earth came into being, boy, I was there. Because I was with God way back before that.

Proverbs 8:24:

When there were no depths, I was brought forth [or begotten]; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

The word "depths", you see that? That word is used three times in here. Right there "when there were no depths, I was brought forth..." It's also used down in verse 27, "when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:" And also in 28, "when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:" The word "deep" there. And this word means turbulence, like a circular motion. The verb form means to toss, or bounce around. You see, where it talks about the deep, it doesn't...the reas...where this came from, is because the ocean is deep, and they always think of the ocean...deep, you know. But that's not what the word means, or originally meant. It meant a turbulence, or tossing and turning. Like the ocean is constantly going around in currents. See, tossing around. Keep your finger here and look at Genesis 15, I'll show you something. You can

look up every place the word is used, but this, I thought, would sort of show it to you. In verse...chapter 15 of Genesis, verse 12.

Genesis 15:12 and 13:

¹² And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep [see that? A deep sleep] fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

¹³ And he [God] said unto [Abraham], Know of a surety...

And so on. Now, you see, first of all if you looked at it as a dream, you do not dream when you're in your deep sleep. Am I right? Your dreams are in your shallow sleep. Isn't there something like three stages to sleep? And the deepest sleep you don't dream. It's when you're in the shallowest stages that you have your dreams. But I doubt if that's what it's talking about here. It would...you know, it would still fit as far as a turbulent sleep, because he was in the shallow stages, not in the deep stage of sleep. See that? But I think God could work with Abraham, while he's awake. Because Abraham was a believer, He didn't have to work with him in his sleep. And if he had a turbulent sleep, to where he couldn't sleep, and so in between the times he was sleeping, God could talk to him. Sometimes when things are going on in the world and God puts it on your heart to pray and lift these things, you can't get much sleep. You're sort of restless, turbulent...see, in your sleep. So you pray. Back to Proverbs 8. That's this word tur...“deep”. It's not deep, that turbulence. And you see, there are more things turbulent...more things that are turbulent than the ocean. The galaxy goes in a circular motion. And I think that's interesting in light of this talking about the creation, in the beginning...that there were no depths before there was any turbulence, movement of anything. I was brought forth. See that? And then, you get down to verse 27.

Proverbs 8:27 and 28:

²⁷ ...he set a compass [on] the face of [this turbulence]:

²⁸ [And] he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of [this turbulence, the source].

Fountains represent the source. Like a fountain, we think of a source of water. See, the source. Back to 24.

Proverbs 8:24-26:

²⁴ When *there* [was] no [turbulence, no movements], I was brought forth; when *there were* no [sources] abounding with water.

²⁵ Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I [begotten or] brought forth:

²⁶ While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

The head or beginning of dust, which is...we know it as atoms. The smallest particles of dust of the world. Before that even existed, wisdom was around.

Proverbs 8:27:

When he prepared the heavens [where was I?],...there: when he set a compass upon the face of the [turbulence]:

And the word “compass” is circle, like an orbit. “...when he set a circle or orbit upon the face of the turbulence.” Now get a picture of that galaxy in your mind. And you see within that galaxy are solar systems. With each of the planets including the earth circling...circling, the sun, one of the stars in that galaxy. And everything is circling in that galaxy. The sun itself is circling around the galaxy. It takes something like 25,000 years, something like that for the sun to make a complete orbit through the zodiac. That’s that word “compass”. This word is only used two other times. Look at Isaiah 40. Look at verse 12.

Isaiah 40:12a:

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven...

You know, it sounds just like Genesis what we’ve read in Proverbs and what we’re going to read here, where He set the firmament of heaven between the waters to separate the...that turbulence.

Isaiah 40:12b:

...measured the waters in the hollow..., and meted out heaven [measured hand...heaven] with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth...

There is the dust of the earth, the atoms, again.

Isaiah 40:12c-13:

¹² ...in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

¹³ Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* his counsellor hath taught him?

Of course we have the mind of Christ. This is in that context in the New Testament.

Isaiah 40:14-22:

¹⁴ With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?

¹⁵ Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of [drop in the bucket], and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

¹⁶ And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

¹⁷ All nations before him *are* as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

¹⁸ To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

¹⁹ The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

²⁰ He that *is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved.

²¹ Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²² *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth....

There's the Word. That's God. The one that sits on the circle, the orbit of the earth.

Isaiah 40:22b

...and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain [to separate the waters], and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

That's one of the two other uses of the word "circle", or "compass", "orbit". The other one is in Job chapter 22. Verse 14...well look at 13.

Job 22:13 and 14:

¹³ And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

¹⁴ Thick clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

The circle, the orbit of heaven. That's how great our God is, how big. Both those places it's used of the circuit of heaven or the circuit of the earth, the orbit. So, you go back to Proverbs 8 and it fits just as beautifully there.

Proverbs 8:27:

...when he set a [circle, an orbit] upon the face of the [turbulence]:

A place for the earth to orbit, a place for the other planets to orbit, a place for the sun to orbit, a place for everything to orbit, a circle: a circle for the zodiac.

You remember Psalm 19? You remember that one, it talks about the stars.

Psalms 19:1:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

You get down to verse 6.

Psalms 19:6:

His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends it:...

Now that's a different word, but isn't that something? The circuit, talking about the stars in the heavens, which are for signs and seasons. That's this circle upon the face of the depth that God set, and everything orbits around it. Now verse 28, Proverbs 8.

Proverbs 8:28a:

When he established the clouds...

The word "clouds" is "sky". It's not the normal word for clouds. It means "sky".

Proverbs 8:28b-29:

²⁸ ...he established the [sky] above [that was the firmament again]: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep [of the turbulence]:

²⁹ When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

When he did all these things, then I was where? By him, I was by him. I (wisdom was with God) when he did all these things, because he acquired me before that.

Proverbs 8:30:

...I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*....

Now this phrase "*as* one brought up *with him*". You can clearly see that three of those words are in italics. This is one of the difficult verses in Proverbs. "One brought up" is one Hebrew word amon spelled A-M-O-N, amon. And the different expositors and translators have been confused, and they've debated it over exactly what this word does mean here in this context. But the word is used three other times, in the New Testament. Jeremiah 46 has one of them; 46:25.

Jeremiah 46:25:

The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh,

and *all* them that trust in him:

The word “multitude”, see it? I will punish the multitude of No. Multitude is *amon*, A-M-O-N. “No” is the name of a city in Egypt. Today it’s called Thebes, T-H-E-B-E-S; Thebes. *Amon*...that was the Hebrew spelling. The Egyptians spelled it *amun* and most people in English today spell it “ammon”. Amon was a god. The god of the Thebes; the god of No...of the city No, or city Thebes as it was called. He says, “I will punish Amon of No”. Amon was the supreme deity in that city. As a matter of fact, he was the supreme deity of Egypt. He was worshiped as a ram or as a man’s body with a ram’s head or sometimes he had a man’s body with ram’s horns on top of the head. It’s interesting that this...the feast that’s celebrated this god, Amon of No, or Amon of Thebes...the feast took place during the sign of Aries, the zodiacal sign of Aries, A-R-I-E-S. And Aries is the ram. It’s the first sign that appears after the vernal equinox in the spring. So what month would it be on the Hebrew calendar? First month after the vernal equinox in spring, Nisan. Right. As a matter of fact, the feast started on the tenth of Nisan. And if this was the custom during the time that Moses was in Egypt it meant that in the middle of their feast (and by the way this feast was celebrated with a lot of orgies and stuff, you know...typical pagan feast)...in the middle of their feast on the fourteen of Nisan, would have been when all their first born died; quite a highlight to their feast. Many think that Amon is a deification of Ham. He’s also called Amen-Re, spelled R-E, which means the sun...’cause he was...sun (S-U-N). He was worshiped as the sun, and he was the chief or supreme deity in Egypt. Matter of fact, not only in Egypt, but Ethiopia, and later by the Greeks and the Romans. Matter of fact, the Greeks called him Zeus-Amon, or Amon-Zeus, and the Romans Jupiter-Amon, or Amon-Jupiter. But he was Amen-Re to the Egyptians; it meant Amon the sun (S-U-N). That’s the word that’s used here.

Jeremiah 46:25:

...Behold, I will punish the [Amon] of No [of the city of No], and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him:

Then you get to chapter 52 and verse 15 of the same book. Jeremiah 52:15. This is the fall of Jerusalem and Jerusalem had gone to Egypt for help. When they were screwing around with other gods, so the true God couldn’t help them anymore, they had gone to Egypt for help. And this is the final conflict here in chapter 52, verse 15.

Jeremiah 52:15:

Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city [Jerusalem, talking about], and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the [Amon].

It's almost sarcastic. The rest of those dirty Amons. They had turned to Egypt for help, to a pagan god, rather than trusting in God Almighty, *El Shaddai*, to deliver them. And the third place this word is used, or third of the other places. There is four altogether, one was Proverbs. I've already given you two from Jeremiah, and now the fourth one is Nahum. Nahum, right before Habakkuk. Nahum 3, verse 8. There you have it again.

Nahum 3:8:

Art thou better than populous No,...

And it's "No Amon"; or Amon of the city of No, No Amon. Those are the three places beside the one in Proverbs 8. Now we go back to Proverbs 8. And it's certain that you could not say that this was Amon, that I was by him as Amon, because Amon was a pagan god. But this word *amon* (A-M-O-N) is related to another Hebrew word *aman*, spelled A-M-A-N. Now those of you that are in Aramaic will appreciate this, because Hebrew is a lot like Aramaic. It is spelled exactly the same, except it has different vowel pointing. Okay. You in Aramaic class will appreciate that right now. Different vowel pointing, otherwise it's the same word. But it's...you still have to refer to it as a related word. And this related word *a-m-a-n* means "to stay or support, to make steadfast or constant". Like when a nurse or someone brings up a child, he's making that child constant by supporting that child, by helping the child to stay, to remain steadfast in the Word. This word *aman* (A-M-A-N) is used of stability, faithfulness, dependability; those are all things that indicate steadfastness or constance. An English word we get from it is "amen". Amen means surely, absolutely (see?), verily, truly. This word is also used of the steady hands of a workman. You can't have shaky hands and be a good workman. But it takes steady hands. And we are workman of what? The Word. Workmen of the Word. And we're to have steady, constant hands in our working of the Word. So you have to figure the meaning of the word *a-m-o-n* from this related word *a-m-a-n* and how it fits in this context here in Hebrews...or Proverbs.

Now, Amen-Re, the god was the sun. And the sun was to the...a constant or a stay in the solar system. It's the star about which our planets orbit. It went through a constant cycle in the zodiac. It was a constant. And that's why it must have been used of this Egyptian god because he was the supreme deity to the Egyptians. He was their constant. And as he was their constant, so wisdom was God's stay, His constant, His steadfastness. What is the wisdom of God? Everchanging? Relative? Evolving constantly? As somebody wrote a book called *God's Being is in Becoming* (theological you know what...). NO! God is steadfast. His wisdom is unchanging, unmovable. There are such things as absolutes with God, His wisdom.

Proverbs 8:30:

Then I was by him,...

When God made the heavens and the earth, I was by Him as His constant, His stay, His

stability. Lamsa translates it from the Aramaic: “I together with him was establishing them [meaning the heavens and the earth]...” What makes the sun, the earth, and everything else, so constant in its orbit? What makes everything in the universe so perfect? What makes the human body so wonderful? What makes all the things work together in nature so beautifully? THE WISDOM OF GOD. Isn’t that beautiful! Not Amen-Re, but the wisdom of God. That’s stability. It’s absolute. There’s no question about it. There’s no evolving of wisdom. There’s no constant growth in wisdom. There’s no fluctuation of wisdom. It’s absolute. It’s the truth. It’s God’s wisdom. I was by Him as His constant or establishing the heavens and the earth with Him, to make them constant. As somebody put it, I was His court expert, the one that God would turn to and say, “Well, how would you like to make the earth?” It was wisdom. God’s wisdom, that established it. See. Somebody suggested that it was the court jester because of the next phrase.

Proverbs 8:30b:

...and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

That’s not it. But it was the greatness of the wisdom. Like you get thrilled when you hear the wisdom of God. Don’t you? I do. I always get thrilled when I hear the Word taught and when I get into the Word and read it, and study it. It just...it, it’s my delight. I rejoice. I get all happy. You know. Once in a while you slug your desk or you do something ‘cause you just get so excited about it. “I, wisdom, was with Him as His constant in establishing the earth and all the other things, I was daily His delight, His joy, rejoicing always before Him.” We just had a wonderful time making the heavens and the earth, and the mountains and the hills and the sea and putting the floodgates up so that things couldn’t pass between, to keep the turbulence where it belonged. We just had a great time doing it.

Proverbs 8:31:

Rejoicing in the habital part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

Isn’t that neat? They should have added this to “The Epistles Speak”, but it wouldn’t have been the epistles. Maybe, we’ll have to do another one on “I Wisdom Speak”.

Proverbs 8:32-36:

³² Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

³³ Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

³⁴ Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates [where the wise men sit], waiting at the posts of my doors.

³⁵ For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

³⁶ But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul [himself]: all they that

hate me love [what?] death.

Something? So, I'd rather have the absolute wisdom of God's Word, than all the greater knowledge of the last 30 years, than all the other knowledge that's been known, which is a bunch of baloney! Because there's nothing new under the sun. And it's still God's Word that's absolute. That's the truth that will stand, that puts the earth in orbit around the sun, besides all the other planets, to put the sun in orbit throughout the zodiac, you know, throughout the galaxy. And all this stuff is working together. And suppose...like some of the astronomers have theorized that the sun in several billions, or trillions of years will burn out. Don't you think God can make another one? [Laughter.] I think so. See, all this materialism, all this sense-knowledge wisdom and so on, is just designed to get people off the Word. And once you're off the Word, then Satan grabs you and leads you right into spiritualism. And when he gets done with you in spiritualism, he just cuts your head off. Spiritualism, Communism, Darwinism, all those things work against the individual. They work against the individual person. When it's done, who are you? You're just a number on a computer. But when God gets done with you, you're a person. You're at the center. You're God's son, His person. You've got the wisdom of God, enough of it to keep the fires going in your life and thousands of other people about you. Looks to me, since Vince got back that maybe we ought to start burning a few more fires with the Word more efficaciously right? I think so too because we got so much to talk about: THE WISDOM OF GOD, WHICH IS ABSOLUTE, UNCHANGING, NO QUESTION ABOUT IT. And that's what you use to come up with some great ideas, some great inventions that will really bless and help people. And that's what you use when you're a leader, as a Twig leader...coordinator, Branch coordinator, whatever your position is to rule and to make those ethical judgments you need to make. And that's what brings to you that...those treasures in life that you really need to live the more abundant life. Okay?

[Prayer] *Well, Father, we sure thank you and love you for your great Word and the wisdom of your Word that we can put on in our minds constantly and walk forth with great love and with great joy, because Father we see how wisdom was the joy and rejoicing of your heart and it is to us. And what a privilege it is to know your Word and to be able to share it with other people. Thank you in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ. Amen! God bless you!*

January 6, 1982

Proverbs
Proverbs 6
Rev. Cummins

Okay, we're going to Proverbs now, chapter 1. I brought along a book tonight by Robert Maynard Hutchins, called higher... *The Higher Learning in America*. Robert Hutchins is one of the well-known philosophers of education. He was the President of the University of Chicago for a while and if I've got my stories right, I believe this is the one that used to take a walk every morning, or sometime during the day (I believe it was every morning), at the University of Chicago across the campus, and Dr. Wierwille would many times go out and join him on the walk. If this is the one I'm thinking...you know, I sometimes get my stories mixed around but I think this is the one. But anyway, he's a well-known philosopher of education. And he's responsible for "The Great Books". Some of you are acquainted with those. We have a set in our library. They're very common. They deal with a lot of the old writings, the philosophers, the classics. Similar to the Harvard Classics. But in here he talks about the problems of higher education. He says, "If then the problem is to clarify the higher learning, let us examine the causes of its confusion. The first of them is very vulgar. It is the love of money. It is sad but true that when an institution determines to do something in order to get money it must lose its soul and frequently does not get the money. Money comes to education in three ways: from students, donors and from legislature. To frame a policy in order to appeal to anyone of the three is fatal and as I have suggested often futile as well".

Now, it's unusual to hear an educator speak out like that as far as education because most of them are so concerned especially with the legislative acts that have been passed in order to get the proper amount of money and funding from the Federal Government. So, you've got to salaam to their desires and you lose your soul as far as an educational institution. And he points out some other problems, causes of the confusion in education...but the love of money, (it sounds just like the Word doesn't it?) is one of the basic causes. Then, he starts to discuss what education is and what it's all about. And he refers back to some of the classics. Because like I said, he's one of them that helped develop the...(What do you call it?) "The Great Books" and so he puts a lot of emphasis on what the classics had to say. "The ancients distinguish five intellectual virtues. The three specula...speculative virtues which were intuitive knowledge and scientific knowledge." That's the first two. Intuitive knowledge is the habit of induction whereas scientific knowledge is the habit of demonstration. Almost like a mental and practical side of it. "Then you put the two of them together, and you have the third virtue which is philosophical wisdom." Now that philosophical wisdom is the scientific knowledge combined with intuitive reason and that gives you the highest type of virtue there is, which is philosophical wisdom. And it treats, or deals with first principles and first causes. In other words, what caused this to be? The things that are now. Why is this plant here? Why is this microphone here? What's behind our reasoning? The first principles and first causes.

Now the reason I like this, is because it means that you've got to have something upon which you base what you believe and in which you draw conclusions, as far as what goes on in the natural, as well as the mental, physical, spiritual realms. Like the Word. The Word is built on first principles and first causes. God is the first principle; He's the first cause. Remember in the Book of Proverbs, we read, what's the beginning of wisdom? The fear of the LORD; the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. That's the first principle. See it? And so this philosophical wisdom he talks about is the highest. It deals with first principles and first causes. Now there's three of them: scientific knowledge, intuitive knowledge and combined, giving you philosophical wisdom. Then to these you add two more: one is art and the other is prudence. Art is the capacity to make, according to a true course of reasoning. Art is the ability to make things, according to the true course of reasoning. And prudence or good sense, that's right reason with respect to action. Just using good sense in what you do. Prudence. Sound similar to Proverbs? Some of the things we've worked on? I think it does. Alright!

Our errone...“Our erroneous notion of progress has thrown the classics and the liberal arts out of the curriculum, over-emphasized the empirical sciences and made education the servant of any contemporary movements in society no matter how superficial. Today education is not built upon the first principles, first causes. Today, education is built upon anything anybody wants to put in the curriculum.” In other words, if you want to put a course in the curriculum on “How Fleas Have Intercourse”, why, you could do that. That's the way our curriculum is built today. Whatever fleeting idea anybody has on fleas. Here is another neat line he has in here. “Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence, education should be everywhere the same”. He's talking about higher education now. “...should be...the same, if truth is the same.” Now of course you know you've got some knowledge that is made up of facts that are erroneous. But the knowledge he's talking about is knowledge that is built on first principles, first causes, truth. See? Let me go to another one.

“The modern university may be compared with an encyclopedia.” The reason for that, is the encyclopedia has everything in it. And that's the way modern universities are set up. They have everything in them. And the only unifying factor they have, like the encyclopedia...the only unifying factor it has is that it is alphabetically arranged. Right? You look up one word in the front, it has no connection with the word in the back, or in the middle. Just the alphabetical arrangement. So in the university, you have the same thing. Departments running from Art to Zoology. “But neither the students nor the professors know what is the relation of one departmental truth to another. Or what the relation of departmental truths to those in the domain of another department may be. The medieval university...” Now, we're going back to medieval ages. “...had a principle of unity. It was theology. The medieval theologians had worked out an elaborate statement in due proportion and emphasis of the truths relating to man and God, man and man and man and nature.” In other words, a relationship between God and man, between man and other men, between man and nature. “As it was an orderly progression from truth to

truth built on first principles and first causes. First principles order all truths in the speculative order. So last ends order all means and actions in the practical order.”

Listen to this, “God is the first truth and the last end. The medieval university was rationally ordered and for its time was practically ordered too. But these are other times and we are trying to discover a rational and practical order for the higher learning of today. Could you build it on theology? Most universities, no. Because theology is banned by law from some universities. It might as well be from the rest. Theology is based on revealed truth and on articles of faith. We are a faithless generation and take no stock in revelation. Theology implies orthodoxy, and an orthodox church. We have neither....To look to theology to unify the modern university is futile and vain. If we omit from theology, faith and revelation, we are substantially in the position of the Greeks who are thus, oddly enough, closer to us than are the middle ages. Now Greek thought was unified, as opposed to modern thought. It was unified by the study of first principles. Plato had a dialectic which was a method of exploring first principles. Aristotle made the knowledge of them into the science of metaphysics. Among the Greeks then, metaphysics rather than theology, is the ordering and proportioning discipline. It is the light of metaphysics that the social sciences, dealing with man and man and the physical sciences dealing with man and nature take shape and illuminate one another. In metaphysics we are seeking the causes of the things that are.”

Now, you see the relationship between metaphysics and the Word, as opposed to the way modern universities are set up. “Metaphysics deals with first principles, first causes. Seeking the causes of things that are. You’ve got to study the relationship between man and man. Those are called the social sciences. Then you also study the relationship between man and nature. Those are called the natural sciences.” You see the difference? “And by studying those two, then you come up with the philosophical wisdom that deals with first principles, first causes.” You see a problem with evolution? Evolution deals with natural science alone and really never gets back to...it’s incapable of getting back to first principles, first causes...so called evolution; it’s not even natural science. “In the highest science, the first science and as first, universal, it considers being as being, both what is and the attributes which belong to it as being.” Okay. What’s the aim of education? Action. Well he says, “The aim of higher education is wisdom.” Now, that’s not bad. Because what is wisdom? Knowledge applied. Is that action? It certainly is. But wisdom is...he also says, at least to the Greeks, it dealt with the knowledge of principles and causes. And that’s not too far removed from the wisdom of the Word, because God is still the first cause. God is the first principle: the fear of the LORD. Right? See, there’s a similarity. And yet he’s trying to deal with it in terms of metaphysics rather than with the Word, which is wrong, but still the principle’s there. “Therefore metaphysics is the highest wisdom. So much is this the case that Aristotle feels called on to refer to the suggestion that this knowledge...”, the knowledge of metaphysics, the highest wisdom, the knowledge of first principles, first causes, “...must be confined to God.” Aristotle said that! Quote from Aristotle, “But the divine power cannot be jealous nor should any other science be thought more

honorable than one of this sort. For the most divine science is also most honorable and this science alone must be in two ways most divine. For the science which it would be most meet for God to have is a divine science. And so is any science that deals with divine objects. And this science alone has both of these qualities, for number one, God is thought to be among the causes of all things and to be a first principle.” I’m quoting from Aristotle okay. “And number two, such a science either God alone can have or God above all others...”...could have this science or wisdom. Metaphysics then...that’s the end of Aristotle.

This is back to Hutchins: “Metaphysics then...” is the highest science ordered...“...as the highest science ordered the thought of the Greek world as theology ordered that of the middle ages. One or the other...”, either metaphysics or theology, “...must be called upon to order the thought of modern times. If we cannot appeal to theology, we must turn to metaphysics. Without theology or metaphysics a unified university cannot exist.” And that’s why today in every university, you’ve got this department doing his thing, that college doing his, another one over here doing something else and nobody...there’s no unity in the university. “Both are almost totally missing today. Theology and metaphysics. And with them has gone any intelligible basis for the study of man in his relations with other men. The truths of ethics, for example, are now merely common sense teachings about how to get along in the world.” Do you remember the difference between common sense and good sense? Common sense is that which is common to a particular culture but it may not necessarily be good sense. Not based on the Word. Okay? It’s merely common sense teaching about how to get along in the world. That’s morality today, or ethics. Listen to this one. “Morals degenerate into the mores unless they have a higher meaning imparted to them by theology or metaphysics.” Now mores are the...whatever fits into that particular culture. If it helps that culture, if it feels good for that society, then that’s moral to them. But it’s not moral built on first principles and first causes, like the Word. That’s why today homosexuality is being accepted in cultures, in our country, and other countries. Homosexuality is not built on first principles or first causes. But it’s the mores, got it? It’s that which seems to be accepted among the culture. After all 10% of the population is homo, so therefore we have to accept it as a part of life. Now that’s not moral, that’s mores. That’s accepting what is agreed upon by the group no matter what the first principles or what the first causes are.

A republic is built on first principles and first causes. A democracy is just the majority, whatever they agree upon. But a republic has to be built on first principles, first causes. See the difference in government? Our government was set up as a republic, built upon first principles. The bill of rights, inalienable rights, things of that nature. But when you get away from first principles, either through metaphysics or through theology, which to us means the study of the Word...if you get away from that, then you don’t go by what’s moral anymore. Your ethics degenerate, and you come up with what is just accepted by the group, what fits into that particular society. Now you see the problem with today as compared to the cultures that had first principles as their basis, whether or not they knew the Word. A similar degeneration overtakes

natural science. I mentioned evolution: no real first principles, no first causes there, just a matter of...well, here's this, here's that, we just study science, we don't worry about the causes or things behind it. And every science treats its...its...its own thing. "If the world has no meaning, if it presents itself to us as a mass of equivalent data, then the pursuit of truth for its own sake consists of the indiscriminate accumulation of data. We cannot understand it. There is no need to try. Whether we can understand the world or not, however, we can seek to master it." That's the opinion of today. That's a useful and popular thing to do. "But its educational and scientific consequences are not truth. Its vocationalism, empiricism, and disorder. And its moral consequences are an immoral morality." Because it's not built on first principles, first causes. It's built on what seems appropriate at the time.

So we study geology, we study astronomy, we study other natural sciences, we don't try to fit the whole thing together. There is no such things as first causes, first principles. There's no absolutes, there's no truth. It's just whatever works out today. That's why universities today are more concerned with helping an individual to get a job in life than they are with true higher education, which has to deal with the intellect, the development of the mind, to understand what's behind the things that go on. The first principles, first causes. And either you build it upon the Word, or you build it upon metaphysics or something else. And of course if you believe there is a God and God did leave us His Word, then we've got the highest wisdom there is, that he mentioned in here, to build something on. He quotes a contemporary who said: "In order to reign as a demiurge over nature, man in his intelligence and in his life must in reality subordinate himself to inhuman and technical necessities and to the energies of the natural world which, originally placed in operation by him, are now invading the human mind. Whatever the acquired gains may be, from other points of view, the conditions of life of the human being are thus becoming more and more inhuman. Behold man, the center of the world, a world all the parts of which are inhuman and press against him in such a morality, not man nor human life as such, but agents, exterior to man, material forces, instruments of human life are subjected to reason. This morality does not liberate man, but on the contrary weakens him, dispossesses him and makes him slave to all the atoms of the universe and above all to his own misery and egoism. What remains of man? A consumer crowned with science. That is the last gift, the twentieth century gift of Cartesian reformation." Cartesian reformation.

So, either you build it on just whatever is appropriate in the society and just let everything work out itself, or you build it on first principles. That's where I think Proverbs started us out this last fall in chapter 1.

Proverbs 1:1 and 2a:

¹The proverbs of Solomon the son a David, king of Israel;

²To know [what?] wisdom and [the corresponding moral discipline];...

Remember that? We worked this section out. To know wisdom and moral discipline. To have the wisdom which is the...would deal with the principle of first causes, first principles. God is first. God is before everything. Without God, you wouldn't have anything. And the accompanying moral discipline that goes along with it. Without first principles of the Word, what type of a moral society would you have? An immoral society.

Proverbs 1:2b:

...to perceive [or discern; the sayings of discernment];

Only Hutchins of course would have put a lot upon the Classics: Plato, Aristotle and other writers, the Classics. We go to the Word, God's Word, as stating the first principles over all. Now, we study these other things too, but the Word is still our only primary center of reference for truth outside of the individual seeking, Foundational Class. "To discern the sayings of discernment from the Word."

Proverbs 1:3a:

To receive the [moral discipline] of [good sense, prudence],...

Remember one of the five things he mentioned in here was good sense, prudence.

Proverbs 1:3b:

...[righteousness],...[justice], and equity;

Where you're able to make righteous decisions. Where you're able to do justice and it's equal and fair. Equality, equity.

Proverbs 1:4a:

To give subtilty...

Which was art or craft, or shrewdness (I believe was one of the words I gave you, wasn't it? Shrewdness?) but it also ties into the art that he mentioned, which is the ability or capacity to make. Here, it's the ability, it gives him that shrewdness to do things. It gives him that art that he needs to make.

Proverbs 1:4b:

...to the simple [the one who still needs the wisdom], to the young man knowledge and discretion.

Or perception and an inventiveness. Where he doesn't just...have a lot of smarts up here, but he's able to utilize it, to be inventive.

Proverbs 1:5:

A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

In order to understand a proverb and its meaning, its significance. To do that you've got to build it upon first principles, the Word. Then he starts out: the words of the wise; the words of the wise.

Proverbs 1:6:

...[wisdom] the words of the wise, and their dark sayings [their hidden meanings].

What's the first principle? The fear of what? the LORD is the first principle, the beginning of knowledge. Hutchins would build it upon the Classics; we would build it upon God's Word. In the medieval ages, they built it upon theology rather than the Word itself. It was close, you know, but miles apart. It's a figure, what do you call it? *Oxymoron*.

Proverbs 1:7:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge [the first principle]: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

So, what we're building, not only in the study of the Book of Proverbs, but in the study of the rest of God's Word, we're building upon first principles, first causes because God is first of all, He's behind it all and then it's His Word that you build everything else in life on. And if you don't have that, then your morals are simply mores, there's no unifying factor in what you do. That's why they talk about unity, ecumenical work today, unification of the churches. But how can they unless it's built on first causes, first principles, namely the Word. You can't even have unity in a university, let alone unity among all the churches throughout the world. That's right. In the first place most of the churches aren't even built on Biblical based theology, let alone the Bible itself. You understand that? In other words with all the...you know, there is such a variety among [quote, unquote] "Christianity" not to speak of all the other "isms", that there's nothing that could unify them. And most people today follow the thinking that...the paper...oh shoot...the paper that deals with *The Origin of Modern Spiritualism*...Ken Petty, yes right. Ken Petty wrote it...shows how all of this started basically in 1848. That was the kick off. There were things preceding and a lot of things following with Marxism, Darwinism, you know, so many other things...with the...what's her name with the spiritualist movement? The sisters, the Foxes, right. And then so many other things that developed out of that (psychology, parapsychology) that today everything is not built on first principles, first causes but it's on this other system that Hutchins writes against. Unless we come back to the Word, there's no answers for today's problem. You're going to have homosexuality, you're going to have all these other things being accepted as moral. But when you build it upon first principles, and especially the

Word, you get rid of immoral morality. That's right. You clean up the society. Here are the words of the wise. And the reason they're wise words is not because some men thought them up because he looked at a fossil and said, "Ah ha! This is where the universe started or where man came from this fish fossil," but he got it from God, like Luke, *another*, from above. It's God-breathed, holy men of God spoke as they were moved. God put his spirit upon man and those men spoke and wrote God's Word. And so, we have these words of the wise. Men like Joseph who were filled with the spirit and that made them so smart, so wise. "There's none so wise and discrete as you are Joseph," that's what Pharaoh told him. What made him so wise? Because he had looked at so many fossils sitting in jail? NO! Because God was with him. He had the spirit of God upon him, first principles, first causes. See? Well, because he looked at all the homos in the other cells? NO! Because the spirit of God was where? On him.

Proverbs 1:7:

The fear of the LORD, the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despised wisdom and [knowledge].

Now, there are three categories of people in the Book of Proverbs that you'll see come up again and again. And I'm talking about three categories who have blown it, who are not on the Word. One of them is fools, the second one are the wicked and the third category are the lazy. You have the fools, the wicked and the lazy. In contrast to that you also have the wise, the righteous and the diligent. The wise, the righteous and the diligent. Now God doesn't want you to be a fool or to be wicked or to be lazy. He wants you to be a wise person, a righteous person and a diligent person.

Now what is a fool? For most of us, I think this is a word that we've just...you know, anything that disagrees with us is a fool. Right? A fool is a simple person who lacks wisdom; simple meaning stupid. He's careless in his walk, and the reason he's careless is because he hasn't learned the wisdom for walking correctly or he refuses to learn the wisdom...wisdom for walking upright. That's a fool. You'll see in the Book of Proverbs when you read sections about fools, that they are proud. They're proud fools. Well, you know they stand...there's a lot of fools today. I'm not just calling people names, I'm just using a Biblical term here. There are fools, a lot of fools today. There are people who have not really gotten into wisdom and the principles of first causes and that thing. They haven't looked at the source of all things. They haven't looked at the Word, the handbook of life. But they think they're wise. And boy, they can argue about anything. The vast majority of people today...and I don't care if they've graduated from high school, or four years of college and sometimes even more...they still lack wisdom. They've been trained in a lot of facts, but they cannot put life together. They cannot look and see first causes, they cannot see first principles. There are no first principles, there are no absolutes, there is no truth. That's why the vast majority of people have fallen in this category of fools. They're proud though. And they really know what they're talking about, if you talk to them. They can talk about politics, religion, and whatever else comes in between.

And they are classified as scorners because they will scorn *you* for what you believe. They don't know what they're talking about but boy they will sure down you. They have a problem called "run of the mouth" that Proverbs talks about. They have a big problem with that. They never know when to shut up. They're always running the mouth. They're easily angered; they get angry very quickly. And with that pride then they start their scorning bit. They hate to learn. And above all, they hate reproof. Maybe you can remember some of those scriptures about: It's a waste of time to try to reprove a fool, it talks about in the Proverbs. Now, those are fools.

The second category are the wicked. Now these have a well-developed knowledge of the world. And their walk is as direct antagonist to true wisdom. They are much more cruel than the fools. They not only refuse to learn wisdom but they work to destroy it, to deceive, to cause division, to harm and to cause confusion. Their intent is evil. They lie, cheat, steal, kill, destroy to achieve their ends. These are those that wink with the eyes, that talk with their feet. Remember that in chapter 6? Perhaps the wicked are the brains and the fools are the puppets. You understand what I mean? The wicked are those that have evil intent as their purpose to destroy wisdom. The fools are simply the puppets. They don't know anything, so they just have the running of the mouth, and they know everything about nothing.

Now the lazy are another category. These are called the slothful, the sluggards. Now they don't deliberately do evil like the wicked ones do. And they don't walk foolishly without wisdom like the fools do. As a matter of fact, they don't do much of anything [laughter], except blame everybody else for their poverty, their discomfort and other problems which they bring upon themselves. Simply because they're lazy. Afraid to work, afraid to do anything. And yet, they like to complain. So when you're reading the Book of Proverbs, you'll see these three talked about either one or the other or a couple or all three throughout the Book of Proverbs. And they're contrasted with the wise, the righteous and the diligent. You see in verse 7 of chapter 1, it starts out.

Proverbs 1:7:

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* [what?] fools despise wisdom and instruction.

It starts right out with the fools. See? And as you work it, you start reading, you see in verse 10:

Proverbs 1:10:

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

The sinners essentially are the wicked, although he uses a more general term here. They're the ones that have something in mind. They could be the fools as well. Certainly they wouldn't be the lazy ones. But many times it's spelled out exactly who they are. In chapter 6,

this is one of the chapters we've worked before, you see all three of these groups. Remember, this was divided into three sections. These first 19 verses, verses 1-5.

Proverbs 6:1 and 2:

¹ ...if [you are] surety for [a] friend,...[you've] stricken [hands] with a stranger,
² ...[you're] snared with the words of [your] mouth,...taken with the words of [your] mouth.

That tells you how to deliver yourself. Why would you get into such trouble, because you lack what? {Wisdom}, like the fool. This is the category of the fool and he is saying "grow up, get out of that category, get wisdom." The whole purpose of Proverbs is to get wisdom. Then the second area:

Proverbs 6:6:

Go to the ant, [verse 6] thou sluggard;...

All the way through verse 11 deals with the lazy man. He's saying, don't be lazy. Get up and out of that, be a diligent man. Then verses 12-19, that's where you have a naughty person, a wicked man. This is the wicked, what does he do?

Proverbs 6:12-14, 16:

¹² ...[walks] with a froward mouth.
¹³ ...[winks] with [the] eyes,...[speaks] with [the] feet,...[teaches] with [the] fingers;
¹⁴ Frowardness is in his heart,...mischief...;...[sows] discord.
¹⁶ ...six things...the LORD [hates]:...

Reiterates them, plus a seventh:

Proverbs 6:19:

...false witness...

That's the wicked, evil intent. See it? Spell it out? Those are the three categories. Chapter 10. We've gone through quite a few things in the first nine chapters. Remember the first nine were didactic narratives. Separate, I think, some fifteen different narratives, where they're like short little stories or things that teach the principles, narratives that teach the principles. Whereas from chapter 10 through...(is it?) chapter 24, and then again from 25 to chapter 29, you have basically two-line parallelisms. It says one thing, then it says another thing. And they're either equal or they're opposite. It says the same thing in an equivalent way or it says the same thing in an opposite way. This first section is entitled the proverbs of Solomon and remember in chapter 25 it's the proverbs of Solomon which Hezekiah's men dug out. Okay?

But they're all proverbs of Solomon. And these are the two-lines, parallel lines, either equal or opposite. As a matter of fact in chapter 10, everything is opposite except three verses. In verse 18 and 22 and 26. Look at verse 18, says:

Proverbs 10:18:

He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, *is* [a what?] a fool.

Who is this dealing with? Which category? The fool. Okay. But you have two things there: he that hideth hatred with his lips is a fool and he that uttereth a slander. Those are saying essentially the same thing, or they're equivalent. They're not opposite, okay? Saying both are fools. In verse 22:

Proverbs 10:22:

The blessing of the LORD, it [makes] rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

It's saying the same thing in different ways. If it were opposite, it would say: The blessing of the LORD maketh rich, but the cursing of the LORD adds sorrow. See that? That would be opposite. But here it's equivalent. And then verse 26:

Proverbs 10:26:

As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the [lazy man] to them that send him.

Vinegar to the teeth is essentially the same thing as smoke getting in your eyes. That's what the sluggard is. But everything else in this chapter is opposite. Look at verse 1.

Proverbs 10:1:

The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

See, it says the same thing in an opposite way. And he uses the word "but". Here it's treating who? Which category? The fool, the foolish son. See it? The fool is the heaviness of his mother. Verse 2: "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but..." (Is it what, equal or opposite? Opposite.) "...righteousness delivereth from death." Now in the first one, it puts the positive first and the negative second. Here it puts the negative first and the positive second. Still opposite.

Proverbs 10:2:

Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.

What...if you have treasures you acquire by wickedness, what profit is it? Oh it seems like a lot today, but is it built on first principles? Nope. But righteousness delivereth from death and it gives you great wealth. Life is great wealth to begin with. See the opposite in it? Look at verse three.

Proverbs 10:3:

The LORD will not [allow] the soul of the righteous to famish: but he [throws] away the substance of the wicked.

Will the righteous famish? No. We're going to have plenty. But the wicked...everything you have, your substance is going to be thrown away. Look at verse 4: "He becometh poor that dealeth with..." Oh, oh, oh. By the way, verses 2 and 3; what category are they dealing with? The wicked and the righteous. See? The wicked man as contrasted to the righteous man. The first was the fool versus the wise. And then verses 2 and 3 dealt with...dealt with the wicked versus the right...the righteous. Now verse 4.

Proverbs 10:4:

He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh [what?] {rich}.

What category do we have here? The lazy man versus the diligent man. And it's opposite. See the "but"? He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, that's the lazy man. The lazy man is the poor man. See that? The lazy man is the poor man. You want to define terms according to the Word? Alright. Remember there's only two ways to get poor? (I believe.) Either you're lazy or the taxers or robbers steal it from you. Two ways to get poor. We worked that in Proverbs one night, didn't we? When we worked that ant business. Alright, verse 5.

Proverbs 10:5:

He that gathereth in summer *is* a wise son: *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* a son that [causes] shame.

Now, it ties...verses 4 and 5 really tie together because it's dealing with sleeping (see it?) as opposed to being diligent, being lazy. So four and five are again dealing with the lazy man. Both of them are opposite. To gather in the summer, would you be lazy? No you'd be a diligent person. And to sleep in the harvest, you would be a what? A lazy man, see the opposite? Verse 6.

Proverbs 10:6:

Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the [what?] wicked.

They're opposite and it's dealing with which category? The wicked. Verse 7.

Proverbs 10:7:

The memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

Think of some of the notorious men historically. But, if your name is written in the book of life, which is going to be remembered longer? The name that's in the book of life. Right? See. The name of the wicked shall what? In contrast of the memory of the just is what? Blessed. Verse 8.

Proverbs 10:8:

The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool...

Or a fool who likes to talk; you know, can't hold his tongue.

Proverbs 10:8:

...shall fall.

Now, here it's the fool. Okay. He lacks what? Wisdom. He just run...run of the mouth. The oppositeness in this, I want you to look at it. The wise in heart do what? Receive. What does the fool do? He's always talking. See it? And he's going to fall. But the wise is always taking in so he'll receive the commandments, the Word. Whereas the fool, he's always talking, he doesn't know what he's talking about, but he's always talking. He's going to fall over his words. See the opposite in it? Otherwise, you'd have to ask yourself, what does it mean? What's...Where is the opposite? That's one of the things, when a thing is a contrast, you have to see, well what is the contrast. They have to be similar, but not...they are saying the same thing in an opposite way. And then, when you see that contrast, it just makes it live that much more for you, see that? Isn't that beautiful? Verse 9.

Proverbs 10:9:

He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

If you walk uprightly... like Jesus Christ says, he who walks in the day, won't stumble but if you walk at night, in other words, walk in darkness, you're going to stumble. He walked in the light, walked in the day, see? If you walk uprightly, which is to walk in the light, if you walk surely, are you going to stumble? Suppose somebody is lying along the path, to trip you with a rope...I saw it on a movie, Steve McQueen, "The Great Escape", remember? Alright. He pulled that rope up and he went flying, didn't he? If I remember it correctly. Well anyway. If you're walking surely, you'd see that rope and you'd step over it or under it or do something or cut it in two, shoot it with your six-shooter. But (in contrast to that), he that perverteth his ways

shall be what? {Known.} Now the knowing is that when somebody sees him they could trip him because he doesn't know where he's going. See the contrast? Now verse 10:

Proverbs 10:10:

He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow [or trouble]:...

Who winks with the eye? Who? {The wicked.}The wicked. Remember that from chapter 6? The wicked one winks with his eye and he's causing...he's the cause of the trouble. But, in contrast to this wicked guy that causes trouble:

Proverbs 10:10:

...a prating fool shall fall.

Now what's the contrast? It sounds like the same thing. Doesn't it? Essentially, rather than a contrast. Should be "and a prating fool shall fall"; it just doesn't make any sense. I wanted to share and I'll try to do this quickly here. But I brought these books along, I mentioned this to the group that's here at Headquarters, some of the different things that I use when I'm studying Proverbs. Here we have a difficult verse. And that's what I want to spend time with you on (in the future when we get a chance to work Proverbs) is verses like this that are difficult. This verse I would then go to, because it doesn't make any sense. We really don't have a contrast there. So I would go to...I told you the *Interpreter's Bible* which I didn't bring along with me tonight. I also go to the *International Critical Commentary* and the *Anchor Bible*, and see what they have to say. I mentioned to you that I also wanted to get a book called, *The Old Testament Library*. It just came in today. And this also has a lot of great things in it. I've seen one before, we ordered one through inter-library loan and we were impressed with it, so we decided to order at least this book. We didn't get the Old Testament. Most of it's...well, a lot of it is printed I know, and eventually we'll want to get the other volumes. So at least, we've got Proverbs to begin with. Anyway, where do I start...let's take the *International Critical Commentary*.

Here is what he says; he translates: "He who winks the eye makes trouble, but..." Now listen to this: "...he who he reproveth makes peace." Now would that be a contrast? It certainly would. Let's listen to his argument. "On winking the eye as an expression for stirring up strife by malicious hints...", see notes 6, 12...okay, that we got. The second clause reads in the Hebrew. Now this is what the Hebrew says, but this isn't the way he translated it: "Any foolish talker shall fall." Remember, I told you this up in verse 8, a fool who's always talking, a foolish talker shall fall. But it doesn't have any contrast here; it doesn't make any sense. Apparently this was repeated from verse 8. In other words what he's saying is that somebody when they were originally copying the manu...Hebrew, accidentally copied the end of verse 8, down here at the end of verse 10, and then omitted what was originally at the end of verse 10. Now this is in the Massorah. The Hebrew Massorah. But I think I told you one day, the Hebrew Massorah did not develop until sometime A.D. prior to the tenth century. The oldest Massoretic text we have, I

think is ninth or tenth century (something like that). So it had to develop relatively late. But now we have the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament plus the Peshitta Aramaic of the Old Testament plus some of the Dead Sea scrolls that have been found in the Old Testament that could, in places, predate the Massoretic Hebrew text. And that's why we have to look not only at the Massoretic Hebrew text but also at the Septuagint Greek and the Aramaic of the Old Testament. And that's exactly what he did here. We expect...here...here it doesn't offer any antithesis. "We expect the mention of something which causes the opposite of trouble." Is that right? Isn't that what our problem is? Okay! Greek has, now this is from the Septuagint: "He who winks deceitfully with his eyes causes sorrow to men; but he who reproves openly makes peace." He who reproves openly makes peace—that's what the Greek has. "This furnishes the desired contrast but in expanded form." And he goes on and explains why some words could have been added to the Greek. "In any case, the suggestion is the frank reproof of wrong doing will pave the way to repentance and amity. For the word trouble..." then he tells you to see something else. Okay. So that's what he says, and it comes from the Greek. Now, the *Anchor Bible* really doesn't add much to it here. It translates it, "He who winks his eye makes trouble, but one who reproaches frankly makes peace." I like the "reprove" better. Then he mentions the second line of the translation follows the Septuagint but the Massoretic Hebrew text repeats 8b. And that you've already heard from the *International Critical*.... In this particular book, he essentially says the same thing. He goes into a little longer discussion of it. This is *The Old Testament Library*. "The shifty individual who is incapable of candor and who employs language of secret signs over and above what he says either by winking or perhaps by opening and shutting his fingers in front of his eyes. Verse 10b is a repetition of verse 8b and does not furnish a suitable parallel to verse 10a. The Septuagint reads, 'He who reproves candidly makes peace.' And on this basis 8b suggests a certain Hebrew reading which means, 'He who reproves to the face reconciles.' This gives the antithesis. The one kind of activity makes for social brokenness, the other for social wholeness." Well, that's pretty good.

Then, I pulled out Lamsa's translation of the Aramaic. And it says, "He who winks with his eyes deceitfully causes sorrow, but he who reproves openly makes peace." So the Aramaic and the Septuagint agree. See how you work that? Against the Massoretic text. But I still would not just openly accept the Aramaic or the Septuagint if the Hebrew fit better in the context. But I believe here that a contrast is wanting and I can see where a scribe would have accidentally put a wrong line in here. Some of you have done it when you're typing, I'm sure. I've even seen it in publications from time to time, where a line is repeated in a newspaper. And so originally this would have read, "He that winketh with the eye causes trouble, but..." And this is from both the Aramaic and the Greek Septuagint: but he who reproves makes peace. Or "...reproves openly makes peace." Then, is there a contrast? And it's real neat, because the next parallel is.

Proverbs 10:11:

The mouth of a righteous *man* is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

It goes right into the mouth thing again which ties into verse 10 “winking with the eye”. He’s not speaking with his mouth, he’s speaking with signals which is dishonest. “...but he who reproves openly makes [what?] peace”, with his mouth. Then, “The mouth of a righteous man (one that reproves righteously) is a well of life: whereas violence covers the mouth of the wicked.” It covers it so that he doesn’t speak the truth, he doesn’t reprove, he gives eye signals, hand signals, feet signals. Isn’t’ that something? Then it fits in the context, flows and there is a definite contrast. Okay? Well, if you read through chapter 10...or you read can through the whole Book of Proverbs, you’ll constantly see fools, wicked and lazy men come up. We could go through the rest of this chapter and each verse is dealing with one or the other. Maybe you have two, three verses together. Sometimes you have whole sections together dealing with a fool or a wicked one or a lazy person. Those are the three main diseases being treated in the Book of Proverbs.

And then in contrast to that is the wise man, the diligent man and the righteous man or woman, either one. Well, we didn’t get to where I was planning to go tonight. Chapter 12, but that one verse I wanted you to see again how...which sources I use to work something here in the Old Testament which is a little different than I would do in the New Testament. Now if I didn’t find a satisfactory answer in here, I would go into a word study then of the words in that verse. Okay? But I felt here the Septuagint and the Aramaic together sort of supplied the correct answer so I didn’t need to take it further. But many times and a lot of times, I’ll do this with the team because some of those guys know Hebrew, they can work it a lot faster than I can with my (what do you call it?) *Word Studies* by William Wilson and my *Young’s Concordance*. So...but on the other hand, I’ve also worked some of them myself. I don’t mean for you to come to the research team with everything because you have to work some of these things for yourself on your research projects. Okay? But I wanted you to see how I do some of this in the Old Testament. But in chapter 12, there are at least four verses that don’t make a lot of sense in the Hebrew and consequently not too much sense in the English. And maybe before we meet the next time, you could read through chapter 12 and see if you can find those. And, you know, don’t make that a priority because your research project is priority right now; but if you get a chance to read through chapter 12 (which doesn’t take that long), work and see once if you can find those difficult verses. And that’s what we’re going to spend some time on the next time we go into the Book of Proverbs. Okay?

[Prayer] *Well, Father, we sure thank you for this night and for your love and goodness to us. Thank you for the Word and how it reaches into our hearts and helps us to understand life and that we can build our lives and minds upon the greatness of that Word, and the first principles, first causes, because we know your Word. Thank you Father for this opportunity to be together with all the Corps again in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen! God bless you!*

January 20, 1982

Proverbs
Proverbs 12
Rev. Cummins

Well, we go to Proverbs chapter 12. And the last time that we were together on Proverbs, I suggested that you might want to read this chapter and that there were some five verses in here that are difficult to understand, or they're mistranslated. Did you get a chance to look at them? Did you find some that you think might be problem verses? Well, we're going to look at a couple of them tonight. We're not going to get into all of them. But remember again as you're working Proverbs that there are three people...or three types of people that are addressed: the fools versus the wise man, and number two, the wicked versus the righteous man and number three the lazy versus the diligent person. And as you're working from chapter 10 on, in most of it, you'll see parallelism. The parallelism is either equal or opposite. So you'll see that in each of the verses that you're going through. Either an equal thing, if it's equal, then you have to ask yourself, well, how is it equal? If it's opposite, you have to ask yourself, well, what's the contrast? How is it opposite to the preceding parallel statement.

Now, in chapter 12, I want to pick up the context, before we get down to verse 9. Because verse 9 is the first verse that has been mistranslated.

Proverbs 12:1:

Whoso loveth instruction [verse 1] loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

And in case you don't know what the word "brutish" means, I looked it up. Because I wasn't certain myself and it means: savage, gross, stupid, sensual, irrational, etc. I guess the English needed a word that when a person was everything, that they just called them brutish. So anyway, a person that hates to learn, that hates reproof and hates the discipline of learning is brutish.

Proverbs 12:2:

[But] a good *man* [verse 2] obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

Now here you have...both of these verses, they're opposites. Aren't they? The first thing in verse one was the fellow that loves instruction; the second thing was, he that hates reproof. Just the opposite. In the second verse it's, a good man obtains favor of the LORD, but in contrast, the opposite, a man of wicked devices, and that word "wicked devices", is a word I gave you

earlier that meant “evil inventions”. Remember the...when we talked about that “evil inventions”? A man of wicked devices or evil inventions will be condemned. Then verse 3 is contrasting. By the way, verse 2: a good man as opposed to a man of what kind of devices? Wicked; wicked. See? So it’s in the category of the wicked as opposed to the righteous in this section. And you’ll see this all the way from verse 2 down to verse 7, that we’re dealing with the wicked versus the righteous. Verse 3.

Proverbs 12:3:

A man shall not be established by wickedness [there’s the word wickedness, see it?]: but the root of the righteous shall not be [what?] moved.

And there’s the righteous. The wicked and the righteous. A man who’s wicked is not going to be what? Established. A tree has roots. It says the righteous, his root is not going to be what? {Moved.} Take a tree with roots. But if you have something that doesn’t have any roots, it’s not going to be established. That’s the wicked. He’s not established, has no root. Verse 4, is a virtuous woman.

Proverbs 12:4:

A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* as rottenness in his bones.

There you have the virtuous woman. And in verse 5, it’s again the righteous versus the wicked. Verse 6 is the wicked versus the righteous. And verse 7 it’s the wicked versus the righteous. All the way through here, it’s the wicked versus the righteous. And this verse 4 sits right in the middle of it and at first it looks like a verse out of context. Like all of a sudden, he just threw in this verse about the woman, the virtuous woman. But it fits right along with it, because either a woman will be righteous or she’ll be what? Wicked. A righteous woman is a crown to her husband. When she’s righteous, or a virtuous woman...a virtuous woman would be a righteous woman, she is a what? A crown to her husband, but she that maketh ashamed, the wicked woman, like the...(what was it?) the strange woman of Proverbs that we talked about earlier...maketh ashamed is as rottenness or like a cancer in his bones. And that’s what wickedness does to you. Like the virtuous woman. Wickedness is like a cancer working on you, in your bones. But righteousness in contrast to that is a crown to you, like the virtuous woman. See the tremendous parallel between life in the physical and in the mental. And Proverbs does a lot of tying together like this. Here the wicked versus the righteous tied in with the virtuous woman versus the woman that makes ashamed.

Proverbs 12:5:

The thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.

Back in verse 3, you had the root of the righteous. Here we're talking about the thoughts of the righteous, contrasted with the counsels, his thoughts of the wicked. They're deceitful.

Proverbs 12:6:

The words of the wicked [in verse 6] *are* to lie in wait for blood [his words kill]; but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

See mouth and words? So we went from the root, to thoughts, to words. And finally we go to the house. Verse 7.

Proverbs 12:7:

The wicked *are* overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall [what?] stand.

The house of the righteous is going to stand, but the house of the wicked is going to be overthrown. So we have the root of the righteous is not going to be moved. But the root...there is no root of the wicked, he's not established. The root of the wicked is not...or there is no root because he's not established. The thoughts of the wicked are going to be deceitful. The words of the wicked kill, they lie in wait for blood and the house of the wicked is overthrown. But in contrast to that, all the way through here. You have the root of the righteous is not going to be what? Moved. His thoughts are right. His words deliver people instead of killing them and his house stands because it's got a good root system, a good foundation on it. You know, it's well constructed like the Corps chalet. And besides that for the righteous man that then in turn would be a crown to him, like the virtuous woman is a crown to her husband as opposed to being cancerous, eating away. So there's a tremendous foundation laid in those first seven verses.

Then we get to verse 8 and it goes to the fool versus the wise. The key word there, is the word "wisdom" which means insight. This is the word *sekel* I gave you earlier in a session (S-E-K-E-L), which means insight.

Proverbs 12:8a:

A man shall be commended according to his [insight]....

His ability to see into things, his perception and awareness, spiritual perception and awareness as well.

Proverbs 12:8b:

...but he that is of a [confused or distorted] heart shall be despised.

That's the fool. The fool's heart is confused. It's distorted. Whereas the wise man has insight into what's going on. He can see what's going on, insight. Then verse 9. Verse 9 is the lazy man. But you would never guess it from the King James. Well, there's a hint of it, the last two words, "he lacketh bread". And the lazy man is always tied into lacking things, food especially. So, the Corps can't be lazy. See that, alright.

Proverbs 12:9:

He *that is* despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

Now what does that mean? "He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread." It doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Does it? I brought along some of my notes from this verse, out of the *International Critical Commentary*. They translate it, "Better off is he who is socially low yet has a servant, than he who plays the great man and yet lacks bread." Now that's maybe a little better, but it still doesn't really offer a solution to the problem. The contrast has to be there. Some ancient versions and that means the Aramaic because I checked that, as well as the Septuagint, the Greek of the Old Testament, and some modern expositors rendered the second half of the first clause "and is a servant to himself". In other words, he who is despised or humbled, socially low (whatever...however that's translated) and is a servant to himself. In other words, he does his own work, he's not afraid to get out and do things himself, "...is better than one that honors himself", but he doesn't do any work. "...He lacks bread." He blows about how great he is, but he doesn't do anything. It's better to get out and do something, to serve himself. A sense which may be obtained by a slight change in the Hebrew. In other words, the Hebrew doesn't literally say that. But the Aramaic and the Septuagint do. It gets rid of the statement that the socially unhonored man has a servant.

"The expression 'acts as servant to himself or is his own servant, or works for himself' does not offer a distinct antithesis to the 'lacks bread' of the second clause." And that, I disagree with because it does offer an antithesis. If you're your own servant or you're self-employed, or you work for yourself, you're putting your effort into it to produce. You're not a lazy person. But if you lack bread, what's the reason you lack bread? Because you're not diligent. You're a sluggard. You're slothful. And so what do...what do you end up with? A lack of bread. You see there is an antithesis. But I think some of these might be too well-acquainted with welfare. And they haven't figured that out yet. At any rate, Mrs. Jess gave me a literal translation of the Aramaic. "Better is a poor man who serves himself, than one who is proud and without bread."

Now the Septuagint, I said, was very similar to that. "Better is a man in dishonor serving himself, than one honoring himself and wanting bread." Very similar to the Aramaic. And the

Anchor Bible I thought was interesting, a little freer translation but it says, “Better to be a common man who has employment, than to give oneself airs and be starving.” I thought that was neat. So you see what it’s saying? It’s better to be somebody that’s not poor in the sense of poverty stricken but where you’re dishonored or you’re not out putting on airs, that kind of thing. And you’re not afraid to work. You’re not afraid to serve yourself. But the lazy man is afraid to serve himself. He’s afraid to...he hides his hands in his bosom, he’s afraid to bring it to his mouth again. You know he’s afraid to work. He wants somebody else to feed him. That’s how lazy he is. But it’s better to serve yourself than to be proud or to honor yourself, and put on the airs but not have any food, because you’re lazy. See it?

So you have in verse 8, the fool versus the wise man, who has insight. Then in 9, the lazy man versus the man who’s not afraid to work, and to get out and work, serve himself. And then in verse 10, the wicked again.

Proverbs 12:10a:

A righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast:...

Or cares for his beast. To regard is “cares” for the life of his beast, and the beast would be a lesser thing that you would care for. He cares for people but he even cares for his beast. His dogs, see? or whatever animals that he has, ass or mule.

Proverbs 12:10b:

...but [in contrast to that] the tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

Now, what’s tender mercies? You know, it’s tender, mercy. You don’t give judgment to those that deserve it. “The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.” Now, what do you call that? It’s a figure of speech. Remember what it was, we had it come up in Ephesians a couple of times, *oxymoron*. It means wise- folly, because tender mercies are not cruel, are they? It just the opposite. But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, that’s that figure. The righteous man even cares for his beast but opposite to that is the wicked man whose tender mercies are even cruel. So what’s his untender, lack of mercy going to be? Then in eleven you go back to the lazy man again, versus the diligent.

Proverbs 12:11a:

He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread....

The fellow that’s not afraid to work, who’s again rooted in the Word. He’s going to have roots in his life. He’s solid, can’t be moved. He tills his land. He’s going to be satisfied with bread.

Proverbs 12:11b:
 ...but he that followeth vain *persons*...

It should be... “persons” of course is in italics but it’s “vain pursuits”. Or he pursues vain things. You know, somebody says, well boy, you ought to jump on this so you can make an easy buck. And boy, he jumps right on it, because he’s lazy. He doesn’t want to work. He follows vain pursuits. And it says:

Proverbs 12:11c:
 ...[he’s] void...[empty of heart].

The word “understanding” is *leb* in the Hebrew: heart (L-E-B). He has an empty heart. The *Anchor Bible* translates that last phrase, again it’s a little free translation but it was neat, “but the stupid spends his time chasing rainbows.” [Laughter.] The fellow that’s void of heart, spends his time chasing the wind, chasing rainbows; vain pursuits. There’s no substance there, see it? Vain pursuits, as opposed to the diligent man, who’s not afraid to work, he tills his land and he’s satisfied with bread. Then we get to verses 12 and 13 and 14. These three, all deal with the wicked. Then 15 goes to the fool. But see verse 12.

Proverbs 12:12:
 The wicked desireth the net...the root of the righteous...

You have the wicked versus the righteous there. Verse 13.

Proverbs 12:13, 14:
¹³ The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just [the righteous] shall come out of trouble.
¹⁴ [And then 14] A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompence of a man’s hands shall be rendered unto him.

These follow right upon the wicked of 12 and 13, so it’ll tie in. Okay? By the way, in verse 14, you don’t have an opposite there. “A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the reward of a man’s hands shall be rendered unto him.” It’s saying the same or similar things, see it? However, verse 12 and 13 are both opposite. Now look at twelve because this is another one.

Proverbs 12:12:
 The wicked desireth the net [of evil] of evil *men*: but the root of the righteous [yields] *fruit*.

Now what does that mean? Well, it's not real clear in English. What is it, to desire the net of evil men? Again the *International Critical Commentary* says that the text and translation are doubtful. As a matter of fact, he never does come to a conclusion. He mentions the fact that the Hebrew reads just like it here in the King James. "The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of righteousness produces"; he translates "yields", produces. And then in parenthesis, he puts (literally "gives"). Literally, this word means to give. And if you'd have followed that line of thought, it would have helped to clear this up. Because what it is, it's the opposite between the righteous who gives as opposed to the wicked whose thing is to take.

He says if we understand the net of the first clause to be that which bad men spread for others then you would translate it, "The wicked desire the net of the wicked", but if the net be that which bad man are caught in, then you would translate it, "The wicked desire the net which entraps the wicked." Which doesn't make much sense. Somebody translates it, "The prey of evil men." With a sense that the wicked seek to enrich himself by unrighteous gain and I think that that might be closer to what this is saying. But they omit this word "net". Well he...no, they translated it the prey of evil men. But there's something deeper to it than that. Plus, he brings up a problem with the second clause that, "The tree produces fruit, but the root doesn't produce fruit." The root of the righteous, it says, yields or produces. But that's where, if you translate it "gives", it'll fit. Now, the Aramaic reads, "The wicked desires to do evil", where they totally avoid this word net when they didn't translate it. "The desires of the wicked are evil", is the Greek Septuagint. It's very similar.

But this word "net" is the Hebrew word *matsod*, M-A-T-S-O-D (M-A-T-S-O-D, *matsod*). It's only used four times; it's a rare word and that's one reason why they had trouble translating it, knowing what it meant. It's used in Job 19:6 and of course here in Proverbs and then in Ecclesiastes 6:26 and then in Ecclesiastes 9:14. In Ecclesiastes 7:26, it's translated "snare". In Ecclesiastes 9:14 it's translated "bulwark"; B-U-L-W-A-R-K. I'd like you to look at the one in Ecclesiastes 9:14. The other two are rather general and it's difficult to tell from the context anything more specific. But this one in Ecclesiastes 9, sort of draws a picture for you, 9:14.

Ecclesiastes 9:14:

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:

Now you would know that if he built great bulwarks against this city, to attack a city, you need more than a net. This is not the normal word for "net". There is another word that's normally translated "net". This is...it's always used of an offensive weapon though. It is translated net in Job, and it's translated snare in the other place, but it has to be bigger than that to fit with its usage here. Because it's some type of offensive weapon used to besiege a city.

Now the picture that comes to my mind right away is the...you know, these towers that were on wheels that they would move up to the city walls or other things that they would use in order to attack the city. But whatever it was, it was some type of offensive weapon used against a fortress. And this word, by the way, is related to the word for fortress. So you can call it an anti-fortress weapon or whatever, but that's the idea of it. And keep in mind that evil is a parasite. Evil cannot exist on its...by its own, on its own; it has to exist on good. It lives off of good. So it has to attack the fortress of good to survive. That's why in Proverbs 12, the wicked desires that offensive parasitic evil anti-fortress weapon, whatever it is, so he can take, he can attack the city of good, to take, to steal, to kill, to destroy. Whereas the righteous does what? Gives. The desire of the wicked is to take, to steal. This net or "evil parasitic anti-fortress device", whatever you want to call it. You know, it's a rare word in the Hebrew, *matsod*. But it's related to fortress and it has to do with some type of offensive weapon used to take a city. The wicked desires that type of a device. And it fits right with what we read in verse 2.

Proverbs 12:2:

A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of [what?] wicked devices will he condemn.

The man of wicked devices, the one who's always thinking up evil inventions, how to take something from others. And so the man shall not be established in verse 3, by wickedness, he has no root. He's not going to be established, as opposed to the righteous who has roots and he's not going to be moved. Here that root of the righteous gives. But the wicked who has no root, who is not established, he has to always be taking. Now you see the contrast between the two parallel phrases? Isn't that neat? The wicked desires the evil parasitic anti-fortress device, but the root of the righteous "gives" as opposed to being a parasite. Then look at verse 13.

Proverbs 12:13a:

The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips:...

See he's out to take, but he's caught in his words.

Proverbs 12:13b:

...but the just [the righteous] shall come out of trouble.

The righteous is always out giving, his root is to give.

Proverbs 12:14:

A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth:...

First you have a root, the root gives. Then you have what? Fruit.

Proverbs 12:14:

...the fruit of his mouth, and the recompence [or reward] of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

After you have fruit, what do you get? Rewards. So you have a root, then you have fruit, then you have reward. If you root...if you don't have any root or your root is shallow, it's wicked, you're only out to take, to see what you can get, to steal, to kill, to destroy, then your fruit is going to be corrupt and there's no rewards. But if you're the righteous, then your root...the root of the righteous gives. That's the attitude of the righteous, he's established. Because giving is a principle, giving equals receiving. As you give you receive. So if your root, that's your root, you're giving, then what's your fruit? It's going to be good fruit. And you're going to be satisfied with that fruit. And as a result there's going to be what? reward. Isn't that beautiful? The righteous versus the wicked. And who wins again? The righteous. Right!

So keep working all the proverbs you run across. Some of them like verse 12, verse 9 are difficult to...because you have to look deeper into the text, but the others, most of them, you can read and you can see the contrast or where it's equal. And next time we get a chance to work on this, we're going to look at verses 26, 27 and 28, because they have some difficulties in them too. But the rest should be pretty well explain...self-explanatory.

[Dr. Wierwille:] Walter that...the "Masada", Israel, it must come from that word?

[Walter Cummins:] Could be Matsod?

[Dr. Wierwille:] Right. Fortress.

[Walter Cummins:] Fortress, right.

[Dr. Wierwille:] It's really great. Thank you Walter, it's wonderful.

April 28, 1982

Proverbs
Proverbs 12:26-28
Rev. Cummins

Okay! Well, tonight we're going into the Book of Proverbs. It's been a long time since we've been in Proverbs and we're going to go back into it tonight. We've covered quite a few things. We're in chapter 12 this evening. I believe the last time, we hit some of the earlier verses in chapter 12. And this particular chapter has a number of things in it that are mistranslated from the Hebrew and so we've had to spend a little time studying some of the things here. And tonight, I wanted to look at the last three verses, because all three of them involve mistranslations. And if you understand these things, it will help you to understand again the whole context, the chapter in which it's written and other things in this section of the book. So let's start with verse 26. Says:

Proverbs 12:26:

The righteous *is* more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

Now the righteous is more excellent than his neighbor. Well a lot of that depends on whether his neighbor...how good his neighbor is. Maybe his neighbor is righteous, right? Then what are you going to say? Is he more excellent than another righteous neighbor? See the whole thing just doesn't fit. First of all these three words ("*is* more excellent than"...or four words: "more excellent than"..."*is* more excellent than") in the Hebrew, it's one...or it's a verb which has been of course mistranslated here in the King James and apparently misunderstood by a lot of translators. Because when they translated it literally, it did not make sense in their minds. The word means "explores" or "searches out" or "studies" or "spies out". To search out or spy out, to explore or study your neighbor. And they didn't quite understand the great significance of exploring your neighbor. Because that's not quite the usage of words we would employ in English. But having...you know, not understanding it in that light, why... they misunderstood it and mistranslated or tried to translate it some other way and never got it to fit. But if you let it set as it is, "explores or studies his neighbor" is very beautiful. And especially when you understand it in light of the antithetic part of this verse, in other words, the contrast. Because the second part of the verse is the contrast to the first. It says "but the way of the wicked seduceth them or misleads them", or "leads them to destruction" as one translation puts it.

See the na...the righteous person will study his neighbor. He will explore his neighbor to see what would bless and help that neighbor. Whereas the wicked will lead his neighbor astray. He leads him astray. This idea is not foreign to the Book of Proverbs nor to other

scriptures in the Word. Matter of fact you read the same idea in many other places, that the righteous explores his neighbor or tries to find out what would help and bless that individual, instead of just spilling his mouth; instead of having the run of the mouth where he just tears him up. He explores him in order to help and to bless him. He has tremendous insight into an individual. He's empathetic. Whereas the wicked simply misleads or tears down that neighbor. This righteous man has insight in order to bless his neighbor. He's empathetic with him. In Proverbs 15, you have a similar idea in verse 28. Where it says, "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer:..."; 15:28.

Proverbs 15:28a:

The heart of the righteous studieth [or meditates] to answer:

In other words, he doesn't just flip an answer off the top of his head, but he studies his neighbor, or he studies a situation before he answers.

Proverbs 15:28b:

...but the mouth of the wicked [it just pours] out evil things.

See? He just has the run of the mouth, and what comes out doesn't make much difference and it tears down, destroys, that kind of thing. Then again, in chapter 24, you have another one. In verse 2; well, start in verse 1, 24:1

Proverbs 24:1 and 2:

¹ Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

² For their heart studieth destruction,....

The righteous man studies or meditates on what? The Word. You know, to build a man up, to bless somebody. Whereas the heart of this evil man studies destruction, studies to tear down and their lips talk of mischief. So this idea of the neighbor or a man...a righteous man exploring or studying his neighbor in order to find out what would bless and help that individual, to have insight into that individual is not foreign to the Book of Proverbs. In Philippians chapter 2, you have a familiar verse of scripture. Philippians chapter 2 goes right along with this. Philippians 2, in verse 4. Where it says:

Philippians 2:4:

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

And in some class, we covered this word "look" was a Greek word *skopeō* from which we get scope. It's like we say; scope in on. It means to focus in on, *skopos* is a...what do you

call it where you throw your darts at? Bullseye thing, target; right. So it's to have as your target, focus in on. See? Look not every man on his own things. Don't focus in on your own things, but every man focus in on the things of others also. Because you want to know why another person thinks the way he does, if you're going to help him. You study, you explore, you spy out...not in a negative sense but...(you know, where you're sneaking around bushes looking through a periscope or something of that nature)...but to where you're...you can help that individual. See? You search out, explore, study your neighbor. Look every man on the things of others also. Galatians chapter 6, you have another familiar scripture that goes right along with this. Chapter 6, verse 1.

Galatians 6:1:

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.

If somebody has a fault, what do you do? You criticize them, you tell them to climb up a tree, crawl out on the limb, take a saw along, cut the limb off behind him, right? No. It says, you which are spiritual; if you're so spiritual then you restore that individual in the spirit of meekness. In the spirit of meekness. But watch yourself that you're not tempted. See? Don't let him, when you're trying to help him, don't let him drag you down. If you're going to help somebody out of the muck and mire that they're in, you've got to reach down, pull them out. But at the same time you don't let them pull you down in. Do you? That's right. So you which are spiritual, you restore that individual, not by beating him over the head or telling him to climb out on a limb, but restore him in the spirit of meekness. You study that individual to decide what would help or bless or really lift that individual up.

In Romans chapter 14, you have a great chapter that's right along this line of helping your neighbor. To help him you have to study him. It doesn't mean be snoopy. Okay? It doesn't mean to be nosy or so you got some more to gossip about. That's not what it's talking about. But it's having insight, being empathetic, understanding. Because why does one person do such things? You know, why doesn't everybody act like me? That's one of the biggest problems I have. [Laughter] If everybody was like me, this would be a lot better world. Not really. It'd be kind of boring. But I think that's the attitude we get sometimes. But why is one person different from another? Why do they have problems in one area that I don't have problems in? But on the other hand, maybe, I've got problems in areas that they don't have problems in. See? And trying to be empathetic to the end that you understand, that you're able to help other people is what we're after. Verse 1 of chapter 14 in Romans.

Romans 14:1:

Him that is weak [or immature] in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations [or critical reasonings].

You receive an individual that's immature in the faith. Now if he's immature, he's not going to have the same high polished vocabulary with the Word, like you have, right? He's not going to have the same long suits in his walk with God, that perhaps you have. But he's hungry and willing to learn. And so you receive that one, but not to the point again where he pulls you down, to critical reasonings. Because:

Romans 14:2:

...one [person believes] that he may eat all things: [but] another who is [immature],...

Says, "Well, I can only eat a...wor...(worms) [laughter], right...herbs. I can only eat herbs."

Romans 14:3

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

Just because somebody doesn't believe you should eat...herbs, and somebody else believes that you should. Or one person believes you should eat this; somebody else believes you should not eat that. Or smoke this or drink that or have this in your car or house or somebody else believes you shouldn't have such and such. Somebody believes you should wear make-up, somebody believes you shouldn't. Quit judging one another, is what he's saying.

Romans 14:4, 5a:

⁴Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

⁵One man esteemeth one day above another:...

Some groups of people think Friday is the top day of the week. Some think Saturday is and some think Sunday is. Well, God made all seven days. So what are you going to do?

Romans 14:5b:

...another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

One person may think one thing, another something else, but you don't dog people on the little insignificant points. You don't get on somebody's case because they don't quite agree with the way you would do something. When it comes to the integrity and accuracy of God's Word, that's another story. Whether you believe the truth of the Word or not, that I would stake my life on, and I think you would to. But it...so many times, the disagreements come up over little

insignificant points; whether you think one day is a holy day or not. Or whether, you know, whether you think one day is better than another, or you think one food is better than another or you think one type of clothing is better than another, within reason. Now you're in the Corps right now, so, you got to understand these things in the context, Okay? But it usually, the disagreements, come over a lot of insignificant things. That's where it begins. Like divorces; always start with minor arguments. One person believes he can do anything, some...another person believes he can't. Look at verse 23.

Romans 14:22a:
Hast thou [believing]?...

Do you have believing? Well, keep it to yourself.

Romans 14:22b
...before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth.

In other words, if...if you believe you can do something and you go ahead and do it, you don't have any problem with it. But if somebody else doesn't think...thinks he should be doing that and he does it, then he starts condemning himself.

Romans 14:23:
And he that doubteth [or has this conflict within himself] is damned [or frustrated] if he eat, because *he eateth* not of [believing]: for whatsoever *is* not of [believing] is sin [to that individual].

He believes, he can't eat it. So, if somebody makes him eat it, then what happens? He sins. Now sooner or later people have to grow up, see; because God made all things to be enjoyed (and all this stuff, you know the Word). Like Peter, He had to explain this vision to Peter because He let down the sheet that had all the unclean animals in it. Peter didn't want to eat. God said, Don't call unclean what I've made clean. But yet, people are immature. But sooner or later they have to grow up. If they want to stay immature all their life, then that's not what it's talking about here. But it's talking about helping those that are weak or immature, young in the faith, the family. See, then verse...chapter 15 says:

Romans 15:1:
We...that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Again, it's exploring your neighbor, exploring someone else to find out what would help and bless him. Don't always be quick to judge that individual.

Romans 15:2:

Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to [what?] edification.

To build him up. Back in verse 13 of chapter 14. It said:

Romans 14:13:

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

You have the responsibility as a more matured spiritual individual to help that more immature person to grow up in the Word. That's your responsibility. And if he believes he can or can't do a certain thing and you know it's different from the Word. What do you do? Go over and beat him over the head and say, "Now look, this is what you're supposed to believe from the Word. Now get with it or get out of the fellowship." No! That's not the way you treat them. That's right. And yet it goes on. Because we become leaders, and a leader is supposed to be strong, determined and not budge on anything. Not exactly. We're to be giving, loving, compassionate and especially on insignificant points. There's a difference and sometimes it's hard as a leader to make that...to draw that fine line. When should you speak and say something and when shouldn't you speak and say something? To make that decision. What would help and really bless somebody? It says something in Jude about, some people you save by pulling them out of the fire, and others you use a little more compassion on. You know, each situation is different. How do you know the difference? If you don't explore and study that individual, not only from a sense knowledge point of view, but you've got to be walking by the spirit. Because God can tell you what to do in specific situations. But I think of a lot of what Uncle Harry would say that how it's better that somebody step on our toes, and we be guilty of stepping on theirs. That was the essence of it, I can't remember exactly what he said. That's the essence, I'm sure you've heard it before. It's better that somebody step on our toes, and maybe it hurts us a little bit, than for us to be guilty of going out and stomping on everybody else's feet. And you've got to let people grow up, you can't always jump on them for something. And as a leader, it's very important. You've got to explore that individual, study the matter before you can really answer many times, or make a decision or be more firm about a situation.

And language...because language can tear down. You think you're big because you can use a lot of small words. You know having three, four, five syllables in them...or letters, excuse me. And you've got to watch that because then somebody else hears it and especially when you're a leader. And I've heard again recently leadership using that type of language in open public meetings. What you do privately is one thing, but what you do out in...in public could be a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. It could cause somebody else to stumble. You very seldom heard me using very strong language. Maybe "heck" [laughter] or something like that; especially in public. Now maybe in private [laughter, clears throat], that's

why I said seldom...or when Joyce and I argue, that's different. [Laughter.] I shouldn't tell you all that. But anyway, I'm talking about in public. You've got to watch your language as a leader. And if you hear another leader doing it, does that give you the license to go out and do it? No. You've got to control your own mouth, your own tongue. And think what would help and bless not just one person (because you know there's some drunk in there that might be blessed by a few four letter words), but what will bless that whole Body and help them. And again it's the spirit of God working within you. And some of those things, you just can't always answer. But I know that you can't for the most part in a meeting use a lot of dirty language and expect to get results. So watch your language, watch bitter words, watch words that could...you know, connote bitterness in your heart. Or if not in your heart, at least that's what comes out on your tongue. You know, what you say, and what somebody thinks you says...you say and what they hear you say, and what they think they hear you say are four different things. That's right. Somewhere in the communication process things don't always come out the same as they're intended to. So you've got to watch what you're saying and how you're saying it. Watch that bitterness. And words can communicate, even though you don't intend it.

You've got to explore your neighbor's heart to know what to say that would bless, edify and build that individual up. It's easy to criticize. And in leadership, we think that's our responsibility sometimes, to criticize. It's not. It's our responsibility to reprove and correct. And then how you reprove and correct; there's different ways of doing it. Like I said, some people you save pulling out a fire, others you use a little more compassion on. But it's easy to criticize someone, whether publicly, privately or behind their back. It's easy to criticize, it's hard to correct the results of your criticism. It's hard to correct what's you've done as a result of doing that criticizing. It's better to correct someone with meekness and patience, instructing those that oppose themselves. I think it says something like that in Timothy.

2 Timothy 2:25:

[With] meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves;...

If they're voting against themselves, you've got to help them to determine the right election. See? By...with meekness and it says that you have to be patient, you have to be able to teach...teach God's Word so that they can be edified, built up to the point of wanting to change, of wanting to get out of that immature category and become more strong and founded in the Word. And that takes exploration of that individual on your part. To explore your neighbor. It's easy to criticize. It's hard to correct what you've done by your criticism. It's better to correct them with patience, meekness and so on, instructing them according to the Word. Because they've been hoodwonk...hoodwinked all their life, perhaps, and they need someone who lovingly wants to help and undershepherd and nourish them to get out of what they're in. Remember the man, the drunk, that Dr. Wierwille said he pulled the sermon out...had saved up for when he came to church and taught this beautiful sermon on the evils of drinking and the drunk told him how much it helped him afterwards. Because he knew more about drinking than

anybody else. He'd been in it all his life, so why should he want to hear more about drinking. He wanted to hear about what God's Word could do for him. And that's why when Dr. Wierwille teaches the Word, I get blessed because it builds up, it...it shows you that there's life in the Word, that there's help, there's hope in the Word, and that it's not a Word that tears you down, or makes you feel guilty. Or like you'd better go to heaven or you're going to have hell. Whatever. You know scare people into heaven. So watch it how you correct people, explore your neighbor. Go back to Proverbs chapter 12. The righteous explores his neighbor. Look back up at verse 23. Chapter 12, verse 23.

Proverbs 12:23a:

A prudent man concealeth knowledge:...

In other words, when you know something, you don't teach anyone else. No, no, no, no, no...that's not what it's talking about. You don't say everything you know. See, engage brain before starting mouth. Okay.

Proverbs 12:23b:

...but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

He just lets his mouth roll. And verse 25, right along this line.

Proverbs 12:25a:

Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop:...

(It's not Christoph, okay [laughter]. He's my friend or I couldn't say that. See you can't say that, otherwise, you'll get in trouble. Alright. I can't say it too much or I'll get in trouble.) "Heaviness in the heart of man..."

You know that's another thing. You just don't want to make, you know...I do puns once in a while and nobody ever laughs at them. But you've got to watch...if you're critical, use people's names in a funny way. You know I can say, Well, I'm "Cummins" or "Goings", but if I use your name, I've got to know you pretty well before I can talk about your name. See? If I know your heart a little bit, maybe I could use your name like that. But also people's size. You never say, somebody is heavy or skinny, or tall, or short or something like that. You just stay off of those things. If you say it...and even if you say it in a...to be funny, in a funny way, to where you think that individual get blessed; they don't, at least not deep in their heart. Just stay off of those things. Think what will really help that individual? See, if I talk about...you know, if you came up and talked about me being overweight, why, that wouldn't bless me. I know I am, you don't have to tell me about it. And if you maded fun of it, it wouldn't make me feel any better. See. Would it? See, you have to explore my heart. Nobody said that about me, but I know what you're thinking. [Laughter]. Okay!

But I never talk about anybody else that way. And I can talk about myself but not you. Okay? Or if you say just the opposite. If somebody is heavy, you call them skinny. Or if they're skinny, you call them heavy. See? That's...it's the same thing...so don't. Words that edify. See. "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop," bend...makes the heart bend over.

Proverbs 12:25b:

...but a good word maketh it [what?] glad.

See that? A good word, a good word will bless, edify, build up. A good word makes the heart glad, but heaviness causes it to stoop over. That's why your words...you know, if you're using foul language or language that's bitter or criticism constantly, that tears somebody down. But a good word makes that heart what? {Glad.} See, builds it up, makes it glad. Then the next verse right after that is our verse we've been working on.

Proverbs 12:26a:

The righteous...[explores] his neighbor [before he gives out his words]:....

See it, the context? The righteous explores his neighbor. Now how do I know if my picking on your name would offend you or not, unless I knew a little bit about you? See. But on the other hand, there's certain things maybe I just don't want to get involved with, I'd rather stay off of. Because I know, even though you might say it's alright, yet deep down in your heart, certain things affect individuals universally. And that's where you have to have that empathy, or being able to look into someb...what's that word where you have insight into...introspection. Is that the...(well, whatever it is)...where you are able to look into other people's lives and to understand those individuals. Is that introspection? No, that's looking in yourself. Compassion. Well, there's some big long word that I learned once, and forgot it...so. But you know the concept, what I'm talking about; where you're able to look into that individual's life to see what would...some people have the ability to do it and some don't. And the reason they don't is because they never thought about looking at other people's lives because they're very self-centered. But you've got to be able to look into other people's lives to understand what would help and bless that individual, instead of always being...looking on...into your own life. A good word makes the heart glad, the righteous explores his neighbor. So what words is he going to use? Good words, that will make his heart glad.

Proverbs 12:26b

...but the way of the wicked [tears...leads them astray, leads them to destruction, misleads them].

In chapter 15, verse 1.

Proverbs 15:1:

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

So if you want to stir up anger, use some grievous words. It works! Dynamite!!! But if you want to turn away anger or wrath, then a soft answer. A soft answer.

Proverbs 15:23a:

A man hath joy by [reason] of his mouth: and a word *spoken* in due season...

How SWEET it is! [Laughter]

Proverbs 15:23b:

...how good *is it!*

A word spoken in due season, how good is it? What does it do? It builds up, it makes the heart glad. The word spoken in due season. Chapter 16, verse 23.

Proverbs 16:23 and 24:

²³ The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

²⁴ Pleasant words *are as* an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

The marrow of the bones of course is where the blood is generated and that's where the soul life is. (That'd be a good one for the Healing Arts Conference coming up there.) Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. Chapter 17. The Word heals, you know. Verse 9; 17:9.

Proverbs 17:9:

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

That's called gossip. Again, criticism, gossip, running off of the mouth when you ought to be keeping it quiet. It separates friends. Chapter 18, verse 13.

Proverbs 18:13a:

He that answereth a matter before he heareth *it*

Now, that's hearing to the end of understanding.

Proverbs 18:13b:

...it *is* folly and shame unto him.

If you answer a matter before you really understand it, it becomes folly and shame to you. When somebody asks you something...you know, if you know the answer, you tell them. But on the other hand, there are some things you've got to ponder, explore. You explore your neighbor's heart, study it before you're able to really know what to do and say that would bless him. Whereas the wicked, he just rambles on; doesn't care who he misleads or destroys. Chapter 21, verse 23.

Proverbs 21:23:

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

You want to stay out of trouble? Just guard your mouth and your tongue. It'll help you. In chapter 25, verse 11. You ought to know this one.

Proverbs 25:11:

A word fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Of course, it's not apples. Johnny apple seed planted those. It's oranges of gold in trays of silver. And the reason for this custom is because in the East when the traveler would come in off the road, they would have a silver tray on the table and it would be piled full of big oranges. Not your little Florida oranges, but big juicy, succulent oranges, bursting with flavor. You've seen them in the ads perhaps where they burst open, the juice flies out. Well these gushed out. [Laughter.] Very refreshing to the traveler. After you've traveled down the dusty trail and you come into somebody's house, boy, this was better than a drink of water. Very refreshing to see those oranges of gold in trays of silver. And of course, the gold represents prosperity, silver represents power in the Bible. So you have prosperity and power, as well as that which is refreshing to the traveler. That's what a word fitly spoken is to the individual. If you have the right word that you say at the right place, at the right time, to the right individual, it's like refreshing, prosperous power. Power for Abundant Living. How is that? Refreshing power for abundant living. Like to the traveler, to see that in somebody's home. But if the word is not fitly spoken, if you just ramble off the mouth or you use a lot of foul language or you use bitter words or words that tear down rather than edify...then it's more like a piece of green bread on brown china. [Laughter] Green, because it's moldy and brown because it's dirty...if you get the picture. Oranges of gold. That's a word fitly spoken. Have you ever had a word fitly spoken? Somebody said something to you at the right place, at the right time? Or you said something to somebody at the right place, at the right time. God's Word fitly spoken, what does it do? It refreshes. It brings prosperity and it brings power to that individual's life. That's why you have to study your neighbor. You explore and explore the Word and walk by the spirit of God within you so that you know what to say. You know what words are fit to say at a time that will cause that person to be refreshed, to prosper and to be filled with power. Chapter 28, verse 23.

Proverbs 28:23:

He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

Now, there's many other verses like this. And I wanted to throw it in by way of contrast and yet, it's the same thing. Because you've...it's a fine line sometimes. You've got to know when to rebuke someone sharply like the...it mentions in Titus. Rebuking. And afterwards you find more favor than someone that's simply flatters with his tongue. Flattery, of course gets you nowhere. But flattery is just as bad as foul language, or bitter or destructive language. Flattery has the same voiding effect, the same destructive effect. When you're supposed to speak up, then you're supposed to speak up. But I've hit the other side tonight because there's too much speaking out when you ought to be studying to know what to say. Not necessarily you, but I've seen it. And language, and especially in public. And don't forget, I Thessalonians 5:22, it says:

I Thessalonians 5:22:

Abstain from [the] appearance of evil.

Not just evil but even anything that looks bad to your neighbor. To abstain from the appearance and again it's a fine line to know what to do if you really want to help and bless that individual. Now sometimes, maybe it's better...you know to...to go the other way, but too often we use things for an excuse. Well, it doesn't matter what you do. Well, we're an example, we're an example.

And back here in Proverbs 12, this righteous person, he explores, he studies his neighbor so he knows what to say and how to act, what to do in each situation. But on the other hand, the way of the wicked misleads, or leads to destruction. Now the way of the wicked. It doesn't say the wicked seduceth or misleads. We know that the wicked does mislead. But that's not what it says. What does it say? It says the *way* of the wicked misleads. In other words, his way. His way is his example. They don't look...or listen necessarily to what he says, but they see what he does. His actions, his manner of life, his way, his example is destructive. It leads...or misleads; leads them to destruction. So your example, your way of life as a righteous person has to be leading them the proper way. Has to lead them to something better. And to do that, you have to be able to look into that individual's life. To explore, to study, to search out your neighbor, so that you know what to do that will edify and what to say that will edify, rather than what tears down, what's derogatory, what defeats people. Jesus Christ came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. The thief comes to steal, kills and destroy. See. Our actions, our words fall into one or the other of those two categories. Now verse 27.

Proverbs 12:27:

The slothful [of course is the lazy] *man* roasteth not that which he took in

hunting: but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.

It doesn't make a whole lot of sense. First of all, the slothful man doesn't go to the trouble of roasting, yet he went through all that trouble of hunting? I mean...it seems to me it takes a lot more time to go out and hunt a deer than it would to cook it. Would it? I don't know, maybe not. But at least if I went out and hunted one, I'd stick around and at least cook it so I could eat something. Wouldn't you? It doesn't make sense that the lazy man would even bother to go hunting. Well, he doesn't. Most of the translations and the Greek Septuagint as well as the Aramaic and the Hebrew all have the following essence. "The slothful takes no game, or does not hunt". You could translate it that way. The slothful takes no game or he doesn't hunt. But the diligent gets plenty. The slothful is too lazy even to hunt, or even if he does go out in the field or the woods to hunt, he's too lazy to really put himself into it. It's like me when I go fishing. When I go fishing, I go in the middle of the day when all the fish are taking a nap, their siesta, and it's just convenient time. And I dig some worms at the last minute at the edge of the garden, throw them in a bucket, take them down to the lake, hook them on to my hook, throw the pole in the water, sit back and read a book. Sometimes, I do that. Sometimes I don't take a book along, and I don't catch a thing.

But the other morning I got up and went out to the lake at 5:30. and I caught four fish. Just so I could teach this. [Laughter] One was so big I couldn't get it in the car...well, anyway. [Laughter] But the slothful, he's so lazy that he won't go hunting. Or even if he does, he really doesn't put himself into it. He doesn't catch any fish, or he doesn't catch any game. That's why the literal or translations, most of them read, have that essence. The slothful takes no game, or he doesn't hunt. But the keen or diligent person gets plenty. Some use the word "keen" rather than diligent. And again this idea is not unfamiliar to the rest of Proverbs. Look right up above in verse 24.

Proverbs 12:24:

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

See, the diligent person...person, he's going to catch plenty of game. But the slothful person, he isn't going to get any food. He's not going to get any game, because he's too lazy to really put himself into the hunt. He's too lazy to go out and work or to earn a living, he's going to be under tribute. He's going to be working for someone else. He's going to be somebody else's slave. Back in chapter 10, verse 4.

Proverbs 10:4a:

He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand:...

It's not talking about cards but talking about working. If you work with a slack hand.

Proverbs 10:4b:

...but the hand of the diligent [shall...or] maketh rich.

If you're diligent, you become rich. If you're lazy, you become poor. Then you go to chapter...chapter 15, verse 19. Here's a good one.

Proverbs 15:19:

The way of the slothful [the lazy] *man* is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

Or "is a high way," it should read. It's a raised road. That's where we get highway from. Because the road was raised. It was above the level of the rest of the terrain so that it wouldn't be flooded out; and that kind of thing where you could walk or you take your carts across on dry ground and so on. It was a high way. In the low way, is where you had all these thorn bushes, the hedge of thorns. Now think about it. If you were going to go from New Bremen to New Knoxville and there was one high way, a road that you could take, and all the rest was a hedge of thorns. Which way would you travel? The high way. Which way do you run? How many of you run through a raspberry patch when you go jogging? Not too many. You run down the road. Right? You pick a high way, where it's dry, and so on. That's the slothful man; when he goes, he goes through the hedge of thorns. It doesn't mean he literally does, but because he's so lazy, his way is very slow, very hard to get through the thorn patch. It would be much easier to go down the high way. That's what the rich man does...or not the rich, the diligent (the way of the righteous), because he's not afraid to work. He gets out there and puts himself to it, and so he runs down the road of life, instead of going through the hedge. Now if you had a race and you're going to run down the high way and somebody else is going to run through the hed...[clears throat] hedge of thorns, who do you think is going to win? Equally match people. The one that runs down the high way. See. So you want to travel slow, you want to travel fast? If you want to go fast, you go the righteous way, the diligent way. You're not lazy. Same idea that we read in the other chapter. Look at chapter 19, verse 15; 19:15.

Proverbs 19:15:

Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer [what?] hunger.

Sure! He takes no game. He's not going to have any food to eat. He suffers hunger. And chapter 20, verse 5...4, verse 4.

Proverbs 20:4a:

The sluggard [that's again the lazy man] will not plow by reason of the cold;...

Oh! It's a little chilly out today, I don't think I'll go plowing.

Proverbs 20:4b:

...*therefore* shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

If he doesn't plow when it's plowing time, no matter if it's a little chilly or not, and then he's not going to eat when it comes harvest time. He's going to have to beg. The same idea. The lazy man takes no game or he doesn't hunt. Whereas the keen or diligent man has plenty. Back to twelve, Proverbs 12. See that? The slothful gets no game. But the diligent has plenty, he gets plenty. Because he's not afraid to work, to get out there and hunt, get up at the right time of day, set the proper traps or whatever he needs to do as a hunter, stalking his prey. So he finds what he needs. Then verse 28.

Proverbs 12:28:

In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.

Now that's not bad, but it's not right. [Laughter.] This last part, "in the pathway thereof there is no death", they have all these italics added, because the Hebrew technically is very difficult to translate. Matter of fact, it just doesn't make a lot of sense. But the...the essence is retained in other versions, like the Septuagint and the Aramaic and so on. And that is that it should read: First part; "In the way of righteousness is life;..." that's okay; "...but the way of wickedness leads to death." But the way of wickedness leads to death. And again you can see it's an antithetic parallel. The way of wickedness as opposed to the way of righteousness. Righteousness leads to life; wickedness, the way of wickedness leads to death. See. So you have power for abundant living or weak and poverty...death or something. You have the two ways of life; or one way of life, one way of death. And this is the summation of that which has gone before in the last couple chapters. When you apply all these principles, live by these proverbs, let these proverbs be your guide in your life. Like not being lazy, like not being wicked, or not being a fool. In other words, getting smart on God's Word, becoming diligent in your efforts that you put forth in life. And then...then, walking according to the Word, being righteous in your dealings, to explore your neighbor, to try to help your neighbor. Then, that leads to life. Righteousness, the way of righteousness is life. But on the other side, for the fool, the wicked and the lazy man, his pathway or his way, the way of the wicked is...or leads to death. Just the opposite. The contrast. That's the summation of this section. Then we will get into another section in chapter 13. But look again at these last few verses. We haven't studied this whole chapter but these last few verses from 24.

Proverbs 12:24:

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

The lazy man is going to have to serve. He's going to be begging. Then, it moves to the wicked.

Proverbs 12:25a:
Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop:...

And it's the wicked that cause such heaviness.

Proverbs 12:25b:
...but a good word [makes] it glad.

Then it moves into the next one.

Proverbs 12:26a:
The righteous is more...

I mean "explores his neighbor." Why? So he knows the good word to give. He knows what will edify rather than tearing down or defeating someone.

Proverbs 12:26b:
...but [in contrast] the way of the wicked [misleads] them.

Causes heaviness to their heart like we read up in verse 25. Then we go back again to the slothful, the lazy man. The one's that's going to be under tribute. He gets no game. Because he's too lazy to work, so he has nothing to eat. But the diligent has plenty. And then all these other things that are in these verses ahead of here. All these things if you apply them, then the conclusion is:

Proverbs 12:28:
...the way of righteousness *is* life;...

...but the contrasting way is the way of the wicked which is death. See. The two ways of life summed up. Then you go into the next section again:

Proverbs 13:1:
A wise son *heareth* his father's instruction:...

So heavenly Father, we sure thank you and love you for the greatness of your Word that we can study and make it a part of our lives. That we can walk, be examples, in our words, in our behavior, in all that we do. And I thank you this night for the Corps here and around the country, for Dr. Wierwille and Rev. Martindale, for their families, for the ministry and the life of your Word that lives in the hearts of your people wherever they go. Thank you Father that we can understand your Word in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen! Good night and God

bless you.

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May 12, 1982

Proverbs
Proverbs 13, 16, 17
Rev. Cummins

Alright. Well, are you ready to go to Proverbs? Or are you too excited about where you're going to be? Maybe we will just close [laughter]; no we won't do that. I thought tonight, we ought to cover at least chapters 13-17. So, we'll see how far we can get. We're going to start in chapter 13 anyway. Chapter 13, verse 12, you have a verse that I'm sure most of you have seen before that talks about hope. It says:

Proverbs 13:12:
Hope deferred [makes] the heart sick:...

And I believe this entire chapter, the real context, in which it...you know, what this chapter is all about is hope. Whether it's hope...long time hope in the future, like the hope of Christ's coming was to them for Israel, his first coming; as the hope is to us for his second coming. Or a hope that may be a shorter distance away; in the category of pay, rewards, inheritance. Those things are covered throughout this chapter. As a matter of fact, you look at verse 2 and look at it in that light. It says:

Proverbs 13:2a:
A man shall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth:...

What he eats is because of what he puts into his work today. He has a hope. He's going to eat tomorrow because of his work today.

Proverbs 13:2b:
...but the soul of the transgressors *shall eat* [supplied by ellipsis there: shall eat] violence.

Their reward, their hope for the future is not a substantial meal, it's violence that they're going to reap. Then you look at verse 4.

Proverbs 13:4a:
The soul of the sluggard [the lazy man] desireth, and *hath* nothing:...

What's his reward? Nothing. He wants to have something, he longs, but he has no hope, because he doesn't put any effort into it. He's lazy.

Proverbs 13:4b:

...but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

The soul shall be made fat. He's going to reap. He's going to eat. He's going to have his rewards. Then you get to verse 7.

Proverbs 13:7a:

There is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing:...

There is that type of person who makes himself rich, but yet he has nothing. He's rich in the world, but when it comes to the Word and spiritual things, what does he have? Nothing.

Proverbs 13:7b:

...*there is* that maketh himself poor yet *hath* great riches.

The individual that makes himself poor, but he's concerned about spiritual matters; he has great riches. He has hope, he has rewards laid up for him. We don't work for pay today. You need enough to keep body and soul together. But our pay is when? In the future when Christ returns. Our rewards, that's our real concern. That's what this is talking about.

Proverbs 13:8a:

The ransom of a man's life [or his...what redeems his life...is] his riches:...

Now if his riches are of the world, if he's made himself rich in the world, he still has what? Nothing. So what good does that riches do him? But the man who is rich in the Word, rich in spiritual matters, he has a lot. He has rewards coming. He has an inheritance and all the rewards for what he's done here today, laid up for him. That's what redeems his life, that's his riches.

Proverbs 13:8b:

...but the poor heareth not rebuke.

He may be rebuked for what he does. He's still concerned with worldly riches, yet he has nothing. He's still in the poor category. Then you look at verse 11.

Proverbs 13:11a:

Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished:...

If somebody gets wealth by false means or by deceitful means...yet he has nothing or it's going to be diminished.

Proverbs 13:11b:

...but he that gathereth [by what?] by labour [by work] shall increase.

As long as you're not afraid of work, willing to put the effort into it, the overtime, whatever needs to be done, you're constantly going to be increasing. But if it's wealth that you acquire quickly by illegal means or by perverse means, then it's going to gradually get smaller and smaller. You might live great today in the ministry. You might take the class and you get so excited about things but then you get tricked into living for the things of the world. But yet, things seem to be going for you real nicely, because boy, you've had the Word. And then all of sudden things start diminishing, and before you know it you're on spiritual skid row. That's what it's talking about. Then you get to verse 12. And it says:

Proverbs 13:12a:

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick:...

Still this whole context is the hope that you have; your rewards, your pay, your inheritance as a believer, as opposed to the rewards, hope, pay and so on that the unbeliever doesn't have. Now hope deferred, or drawn out, maketh the heart sick. You have a hope that something is going to happen next month. But next month comes, and it doesn't happen. You have to wait maybe another month. It's drawn out, it makes your heart sick. In the context of Christ's return, in the first century, they were expecting Christ to come back anytime. He could of, couldn't he? Today we look for his return very soon. He could come back anytime. On the other hand he may not come back for another two thousand years. And we've always got to keep that in mind. That's why when day by day, year after year goes by and Christ doesn't return, we still can't take our eyes off of the Hope. Even though that's drawn out, even though it's deferred so it doesn't happen right away, we've got to keep our eyes on the Hope. When Christ does return, we know we're going to be rewarded. There's going to be an inheritance.

Proverbs 13:12b:

...but *when* the desire cometh,...

Of course "when" is in italics. The word "cometh" means, "fulfilled, realized or come through". When your desire or longing is fulfilled, when it's realized, when that hope...when what you were hoping for comes to pass, it's a tree of life.

Proverbs 13:12b:

...but...desire [fulfilled],...*is* a tree of life.

You hope for something: let's say for your government check, you know it should come next month. Next month comes, it's not there. It's deferred, it's drawn out, it's extended. And your heart gets what? Sick. Because you depend upon the government. The government is my shepherd, I shall not want. Not quite. But then, when that check comes, your desire is fulfilled,

it's realized, it's come true, it's a tree of life. But that's only temporal. When Christ returns, what a tree of life that will be. See? What a gre...how much greater is the hope that we have. And when it's realized, when it's fulfilled, when we have what we're looking for, longing for, desiring, what a realization! And what a tree of life it'll be. Isn't that a beautiful verse? Now go down to 19. This whole thing of hope continues.

Proverbs 13:19a:

The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul:...

When you have that desire, the hope...but when it's accomplished, it's sweet to the soul. Like up above, it says, "the desire fulfilled is a tree of life." Here it describes it as sweet to the soul.

Proverbs 13:19b:

...but *it is* abomination to fools to depart from evil.

That's what they did at Hiroshima, "a-bomb-in-nation" [laughter]. Okay...well anyway, it's an abomination to fools to depart from evil. They think...but yet the fool has not hope. (I'll let DR laugh and tell the jokes. Okay.) "Desire accomplished is sweet to the soul," when that is realized...when you as a believer have a hope and that hope comes to pass, it's realized, it's sweet. But the fool, he really has no hope and so he refuses to depart from evil. It would be an abomination for him to depart. Then verse 20.

Proverbs 13:20a:

He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise:...

He has a hope because he is wise.

Proverbs 13:20b:

...but a companion of fools [has no hope...he] shall be [what?] destroyed.

Is there any hope in destruction? No.

Proverbs 13:21a:

Evil pursueth sinners:...

Because he has no hope, he's not going to be rewarded.

Proverbs 13:21b:

...but to the righteous good shall be [what?] {repayed}.

There's your reward. There's your hope. He's going to be repaid for the righteous, the good, that he does. Then verse 22.

Proverbs 13:22a:

A good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children:...

To his children's children. He may not be around to see it, but he leaves that inheritance for his children's children. And not talking about...like money...just leaving money or anything like that, but in a bigger sense. I think about the statement Dr. Wierwille made to Tom Jenkinson on the film...about...he wasn't building this for Tom, he was building it for his children, building it for the next generation, which is the third generation from Dr. Wierwille. When he plants a tree out here, I think he said it at lunch the other day. He said, "I may never see...or sit under the shade of those trees, but I know some day, somebody will; maybe you or maybe your children will." See? He leaves an inheritance to his children's children. There's hope. When you plant a tree today, why do you plant it? Because you can go out and sit under the shade? No. So you...if you plant a three foot apple tree today, you can go out tomorrow and pick apples, right? No. I just planted a few recently and I know it doesn't work that quick. You've got to wait a few years. But I have hope, someday I'm going to eat apples off those trees. Right?

Proverbs 13:22b:

...and the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up...

He lays up his wealth too. The righteous man lays up his for his children's children. He plants today, plants the trees, does the things that build a facility so that his children's children can really enjoy it. But the wealth of the sinner is also laid up. He's laying up wealth, isn't he? But who is it laid up for?

Proverbs 13:22c:

...for the just.

He's not laying it up for himself. He can't take it with him. Somebody's got to get it after he's gone. Right? The sinner...he's laying it up for the just. Isn't that nice to know that you're just once in a while anyway?

Proverbs 13:23:

Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* destroyed for want of judgment.

That's a difficult verse. I'll come back to it in a minute.

Proverbs 13:24:

He that spareth his rod hateth his son:...

If you don't use the rod of correction, you know, the physical rod as well as the words that accompany it of correction, if you don't use that on your son once in a while, you hate your son, it says.

Proverbs 13:24:

...but he that loves him chasteneth him betimes.

He chastens him. Why? What's the context? Hope. Because he has hope that that spanking today, or whatever it takes for correction, will produce some good in the future. Hope. See it?

Proverbs 13:25:

The righteous eateth to the satisfying of [the] soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

Because he has no hope. Now back to 23. Right in the middle of this we're dealing with hope, our rewards, inheritance, leaving an inheritance for your children's children in the future. So this verse has to fit in that context.

First of all the word "tillage". By the way, the Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic and Latin texts all have different readings on this verse. The reason being, the original apparently was misunderstood and then someb...or else...changed and then every text from there on out couldn't make sense out of it. So they just translated it the way they felt would be best and all four of them disagreed. Well anyway. The word "tillage" is the Hebrew word *nir*, N-I-R; N-I-R. And it means "ground recently broken up". It's only used three times in the Old Testament. It's related to a verb form that means "to break up or to plow". In Jeremiah 4:3, you have one of the usages of this, uses of it. Jeremiah 4:3

Jeremiah 4:3:

For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.

Break up your fallow ground ; the words "fallow ground" is this word *nir*. It's ground that has recently been broken up. The word "break up" is the verb form of this word *nir*. So *nir* your *nir* would be a figure of speech. What one? Which one? *Polyptoton* is right; *Polyptoton*. Where you have the same word used in different parts of speech. One's verb, one's a noun. So it's...you know, if you wanted to come across with that same sense in English, you'd say "Plow

your plowed ground, and sow not among thorns.” In other words, you get out there in your plowed ground and plow it up again. Make it really good, nice and loose so you can really plant something in it. Okay? Don’t plant it among thorns. Maybe your ground has been plowed but now you get out there and you plow it again because you might have some weeds that have come up since you last plowed it. And you don’t want thorns and weeds growing among your other plants, do you? At least not to begin with. Later on you can go pull them out, do something. But right now, let’s plow it up again. So plow your plowed ground. *Polyptoton*. Got it? Over to Hosea chapter 10. Hosea chapter 10, verse 12. Well let’s look at verse 11.

Hosea 10:11:

And Ephraim *is as* an heifer *that is* taught, *and* loveth to tread out *the corn*; but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, *and* Jacob shall break his clods.

In other words, really get out there and mix that field up, would you?

Hosea 10:12a:

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground:...

You see, “fallow ground”, that’s plowed ground again, broken up ground. And break up is again the verb. So it’s “*nir* your *nir*”. Another *polyptoton*. Break up your broken up ground, or plow your plowed ground.

Hosea 10:12b:

...for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Isn’t that a beautiful illustration? Break up...break up your broken up ground, so that you can plant your things, sow in righteousness and you reap in mercy. God’s going to rain His righteousness down upon you. What a garden! Planted in the garden of life. I think there’s a song to that effect. We’re not weeds anymore. Now back to Proverbs, chapter 13 verse 23.

That word “tillage” is this word *nir* which means broken up ground, or plowed up ground. And there’s much food or an abundance of food in the plowed ground of the poor. Or you could say, “the plowed ground of the poor yields much food” is essentially what it says. Somebody has a piece of ground, maybe he hasn’t much, but as long as he’s willing to plow that ground, to break it up, to work it, to plant the seeds in it, what’s he going to do? He’s going to eat off of that ground when? The day after he plants? {No.} In due season. In due season we reap. He’s going to reap. Because he has...what’s the context? Hope. See it, how it fits in the context? The plowed ground of the poor yields much food because he has hope. If he looked at the ground, didn’t plant anything in it, because he said, “Boy, I have to wait too long. By that

time I might move away.” He’s not going to reap off of it. He has no hope in that plowed ground.

Proverbs 13:23b:

...but there is *that is* destroyed for want of judgment.

It’s sort of a strange translation. First of all, the word “destroyed” means in Hebrew “is swept away”, “is swept away”. You could in the context I think, translate it “perish”. Then “for want of judgment” is “by injustice”; “by injustice”. Now the thing that made it difficult for the translators...not only in English, but also in going into the Greek, Latin and Aramaic and so on, Hebrew, that I mentioned before, is that there’s really no subject here. Something is swept away by injustice is how it reads. The word “something” isn’t there. Blank. The context start because we read about the plowed ground of the poor yielding much food, an abundance of food. And the context deals with hope. I think you could put in there, “the much food”. But much food is swept away by injustice. In contrast, because remember these are either contrasting or corresponding. And here we have evidently a contrast. In contrast to tilling the ground or plowing the ground in anticipation of eating from it. When you mistreat the ground or you don’t plow, you don’t plant, you don’t do the work that has to be done, there’s not any food. There’s no hope for eating off of that ground. Is there? Or you could supply that “men are swept away by injustice”. Meaning that they will not eat from that land, because they mistreat it, there’s injustice involved. They do not believe that that ground will really produce. Or they’re too lazy to put the work into it, that needs to be done in order to reap from that land. Or if they plow and they plant, maybe something tears them away from it. So if we plow and plant today in the ministry and all of a sudden the world yanks you away from the Word, from the fellowship of believers, what hope do you have of eating off of that? What reward is there for us? None. See? You’re pulled away from it by injustice. But if you plow the ground, there’s going to be food and if you don’t eat it, somebody will. That’s right. You may plow the ground, you may plant the seeds and then leave. Somebody else may eat the food, or the birds will. So that’s that verse: The plowed ground of the poor yields an abundance of food, but much food (or the men) are swept away by injustice. They perish with injustice. Because they’re afraid to work or they abuse the ground.

I thought of the give-away programs, government give-away programs, where they give the food away. Even though somebody plows, plants, it gives it away. Well, who’s going to plow and plant if they can get it from the government? Right? If the government comes in and gives you everything that you need, all your food and everything, then why should you work? So let’s all quit working. When we all quit working then nobody is producing food, then the government can’t give it away anymore. Right? It makes good sense, I mean poor sense. Alright, that was one of the difficult verses in this section.

Now chapter 14 and 15 are pretty good chapters, a lot of good proverbs in here. Chapter

16, I want you to go there. Verse 1.

Proverbs 16:1:

The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

That first line. “The preparations of the heart in man”, has no verb. And it should have a verb supplied by ellipsis. The same as there’s an ellipsis in the second part. See the word “is”? That is supplied by ellipsis. The answer of the tongue, is from *Jehovah*. Or you could say comes from *Jehovah*. The first one needs a verb supplied by ellipsis. To man “pertain” the plans of his heart. To man are, or pertain, the plans of his heart. But the answer of the tongue comes from *Jehovah*. The answer of the tongue means “the last word, the final decree”. Man may make plans in his heart. You may make a lot of plans, but the final decisions have to come from where? The LORD. Matter of fact, in verse 9, it says:

Proverbs 16:9a:

A man’s heart deviseth his way:...

He may make his plans, he devises his way, but the LORD does what? He has the final word.

Proverbs 16:9b:

...[He directs] his steps.

Man may make the overall plans, he may say, “Well, look I want to go from this side of the river to that side of the river”, but God has to tell him where to step across. He says, Go down stream ten feet so you don’t fall in the quick sand. But don’t go twelve feet or you’ll miss the stepping stones. God directs your steps. You make... may make plans. And each individual is an individual. You know, each of you has desires and things in your heart because you’re an individual. God has called you, but you’re still a unique person. You’re not me and I’m not you. We’re not all somebody else. We’re all individuals in that sense and we have our desires. Some of you may be good architects. Some of you may be good attorneys. Some of you may be good nurses. Some of you may be good counselors. Some of you may be good comedians, but not all of us are. Some of us try too hard. [Laughter] Anyway. And we’re very trying. God still has to direct your steps, tell you which...what to do in each situation. A business man; he wants to go in a business, he runs his business. But how he runs that business, if he really wants to be successful according to the Word, who does he listen to? God. That’s right, it’s a walk. See how that verse 1 now fits with verse 9. As a matter of fact, the whole essence of this chapter is “You may make plans, but God has the final word.” God directs your steps. Well, look at verse 3.

Proverbs 16:3:

Commit [your] works unto the LORD, and [your] thoughts [will] be established.

Let God direct your steps. Let Him have the final word. See it? Verse 7.

Proverbs 16:7:

When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

See? If God tells you what to do, He can even help you to the point that your enemies are at peace with you. At least they can't touch you. A lot of this in this chapter...and if you look at it in that light. Look at the last verse, 33.

Proverbs 16:33a:

The lot is cast into the lap;...

Now, what's a lot? It doesn't mean a whole bunch of stuff. It's the pebble, the stone that was used in voting. Right? Or like the Urim and Thummin in Exodus. The priest held the Urim and Thummin in his breastplate, which he used to make righteous decisions. And it wasn't that he randomly said, "Eenie, meenie, minie, moe", it was that he knew which one to select IF God was working in his heart. He walked by rev...God had the final word. He walked by revelation. If he walked by revelation, he got the right decision. See? The lot, the pebble, the stone may be cast into the bosom. "Lap" is "bosom".

Proverbs 16:33b:

...but the whole disposing thereof *is* of [whom?]...

It's still God that makes the final decision. If somebody throws the wrong lot, or if you vote for the wrong thing, God's Word is still going to rule over it. Okay? God still will have the final say. And if you live by your wrong decision, it's not in accordance with God's Word, what's going to happen? Problems. That's why you let God...you may make plans but you let God direct your steps along the way. You may make your plans but you let Him have the final word. You may vote on something, but God still takes care of the final disposing of the thing. All throughout this chapter, if you read it in that light, you'll see the greatness of our walk and how we do make decisions and plans and things. But the final word still has to come from God. That's our walk. See. And how can you know what the final word is from God if you don't walk by revelation. I mean, if there is no such things as revelation and walking by the spirit...you know, little small voices that people will hear. That's just not heard of in our day and time because we are a scientific culture and we don't live by those things. Baloney. Maybe the culture is that way, but God is still at work within us to will and to do of His good pleasure. And we've got to let God work in our hearts. Read the chapter sometime in that light. It's a tremendous chapter. I want to see one more verse in this chapter, verse 31.

Proverbs 16:31a:

The hoary head *is* a crown of glory,....

Now “hoary” means “gray or white”. It’s the gray or white head. That’s a crown of glory. And the word “is” is not there in the Hebrew. They supplied it and I believe you should leave it out. You’ll notice the word “if” is also supplied. And I believe you should leave that out. And the word “be” should be translated “is”. Those are the only changes you have to make in order for this to make sense. The white or gray head. You know, the...who has a white hair? Older people. Right. That’s his crown of glory.

Proverbs 16:31b:

The [white or gray] head...a crown of glory,...it [is] found in the way of righteousness.

The reason people get old is because they live according to the Word. One of the promises in the Word is old age. You’ll read it quite a bit in Proverbs. Right? Old age. In other words, if you live according to God’s Word, keep His commandments, you’re going to have a long life, it says. You’re going to live long upon the earth. But if you don’t, you’re going to have trouble, problems, your life is going to be cut short.

Now this does not imply that everybody that’s old and has gray hair has been righteous all their life. Okay? It simply says that if you are righteous, if you do live according to the Word, if you’re in that way of righteousness, your...the odds of you getting to that age are much better. And that then is a crown of glory. You’ve lived long upon the earth. It’s a crown of glory. See it? There’s...there’s people that have lived unrighteously and lived a long time. But there are, I would say far more that have lived righteously and lived to that age where they saw gray hair. I mean...I’ve got...no [laughter]; nothing to do with that. But see that? How it’s a crown of glory because he’s righteous. The reason he’s...or...because he was righteous, he lived to be older and that’s why he lived old enough for his hair to turn gray, or white. So it’s a crown a glory to him. It’s beautiful. A lot of people get killed before their hair turns gray. Great thing of the culture.

Alright, chapter 17, verse 14 is the one we’re heading for. Says:

Proverbs 17:14:

The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

Well, let’s start with verse 1 and let’s pick up the context. Sounds a little wet, doesn’t it?

Proverbs 17:1:

Better *is* a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices *with* strife.

The essence of this chapter is getting into words of strife. That's the negative side of it. Opposite to that would be words that build up, words that edify, like we talked about a couple weeks ago. But you see a house...if you live in a house and you've got all kinds of sacrifices, all kinds of goods, everything you need...plus, and all you have is strife with it, somebody is always breathing down your neck, laying words on you that tear you apart, give you ulcer and everything else; it's better to have a dry morsel, and quietness therewith than all that. Remember Abraham Lincoln? Do you? You know, he through the bucket of water...or his wife threw the bucket of water on him. He said, "After all that thunder, there had to be a little bit of rain." I don't know...something like that...well anyway. Verse 4 says:

Proverbs 17:4a:

A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips;...

False lips speak what? Words of strife.

Proverbs 17:4b:

...*and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

What does a naughty tongue speak? Words of strife.

Proverbs 17:5a:

Whoso mocketh the poor...

Well, when you mock, what are you doing? Speaking words of strife.

Proverbs 17:5b:

...*and* he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.

If you're glad at calamities, what do you do? You speak words about how great calamities are. You get all excited about somebody dying or somebody, you know... verse 7, is another one.

Proverbs 17:7:

Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.

Lying lips are words of strife. Excellent speech is just the opposite. Verse 9.

Proverbs 17:9:

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

If somebody says something to you or you see something happen that's not right, not according to the Word, and you go around and gossip, share with someone else, it says, you separate friends. But if you cover the matter, put it in your lock box, shut up, then, you seek love. Difference between words of strife and keeping your mouth shut or speaking words that edify. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are good,...(and all those other things). Think those things." Instead of thinking all the evil crap about people. Think good. Think things that build up, edify. Alright? Verse 11.

Proverbs 17:11:

An evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

Somebody that's seeking rebellion is somebody that's out there sticking out his tongue at the enemy with words to try to egg him on. So who is going to be sent? A cruel messenger. What does a messenger do? He delivers messages. And these messages will have words of strife in them. Verse 13.

Proverbs 17:13:

Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

If somebody...the context is words of strife. You speak words of strife, evil, it's going to be rewarded. You're going to get some words back. And a few other things. Now verse 14.

Proverbs 17:14a:

The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water:...

The wor...the Septuagint used in translation, because they didn't quite understand it, used the word "word" instead of "water"; or "words". The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out words. Now literally, that's pretty good, because that's the context. When somebody lets out words, he starts strife. The wrong kind of words. But leaving it the way it is and this is the Hebrew and the Aramaic. The beginning of strife is as when one lets out water, like out of a dam or some other thing that's holding back water. A dam develops a little crack, what happens? All of a sudden that crack starts growing and growing and the dam bursts. Just a little water is let out at first. I think of the guy in the Netherlands who kept his finger in the dike. Remember that, for all that time? The reason he kept it in the dike was because he thought if he didn't...he pulled that thing out, first there's a little trickle, and then all of a sudden the whole dike gives way. You've got...if you've got a little trickle, you've got to mend that trickle before the dam bursts. That's what this verse is saying. When one lets out water, just a little bit first,

like a hole in the dam, that's the beginning of strife. When you let out a little bit of water, that's the beginning of that dam breaking. When you let out a little bit of words that tear down, it's only the beginning of strife. And what's going to happen? It's going to develop into a full-scale war, or divorce or something of that nature. This letting out a little bit of water, look how it developed before Noah's day. When they...you know, words of strife, they got worse and worse. Finally there was nobody righteous left upon the earth except one. Noah. Look at all the water that was let out there. I mean in a...you know, the water came literally, but the words of strife that preceded it. Or Egypt, I thought of the Egyptians being drowned in the sea. Look at all the words of strife of Pharaoh before that. And it started with just...you know, they were capti...Israel was captives, Pharaoh wouldn't let them go. You know, ten different plagues Moses sent them. Finally they left, he let them go. He still was mad. If he'd have stayed there, he would have stayed alive. But Pharaoh didn't. He fol...took his troops, followed after them, they all got drowned in the sea. They're physical illustrations, but that's how things start. Little words. A little hole in the dam and pretty soon the dam bursts. Little words that tear down, cause strife, and all of a sudden you've got a full-scale war or divorce, or a big calamity, a big political debate, things of that nature. Big disagreements. Now the second part of the verse.

Proverbs 17:14b:

...therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

It doesn't make a whole lot of sense either. And again the translators have had difficulty with it. One of them translated it as follows, and I think it's probably the best of all of them. "Stop the quarrel before it gets worse." That's what it means to leave off contention. Stop the quarrel, "...before it be meddled with" should be, "before it gets worse." Before this thing develops into a full-scale war, stop the quarreling. Stop the strife. Before you have to go get a divorce, stop your arguments. The beginning of strife is like when one just puts a little hole in the dam and lets out a little bit of water. And all of a sudden that hole gets bigger, and before you know it the whole dam breaks. But what should you do about it then? If you hear of a little quarrel developing, if you hear words of strife come out, that little hole in the dam, what do you do? Stick your finger in it. Plug it up, put some mud in it, concrete or something else. Check with Way Builders, what's the best stuff to put in it. But plug it up. Stop the quarrel before it gets worse, before it develops into a divorce, before it develops into a war, before it develops in a big dissention between groups or people. Keep your finger and look at Matthew chapter 5. Keep your finger *there* [laughter]; supplied by ellipsis. Matthew 5. Now I'm not covering all the verses in these different chapters. And I'm doing that on purpose because I think you can read it, and you've read Proverbs I'm sure before, at least sections of it, and you ought to continue to read it because there's a lot of great practical wisdom in it. But there's some of these difficult verses, if I handle those with you to show you some of the essence behind it or where it's been mistranslated, then you can work these sections along with the others. Matthew chapter what? Five? Chapter 5, verse 23.

Matthew 5:23:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

If you, say, are coming to the altar to do a sacrifice, to offer a gift at the altar, and all of a sudden as you get there, you remember, "Hey, my brother had a little quarrel developing with me. What he said to me was not too good. Some words of strife I think." What should you do? Verse 24 says:

Matthew 5:24a:

Leave there thy gift before the altar,...

Don't offer your gift, just set it down on the floor someplace and get out.

Matthew 5:24b:

...go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

If you remember you've got a quarrel with your brother and you're just about in the temple...or you're in the temple just about ready to offer your gift. Forget about offering the gift, put it down on the floor, or put it on the chair or some stand some place, go run out and make amends with your brother. Stop the quarrel before it gets worse. That's what Proverbs is talking about. Stop it before it gets worse. Then you can go back and offer your gift. Verse 25 has another great illustration.

Matthew 25:25a:

Agree with thine adversary quickly,...

You have a friend-emy, a friend that serves an enemy, an adversary. You agree with him quickly, get things together. Stop the quarrel before it gets worse. Before it really develops. If there's a hole in the dam, plug it, before the dam bursts. Agree with him quickly.

Matthew 25:25b:

...whiles thou art in the way...

While you're both still in the way; before he leaves and joins some other organization, alright? [Laughter.] No, right when you are there with him. You agree with him quickly. Settle the argument, quit the quarrel, stop the quarrelling before it gets what? Worse.

Matthew 25:25c:

...lest at any time the adversary [your friend-emy] deliver thee to the judge, and then the judge [delivers] thee to the officer...

And then what does the officer do? He sees to it that you're:

Matthew 25:25d
...cast into prison.

So a little hole in the dam, all of a sudden it develops a little bit bigger, then it becomes a crack, all of a sudden the crack gets wide and all of a sudden the dam gives way, bursts loose. Look at this, here's an adversary, you have a little argument. Well, go agree with him quickly, otherwise before you know it, the adversary is going to take you to the judge. And then, what's the judge going to do? Well, the judge is going to take you to the officer and the officer is going to take you to prison. And verse 26 says:

Matthew 25:26:
Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

You're going to stay in jail and rot until you've paid whatever you have to pay. That's the breaking of the dam That's why in Proverbs 17:14:

Proverbs 17:14:
The beginning of strife *is as* when one [lets] out water;...

A little bit at first, that's only the beginning of the strife. But it's going to develop into the breaking of the dam or a full-scale war or your ending up in prison. And they throw the key away, until you've paid the uttermost farthing. Therefore, quit quarreling, stop quarreling before it gets worse. Before you end up in jail. Before you end up in war, before you end up in divorce. Get to your adversary, agree, get the issue settled while it's still a little hole in the dam. See it? I think we say a stitch in time saves what? {Nine.} Right. A stitch in time saves nine. A stitch on the dam saves nine too. It saves the whole thing. We're in verse (what did I say?), 19; verse 19.

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

Now, he loveth transgression that loveth strife. The context again is what? Words of strife. Words of strife. And the guy that loves strife, he loves to give out those words that stir up strife, he then loves transgression too. He gets involved, I mean, he'll go the whole route and he that exalts his gate seeketh destruction. So, if you have a gate don't exalt it too much. [Laughter.] No, in the Eastern culture, they would build towers upon their houses or a pretty front. A facade, something that looked very attractive. As a matter of fact, it was so attractive

that robbers would see that and they'd say, AhA! a rich person lives here. Only a rich person could build that kind of a tower or gate or whatever you call it upon his house. So he knows exactly which house he ought to enter into if he's going to come out with a profit. So what this is saying is: he that exalts his gate, is looking for an inviting robbers into his house. He's looking for destruction. He might as well put a neon sign up there on top of his house that says robbers welcome, right? But the context is words of strife. And you can do it with words, the same as you can with a facade on your house. You can put a facade on your life, a front, you can brag about how great you are and how you have such tremendous ability. You can exalt yourself, you know, put...make yourself look so great, but you're inviting the attacker to attack you. In other words, if you say, you can handle any argument on the trinity, you're inviting a trinitarian to attack you. So if you make that statement, make sure that you can. Okay? I think we probably have a few people that could do that in the ministry. But it's better to be, what is it? Still and thought dumb, than to speak and to remove all doubt. That's the one I was trying to think of. Another proverb: It's better to hold your peace and instead of exalting yourself, you see what I mean? Exalting yourself, putting a gate on your life, or a tower, then... Because if you do that, you're inviting someone to attack you, you're inviting words of strife. That's the context. See. It's not talking about what you physically put on your house, but what you put on yourself. If you're inviting destruction, if you're inviting transgression, if you love strife...those kind of things. And I think the rest of the chapter there is pretty self-explanatory.

So those are a few of the difficult ones that you find in those chapters that I thought you should be aware of. And keep working Proverbs. Do you read Proverbs periodically? And some of the Proverbs I know have greater meaning for you individually than they would to someone else. You know, you might read a verse...boy, I used to do a lot of this...well, you know, I've got a lot of verses marked in Proverbs where I would a...would go through and I'd see different verses that I could really identify with. You know, like the slothful turning on his hinges. [Laughter]. Or whatever. I could identify, then I could do some improvement work on my front gate or something [laughter]. But the...you know, the same verses that mean something to me may not be the same that really hits you as you're going through it. But then later on, I know as I read, then other verses would hit me that I'd sort of skipped over quickly before. And I think as you continue to read it, then you'll see a lot of practical wisdom that you can utilize in your life, in the Corps, in business or in anything you're involved with...with the ministry or in helping other people as well. Because there is just so much tremendous wisdom. It's the wisdom of the wise, remember? It starts out in chapter 1 with who it's addressed to and what it contains. It's a great book. Okay?

[Prayer] *Well, Father we sure thank you and love you for your Word and the opportunity we have to live and believe together. Thank you for the ministry and the outreach around the world and for watching over your people wherever they are. Thank you Father for taking care of the situations overseas and for our country, our nation, for protecting your people in every way. And no harm can come to any of the believers. Thank you Father for such a tremendous*

*time of being together, for the Corps around the world in the name of your Son Jesus Christ.
Amen!*

God bless!

| _____

June 9, 1982

Proverbs
Closing
Rev. Cummins

Well, let's take your Bibles and go to the Book of Proverbs tonight. This will be the final teaching of Proverbs for the year. We're going to chapter 30. Now there's a lot of things in Proverbs that we haven't covered. A lot of it, again you can read and it's understandable, just from the English. There are a few other difficult places that you'd have to work, some of the texts and so on, in order to clarify some of the verses. But the vast majority of it, like always, is very clear. But I wanted to move ahead to chapter 30, which is the second to last chapter of the Book of Proverbs. Because I think it's very significant that after he's covered all the proverbs, after he has the great introduction, what the purpose of the Book of Proverbs is, he lays out the whole curriculum for the students, then he goes into those short narrative, develop...things [didactic narratives] in the first nine chapters. And then from chapter 10 all the way through now to chapter 29 he's handled individual proverbs. But every one of those is handled inside of a context. In other words, they're not just disjointed proverbs, but each one sets in its context. They are related in one way or another. And so it all ties together. But then, we get to chapter 30 and it again takes on a new format. It doesn't have those two parallel lines that are either antithetic or where they go together, where they say essentially the same thing. But we have another construction. It starts out:

Proverbs 30:1:

The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

Now, isn't that terrific? [Laughter.] It's one of those tremendously edifying verses as you read it through. First of all "the words of Agur", whether or not Agur was the teacher at the time that spoke it or the one that was responsible for the students, he was like one of many of the wise men. Remember wise men, how they watched over and taught the students? They were the PhD's of their times. They were the PhD's spiritually though when it came to the wisdom of the Word. But Agur may have been one, but these are still the Proverbs of Solomon. Because Proverbs 1:1 starts out what? The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David. So they're still Solomon's proverbs. Bullinger and others have suggested that Agur might even be another name for Solomon. Regardless, his name that's used here is significant. As a matter of fact, some have even thought that this name, as well as the name Jakeh and these other names, might have originally had an intended meaning; that they were actual words rather than proper names in the sentence. As a matter of fact, the Greek Septuagint version literally reads, the first part of this verse reads: "Reverence my words son and receiving them repent." It does not use proper

names at all. Reverence my words son and receiving them repent ; that's the first part of the verse in the Septuagint version. But the Septuagint version also places this entire chapter, as well as the first nine verses of chapter 31, someplace in chapter 24. So it's pulled them out of here because they looked like they really didn't belong at the end, they belonged someplace else. But I think they do belong here. And they are a tremen...this...both of these chapters, chapter 30 and 31, are tremendous summary chapters for the Book of Proverbs.

But the word "Agur" in the Hebrew, it's a passive participle which means "gathered". It comes from a verb which means "to gather or harvest". Like you gather in the crops at the end of the season. It's used in the sense here, I think it would be significant, as the teacher who gathers together the students, or as the one who has gathered together the sayings of the wise in order to present to the students. That's the significance of this name Agur. Similarly "Jakeh" in the Hebrew means "obedient". The Latin has an interesting reading; it like the Greek, it does not use proper names. It says, "the words of the assembler, the one who assembles [in other words, the teacher] the son of the vomiter." In other words, the one who pours out instruction. Okay? "The words of the assembler, the son of the vomiter [the one who pours out the instruction]." That's how the Latin reads, the Latin version. I think that's neat in light of Ecclesiastes 12:11...12:11 says: The words of the wise—and that's what we're dealing with here in Proverbs.

Ecclesiastes 12:11a:

The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened...

And the "goads and nails" were used to keep an animal in line as it was plowing in the field, so you wouldn't have crooked furrows. So this keeps the student in line, in plowing in the field of life. They are:

Ecclesiastes 12:11b:

...goads and nails, fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

The masters of assemblies. They were the teachers who taught the students, who assembled the students together. That's why I thought that Latin was sort of neat. The words of the assembler, the teacher, the one who assembles the students. And he's the son... son of the one who pours forth, who teaches the students the words of the wise. So the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh, have a very significant meaning; they're like the words of the assembler or the gatherer, the one who gathers, who is the son of obedience. Or as the Latin puts it, the son of one who pours forth God's Word.

Then you have, "even the prophecy". This is not the normal word for "prophecy". Before I tell you what it means, I know you're acquainted with the...what do you call it? The

Englishman's Greek concordance...what's it a...*The Word Study Concordance*, [by Tyndale]. You're acquainted with *The Word Study Concordance*. It uses Strong's numbering system. Then you can look up the word...the Greek word in the New Testament. After you know Strong's number, you can look it up in *The Word Study Concordance*, and then you can find every place that Greek word is used. Similarly, you could look it up in a couple of different lexicons and other things that are available, because it also uses that numbering system or gives the numbering system in *The Word Study Concordance*. But there's a similar thing available for the Old Testament. And I brought these along tonight. First of all again, you need *Strong's Concordance*. You'd look up this word "prophecy" for example, someplace in here. Oh I just happened to turn to it [Laughter]. You look up the word "prophecy" and look up Proverbs 30:1 and it tells you, it is the Hebrew word, now we're dealing with Old Testament so it would a Hebrew word, number 4853. So you have 4-8-5-3; that's the number. Now, you could go to the back of Strong's and it would give you a brief definition for this word that's translated "prophecy" here in Proverbs. However, there are two books, one is Gesenius' *Hebrew Chaldee the Lexicon to the Old Testament*. Gesenius is spelled, G-E-S-E-N-I-U-S. Then it's the *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*. This is a lexicon like Bauer's Lexicon is to the New Testament. Bauer's...I guess you call it by the translators Arndt and Gingrich; they were the ones that translated Bauer's work, so it's available in English. That's the one that *The Word Study Concordance* has the numbers in, so you could look it up there. However this one, Gesenius' *Hebrew Chaldee the Lexicon*...is a lexicon where you could look up this number, (what was it?) 4853 and it defines this particular Hebrew word. It...let's see, right here. It says it gives seven different usages of the word. First of all, it's a "verbal infinitive from the root" whatever. It's "a bearing" or "a carrying"; a bearing or a carrying, that which is carried. Then, "a burden or load", or "something uttered, as a sentence". And then, other meanings to it. But the basic meaning is "something that's carried" or "a burden", it's translated as a matter of fact. Now that gives you a definition of the word. Okay? A lexicon definition. You've worked this with the Greek before. And now, with this, you can work it easily with the Hebrew. Then you go to this other one, *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance to the Old Testament*. *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance to the Old Testament* and this is by Wigram (W-I-G-R-A-M). Then again you look up the number 4583...or 4853 and it gives you every place that that Hebrew word is used. Okay? Now you see how that would simplify your work if you're doing something in the Old Testament? Then again, you wouldn't have to look up every place in Strong's or in Young's where it's translated differently, because all the words are given...or all the places that this word is used is given right here. So it'll simplify the work. This is a lot like *The Word Study Concordance* in the New Testament. So you have 4853, you look up the word, and it gives you all the places that it's used. Then you could run through here and you'd see that a lot of times it's used of the burden that an animal carries...carries, when you put a burden on the back of an animal. But many, many times, it's used of a message that's delivered; as it said in our...our lexicon over here, just a little bit ago of a sentence or something that's delivered. But it's interesting that that word that's used of a burden should be used of a message that's communicated. Okay? Now you understand these two, how they work similar to

the Greek in the New Testament using *The Word Study*? Okay, I wanted you to see that to know that it's available. Alright.

Now going back to this word "prophecy". We're not going to look up every place the word is used. But I want you to look up a few of them. In Exodus 23:5 is the first occurrence. Exodus 23, verse 5.

Exodus 23:5:

If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden,...

Okay, now you see, here is an animal, and he has a load on his back. That's the burden. Now this is the first occurrence. It defines the word for you, doesn't it? It shows you...it's that load on the back of the animal. That's his burden. Alright. But, as I said, it's also used of a message, and particularly a message of God. In Habakkuk chapter 1. Habakkuk. Micah, Nehum, Habbakuk or Habbakuk [pronounced differently]. Chapter 1, verse 1. See it in verse 1?

Habakkuk 1:1 and 2:

¹ The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

² O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!...

The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see. In other words, it was the message that God gave to Habakkuk to give to the people, to Israel. It's that which is carried by the prophet in this case. Not that it's a burden in the sense of weighting you down, but it's a weighty matter, something of importance. That's why the term...this term is used. It's something that's weighty, it's something that's of importance. Now if it was a negative situation, where Israel had gotten out of fellowship, it could be like what we think of a burden. But Jesus said (you know), My burden is what? Light, or something. Well, none of God's words are a burden as long as you're walking on the Word. But they are weighty in the sense that they are important. See the significance of it? Now look at Zechariah chapter 9, verse 1.

Zechariah 9:1:

The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus *shall be* the rest thereof:...

Here again is the burden or the weighty matter, the matter of importance of the word of the LORD. It's another one. Malachi chapter 1, verse 1. It says essentially the same thing.

Malachi 1:1:

The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. Was it...it might have been a

burden to him in the sense we think of it. If they weren't in fellowship, which some of them weren't, because they were robbing God, that type of thing. But it's that it's an important message, it's a weighty matter that Malachi has to share. See how this is used? It's a prophetic term. A term that's used of delivering a message of vital importance that God wants carried to the people. And that's why that term is used. Now back to Proverbs chapter 30. We have:

Proverbs 30:1a:
The words of Agur the son of Jakeh,...

The burden, or the weighty matter, or the matter of importance from God to be carried to the people. Or in this case to the students, because we're still in Proverbs. Proverbs is to the young people, to the students who are learning. This is the...the words which are of importance. They're weighty to the student, something he has to commit to memory. Then it says:

Proverbs 30:1b:
...the man spake...

The word "spake" is used of different types of speaking. But it is used especially of the voice of God. When God spoke, this term is used. Genesis 22:16 is the first occurrence of the word. Genesis 22:16. Look at verse 15.

Genesis 22:15 and 16a:
¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,
¹⁶ And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD,...

See the word "saith"? That's this word "spake" that's used in Proverbs.

Genesis 22:16 and 17:
¹⁶ ...said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*:
¹⁷ That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven,...

See, it's an important message that he was giving to God...or God was giving to Abraham via this angel and it uses that special prophetic term that's used here in Proverbs, where it says, he spake. The man spake. So, one translation gives it as "the inspired utterance of the man", because this is a term used of the voice of God. This term is also used in Malachi 1:2. It's used a lot of other places. But I thought it was neat that's it used in Malachi 1:2, because we just read the burden in chapter 1, verse 1 of Malachi. These same two terms used together there. (Let me find it here...Zechariah, Malachi.) Verse 1.

Malachi 1:1 and 2:

¹ The burden of the word of the LORD [or the weighty message, the message of importance of the word of the LORD] to Israel by Malachi,

² I have loved you, saith the LORD:...

There is the word again, “saith”. That’s this word that’s used of prophetic utterance, the voice of God speaking. Inspired utterance. See it? So, back to Proverbs 30.

Proverbs 30:1b:

...the man spake...

In other words, the man spoke by divine inspiration, by inspired utterance. That is the beginning of this section of Proverbs. “The words of Agur”, who was the teacher, who taught the students, the wise man. And he was “the son of Jakeh”, which means obedience. Because he was obedient to God’s Word. “The message of importance, the weighty matter of the Word of God, the inspiration, or divine (what did I say?)...the inspired utterance of the man.” That’s how this opens. Then you have:

Proverbs 30:1c:

...unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal.

Which again are proper names; nobody knows who they are or anything about them. And there’s quite a few ideas as to what these words originally were or what they originally meant in the Hebrew. And there are...there’s greater reason to believe that these words especially were not proper names, but rather they had a meaning in the original.

A man by the name of Torrey, who reconstructed the...what he believed to be the Aramaic original, said this should read as follows: “I am not God...” but this word “Ithiel” or “unto Ithiel”, it’s one word in the Hebrew that it means “I am not God”. And then it’s repeated “unto Ithiel.” So it’s “I am not God, I am not God...” And the word ‘Ucal’ or “and Ucal”, that’s one word again, means “I should have power”. I should have power. So it literally would read, “I am not God, I am not God that I should have power”, which I think (as we’re going to see in a minute) fits very nicely with the context. And it’s similar to other situations in the Word. Because...now wait a minute. The words “Agur, the son of Jakeh, even the weighty message, the inspired utterance of the man...” Then you ought to have a colon because now here is the message. This is the message. Okay? All that was like introductory. Now here is the message, it starts with this...what was translated unto Ithiel, and so on. It should be: “I am not God, I am not God that I should have power, surely I am more brutish or stupid than a man and have not learned the understanding of a man.”

Because, there were people, just like in Job's time, going around saying how much they knew about God. Remember Job's (what do you call them) comforters? His miserable comforters, how they knew so much and they were there to tell Job what to do and how to really get it together. But they were miserable comforters. He says, well:

Proverbs 30:2:

Surely I [must be] more [stupid] than any man,...[I] have not the understanding of a man.

I'm not much better than an animal.

Proverbs 30:3a:

I neither learned wisdom,...

The wisdom of this world, the wisdom of men which you fellows seem to know so well

Proverbs 30:3b:

...nor have the knowledge of the holy.

Why, some of you are so holy, that I can't achieve that! Well, who hath measured or...

Proverbs 30:4:

...ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

In other words, there was a lot of wisdom going on. Remember the strange woman of Proverbs, the idolatrous wisdom? All this wisdom was floating around, and boy, those people knew so much about God. But here's the teacher, the wise man who's been...who's the teacher of these people and he says: I am not God, I am not God and I have not power. Why, it seems like I am more stupid than a man. I don't have the understanding of men. I haven't learned wisdom, I don't have a knowledge of the holy. By the way who does? What? Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Which one of you has? Have any of you? See the situation? It's similar to Isaiah, I want you to look at Isaiah, chapter 40. It's similar to this cry here in Isaiah chapter 40, verse 12.

Isaiah 40:12 and 13:

¹² Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span [which one of you did?], and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

¹³ Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* his counsellor hath taught him?

How many of you have taught God? This is the verse that's quoted in I Corinthians 2:16. It says:

I Corinthians 2:16:

...who hath known the mind of the LORD, that he may instruct him? [Remember?] But we have [what?] the mind of Christ.

As we renew our minds, put it on, then we can put the mind of Christ up here. We have it spiritually, but we've got to put it on here in our minds; we've got to renew our minds. But in the Old Testament they didn't have spirit born in them. They didn't have that potential like we have it today. If a man had spirit upon him, he had the potential to walk and to know what God's direction was, but he couldn't know the Mystery; he couldn't know a lot of other things. He certainly couldn't make the heaven, he couldn't weigh the mountains in the scales and so on. So, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" Who's been the teacher of God?

Isaiah 40:14-22:

¹⁴ With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?

¹⁵ Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a bucket [or in a bucket], and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

¹⁶ And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

¹⁷ All nations before him *are* as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

¹⁸ To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

¹⁹ The workman melteth a graven image [here's the problem], and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

²⁰ He that *is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved.

²¹ Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²² *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

Haven't you heard the Word? You can't make God out of gold! Now which one of you wise men have been his instructor? Look at Romans, chapter 11, verse 33.

Romans 11:33:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his [judgment], and his ways past finding out!

Or what? Do you remember? Have you ever heard the Book of Romans before? It's untrackable. His ways past finding out. His ways untrackable. You can't track God. How glorious are these things? How unsearchable are his judgment? His ways are untrackable. They can't be traced. Then verse 34.

Romans 11:34:

...who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Again a quote from Isaiah, isn't that something? God's wisdom is way beyond what the human mind could comprehend, but we have the mind of Christ it says in Corinthians. So we have the potential latent within us. But there were those who were building their idols out of gold or wood or stone and they were saying, "Well, this is God, and this is what God says." And this is what Isaiah was talking about. This is what Proverbs is talking about because there was so much of that strange wisdom available. The strange woman of Proverbs. See? And this is his second [to] last message to his students. The last message is in chapter 31. He says, "I am not God, I am not God that I should have such power as you proclaim to have or has some people proclaim to have. Surely I am more stupid than a man. Why, these men like Job's counsellors, why they pretend to know so much, I'm not that smart. I have not the understanding of a man, I don't have worldly wisdom. I neither learned wisdom, the wisdom of the world, nor have the knowledge of the holy. By the way who has ascended up into heaven or descended? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name and what is his son's name if you can tell me?" It's sort of a mocking of the worldly wisdom, the idolatry that was going on. Because God's wisdom is much bigger. His ways are untrackable. And he's playing down himself like Paul did in Ephesians 3:8, remember that one? I think we've covered that this year sometime, where it says, "unto me who am less than the least of all saints?" How can you be less than the least? Well it's the figure *oxymoron* where you can't be less than the least. If you're least, you're least. But if you're less than the least, that's got to be a figure. Paul was downplaying himself.

Ephesians 3:8:

... I am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the [untrackable] riches of Christ.

Who can track God? You *can't*. But we have Christ in us. We have the mind of Christ. And so Paul was teaching among the Gentiles the untrackable riches of Christ, the riches that couldn't be tracked. Today it's available to track those riches and to teach it, to show people it's available. "But the natural man receiveth not..." what? "...the things of the Spirit of God... they're foolishness to him." You've got to know God and His Word and you've got to be born again. You've got to be tapped in spiritually if you're going to understand the spiritual things.

Back to Proverbs. I think you're acquainted with Corinthians where it differentiates between world wisdom and the wisdom of God, which is a little bit smarter than the foolishness of this world. That really ties into this. By him playing himself down saying, "Well, I'm..I'm more stupid than a man." Yet, the wisdom of God is higher than the foolishness of (how is that?)...the foolishness of God is higher than the wisdom of man. See? In Corinthians. So this is how he starts this to the students. Then he goes to verse 5 and he says...after he says (you know), "Who...which one you hath ascended or descended; which one of you really knows God." In essence, "Which one of you has been God's teacher?"...well, like they were trying to do. Then he clarifies, he says, "Every word of God is..." what? {Pure.}:

Proverbs 30:5a:
Every word of God *is* pure:...

So if we want to know about God, it's not what I think, it's not what philosophy teaches, that I think up or somebody else has dreamt up. Or it's not what's behind some statue someplace. But it's the Word of God that teaches us what God is, and what the student that studies Proverbs needs to know. He needs to know one thing and that's the Word of God, because that's what is pure.

Proverbs 30:5b:
...he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Hasn't that been a theme in Proverbs? See? "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." See? Trust God. And He is a shield. Verse 6.

Proverbs 30:6a:
Add thou not unto his [what?] {words},...

What happen when you add words to God's Word, do you have the Word left? {No.}
No Sir.

Proverbs 30:6b:
...lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

And that's exactly what the world wisdom people did. They added words to God's

Word. And when you add words to the Word, do you have the Word left? {No.} No. The Word of God is pure. But when you add to it or subtract from it or change it, you don't have the Word left. So we can't build on what people say about the Word. What does the Word say? That's our criteria in this school of the proverbs for the young people. Verse 7 follows right upon it.

You know, the commentaries always say how disjointed this chapter is, how he moves from one thing to another so they were probably written at different times, and somebody pieced it together. A bunch of baloney! This all ties together and it's focusing around the Word of God being pure as opposed to the worldly wisdom, because that's been the theme of Proverbs. The strange woman as opposed to wisdom...she is more precious than...whatever...see? jewels, and so on.

Proverbs 30:7:

Two *things* have I required of thee; deny me *them* not before I die:

Two things I want out of life: A Cadillac, a new house, a mansion, a yacht, a harem [laughter], no. Two things. Number one: Remove far from me vanity and lies. That's one. The second is: give me neither poverty nor riches.

Now, vanities and lies are similar but they're not identical. Lie...a lie is simply not the truth. If something is not true it's a lie. But a vanity is something that pretends to be true. A pretense of truth. It's technically false but it has a pretense of being true. What were the idolaters teaching? A pretense of truth. They said, "Oh we know all about God, we'll tell you all about Him. Well, we were even God's teachers [laughter]. We made God. See the statue?" That's vanity. And lies is simply not truth. The first usage of this word that's translated "vanity" is in Exodus 20:7 where it says:

Exodus 20:7:

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;...

So it's to use the name of God with a pretense of truth. Like, you know, you use the name of God and you said, "Boy, we've really worshiped God. We're so...but it's wrong. It's a pretense of truth, but it's not built on the Word. And that's where a lot of people are today. They have a form of godliness, no power, see? No knowledge of the Word. Look at Ezekiel 13:1. It has a neat...some neat usages of the word there. Ezekiel, verse 1 of chapter 13.

Ezekiel 13:1 and 2a:

¹ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

² Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel...

Prophesy against the prophets? But the prophets are the men of God. Not these prophets.

He told Isaiah who was a prophet:

Ezekiel 13:2b:

...[you] prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own [what? {hearts}] hearts,...

They're not prophesying the truth of the Word, they're not prophesying out of God's heart. They're prophesying out of where? Their own hearts. It sounds like the idolaters of Proverbs, doesn't it? The world wisdom. Here ye the word of the LORD.

Ezekiel 13:3:

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!

They haven't seen any revelation.

Ezekiel 13:4 and 5:

⁴O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts.

⁵Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.

You've neglected to really protect Israel, to really speak the truth to Israel.

Ezekiel 13:6:

They have seen [what?] vanity...

That's this word. "A pretense of truth". Have they seen truth? No they said, they saw truth. But it was only a what? Pretense of truth, vanity.

Ezekiel 13:6b:

...and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them:

They said, "The LORD saith..." but the LORD hasn't sent them.

Ezekiel 13:6c and 7:

⁶...and they have made *others* to hope that they would confirm the word.

⁷Have ye not seen a [what?] vain vision,...

There is that word again. It's a vision which has a pretense of truth. They say it's true, but it's not.

Ezekiel 13:7b and 8:

⁷ ...and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith *it*; albeit I have not spoken?

⁸ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken [what?] vanity,...

A pretense of truth rather than the truth itself.

Ezekiel 13:8-10:

⁸ ...and seen lies, therefore, behold, I *am* against you, saith the Lord GOD.

⁹ And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity [pretense of truth], and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

¹⁰ Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar:

They were building a wall. Only they were using what? Untempered mortar. In other words it wasn't the right kind of stuff that makes the wall to stand. They were building a so-called religious wall. It had poor mortar in it.

Ezekiel 13:11a:

Say unto them which daub *it* with untempered *mortar*, that it shall [what?] {fall}:...

Sure. When you build a building and you don't have the right type of mortar, what's going to happen? Way builders? Darlene? It gonna fall [laughter]. That's right. It's going to fall. Where were we? Verse 11.

Ezekiel 13:11b-15

¹¹ ...there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend *it*.

¹² Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where *is* the daubing wherewith ye have daubed *it*?

¹³ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend *it* with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in *my* fury to consume *it*.

¹⁴ So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered *mortar*, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and

ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

¹⁵ Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered *morter*, and will say unto you, The wall *is no more*, neither they that daubed it;

[Laughter.] Not only is the wall gone but the daubers are gone.

Ezekiel 13:16a:

To wit [a little humor there], the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her,...

Isn't it where he started out. They were preaching what? Peace.

Ezekiel 13:16b:

...and *there is* no [what?] peace, saith the Lord GOD.

They were using the wrong kind of stuff to build the wall. It was vanity, a pretense of truth. They said it was true, but was it? No. That's what this word for "vanity" is. Back to Proverbs. That's quite a thing out of Ezekiel isn't it? So he says:

Proverbs 30:8a:

[You] Remove far from me [this pretense of truth] and lies:...

Just keep that out of my life. Now that's a pretty good start. If you could keep the pretense of truth out of your life, and the lies out of your life, wouldn't that be terrific? If you could just walk on the Word without ever being concerned about getting into something that might be the Word or might not be. Wouldn't that be terrific? That's the place we've got to get to. Keep me from a pretense of truth and from lies. Number one. And number two:

Proverbs 30:8b:

...give me neither poverty nor riches;...

Don't make me real poor, don't make me real rich LORD. Somewhere in between is alright. But not real poor and not real rich. Why?

Proverbs 30:8c:

...feed me with food convenient for me:

Just give me what I need. Supply my needs; not poverty, not riches, but what I need.

Proverbs 30:9a:

Lest I be full,...

You know, if I've got too much, too much riches.

Proverbs 30:9b:

...and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD?

See? I don't need God, I've got my riches.

Proverbs 30:9c:

...or lest I be poor, and [do what?] steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

If I'm poor, then I say, "Boy, there really is no God. If there was a God, well I wouldn't be in this mess." So I go out and steal. I help myself. But if I get real rich, then I say, "Boy, I don't need God, I've got enough. But just let me have the right amount Lord, just supply my needs and we'll go along. Alright?" Two things: Get rid of the vanity and lies (don't let me ever get close to those); and just give me what I need, no...no a poverty and no riches. Okay? Just keep my needs supplied day by day. That's the only two things that you have to ask for in life. That takes care of you, right? If you've got all your needs supplied, what do you need physically? Well, you've got them supplied, right? If you've got too much, then you might have some problems. If you've got too little, you might have some problems. Just let God supply your needs, you're in good shape. And as long as you don't have this pretense of truth. As long as you can stay put on what the Word says and not what man says. That's where we've got to stay as students of the Word. Proverbs or whatever we're studying. See? Then, again he goes back to this learner, the student. Verse 10.

Proverbs 30:10:

Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

The servant of the master in this context is the teacher. The master is your father, so you're the student. And you accuse your teacher to your father. What will your teacher do? He'll go and tell your father, "Well, this student hasn't been doing so good either." See? So don't accuse your teacher to your father, your...to his master. Because your father hired me to teach you. Right? That's in essence what the Eastern culture was. "Lest the teacher, or the servant curse thee and thou be found guilty."

Proverbs 30:11:

There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

If they curse their teacher, or accuse their teacher, they're usually in that category where

they curse their father, curse their mother (don't bless their mother). "They are pure in their own eyes...", verse 12.

Proverbs 30:12-14:

¹² ...not washed from their filthiness.

¹³ There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! [full of pride] and their eyelids are lifted up.

¹⁴ There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

You're not to be that classification of students. Okay? As students of the Word, you must be obedient to your parents. When your father, mother teaches the Word, you as a young person, listen to that Word. And when the servant of your father teaches what do you do? Listen. Why did your father hire me? To teach. Because I'm a wise man, a master of Israel, because I have the wisdom of God...or you know, some of it. I know some Word, I know some proverbs, I know what they mean. I know the proverbs and their interpretation. The point of what's being said. That's why he hired me. So listen students. Isn't this beautiful for a closing teaching to the students? I think it's neat. Don't listen to all this garbage...you know there are so many people out there that know God. Why, they're smarter than God, you know...I mean, they ascended from heaven and descended and gathered the wind in their fists, and all those things. Now wait a minute! I must be stupider than any man. No. Every word of God is pure. And you don't add to God's Word, lest he reprove you and you be found a liar. And you don't want to be found a liar, right? So two things you've got to have in life. Get rid of the vanity and lies, and neither riches nor poverty, but God supplies your need. Food convenient. You stay put as students of the Word on God's Word. It's addressed to young people learning the Word through the teacher, the assembler. Agur may have been one of them. Then, verse 15, he starts a number of illustration about children that are disobedient versus children or students that are obedient to the Word, as opposed to vanities, pretenses of the truth. Either you're obedient to the truth or you're obedient to lies, which fall in the category perhaps of a pretense of truth.

Proverbs 30:15:

The horseleach [or leach, a blood sucker] hath two daughters, *crying*, Give, give....

What does a blood sucker do? He wants more, more blood. Give me blood, alright? [Laughter.] Then, he uses an interesting literary device here that you don't see too many places. Says:

Proverbs 30:15b:

...There are three *things that* are never satisfied [now wait a minute, there are], *yea*, four *things* say not, *It is* enough [that say, it's not enough]:

Isn't that neat? I added, "now wait a minute". But that's essentially how the emphasis is on it. There's three things that are never satisfied, no four, that say, it's not enough...that always want more, not enough, I want more, I want more, I want more. Number one:

Proverbs 30:16a:
The grave;...

People die every day yet the grave is never full, the grave always wants more people. Give me more, give me more. Alright? It sounds like one of those late night thrillers, doesn't it? Blood suckers and the grave...give me more.

Proverbs 30:16b:
...and the barren womb....

The barren womb is never satisfied, it wants children. If you've had two, three, four, five, six or twenty children, maybe you're satisfied, but that barren womb isn't. Give me a child, give me a child, never satisfied, see?

Proverbs 30:16c:
...[or] the earth *that* is not filled with water;...

Why it rains all the time? It's raining some place, right? I mean it rained today, it's rained before, it's going to rain tomorrow, and yet the earth still isn't full of water, it wants more rain. Give me more.

Proverbs 30:16d:
...and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

Have you ever seen a fire that says, "It's enough?" [Laughter] No. You always see fires, they never quit. As a matter of fact in Gehenna, you know the city dump, is where the fire never ceases in the Eastern culture. It just keeps burning. People are always throwing garbage on the thing. It keeps it going, so the fire keeps going. Those four things. And a disobedient son is just as greedy. That's the context. A son who refuses to walk in the truth of the Word, he's disobedient. Who disobeys his father, he's not a blessing to his mother, he curses his father and so on, he's always greedy for more and more. Just like the idolater always wants more and more gods. The wisdom of the world, it's always greedy, wants more and more. Covetousness, right? We've covered that in Ephesians; we've covered it in Proverbs. Always wants more and more.

If you have a pretense of truth or lies instead of the truth, you're always going to be wanting more and more, because it doesn't satisfy your hunger. Does it? No. Then another one,

17.

Proverbs 30:17:

The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother [and that's what the context has been], the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

So, don't mock your father. Don't be greedy for more and more saying, "Give, Give, Give", like a leach, a blood sucker or the grave or the barren womb or the earth or the fire. Then, he gives another illustration.

Proverbs 30:18:

There be three *things which* are too wonderful for me,...

Not wonderful in the sense we think of wonderful, or *wunderbar*, but in the sense that we...it's like..., "I can't understand it". There are three things that I can't really comprehend, I can't figure them out, I can't understand it. Wait a minute, there's four which I really don't know. See again, he uses this literary device. Number one:

Proverbs 30:19a:

The way of an eagle in the air;...

Have you ever followed an eagle? Have you ever seen an eagle up in the sky, closed your eyes, then you look up there and you can see just exactly where he's been? Right? No. How about:

Proverbs 30:19b:

...the way of a serpent upon a rock....

If you're a good tracker, you could follow him perhaps. It depends how dirty he was [laughter].

Proverbs 30:19c:

...the way of a ship in the midst of the sea....

You can never tell where a ship is going to go. If you've ever driven a boat, you know how they sort of slish slosh around and you know, you turn it...it doesn't turn like a car, it goes [makes sound "zzzzz"]...sort of like an airplane. You have to make a wide turn, you never come into a dock like this [laughter]. If you're coming into a dock you know [makes sound "zzzzz"], you gotta make a wide turn. And then, you can never see where it's been.

Proverbs 30:19d:
...and the way of a man with a maid.

You can never tell where they're going either. [Laughter.] Now that's not in the negative sense, just an illustration that's pointing out that there are certain things that are just untrackable. You cannot really understand, comprehend...you can't fully fathom it.

Proverbs 30:20a:
Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman;...

Now, what's the adulterous woman of Proverbs, the strange woman? It's idolatry. The wisdom of the world.

Proverbs 30:20b:
...she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

That, I really can't understand...how people that are into idolatry that want to worship something other than the true God, who have a pretense of truth, who live by lies, who live by the wisdom of the world. I can't understand it. What's more! I really can't understand why somebody that's heard the Word, gets out of the Word. And what really has me puzzled is when a W.O.W. leaves the field. But what really puzzles me is why someone that's in the Corps would leave with all the greatness of the Word that lives in your heart or that's been taught. Why would you ever leave the Corps? Or if you've been through the Corps and then to cop out, that I can't track. And say, "Well, I've done nothing wrong." I really can't comprehend that one and yet it has happened. To me I don't know why anyone would want to go back to the things of the world, to the idolatrous ways of the world or to a pretense of truth once you've heard the Word.

You know, we in the Way Ministry don't know everything. We don't know all the Word, but I haven't found a place that knows any *more* of it. You know, maybe some people know a few things we don't know because we haven't studied that yet. But as far as the overall thing, I don't know of anyone that knows more. Boy, to be born again, know you're heaven bound, to have the hope that we have, to have the great understanding of so many things in the Word. To see the Word fit without contradiction, which very few people believe to begin with. I mean some mouth it, pretense of truth again, but to get that Word to fit, where can you go? If I screwed up royally, I'd still have no place else to go. Because who has as much knowledge of the Word? I don't know. At least I haven't found any place. Maybe somebody else has, that's why I can't understand it. That's why it's untrackable to me. I just can't understand why anyone would want to get away from the Word, like the idolatrous woman. She eats her meat, wipes her mouth and says, "I haven't done anything wrong." People into the Word, love the Word, live by the Word...then all of a sudden, a little pressure or something comes along...I don't understand

it. They leave the Word and they say, “Well, I haven’t done anything wrong.” I can’t comprehend that.

So a disobedient child, or a disobedient student who follows the vanity instead of the truth, I can’t understand it; can’t comprehend that. Verse 21, here is another group.

Proverbs 30:21:
For three *things* the earth is disquieted,...

Oh! There are four of them again that it cannot bear. Four things.

Proverbs 30:22a:
For a servant when he reigneth;...

Have you ever seen a servant reign? It doesn’t make much sense, does it?

Proverbs 30:22b:
... a fool when he is filled with meat;

Why a fool, too lazy to work.

Proverbs 30:23a:
For an odious [or a woman that arouses hatred] *woman* when she is married;...

Have you ever seen a hatred woman married?

Proverbs 30:23b:
...an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

When those things happen the whole “earth is disquieted”, it’s upset. And so when a son is disobedient to the Word, it disquiets the earth. That’s the context. Verse 24.

Proverbs 30:24a:
There be four *things which are* little upon the earth...

Here he doesn’t say three, yea four, he just says, there’s four things that are very little upon the earth.

Proverbs 30:24b:
...[and] they *are* exceeding wise:

Very little, but very wise.

Now you take “the ants”; now they are:

Proverbs 30:25:

...a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

They always have plenty to eat. Very little animals.

Proverbs 30:26a:

The conies...

This should be “hyrax” according to many of the sources. The hyrax was a little animal that lived in the crevasses of rocks.

Proverbs 30:26 and 27:

²⁶ ...are but a feeble folk [very small], yet make they their houses in the rocks [they still build their houses];

²⁷ The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;

Have you ever seen a swarm of locusts? They come by bands.

Proverbs 30:28a:

The spider taketh hold with her hands....

She goes to work. And where does she live? Why, some of them live:

Proverbs 30:28b:

...in kings' palaces.

Spider webs everywhere? Right? Sure! Little but strong. And that's like an obedient son. If you're obedient and walk on the truth of the Word, you're going to have plenty to eat, you're gonna...you're going to live in kings' palaces, see? you're going to be organized, go forth in bands and so on. You're going to have your house, your shelter, because you're a wise person. Because these are exceeding wise animals. So if you are an obedient, wise son, you're going to have results like they do. Twenty-nine:

Proverbs 30:29:

There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

To “go well” means they “march forth majestically”. Four things which march forth

majestically. Boy, when you see this thing, your eyes perk up, you take note. Number one is the lion.

Proverbs 30:30:
...strongest among beasts,...

What do you do when you see a lion? Boy, don't they look majestic? They are king with that big ruffle around the neck, majestic.

Proverbs 30:31a:
A greyhound;...

Have you been out on the Interstate? [Laughter.] I don't know where they got "greyhound" from? There are a lot of speculations on this verse. The Greek says, "a rooster", and the Aramaic does too, which would make more sense. I don't know, greyhound, is pretty neat too. But the Hebrew says, which I think is neat, it says something... "one girl in the loins". That's literally what the Hebrew says. It doesn't say greyhound or rooster, anything. It says, one girl in the loins. Like a strong man, a person that's strong in the loins. Boy, when he walks or she walks down the street, don't you take notice? No? [Laughter.] I do. I mean, you know, it's a...like a person with charisma, your eyes perk up or something.

Proverbs 30:31b:
...[and] an he goat...

The "he goat" was the older goat that led the other goats and he was very majestic on the mountain side as he led the others. He stood out front with his head high. It was a very beautiful sight.

Proverbs 30:31c:
...and a king, against whom *there is* no rising up.

In the Hebrew reads: A king, (when he is with his...) when his army is with him. Have you ever seen a king with his army? You know, in a movie (or anything)? I mean, it's very...they are very majestic. The king's out front in his carriage or on his platform or whatever. Very majestic, arrayed in his royal garment.

So, a child or a son that's obedient...he's going to be very majestic, people's eyes, they're going to perk up and say, look there goes an obedient son. The conclusion, verses 32 and 33:

Proverbs 30:32a:

If thou hast done foolishly...

In other words, if you haven't been obedient. If you've done foolishly,

Proverbs 30:32b:
...in lifting up [yourself];...

Following the vanity and lies, claiming you know more than God, following some of these philosophers, these idolaters, the strange woman. If you've lifted up yourself.

Proverbs 30:32c and 33:
³² ...or if [you have] thought evil, *lay* [your] hand upon [your] mouth.
³³ Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

And that's what a disobedient son will do. But an obedient son is someone you can look up to. It's someone that is going to have results. It's someone that is going to live with God and have great success in life. The disobedient son who follows the vanities, the pretense of truth and lies, or he's into riches, or he comes to poverty; he's not going to have success very long. Joshua was an obedient son. And it says, If you follow my Word, meditate therein day and night, you're going to have what? Good success, good success! Whenever you're obedient to God and His Word, you're going to have good success. You'll not be a failure. This is the second [to] last thing now he's telling this group of students, the students of Proverbs. He's laid out the whole curriculum, he has taught them the words of the wise, their proverbs and the point of what each proverb meant. And now, he says, "Don't follow a pretense of truth. Don't follow idolatry. Follow the truth of God's Word." And he gives these four literary...whatever you call them, I think they're neat, to say the least. The way it's constructed to draw a picture to the student, the student at that time could really identify with these images that the teacher was portraying here. Maybe today we'd use other images, but boy, you'd come to the same conclusion: that you've really got to stay put on God's Word, the pure Word, not add to the Word, not follow vanity and lies, not riches or poverty, but follow the Word, the pure Word of God, and then you're going to have good success. You're not going to have strife and all these other negatives happen to you. Then, after he closes there, he goes into the graduation message.

Proverbs 31:1:
The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

Again the word "prophecy" is that word that I gave you before. It's that "burden or load, that which is carried". It's "a weighty matter, something of importance". The words of importance that his mother taught him. That's where it started, because who teaches you first? Your mother, then your father, then the teacher. The wise man teaches you in the Eastern

culture. First your mother is your teacher, then your father, then the wise man, the teacher. And it started back then, that the father taught the same thing, the teacher has taught you the same thing.

Proverbs 31:2 and 3:

² What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

³ Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

Don't give your strength to women. What women has Proverbs talked about? There are two women: the strange woman and wisdom was a woman. Don't give your strength to the strange women. And Solomon knew them physically as well as from a spiritual standpoint. He got into idolatry. He was torn away at the end of his life because of his wives and their idolatry. And that's why the kingdom of Israel was split in two. Give not your strength to women (the strange woman, the idolatry, worshiping other gods, the wisdom of this world) nor to those ways which destroy kings. The whole thing that Proverbs has been talking about, strong drink and so on. Verse 8.

Proverbs 31:8 and 9:

⁸ Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

⁹ Open thy mouth, judge righteously,...

Wasn't one of the things of the curriculum in chapter one to be able to have good sense, prudence, for justice, righteousness and equity. Remember that? Here, he closes with "open your mouth, judge righteously":

Proverbs 31:9b:

...and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

That you're able to separate truth from error. Then, opposed to all the strange women in the world, all the idolatry:

Proverbs 31:10a:

Who can find [a what?] a virtuous woman?...

The wisdom of chapter 3, of chapters 8 and 9. She is more precious than, what was it? rubies. Wisdom, she is more precious than rubies. That's the virtuous woman of Proverbs as opposed to the strange woman.

Now I know that it applies to the actual woman too. It's a good reputation for a woman to live up to, but in the context of Proverbs, what is it dealing with? Wisdom, the wisdom of

God. And that's why in a broad sense [laughter], if you're applying this, it applies directly to a woman, but it would also apply to a man. Okay? It applies to wisdom.

Proverbs 31:10:

Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price [oh there...her price] is far above rubies.

It says that some place in chapter 8 or 9 too doesn't it? Three, some place...well anyway. It's wisdom that's so virtuous as opposed to the strange woman which is the wisdom of the world, the idolatry. You see how beautiful this is in light of an actual woman. But it's also beautiful how it closes out Proverbs where *the* woman...the virtuous woman was wisdom, the crown to her husband was wisdom. Then the whole book just ties together so beautifully. The commentaries always say, "Well, it's just an extra poem thrown in at the end." And it is a poem by the way, an acrostic. But it's more than that. It wraps up the wisdom that was taught to the students in the school of Proverbs by the wise men, the men that knew the wisdom of God. Maybe they weren't God, none of us are, like some pretend to be. And maybe we don't know everything, but boy we know enough of the Word that we're able to communicate the truth of it rather than a pretense. We can get the Word to fit without adding to it, or subtracting from it. Right? You can see the Word fit, like a hand in a glove.

So that closes out the Proverb's curriculum. And there's a lot of other things in...I think you ought to spend time in reading more of these proverbs and master them, and teach your children, your young people. Teach them the greatness of what Proverbs has to say. And so much of what you read in Proverbs you can read in the New Testament, in the practical sections of the epistles. Like Ephesians 4 to 6. Like Romans 12 to 16. Like most of Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians and Colossians. See? Practical things, you see it in Proverbs, applied in the Church, as long as you watch "to whom it's written", then it all fits. Isn't that neat?

Joe do you have those...have the card, or want to update me on what's going on while we are sitting here. Okay, we'll just sign off and then we'll send them the tape, I guess. How's that? Alright.

[Prayer] *Father, we thank you for this night for your love and goodness to us and for the beauty of your Word and the wisdom that we can put in our minds and hearts and apply it as we live day by day. Thank you for every person here and those around the country, for "Living Victoriously" coming up and for all your people coming in here next week, for watching over every one of them in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen!*

God bless you! And have a great time living with Proverbs in your heart. Okay?