
QT Questions—for Proverbs

(Here's a short introduction to the book of Proverbs from my Study Bibles.)

- The main theme of Proverbs is that wisdom proceeds from revering and trusting God. Our actions reflect our inner character, and vice versa; by honoring God with our lives and following His wisdom, we can expect to experience the blessing of God's goodness. In the natural order of God's word, good character produces a life that will flourish, though Proverbs is also clear that the natural order does not always win; sometimes, against all logic, evil and folly thrive.
- The primary concern of Proverbs, like other wisdom literature from the ancient Near East, is instruction: Younger generations need such wisdom to live well. But the book of Proverbs is also unique among its contemporaries in its emphasis on worshiping Yahweh—the only true source of such wisdom and fullness of life (Pr 3:19). Proverbs repeatedly shows us that we must live according to Yahweh's ways—by living ethically, representing justice and caring for the weak and impoverished—even when society at large tells us otherwise.

Prov 1 (6/4/24)

1. Where and why does wisdom begin there and what do fools do and why; in vv. 8-19, what can you get through ill-gotten gains and yet what will be the consequence; what are we to do with wisdom's rebuke and why; what do you learn?
- In v. 23, I learned a new insight. As we know, our repentance does not result in our forgiveness. However, we are encouraged to repent because it is an overflow of God's generous forgiveness for us. So, we are able to truly repent because we know we are truly forgiven. Through our verse today, when we repent, we get new and deeper understanding of God's ways, "Repent at My rebuke! Then I will pour out My thoughts to you, I will make known to you My teachings." When we refuse to repent, our hearts are not teachable, so God will not pour His teachings to hardened hearts. However, when we repent, our hearts are humbled and believed that I am wrong and God alone is truly right and I want to learn and I need to submit to His ways. And because the soil of our hearts are ready, God delights to pour His truth, so that our lives can produce 30, 60, 100 fold of His truth and grace unto us. Even though repentance is admitting our sinful ways, yet, despite our wrongs, God not only forgive us but He also pours His truth, so that we would truly unlearn our ugly ways and humbly and lovingly begin to adopt and learn God's way over ours, over mine, over the world's. Repentance is good for our souls and good for our edification.

Prov 2 (6/5/24)

1. What are the many approaches for wisdom do you read here and what happens when you find her and how can this be applied to you; from whom does wisdom save and how do you see this in your life?
- This proverbs begins by offering a choice and a decision to make, as to what or who to seek and follow, as it presents, "... if you accept my words... if you call out for insight... if you look for it as for silver..." If we accept and follow the ways of wisdom, then we will find the knowledge of God and learn how to fear Him well, that leads us to love and obey our God more wholeheartedly and joyfully. Unlike the fear of the world, where it leads to suspicion, doubt, troubled hearts, and ultimately to a frightening destruction, fear for our God leads us to distrust the world, rather we will learn to thankfully and sweetly and completely depend on

Him, because we see there's no better place than to rest in God's all wise ways. True fear of our God blesses us to not trust ourselves, but lovingly trust only in our God, for we will truly believe that His ways are so much higher and better and holier than anyone else's. We will say, may He increase greatly and may we decrease humbly in our lives, always.

Prov 3 (6/6/24)

1. Will you carefully and humbly examine two portions on this chapter and explain what they mean and how they can be applied to your life—vv. 5-7 and vv. 25-28; what other instructions catches your eye on this chapter and why and how can it be applied to your life?
 - The Lord is not impartial. He loves and hates; there's no middle ground. In vv. 32-33, it is written, "For the Lord detests the perverse but takes the upright into His confidence. The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but He blesses the home of the righteous." The holy God loves and blesses the people walking in righteousness, but the people pursuing wickedness, He hates and showers them with curses. Let's not think that our God is simply a distant observer to our lives. He is involved, and He loves those who love His Son and hates those who disobey His Son. There's no middle ground. Before God, we either love Him or hate Him. We either obey Him or disobey Him. It's really black and white before God. There's no middle ground. We really should examine our lives seriously and humbly to see if we love Him or not, because even though we may believe that it's neither, if that's the case, then be sure to understand this, when we don't love Him, it is that we hate Him; there's no middle ground. Silence is not a middle ground; it's hatred for Him, when we don't confess and obey Him, as the Israelites did on Mount Carmel, before Elijah's question, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal is God, follow him' But the people said nothing" (1Kgs 18:21).

Prov 4 (6/7/24)

1. What is the father's instruction for his son and why and how; from vv. 23-27, what do you learn; please define wisdom/knowledge and how does it impact your life?
 - Where do we learn wisdom? The father tells his son to learn it from him, just as he learned it from his father. That's parenting, to teach their children what they need to live for; how they should live for; and why living such way is the right way for their children to live. Sadly, we are living in a world where many parents don't teach their children because they themselves haven't really learned it from their parents. Therefore, too many parents let their children choose and decide on their own, and they think it is the job of the parents to support whatever their children decides. It shouldn't be like that. The parents are meant to influence and lead and persuade their children to choose what's right. Ultimately, the children must learn to choose, but it is the job of the parents to influence them, to lead them, to persuade them, so they would learn to choose wisdom over wickedness, God's glory over their own happiness and success. Parents must pray and plead and bless their children, so their children will see that the fear of the Lord is the greatest blessing and pursuit they need to choose and run after.

Prov 5 (6/8/24)

1. What makes adultery so tempting and yet so harmful (vv. 1-6); how should spouses protect and keep and bless each other (vv. 15-20); what do you learn in this chapter?

- Verses 7-8 reads, “Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say. Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house.” The father is not only teaching his sons here, but he is also warning and even pleading to his sons to listen and obey his words. Though the final decision may be the sons’, but the father is meant to put as much weight as possible to influence his sons to make the right choices. We are living in a world, where too often, parents are told to stay in their lane, that is, on the sidelines, and cheer their children, but to not meddle in their decision making, which is why, even young children make awful choices to have gender-sex changes and the parents are supposed to “just support their decision.” Parents and adults, let’s unlearn the world’s ways. Let’s learn God’s way. God wants the parents to get involved, to influence, to teach, to warn, to plead, to persuade lovingly their children to walk after our God and not the world. Parents and adults, did you know that was one of the call for John the Baptist in his ministry, “... to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Lk 1:17).

Prov 6 (6/10/24)

1. What are you to learn from the ants; what are the seven things God hates and which ones do you wrestle with; what does God say about adultery; what do you learn?
- When we are ensnared by our own words or pledge, we are taught here to go to the point of exhaustion to free ourselves, giving ourselves and those whom we are trapped to, no rest until it is resolved. It means, we will be held responsible, and we will have to pay the consequences for our actions. However, it also means, that there is a resolution, and we are to pursue it relentlessly, until we find it. There is no shortcut or excuse for our foolishness. We must pay. However, there is a way out, as we are willing to endure the cost. Yet, for our greatest sin and foolishness, God’s forgiveness comes to us without a cost to us. But, there’s a heavy price that He will endure because of our sins. There’s a payment to be made, and because God pays for us, we don’t. However, in our world, at times, our God will withhold the payment for our foolishness, so that we will see our sinfulness has a costly payment but the only reason why we don’t pay is because He has paid it all for us, not because we deserved it, but despite our foolishness, He pays willingly. That’s His love for us, for that’s how He forgives our sins.

Prov 7 (6/11/24)

1. What are the many different ways God wants us to hold on to His word and how would that look like for you; what is the adulteress desiring to do and why; how did the young men respond and how should have they responded; what do you learn?
- The face of adultery can be twofold. It can be secretive, subtle and sweetly poisonous. But it can also be brazen, shameless, very loud. It seems more and more, our culture has taken the brazenness as the face of sin, as it celebrates it, so proud to announce it to the world, including pushing to make it into the law of the land. The world no longer tries to hide sin, but celebrate it, parade it, and make it into the norm of our culture that keeps spreading into all the parts of the world. Sin’s ambassadors are much more proud, bolder, eager, and fights real hard to not only persuade but even force everyone around them to either accept them or not belong. They truly place their agendas ahead of everything, and they seem to fight with their lives to bring about the change they desire. Their sinfulness is truly their primary identity and are so proud of it. As much as I despise this, I am also humbled and ashamed that God’s people do not live this hard after God’s purpose in our lives. I wish we did. I pray we do.

Prov 8 (6/12/24)

1. What does it mean that wisdom is calling out from the highest point and why is that important; why is wisdom better than wealth; what is the result of the fear of the Lord in us and why do you think that is (v. 13); what do you learn?

- In v. 22, we read, “The Lord brought me forth as the first of His works, before His deeds of old.” For God to create the world, He used wisdom, which is why, the world flows wisely, smoothly and orderly. God didn’t just create out of nothing. God created the world under His wisdom, to work according to the wise ways He saw. Because the world is a creation from our wise God, there’s order from day to night, from the waters flowing downward, to trees growing upward, to the animal kingdom survival methods, where every animal, including little ones, are given ways to survive and thrive. David saw God’s wisdom in His creation. He wrote in Ps 19:1-4, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.”

Prov 9 (6/13/24)

1. Both wisdom and folly call—who are they calling and why; what’s the difference between rebuking the wise and the mocker and why; what do you learn?

- Verse 10 gives us God’s perspective, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” There are many brilliant people who know many things and teach so well. However, many of them trust their understanding, and have no fear of God, which means only one thing, and that is, they really do not have any wisdom in God’s sight. Moreover, since they do not know our holy God, they truly do not have any understanding in God’s eyes. Yes, they have lots of understanding about many subjects, and truly know many amazing facts and insights, but they have no knowledge of our God, because they never met our God. May we learn from them some useful insights, but may we never be overly impressed with their knowledge or ways, because in God’s sight, they really don’t have any true knowledge or wisdom. And though we may be poor and know very little, yet, we have wisdom because we fear our God and we have true understanding because we have met the true God. May our knowledge of our God truly be a greater treasure to us than all the earthly treasures they possess.

Prov 10 (6/14/24)

1. What does v. 26 mean and can you translate it in your own way; of the many pros and cons from each verses, which ones can you relate; what do you also learn?

- Verse 8 reads, “The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin.” Why is the opposite of the wise who accepts command a chattering fool? I see, while the wise is busy obeying the command he heard, the fool is still talking, reasoning, justifying and maybe perhaps to understand better, he is still talking. There is a time to talk, to reason, to justify to understand better. But, there also comes a point when the talking has to stop, and it’s time to decide, to move, to act in obedience to the commands of our God. Especially, with God, our reasonings are not essential. Perhaps, it may help us to understand a little better. But, the intention of God’s words to us is for us to lovingly, humbly and joyfully obey His commands. Let’s remember, faith without deeds is dead. Or, words without deeds is empty promises. Imagine, if God said lots of good promises but never did them, that’s words without deeds.

Prov 11 (6/15/24)

1. In v. 11, what exalts and destroys a city, how and why would that be; can you explain v. 22 and how is that applicable to you; what do you also learn?
- In vv. 24-25, we are taught that generosity brings more, while stinginess brings less. It's the opposite teaching in our world, where to keep more for oneself we retain more, and therefore, the less we give, the more we keep for ourselves. Actually, in our life experiences, we often seem to experience the world's teaching more than what our God teaches. So, we love when we buy low and sell high, that's the business model of our world, which most of us adhere to real tight. Our life experiences seem to confirm more of the world's teaching than God's. So, while many of us might recite, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," such teachings we recite but rarely live out and make decisions accordingly, especially when it comes to big and expensive decisions. Too often, our faith and deeds are not aligned; our faith seems to have little life. As God's people, we really must learn to lovingly believe and joyfully live God's ways in our lives, rather than cling and live according to the worldly ways. Too often, we recite God's way, while live like a citizen of this world. Above our experiences and the many teachings of the world that seem to make more sense to us, we must learn more of God's way, and see His truth, and thus, learn to strip away our thoughts being higher than His. Once again, while we say His way is higher, when it comes to making decisions, too often we value our ways over His. Let God be true and every person, especially myself, be the liar. So, with John, let's humbly confess, may He increase and I decrease. And now, let's live what we confess.

Prov 12 (6/17/24)

1. In v. 1, how differently does God see the people who love discipline and who do not and why do you think that is; can you explain vv. 15-16 and how would that be applied in your life; what else do you learn from this chapter?
- Verse 10 reads, "The righteous care for the needs of their animals, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel." The first part of the sentence sounds good, as the care of God's people goes as far as the lowest and the least in our world. May we always remember to care for the people and even animals who are in need. May the low estate of others never be out of our reach of care. Just as our God cared for the least and the lowest of sinners like us, so we desire to follow in His footsteps. But, when we get to the latter part of the sentence in v. 10, it's the opposite, as "the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel," we are told. The highest acts of the wicked are not welcomed. We often think separately, and think, since it is a kind act, even though it is from the wicked, still, a kind act is a kind act. This reminds me of Is 64:6, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags." The righteous acts of the unclean are as dirty and smelly and unwanted like filthy rags. So, in both Isaiah and in this proverb, we are to learn that the kind acts of the wicked is cruel because God sees not only the act, but from whom the acts come from. Our acts are an overflow of our hearts, and when the heart is not right, when the root is not right, then the fruit is actually rotten, even if it appears lovely on the outside. So, learning which comes first is important. Our actions are meant to be the overflowing response from our hearts, meaning our hearts come first. Putting our hearts right, and we can only be right when we stand right with God in Jesus, then even our smallest deeds will be kindness to the least, and when our hearts are not right with our God because we stand outside of Jesus, then even our best of acts are cruel, wicked, and dirty like filthy rags. Let's learn to see and judge as our God teaches us, and unlearn the ways of the world in us. May our God be true and every person a liar.

Prov 13 (6/18/24)

1. According to v. 24, how does a parent express hatred or love for one's children and why would that be; which other instruction in this chapter catches your heart and why; which of God's counsel can you apply in your life?

- We have no children, so we never had the privilege of raising our own children. So, counseling parents on children, I speak with no personal experience. But, reading God's word and seeing many parents, I do see that parenting is not easy according to God's word. I see many parents will spare the rod, and I am sure for many different reasons I may not always understand. However, in the end, when parents spare the rod, discipline, God's word says, they are hating their own children. I pray that the parents, actually all God's people, will pray and humbly and perhaps imperfectly, strive to obey God's word, to not spare the rod when our love ones are sinning, so God can use us to bless them to see their sinfulness, to acknowledge their sins, and to genuinely repent for their sins. That's what a rod is meant to do. The rod is not an instrument of dishing punishment for our children who has fallen into evil. But, the rod's painful dishing is meant to help them see, what sin will result in their lives, and unless those sins are repented genuinely and humbly before God, then the eternity awaiting them will bring pain and misery that's never ending. So, the rod is meant to be simply a light foretaste of the frightening eternity of evil waiting for them. So, the rod is meant to sort of wake them up with the pain it should produce. And may I say, the children here are not only the little ones, but also the adults. But, it is here, a godly parent can lovingly teach and lead our love ones the amazing love and humility of Jesus, who suffered willingly for our sins, even though He had no sin of His own. The Heavenly Father did not spare His rod for His Son, because He loved the sons and daughters that His Son, Christ Jesus, came to substitute for. What greater rod has there ever been than the cross on which the Son willingly received all the punishment for sins, all because He chose to become our substitute?—Jesus went to the cross and paid for all of my sins. Though He unjustly and unfairly received the rod I deserved, He repaid my evil with His righteousness, forever blessing me to inherit His everlasting kingdom. Simply incomprehensible! What irresistible love! What an amazing God, You are!

Prov 14 (6/19/24)

1. In v. 31, how is the poor and God connected and why and how does this impact your life; what are some of the things taught in this chapter blesses you and frightens you and why; what would you apply in your life?

- Verse 10 reads, "Each heart knows its own bitterness..." How sad and how frightening to read these words. For all the wonders and blessings of life, each heart has its own bitterness. No one is immune to such bitterness. To think that someone else has it better than me, is to not understand the bitterness each heart carries. And as painful and miserable our own bitterness is, so are theirs. Too often we find more misery in us because we keep comparing our lives with others who seem to have it better, and it is true that in some areas, their lives are indeed better. But, we also conveniently forget, they also carry bitterness deep in their hearts, which obviously is not visible to us. But, they do. Each heart knows and carries our own bitterness. But, soon, we will enter a place where all of our pain, our misery, our disappointments, our sorrows, our bitterness will find healing. The house we will move into, has a Master, who is the Great Physician, and in His house, there are no bitterness that He does not know how to heal. He is the Great Physician, not just by title, but by His ability and His power and His love for the hurting to heal completely, perfectly and eternally. My heart, our hearts will know His peace.

Prov 15 (6/20/24)

1. What does v. 3 mean and why is that a great blessing for God's people; why would God detest the sacrifice (worship) of the wicked in v. 8 and how should that be applied to us; what do you learn from this chapter?

- In v. 10, we are told, "Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path; the one who hates correction will die." Painful discipline is for everyone, God's people and not, when we leave God's path. So, let's please remember this verse, when we are suffering for the wrongs we have done. It's what it is said it will be. The question should not be, why me, but seek God's blessing to seek the Lord's face in humble repentance for the foolishness we have chosen. And the beauty and blessing for God's people is that there's forgiveness for our sins. And one of the fruit of us being forgiven is the humility to own up our sins and humbly repent for our sins. Repentance is not a prescription for our forgiveness but a description of us being forgiven. Praise the Lord for He forgives far before we have ever confessed our sins. That is why, God's love, His forgiveness is a gift of grace, which means, we did not earn our forgiveness by our repentance, but He has already freely given us His gift of grace while we have not done anything to earn and thus deserve God's gift. The sad part of the above verse is the second half, where we are told of the one who hates correction, because the heart that hates correction is a description of not willing to humbly submit before God's authority, therefore, rejecting God, he will die apart from God's goodness, which has only one destination, and that is the everlasting fire of hell. So, seeing the attitude of our hearts when we are going through the pain of discipline gives us a window to our souls, leading us to where we will dwell in our eternity. May we be people who humbly receives the pain of God's discipline, and may that pain lead us to humbly repent for the sins we have chosen to commit. And be blessed to remember how we are already forgiven for our sins because Jesus, our Savior, has paid the price for all of our sins in His cross, far before we ever committed our sins. Just as He paid for our sins before we ever committed them, so we confess our sins, not to be forgiven, but because we are already forgiven in Jesus' death on the cross, a long time ago.

Prov 16 (6/21/24)

1. In v. 2, why would a way seem pure to us and yet needed to be weighed by the Lord; in v. 16, why is wisdom better than gold and do you believe that and how do you live it; in v. 24, what brings healing to our bones and why; what do you want to apply into your life?

- In our world today, the warrior, the conqueror, the victor, the winner is cherished above all, while the patient person may be nice, but not someone we look up to or aspire to grow more like. We value success in our world, and no one is more successful than someone who takes a city. Yet, God tells us differently in v. 32. He says the patient person is better. And here's our dilemma. Will we accept what we see, what we know, which ultimately become what we believe, or will we accept God's word and standard over what we know and what we feel? That's why Romans 3:4 and Isaiah 55:8-9 are so important and applicably true in our lives. Ultimately, we must decide who we will believe, who we believe knows best, and not just in our heads, but truly when we have to make decisions for our lives, for our careers, for our future, for our wellbeing. Who will rule our lives, will it be our thoughts or God's? I pray that our God will bless us to truly see and believe more than anything that our God knows best, and we will humbly and gladly and thankfully and lovingly will lay down our ways, because we truly

know and believe and desire God's way over ours. No doubt, no hesitation. The question then is, does God's word rule my life or is my thought the final decider? Will we have God submit unto our thoughts, or would we submit under God? May this not be simply an argument for the mind, but make us to place all our treasures on the line because we believe on whom we believe, not just in word but with our deeds with all the consequences that come with them.

Prov 17 (6/22/24)

1. In v. 9, how is love covering an offense different than just not dealing with it and how can we apply this verse; what does v. 12 mean and how can we live out this verse; what other instructions do you find precious and applicable?
 - In v. 19, the latter part reads, "... whoever builds a high gate invites destruction." That sounds so contrary to our logic. The reason why we build gates, and the higher they go, the safer it would be, would be our understanding. But, it is true, the higher the gate, the greater the curiosity from the outside. Moreover, the more the people want to guard their treasures, the higher they would build gates, to keep the thieves out. And since the high gate is usually an indicator of precious treasures inside, then the thieves will desire to break in more than other places, thus the invitation.
 - Meditating on this verse, I read another interpretation that flowed together with the earlier part of the verse, "Whoever loves a quarrel loves sin; whoever builds a high gate invites destruction." So, the building the high gate was interpreted as, opens his mouth wide, meaning brags too much and so invites destruction. The final verse of this chapter, 28, reads, "Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues." So, if we connect the final verse with verse 19, we can read the gate as our mouth. God's word is so much deeper than our understanding and perspective. May we always be humble in our study and understanding of God's incredible truths.

Prov 18 (6/24/24)

1. Can you explain v. 17 and have you seen this in your life experience; how has the tongue the power of life and death and why, and have you had an experience with both; what other instructions captures you in this chapter?
 - Verse 7 reads, "The mouths of fools are their undoing, and their lips are a snare to their very lives." Most people would never undo their own lives, and if they did, it was unintentional. And yet, it happens, and happens frequently. Why? It's because most of us are not able to catch ourselves of our undoing, and sadly, sometimes, even if we knew what we were doing, we don't know how to control ourselves. Just as we are not able to see our own faces without a reflection, usually most of us are not aware of what we say and most of all, how we say them. Usually, two types of people point them out to us. Our enemies, in order to destroy us, will point out, and though they do so with bad intention and most likely, with exaggeration, they will point out, and for the most part, what they say, has a lot of truths. But because they come injected with malice, it's really difficult to hear and accept them, as much truth it may contain. But, we need to pray for great humility, so that we will be able to hear their criticism. The second type of people who can point out our wrongs are people who truly love us, who do not mind receiving our initial harsh reaction. They know, unless they point out, we will most likely not see what's being smeared in our faces, because that's something we cannot see by ourselves. So, they point out what we don't want to hear, but they will, because if not them, we will walk with a sign that we are fools taped on the back, with us not knowing why everyone is mocking us, because we can't see it for ourselves. Life is meant to be lived with the help and

eyes and ears of our loves one, seeing for us and hearing what we cannot for ourselves. May we have such beautiful friends. And may we be such wonderful friends to our friends. Let's pray that we will be a blessing to our love ones to be a fountain of life and not be a poison of pain and suffering with what we say and how we say them. Thank You Lord for our love ones who point them out to us, and we pray that we will be such friends to the ones we love.

Prov 19 (6/25/24)

1. In v. 11, how do we receive our glory and why would God bless us this way and how can this be your way of life; in v. 17, how can we lend to God and how well and regularly do you live this out; what other applications have you found?
- In v. 6, we are taught, "... everyone is the friend of one who gives gifts." Living in our individualistic culture, there's little giving and receiving gifts, except occasionally on special days. One of the good things I like in the Korean culture is when we go out to eat, we rarely pay duth, which is not a bad thing at all. However, I like when we all take turn to buy and receive from each other. To me, that's like giving and receiving gifts. So, instead of just taking care of my needs and pay for my meal, we buy gifts for others to receive, and when others choose to buy, then we receive their gifts. In our home, Nadia and I decided, whatever merchandizes she orders or buys, they are a gift from me, and vice versa, whatever I buy, it's her gift for me, though I chose it. So, this is how we apply this principle, to always buy and receive, so we learn more to be thankful for each other's gifts and care. May we have many friends and families we buy gifts to, and may we also have many people who will also buy us gifts. To give and to receive many gifts often is a joyful and more loving way to live, in my humble opinion.

Prov 20 (6/26/24)

1. How do you understand v. 6 and how can it guide your life; v. 30 sounds painful and yet sounds like a blessing, how so; what truths captures you in this chapter?
- V. 21 reads, "An inheritance claimed too soon will not be blessed at the end." Many of us seek instant gratification; therefore, we would rather receive our rewards sooner rather than later. As Christians who know our greatest treasures and rewards awaits for us in the future, in God's kingdom, yet, if we could, we would often want to taste the joy of God's riches here more, thinking that the later would also be ours. We have to learn, that many of God's treasures can be savored both here and in His kingdom. But, then, there are also treasures that God will only give either here or there, which means, if we get it here, then there won't be any later to have there. Some treasures, God delights to give us only in His kingdom later, and we must learn to wait. May the timing of our God capture us more than our desire for instant gratification. The battle of our faith is truly knowing and believing who to trust more, God's word or my desire. May our God truly be our first and greatest love, a love far bigger, deeper, and greater than my love for me. Yes, Lord, please bless me to truly love You much more than I love myself. You over me is what I pray for. More You, and less me.

Prov 21 (6/27/24)

1. From vv. 9 and 19, how does God see a quarrelsome wife (and also a person) and what should you learn from it; in v. 15, how can justice bring both joy and terror and how does it apply to your life; what more catches your eye in this chapter?

- V. 31 reads, “The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the Lord.” We know horses were a tremendous advantage in the battle, somewhat similar to having tanks when the war was fought more with guns and knives. But, despite the great advantage that horses brought, yet the final victory did not rest on those advantages, but always rested with the Lord, because God alone is the almighty God, the Creator of the Universe. The principle is the same in all the areas of our lives. There are many advantages in our world that do seem to steer us for victories in life, but the ultimate success do not rest on those advantages, but it is in the hands of our sovereign God, who rules all. Now, this does not mean, then we turn passive and simply do nothing and wait for God to accomplish all. Quite the opposite should be our mindset, as we learn this from King David when he was told that he would not be the one to build God’s temple, but his son. And though it was not his work, that did not stop David from helping prepare to build the Temple. In fact, he did almost everything possible to build it, by planning and preparing all the needed materials and resources, though he could not build it, because God would not permit him. So, we should get our horses ready for the day of battle, knowing that they will not decide the outcome, but they can be God’s instrument for us to accomplish His will. It’s like doctors and medicines today, for they do not ultimately bring healing, but our God can use them as His instrument to bring healing to us. God can bring healing without doctors and medicine, but God often uses them as His instrument of healing, just as He uses horses as His instrument for the victory. Using horses and doctors are not wrong, as long as we remember, they are not the ultimate reason for the victory and the healing, for they are instruments, and it is God who brings the victory. God is the reason for the victory and for our healing. God is our reason.

Prov 22 (6/28/24)

1. In vv. 6 and 15, how does God want His people to treat the children and why do you think that is and how is it applicable to you; what more do you learn of God; which practical instructions applies to you and how can you best live them?
- In v. 9, we are taught, “The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.” We are not told how they will be blessed. In fact, we are told that the generous share their food with the poor, which is the reason why they are blessed. If we add nothing more here, then in reality it simply means, the generous give away their food to the poor, who have nothing to pay them back with. So, in simple math, the generous will be giving away their good without receiving anything back, which is a minus, and not a plus. So, without explaining how the generous will be blessed, God simply states they are. Are we ok with God telling us is a blessing, without explaining how? Are we ok when in reality, we are giving away without getting anything back? Are we ok with the loss we will experience in real life, or at least as we experience life? Is God’s word enough, is His promise enough, even when we don’t see it or experience the goodness He promises immediately or even in this lifetime? Oh, I pray that in our lives, the most important, and the most impactful words that guides our lives will be God’s word, and if He says it, may we truly believe Him, no matter what other experiences in life might want to tell us, especially if it tells us differently. May His words be enough, because our God is truly more than sufficient in all things, all the days of our lives. God, You are my only God!

Prov 23 (6/29/24)

1. In this chapter, there are many things we are not—to crave, to covet, to glance, to speak, to withhold, to envy, to join, to gaze—what are they, why do you think that is, and which ones have you done and must no longer do?

- We live in a world, where discipline is greatly opposed. There's a lot of hating and cancelling out each other, but very little discipline. Even when people believe and follow after sin, even when they are our children, the worldly mindset is to either support them or encourage them but not oppose them, and not discipline them with a punishment. In fact, many people in our world treat punishment in discipline as like death, which God says it isn't. God says in vv. 13-14, "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish them with the rod, they will not die. Punish them with the rod and save them from death." God is clear, if we want to save the child from death, then punish them in discipline, so they will learn right from wrong. God is clearly opposing the worldly ways. What God says it will save us, such as discipline in our sins, while the world considers that detrimental. So, what the world thinks will kill the child's wellbeing, God very clearly disagrees, and teaches us, what we think might kill is what actually will save us and our children. So, may we learn from God, and obey God's teaching, instead of learning and following the worldly ways. May God be true and every person a liar (Rom 3:4). It is so good to learn from our God and joyfully obey Him, than to walk alongside the world, not realizing the blind leads the blind. May we learn to discern God's truth over the lies in the world, and delight to joyfully obey and only follow our God in all things, at all times.

Prov 24 (7/1/24)

1. In v. 16, what happens to the righteous even though they have fallen many times and why would that be; from vv. 30-34, what is the lesson he learned and applied into his life, and how can this be applicable to yours; what more do you see in this chapter?
- In v. 10, we are told, "If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength!" It's easy to think that we are supposed to falter in our time of trouble. But, that is not what God wants to happen to us. He says that our strength is small, meaning He wants our strength to be stronger enough so that we will not falter in our time of trouble. God wants us to build our strength, so that we would know how to navigate through the trouble times, without falling. And that happens when we learn to be yoked with our Lord and walk with Him holding our hands, as we delight to walk with Him, nearly and dearly. Our strength is never meant to be a stand alone strength. Never independent from our God, but always lovingly dependent on our God, because our joy is to walk nearly and dearly with Him. And, by the way, when we should falter in our time of trouble because we are small, let's never think that our God will abandon us because we have fallen. Quite the opposite, He will raise us again, even if we have fallen seven times or seven hundred times (v. 16). Our God is gracious, who knows how small we are, so He wants to strengthen us. And He is also patient, knowing that we fall often, so He comes to us to raise us again and again, never tiring to raise us again. What a wonderful Redeemer we worship and love.

Prov 25 (7/2/24)

1. There are many unexpected, almost illogical, insights we are given, will you meditate on one or more of them and explain why that would be and how they can also be applied to your life (vv. 2, 15, 16, 21-22, 28); any others you would like to share?
- Verse 28 reads, "Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control." Broken walls for a city is unsafe, because any army can invade, and there will be very little resistance because their primary protection is gone. A city with broken walls is unprotected, and most likely, all her inhabitants will be destroyed, either being killed or taken hostage to a far away land. And that is the comparison image we are to behold when we lack

self-control, God instructs. In the fruit of the Spirit, we are taught to have self-control. And yet, many of us, do not. Words or actions and thoughts too often run uncontrollably within us. God knowing our tendency has also taught us, "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (Jam 1:19). Too often in our lives, we see we don't have certain wonderful characteristics God delights for us to have, and with our acknowledgment, we leave it there. When God delights for us to have, we must strive and make every effort within us to pray for, to work for, and to cultivate what's lacking within us, so that we would not suffer the consequences that would naturally pour, such as for the lack of self-control. Let's pray earnestly and work tirelessly for our God to bless us with His characteristics, so that we would grow more after the likeness of our Lord Jesus, who never lost His self-control, either in the face of temptations, or in the dark hour of danger, even when He was in the midst of horrendous suffering and agony with the nails piercing His hands and feet. Even when He was over-turning the tables in the Temple or weeping for Jerusalem or disputing with His enemies or facing His tormentors, Jesus never lost His self-control, for He never sinned in such times, and always spoke and acted for God's glory, in all things, at all times. Jesus is who we delight to behold and delight to grow more and more and more after His beautiful likeness.

Prov 26 (7/3/24)

1. What do you learn about a foolish person and will you examine yourself to see if you are not acting like one; what is the power of gossip like and have you seen it work; what do you learn?
 - After a great harm was done, I have heard some people simply say, "I was only joking," meaning no harm was intended. Though a harm was caused through their joke or prank, they do not think they deserved the harm of a punishment, because they were only joking. Perhaps, if you have thought or said something similar, then please, please, read, meditate and memorize vv. 18 and 19. The joke or prank for a laughter actually is "like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death." It's like throwing a grenade on a playground and saying, "I was only joking." The intention might have truly been a joke, but it is inexcusable. No matter how good the intention, if it has the power to harm greatly, then it cannot be done, and if done, then he must receive the consequence of his action. Just as we know the destructive harm of a grenade, so we are told today by God's living word, a joke and a gossip is more "like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death." They are not harmless; they are destructive. Some people might think, words don't destroy. God's word says different, it is "like shooting flaming arrows of death." They kill, they destroy. Therefore, they cannot be done; they cannot be excused. Let's learn well today, about jokes and pranks. They are harmful weapons of great destruction; not harmless, but very harmful. May our God bless our hearts and lips to build others up, to bring God His glory, and never be an instrument of destruction, joking or not.

Prov 27 (7/4/24)

1. Will you take time to meditate on 1-3 instructions in this chapter and as much as possible, do so a little deeper than before; do you have someone to sharpen you as v. 17 teaches (if not, will you pray that the Lord will lead you to him/her); will you memorize the instruction God delights to deposit unto your heart and recite throughout the day?
 - Verse 21 reads, "The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but people are tested by their praise." Reading about the crucible and the furnace, I was expecting that people will be tested by the trials and difficulties of life. But, I was wrong. We are tested by the praise we receive.

We are tested by how we handle the congratulations and the compliments we receive. More than our failures, we are tested by our successes, by our accomplishments, by what we did well. I don't believe this is about being thankful, satisfied and fulfilled by the good results. We should be. It's wonderful to have success and to be praised. However, does our success make us feel greater than others? Who receives the glory in our successes? It's really hard to be humble when we are successful. The King of all glory humbly washed the feet of His disciples, because He desired more to serve than to be served. From Satan, to Adam and to all people, our desire is to be raised up, and not lowered. We feel good when we are praised, but discouraged when we don't receive the acknowledgment of our hard work. Lord, we pray that our hearts will look to You, both in the days of difficulties and in the days of success, and may we humbly learn to offer the praises we may receive where they belong, and that is to You, and Your glory, and the edification of Your church. To You alone be all the glory and honor and praises. And bless us to rejoice in Your honor more than ours.

Prov 28 (7/5/24)

1. What kind of prayers are detestable to God and why (v. 9); what are we to do with our sins and why (v 13-14); what do you learn about the poor and how should you treat them and why?
 - Verse 26 reads, "Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe." In our world, many are taught and believe that they need to learn to bet on themselves, meaning to trust themselves over the naysayers around them. This usually comes up in their contract discussions for professional athletes. Some outperformed what others thought, so they end up receiving much larger contracts. Sadly, many others underperformed, and some get injured, so they don't get anywhere near the contract they would have received, without the gamble on themselves. These are rarely reported, while the larger contracts are celebrated, which is what most people see and learn from. Through this, among others, the people in our world are constantly taught, to trust in themselves, to believe in themselves, thus to bet on themselves. Sadly, the message of the world does not remain only among the non-believers, but this mindset has crept inside the church, as well. Too many Christians make themselves as the final arbiter of their lives, instead of learning to humbly receive and follow the instructions from their spiritual leaders. The world's message to trust in themselves is alive and well inside the church. God's people must humbly repent and unlearn the worldly ways in us. God's people must humbly learn to accept God's way over ours, so that our God and His words will rule and reign in our hearts and lives. May He be true, and every person a liar.

Prov 29 (7/6/24)

1. What do you learn about justice and how should we pursue it; what does v. 25 mean and how real is the fear of man in your life and how can you overcome it; what is your prayer in light of what you heard from the Lord in this chapter?
 - God teaches us in v. 11, "Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end." As we know, it's not easy to not vent when we are full of rage. Controlling our emotions when we are angry is not easy. When things don't go well, when they go terribly wrong, it's easy to let go to our rage and let it be. And when our anger or feelings subside a little, then we try to take back the control. If that's us, then to us God says, "fools give full vent to their rage," meaning, that's not right, that we are not to give full vent to our rage, that we are not to lose our control in our worst moments, that we cannot go off and say and be overcome with our

bad thoughts and mood. In the TV show, the policeman said, “it’s easier to ask for forgiveness than for permission,” which meant, act first, even if it is out of control, and seek forgiveness afterwards. In our life experiences, this is probably true as well. But, for God’s people, we must not be guided by what’s easier for us. God’s word teaches us today about learning self-control, even praying and learning to be merciful, rather than acting first and then seeking forgiveness. We are to learn to not spill the milk if possible, than learning to apologize for the spilled milk. Our guide is not our experiences, not the world, not the TV shows, not what’s easier, but God’s word. May God be true and every person that speaks differently a liar.

Prov 30 (7/8/24)

1. What are the two things Agur ask of God (vv. 7-9) and why and how are they applicable to you; of the four things he says, which ones catches your eye and why and how are they applicable to you; any other lessons for you?
 - His heart behind v. 9 is incredible, “Otherwise, I may have too much and disown You and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.” The reason he does not want too much or too little is because he does not trust himself to do well on his own. He knows his heart; he knows he is weak; he knows he is prone to wandering away from his God; he knows he is not as faithful and loyal as he should be; he knows to not trust himself, but his trust and faith is in his God alone. He knows he perseveres only when his God preserves him. So, he wants God to have the last say and not him. Unlike the people of our world who repeatedly tells everyone to bet on oneself, to trust oneself, he says, “No, don’t trust you, don’t trust in people.” Unless we place our trust and our faith in our God alone, then even when we are in the perfect situation, as Adam was, still, like he, we too will choose disobedience over God’s word and His ways. That’s us. Only God knows how to not fall into sin. Only God can be tempted in every way, and still not fall into it and sin (Heb 4:15). And because He never sinned, when we do, we can boldly run to Him, because we know He has also been tempted in every way, but He never sinned. So with great compassion, He will still accept us in our sinfulness, He will love us while we are still His enemies and acting in disobedience, He will cleanse us and forgive us of all of our ugly sins. And knowing that our God is this compassionate, we run to His throne boldly and even confidently, though we have absolutely no confidence in ourselves, but only in Him (Heb 4:16). He is good, and His love endures forever. He is really that good! Praise Your name, Christ Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit!

Prov 31 (7/9/24)

1. In vv. 1-9, what should the king do and not do and why; which characters of a noble wife ministers to you and which do you see lacking in you; either from this chapter or from the whole book, which instructions ministered to you this time?
 - Verse 30 instructs us, “Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” In our world, we love a woman who has charm and is beautiful, so we work really hard to cultivate them and keep them for as long as possible. But, our God instructs us, they are deceptive and is fleeting, which means, they should not be our pursuit, yet they are. What our God finds praiseworthy is a woman, a man, a person, who fears the Lord. Our pursuit in life should be after what our God delights, and not what the world regards highly. To accept, to believe and to humbly follow the Lord’s heart over ours, especially when it seems that the whole world where we live seem to follow and so have we, is unnatural for us, and yet, when our God is our first and greatest love and delight, then, we can place our

desires below our God's, because we love God more than we love ourselves, just as He loves us more than Himself, displayed on His cross. Lord, may we delight more in fearing you than to receive all the praise and adoration from the world for our beauty and charm.