

Day 380 - MONDAY: March 4th

Proverbs 18

Proverbs 18:1-24 NKJV

A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment. A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart. When the wicked comes, contempt comes also; And with dishonor comes reproach. The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; The wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook. It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, Or to overthrow the righteous in judgment. A fool's lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul. The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body. He who is slothful in his work Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer. The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe. The rich man's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem. Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility. He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him. The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, But who can bear a broken spirit? The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge. A man's gift makes room for him, And brings him before great men. The first one to plead his cause seems right, Until his neighbor comes and examines him. Casting lots causes contentions to cease, And keeps the mighty apart. A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle. A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; From the produce of his lips he shall be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit. He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD. The poor man uses entreaties, But the rich

answers roughly. A man who has friends must himself be friendly,
But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "In Proverbs 18:1, the person who "isolates" or, literally, "separates" himself is not here a quiet recluse or hermit. Rather, the latter part of the verse makes clear that this individual is one who "rages" at other people. The NIV translates the Hebrew term here as merely "defies," but the literal sense is "breaks out," the word also being used in Proverbs 17:14 and Proverbs 20:3 in the sense of engaging in quarreling. The person identified in Proverbs 18:1 is therefore contrary and schismatic, one who is divisive, setting himself against others and bringing strife. The proverb thus fits well with the next one in verse 2.

37. Further Comments on Listening to Evil Talk (Proverbs 18:5-8)

"TYPE: CHIASTIC....The chiasmus in vv. 6-7 is obvious (lips, mouth, mouth, lips). Somewhat less conspicuously, v. 5 refers to heeding evil talk at the gate [where judicial decisions were made], and v. 8 describes the pleasures that malicious slander can give. This section appears to be a further commentary on 17:27–18:4. In official proceedings, whether they be court cases or community decisions, one obviously should not take the side of an evil person (v. 5). The odds of such happening are reduced by the fact that caustic and selfish people expose themselves by their words (vv. 6-7). On the other hand, many have a perverse attraction to malicious gossip (v. 8). This points to the need to be a judicious and thoughtful listener" (NAC). Verse 8 is repeated in Proverbs 26:22.

38. Security (Proverbs 18:9-12)

"TYPE: THEMATIC....Several proverbs on personal security stand here together" (NAC).

39. Two Proverbs (Proverbs 18:13-14)

TYPE: INDIVIDUAL PROVERBS. "These two proverbs have no direct relationship to each other. Interestingly, however, v. 13 looks back to 17:27–18:4 while v. 14 repeats the sentiment of Proverbs 17:22" (NAC). Proverbs 18:13 shows the importance of not being hasty or prejudiced in coming to conclusions—to wait until one has all the facts before making a judgment (see also verse 17).

"Verse 14 points out that one's attitude, for good or ill, is the single most important factor in confronting adversity" (note on verses 13-14).

40. Just Problem Resolution (Proverbs 18:15-19)

TYPE: THEMATIC.

Verse 16 shows that gifts open doors (compare Proverbs 17:8; Proverbs 19:6). This could be a model of propriety, yet it may also be something for jurists considering a dispute to be on guard against (compare Proverbs 17:23).

Proverbs 18:17 adds to the wisdom of verse 13 in making the point that we must give all sides in a dispute a fair hearing. In verse 18, disputes were sometimes settled through casting lots. In seemingly irresolvable disputes today people sometimes decide to "flip for it"—tossing a coin to determine an outcome through chance. Yet in ancient times, the casting of lots was often seen as an appeal not to blind chance but to divine judgment (Proverbs 16:33). Thus it was looked on as turning the matter over to God.

Proverbs 18:19 points out that reconciling with an offended brother, a close companion, is no easy matter—perhaps because

of the level of perceived betrayal. Of course we should, if at all possible, avoid offense in the first place. But where offense has already occurred, we must be prepared for some great effort in restoring a positive relationship. This may also be a warning to jurists about the intractability of such disputes.

41. The Power of Words (Proverbs 18:20-21)

"TYPE: THEMATIC, CATCHWORD" (NAC).

Verse 20 refers to productive speech benefiting its user. On the other hand, verse 21 warns that those who love to use the tongue will bear the result, whether good or ill. The key, then, is to speak carefully, as so many other proverbs show." [END]

Verse 2 – As we each grow in becoming sons and daughters of encouragement, may we learn to listen fully instead of waiting for our opportunity to speak. Only after fully listening can we evaluate whether we have anything of value to share.

Verse 8 – This is such a great word picture. We can often eat up “gossip” like we are eating delicious food. Gossiping and listening to gossip/slander is something we as Christians must work on. The Church of God is full of this evil behavior and hopefully we can all work to overcome eating this poisonous food.

Verse 13 – How many problems would be avoided if a situation was fully investigated and both sides fully considered. Rash decisions and answers lead to all sorts of problems. How do we each do in hearing a matter fully before we respond?

Verse 17 – Here again, how many times have we heard only one sides perspective and been in agreement with them, only later to hear there is another side that is vastly different and equally

compelling. The truly wise hear both sides before forming thoughts and conclusions and even then, how much of each are actually fully true?

Verse 24 – Hopefully we all have friends in our lives that we know will be there for us no matter what. We can count on them! How about us? Are we there for our friends when they need us?