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Proverbs

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PROVERBS

The Purpose of Proverbs

- 1** The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:
 ² For learning wisdom and discipline;
 for understanding insightful sayings;
 ³ for receiving prudent instruction
 in righteousness, justice, and integrity;
 ⁴ for teaching shrewdness to the inexperienced,
 knowledge and discretion to a young man —
 ⁵ let a wise person listen and increase learning,
 and let a discerning person obtain guidance —
 ⁶ for understanding a proverb or a parable,
 the words of the wise, and their riddles.
- ⁷ The fear of the LORD
 is the beginning of knowledge;
 fools despise wisdom and discipline.

Avoid the Path of the Violent

- ⁸ Listen, my son, to your father's instruction,
 and don't reject your mother's teaching,
 ⁹ for they will be a garland of favor on your head
 and pendants around your neck.
- ¹⁰ My son, if sinners entice you,
 don't be persuaded.
- ¹¹ If they say — "Come with us!
 Let's set an ambush and kill someone.
 Let's attack some innocent person just for fun!
- ¹² Let's swallow them alive, like Sheol,
 whole, like those who go down to the Pit.
- ¹³ We'll find all kinds of valuable property
 and fill our houses with plunder.
- ¹⁴ Throw in your lot with us,
 and we'll all share the loot" —



- 15 my son, don't travel that road with them
or set foot on their path,
16 because their feet run toward evil
and they hurry to shed blood.
17 It is useless to spread a net
where any bird can see it,
18 but they set an ambush to kill themselves;
they attack their own lives.
19 Such are the paths of all who make profit dishonestly;
it takes the lives of those who receive it.

Wisdom's Plea

- 20 Wisdom calls out in the street;
she makes her voice heard in the public squares.
21 She cries out above the commotion;
she speaks at the entrance of the city gates:
22 "How long, inexperienced ones, will you love ignorance?
How long will you mockers enjoy mocking
and you fools hate knowledge?
23 If you respond to my warning,
then I will pour out my spirit on you
and teach you my words.
24 Since I called out and you refused,
extended my hand and no one paid attention,
25 since you neglected all my counsel
and did not accept my correction,
26 I, in turn, will laugh at your calamity.
I will mock when terror strikes you,
27 when terror strikes you like a storm
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
when trouble and stress overcome you.
28 Then they will call me, but I won't answer;
they will search for me, but won't find me.



- 29 Because they hated knowledge,
didn't choose to fear the LORD,
30 were not interested in my counsel,
and rejected all my correction,
31 they will eat the fruit of their way
and be gluttoned with their own schemes.
32 For the apostasy of the inexperienced will kill them,
and the complacency of fools will destroy them.
33 But whoever listens to me will live securely
and be undisturbed by the dread of danger."

Wisdom's Worth

- 2** My son, if you accept my words
and store up my commands within you,
2 listening closely to wisdom
and directing your heart to understanding;
3 furthermore, if you call out to insight
and lift your voice to understanding,
4 if you seek it like silver
and search for it like hidden treasure,
5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and discover the knowledge of God.
6 For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.
7 He stores up success for the upright;
He is a shield for those who live with integrity
8 so that he may guard the paths of justice
and protect the way of his faithful followers.
9 Then you will understand righteousness, justice,
and integrity — every good path.
10 For wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will delight you.
11 Discretion will watch over you,



- and understanding will guard you.
- 12 It will rescue you from the way of evil —
from anyone who says perverse things,
13 from those who abandon the right paths
to walk in ways of darkness,
14 from those who enjoy doing evil
and celebrate perversion,
15 whose paths are crooked,
and whose ways are devious.
- 16 It will rescue you from a forbidden woman,
from a wayward woman
with her flattering talk,
17 who abandons the companion of her youth
and forgets the covenant of her God;
18 for her house sinks down to death
and her ways to the land of the departed spirits.
- 19 None return who go to her;
none reach the paths of life.
- 20 So follow the way of the good,
and keep to the paths of the righteous.
- 21 For the upright will inhabit the land,
and those of integrity will remain in it;
22 but the wicked will be cut off from the land,
and the treacherous ripped out of it.

Trust the LORD

- 3** My son, don't forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commands;
2 for they will bring you
many days, a full life, and well-being.
- 3 Never let loyalty and faithfulness leave you.
Tie them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.

