

TEXT 15:1-11

1. A soft answer turneth away wrath;
But a greivous word stirreth up anger.
2. The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright;
But the mouth of fools poureth out folly.
3. The eyes of Jehovah are in every place,
Keeping watch upon the evil and the good.
4. A gentle tongue is a tree of life;
But perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit.
5. A fool despiseth his father's correction;
But he that regardeth reproof getteth prudence.
6. In the house of the righteous is much treasure;
But in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.
7. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge;
But the heart of the foolish doeth not so.
8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah;
But the prayer of the upright is his delight.
9. The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah;
But he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.
10. There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way;
And he that hateth reproof shall die.
11. Sheol and Abaddon are before Jehovah;
How much more then the hearts of the children of men!

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:1-11

1. Find the double contrast in v. 1.
2. Does "fools" mean "simpleton" or "unwise" in v. 2?
3. Cite other passages besides v. 3 that show either the omnipresence of the omniscience of God.
4. The breaking of what "spirit" (v. 4)?
5. Locate other passages besides v. 5 that speak of despising correction.
6. Locate other passages on regarding reproof (v. 5).
7. Who was a righteous man in the Bible who was rich (v. 6)?
8. Who was a wicked rich man who had trouble (v. 6)?
9. What does "disperse" mean (v. 7)?
10. What makes the sacrifice mentioned in v. 8 abominable to God?

11. Compare vs. 8,9.
12. Forsaketh what "way" (v. 10)?
13. What is "Sheol" (v. 11)?
14. Where else is "Abaddon" used in the Bible (v. 11)?

PARAPHRASE OF 15:1-11

1. A soft answer turns away wrath, but harsh words cause quarrels.
2. A wise teacher makes learning a joy; a rebellious teacher spouts foolishness.
3. The Lord is watching everywhere and keeps His eye on both the evil and the good.
4. Gentle words cause life and health; griping brings discouragement.
5. Only a fool despises his father's advise; a wise son considers each suggestion.
6. There is treasure in being good, but trouble dogs the wicked.
7. Only the good can give good advice. Rebels can't.
8. The Lord hates the gifts of the wicked, but delights in the prayers of His people.
- 9,10. The Lord despises the deeds of the wicked, but loves those who try to be good. If they stop trying, the Lord will punish them; if they rebel against that punishment, they will die.
11. The depths of hell are open to God's knowledge. How much more the hearts of all mankind!

COMMENTS ON 15:1-11

V. 1 The setting of the verse: someone has spoken angrily to us. What kind of answer shall we give? We can return a "soft" (gentle) answer, which will tone down the other's wrath, or we can answer in the same tone in which he spoke to us, and full-fledged trouble flares. "Pulpit Commentary: "Two things are here observed: an answer should be given--the injured person should not wrap himself in sullen silence; and that answer should be gentle and conciliatory." A medieval rhyme: "Anger, however great, is checked by answer sweet." This instruction is necessary for maintaining good human relations. Even strange animals are often calmed by a gentle voice. Giving a "soft" answer is part of obeying Rom. 12:18. An instance of the "soft" answer working (I

Sam 25:23-33). Instances of "grievous" words stirring up strife (Judg. 8:1-3; Prov. 25:15; I Sam. 25:10-13; I Kings 12:13-16).

V. 2. A "wise" person has the knowledge to utter; he also knows when, where, and how to speak; and he studies or thinks before he speaks (v. 28). Jesus' speech was always superior, beginning with Luke 2:46,47. But fools pour out folly (Prov. 12:23; 13:16). A fool's voice is known by its words (Eccl. 5:3).

V. 3. Both the omnipresence and the omniscience of God are implied in this statement: He is everywhere, and He knows everything (Psa. 139:1-12; Prov. 5:21; Jer. 16:17; Heb. 4:13). Such knowledge is necessary if God is to be our judge (Jer. 32:19). Since He beholds both the evil and the good, God is not human, for human beings tend to see only the evil of their enemies and critics and to by-pass the evil in their friends and close relatives. This verse backs up our song, "You Cannot Hide from God." Jonah (Jon. 1:3) tried it; so did Achan (Josh. 7:1,11,16-21); so did Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-9); so did many others.

V. 4. A "tree of life" to everyone: to the one who has spoken and to those who have heard. The perverse tongue is a "breaking of the spirit" to all involved: the speaker himself is often hurt; so are those who have been spoken to. A kind tongue was a part of the virtuous woman (Prov. 31:26).

V. 5. A fool is wrong twice: first, he disobeys, and then he will not accept correction--much like King Asa (II Chron. 16:7-10). Some will accept correction, and some won't (Prov. 10:1). Those who do are "wise" (Prov. 10:1); those who don't aren't. See these passages (Prov. 13:18; 15:10,12,31,32).

V. 6. This was especially true of Israel's and Judah's kings. Those who were good gained cities and amassed wealth through the blessing of God, and those who were wicked often lost cities and had to pay off their enemies to keep from being destroyed.

V. 7. Another contrast between the "wise" and "foolish". The wise's lips "disperse" (disseminate, give out) knowledge (Prov. 10:21), but the foolish's heart has no inclination to do so. These two groups live "poles apart". They live in the same material world, yet they live in two different "worlds" while here.

V. 8. Sometimes the wicked sacrifice, pray, and keep up a "front" of religion, but it does them no good (Prov. 21:27; 28:9; Gen. 4:5; Isa. 1:11; Jer. 6:20; Amos 5:22; Mark 7:7; Luke 18:11-14). God is pelased to hear the prayers of the godly (I Pet.

2:12; John 9:31; I John 3:22).

V. 9. This verse goes closely with v. 8. Sinners often look down upon others who do not live as they live, go where they go, and indulge in what they indulge in. They seem to be very "sold" on themselves and their ways, even thinking it strange that others do not run with them to the same excess of riot and speaking evil of them (I Pet. 4:4); but their ways are abominable to God (this verse; . And Psa. 1:1 says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of the scoffers." Righteousness is something to be followed (pursued). and we are to follow wherever it may lead (Prov. 21:21; I Tim. 6:11). There are "paths of righteousness" (Psa. 23:3) where the Good Shepherd has led His sheep throughout the centuries of time.

V. 10. Those who are in the "way of the wicked" (v. 9) are in for grievous correction, both by God and man (God's chastening and man's courts and personal dealings). And while such are famous for not regarding reproof, not listening, not amending their ways, they had better, for "he that hateth reproof shall die" (sometimes by execution, sometimes by God's cutting him off, and by ultimately the second death). Other passages: Vs. 5,12,32; Prov. 5:12; 10:17; Heb.¹²:21:11.

V. 11. "Sheol" is the Hebrew word for the place of departed spirits (the same as "Hades" in Greek). "Abaddon" is the Hebrew word for destruction (the same as "Apollyon" in Greek). Both forms of the latter are used in Rev. 9:11 "Sheol and Abaddon" are used together in Job 26:6 and Prov. 27:20. The omniscience of God, then, extends to those who have perished (this verse; Psa. 139:8), and so does it also to the hearts of men (I Sam. 16:7; II Chron. 6:30; Psa. 7:9; 44:21; John 2:24,25; Acts 1:24; 8:21).

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:1-11

1. In what two ways can we respond to cutting words (v. 1)?
2. Give the outcome of the two different answers (v. 1)?
3. Comment upon a wise person's uttering knowledge (v. 2).
4. What comes forth from a fool's mouth (v. 2)?
5. Cite two passages showing God's omniscience (v. 3).
6. Why is God's omniscience necessary to His righteous judgment (v. 3)?
7. Who all are blessed by the gentle tongue (v. 4)?
8. Who all are hurt by the perverse tongue (v. 4)?

9. What two times is the fool of v. 5 wrong?
10. Illustrate v. 6 by some of the kings of Israel and Judah.
11. What is the contrast between the wise and foolish in v. 7?
12. Why would the wicked bother to sacrifice to God (v. 8)?
13. What about the sacrifice of the wicked (v. 8)?
14. How does sinners' view of the ungodly life differ from God's view of it (v. 8)?
15. What does it mean to "follow" righteousness (v. 9)?
16. Who will correct the person who forsakes the right way (v. 10)?
17. Why should people listen to reproof (v. 10)?
18. What is "Sheol" (v. 11)?
19. What Greek word means the same (v. 11)?
20. What does "Abaddon" mean (v. 11)?
21. What Greek word means the same (v. 11)?
22. According to v. 11 what is before the eyes of God?

TEXT — 15:12-22

12. A scoffer loveth not to be reprov'd;
He will not go unto the wise.
13. A glad heart maketh a cheerful countenance;
But by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.
14. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge;
But the mouth of fools feedeth on folly.
15. All the days of the afflicted are evil;
But he that is of a cheerful heart hath a continual feast.
16. Better is little, with the fear of Jehovah,
Than great treasure and trouble therewith.
17. Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is,
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.
18. A wrathful man stirreth up contention;
But he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
19. The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns;
But the path of the upright is made a highway.
20. A wise son maketh a glad father;
But a foolish man despiseth his mother.
21. Folly is joy to him that is void of wisdom;
But a man of understanding maketh straight his going.
22. Where there is no counsel, purposes are disappointed;
But in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:12-22

1. Is there a relationship between a scoffer's not loving to be reproved and his not going to the wise (v. 12)?
2. What characterizes a "cheerful countenance" (v. 13)?
3. What characterizes a "broken spirit" (v. 13)?
4. Why does a man of understanding seek knowledge when people who are sadly deficient in understanding don't (v. 14)?
5. What is meant by the mouth of fools' feeding on folly (v. 14)?
6. What does "evil" mean in v. 15?
7. A "continual feast" of what kind (v. 15)?
8. Find the double contrast in v. 16.
9. Find the double contrast in v. 17.
10. A "wrathful man" is contrasted with what kind of person in v. 18?
11. What does "appeaseth" mean (v. 18)?
12. How is the way of a sluggard like a "hedge of thorns" (v. 19)?
13. How is the path of the upright like a "highway" (v. 19)?
14. What earlier verse in Proverbs is much like v. 20?
15. What would you include under "folly" in v. 21?
16. What is meant by a man making "straight his going" (v. 21)?
17. Reword the thought found in v. 22.

PARAPHRASE OF 15:12-22

12. A mocker stays away from wise men because he hates to be scolded.
13. A happy face means a glad heart; a sad face means a breaking heart.
14. A wise man is hungry for truth, while the mocker feeds on trash.
15. When a man is gloomy, everything seems to go wrong; when he is cheerful, everything seems right!
16. Better a little with reverence for God, then great treasure and trouble with it.
17. It is better to eat soup with someone you love than steak with someone you hate.
18. A quick-tempered man starts fights; a cool-tempered man tries to stop them.

19. A lazy fellow has trouble all through life; the good man's path is easy!
20. A sensible son gladdens his father. A rebellious son saddens his mother.
21. If a man enjoys folly, something is wrong! The sensible stay on the pathways of right.
22. Plans go wrong with too few counselors; many counselors bring success.

COMMENTS ON 15:12-22

V. 12. A scoffer is a proud, know-it-all person, self-willed, opinionated, and usually wrong. He will not go to the wise to ask or to learn, and he doesn't like people coming to him with their corrections of him. Many deplore being reprov'd (I Kings 22:8; Amos 5:10; John 3:19,20). For hating and despising reproof see also vs. 5,10,32 of this chapter.

V. 13. A "glad heart" (on the inside) makes a "cheerful countenance" (on the outside). The reverse is also true (a sad heart will show up in a sad countenance--Neh. 1:1-4; 2:1,2). "Pulpit Commentary": "The face is the index of the condition of the mind." "Septuagint" translates: "When the heart is glad, the face bloometh." See also Prov. 17:22; 12:25.

V. 14. The person who has knowledge wants more, and he gets it. Solomon desired wisdom that he might rule God's great people and follow his famous father upon the throne of Israel (I Kings 3:5-9). Note the vastness of his growing wisdom and understanding (I Kings 4:29-34). "Pulpit Commentary": "The wise man...is always seeking to learn more...The fool is always gaping and devouring every silly, or slanderous, or wicked word that comes in his way, and in his turn utters and disseminates it."

V. 15. To the person suffering, no day seems physically good: they are all "evil" (like those referred to in Eccl. 12:1). To the healthy and the happy every day is good (a "continual feast"). Oh, the great blessing of good health and favorable conditions that make one happy!

V. 16. Sometimes "treasure and trouble" go together--are twins (I Tim. 6:9,10). It is really better and the part of wisdom to take a lesser-paying job with which God is pleased than to take a big-paying job with which He is not pleased (Mark 8:36). What is great or true gain? See I Tim. 6:6. Other verses with much of the same truth in them are v. 17 of this chapter; Psa.

37:16; Prov. 16:8; 17:1.

V. 17. A "dinner of herbs" represents a meatless meal (a poor man's meal); "stalled ox" represents a luxurious meal. Note the double contrast: "dinner of herbs" vs. "stalled ox" and "where love is" vs. "hatred". People can have a good fare of food and love at the same time just the same as people can have hatred with their dinner of herbs. This verse does teach that love in the home is better than luxury in the home if there is to be only one and not both.

V. 18. A wrathful man stirs up contention because he wants things stirred up. What a perverted outlook! But men who are slow to anger try to keep things calm. And they are doing what they should. "Hot heads" and "cold hearts" often go together. See also Prov. 26:21; 29:22. "Pulpit Commentary": "It requires two to make a quarrel, and where one keeps his temper and will not be provoked, anger must subside."

V. 19. Try to walk down an old road that has gotten grown over with thornbushes. Progress is slow and difficult. Such is the way of the sluggard of lazy person (Prov. 22:5). In contrast the path of the upright is clear and open (like a highway). Prov. 4:18 also speaks of the path of the righteous.

V. 20. Read Prov. 10:1; 29:3 also. Nothing makes a father happier than the good ways of his children (III John 4). "Despising" one's mother is just the opposite of the Fifth Commandment (Exo. 20:12). A child who is brought up to honor his parents will usually grow up and bring honor and gladness to them.

V. 21. Compare the first statement with the first statement in Prov. 10:23. Putting the two together, "folly" (or "wickedness") is "joy" (or "sport") to the fool. And so it is. Many live this way (consider Tit. 3:3). They may live in the same world, but the wise person lives so differently from the fool who is void of wisdom. The wise man makes his going "straight" (see Eph. 5:15 also).

V. 22. A double contrast: "no counsel" vs. "multitude of counsellors" and "purposes are disappointed" vs. "they are established". Compare Prov. 11:14. "Counsel" in Proverbs' day had to do mostly with war (Prov. 20:18).

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:12-22

1. Describe a "scoffer" (v. 12).

2. How does a "glad heart" show up (v. 13)?
3. What does "sorrow of heart" do (v. 13)?
4. Who was a man of understanding who constantly sought more knowledge (v. 14)?
5. Contrast the day of the "afflicted" and the person with a "cheerful heart" (v. 15).
6. What often accompanies a quest for "treasure" (v. 16)?
7. What is better than great treasure and trouble (v. 16)?
8. What kind of home is better than one with the finest of fare if it has trouble (v. 17)?
9. What is the double contrast in v. 18?
10. How is the way of the wicked contrasted with the path of the upright (v. 19)?
11. What is it that makes a happy father (v. 20)?
12. What other verse in Proverbs is similar to the first part of v. 21?
13. When especially did they rely upon "counselors" in olden times (v. 22)?

TEXT — 15:23-33

23. A man hath joy in the answer of his mouth;
And a word in due season, how good is it!
24. To the wise the way of life goeth upward,
That he may depart from Sheol beneath.
25. Jehovah will root up the house of the proud;
But he will establish the border of the widow.
26. Evil devices are an abomination to Jehovah;
But pleasant words are pure.
27. He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house;
But he that hateth bribes shall live.
28. The heart of the righteous studieth to answer;
But the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.
29. Jehovah is far from the wicked;
But he heareth the prayer of the righteous.
30. The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart;
And good things make the bones fat.
31. The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life
Shall abide among the wise.
32. He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul;
But he that hearkeneth to reproof getteth understanding.
33. The fear of Jehovah is the instruction of wisdom;
And before honor goeth humility.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 15:23-33

1. What is meant by a "word in due season" (v. 23)?
2. Does "upward" in v. 24 imply heaven or the better life here?
3. Cite other passages besides v. 25 condemning the proud.
4. Cite other passages besides v. 25 showing God's concern for the widow?
5. What is meant by "border" in v. 25?
6. What would be some examples of "evil devices" (v. 26)?
7. Comment on pleasant words being "pure" (v. 26).
8. How does a greedy person "trouble" his house (v. 27)?
9. What connection is there between hating bribes and living (v. 27)?
10. Will a person remain righteous who speaks the first thing that comes into his or her mind (v. 28)?
11. What are some kinds of evil speech coming from the evil (v. 28)?
12. In what sense is Jehovah "far" from the wicked (v. 29).
13. Why does God hear the prayer of the righteous (v. 29)?
14. What is the "light of the eyes" (v. 30)?
15. What is meant by "make the bones fat" (v. 30)?
16. What is meant by the reproof of "life" (v. 31)?
17. Cite a Biblical character who refused correction (v. 32).
18. In the Bible who was humble before he was honored (v. 33)?

PARAPHRASE OF 15:23-33

23. Everyone enjoys giving good advice, and how wonderful it is to be able to say the right thing at the right time!
24. The road of the godly leads upward, leaving hell behind.
25. The Lord destroys the possessions of the proud but cares for the widows.
26. The Lord hates the thoughts of the wicked but delights in kind words.
27. Dishonest money brings grief to all the family, but hating bribes brings happiness.
28. A good man thinks before he speaks; the evil man pours out his evil words without a thought.
29. The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayers of the righteous.
30. Pleasant sights and good reports give happiness and

health.

- 31,32. If you profit from constructive criticism you will be elected to the wise men's hall of fame. But to reject criticism is to harm yourself and your own best interests.
33. Humility and reverence for the Lord will make you both wise and honored.

COMMENTS ON 15:23-33

V. 23. A person does not have joy from just any answer of his mouth but by a right answer or a good answer or a timely answer. "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" (v. 28). "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one" (Col. 4:6). "Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (I Pet. 3:15). "All that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver" (Prov. 25:11).

V. 24. The wise choose the way that leads to life rather than destruction ("Sheol"): "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it" (Matt. 7:13,14). Wisdom makes the decision now that will end right later: "If thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43). Are you "pressing on the upward way"? Are you "gaining new heights every day"?

V. 25. A double contrast: "root up" vs. "establish" and "the proud" vs. "the widow" (and maybe a third: "house" vs. "border"). For similar passages see Prov. 12:7; 14:11; Psa. 146:9. This is a great warning against arrogancy, self-sufficiency, and being independent in attitude. Concerning the "border" (or boundary) of the widow: "In a country where property was defined by landmarks--stones or some such objects--nothing was easier than to remove these altogether, or to alter their position. That this was a common form of fraud and oppression we gather from the stringency of the enactments against the offence (see Deut. 19:14; 27:17; and compare Job 24:2 and Prov. 22:28). In the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions...there are many invoking curses, curious and multifarious, against the disturbers

of boundaries" ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 26. "Evil devices" would include everything from the simplest plot to outsmart somebody to the most complex invention for the production of evil. Such inventers may be lauded, and such devisers may think themselves shrewd, but such is not God's view. God is against "evil" and everything and everybody multiplying it. Words that are "pleasant" (or pleasing) are "pure" and not evil.

V. 27. One "greedy of gain" was violating the Tenth Commandment (Exo. 20:17). But instead of building up one's own house at the expense of others, sometimes one brings ruination to himself and his house, such as did Achan (Josh. 7:21,24,25), Naboth (I Kings 21:1-24), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10), and Lot and others. Other Scriptures: Isa. 5:8; Jer. 17:11; I Tim. 6:9,10. One who hates bribes is one who refuses to accept them (to enrich himself) or one who offers them (In hopes of profiting himself). There is far more of this in government than we realize.

V. 28. "Clarke": "His tongue never runs before his wit; he never speaks rashly, and never unadvisedly; because he studies--ponders--his thoughts and his words." A wise person is "slow to speak" (Jas. 1:19) so as to tell the exact truth and to say what should be said. The chief priests and elders deliberated in answering Jesus (they studied before answering), but it was not righteous (Matt. 21:23-27). The mouth of wicked "poureth out" evil things suggests that they speak with ease, giving no forethought to what they are about to say. And, oh, the wrong things that get said in this way!

V. 29. Man's wickedness puts "distance" between himself and God (Isa. 59:2). God hears the prayer of the righteous, but His face is against the wicked (Psa. 34:15-18; I Pet. 3:12; Psa. 145:18-20). The godly person finds joy in walking with God, and when he needs special help, he can call upon Him. The ungodly relinquish all this to their sin.

V. 30. The sunlight and other beautiful things that man sees bring joy to his heart, and the good news that he hears makes him feel good and results in good health. What one sees and hears, then, affects the way he feels, and the way he feels affects the functions of his body. People who trust instead of fret, who pray instead of worry, who thank God rather than complain, etc. are bound to have better health than those who do otherwise.

V. 31. V. 5 said that the person who regarded reproof would get wisdom. This verse says that such will abide among the wise. See vs. 10,12 also. An old proverb: "Advice is for them that will take it." Stephen referred to his hearers' ears as "uncircumcised" (Acts 7:51). The ear cannot always hear what is pleasing and commendatory, as much as we would like it that way. Praise may be pleasing, but reproof may be more profitable. All of us need both.

V. 32. This verse treats both responses to reproof. One refusing correction may appear to be despising the one reproving him, but in reality he is despising his own best interests; he is hurting himself. The inclusion of so many sayings on correction indicates the amount of this that will come to us in life. Their purpose is to get us to accept it for our own betterment.

V. 33. Compare with Prov. 1:7. To learn true reverence for God is true wisdom. Wisdom would instruct us to this fear through parents, through the Scriptures, and through our religious leaders and religious associates. Honor does precede humility: it was so with Jesus (Phil. 2:7-11); it was so with the penitent publican (Luke 18:13,14); and we must be converted (humbled) before we become Christians (honor).

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 15:23-33

1. What are some other verses besides v. 23 on giving a right answer?
2. What famous statement of Jesus tells us to choose the way that leads to life (v. 24)?
3. What was stated about borders or boundaries (v. 25)?
4. What all would be included under "evil devices" (v. 26)?
5. Who were some Bible characters who troubled their own house through greed (v. 27)?
6. In what area of life are "bribes" the most apt to occur (v. 27)?
7. What is the contrast in speech between the righteous and the wicked in v. 28?
8. In what sense is God "far" from the wicked (v. 29)?
9. What is said of both sight and hearing in v. 30?
10. Who accused his hearers of having "uncircumcised ears" (v. 31)?
11. Who is hurt the more when one refuses correction--the reprover or the reproved (v. 32)?

PONDERING THE PROVERBS

12. Who in the Bible were humble before they were honored (v. 33)?

NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 15

"Good speech"--

- "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (v. 1).
- "The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright" (v. 2).
- "A gentle tongue is a tree of life" (v. 4).
- "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (v. 7).
- "A man hath joy in the answer of his mouth; And a word in due season, how good is it!" (v. 23).
- "Pleasant words are pure" (v. 26).
- "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" (v. 28).

"Bad speech"--

- "A grievous word stirreth up anger" (v. 1).
- "The mouth of fools poureth out folly" (v. 2).
- "Perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit" (v. 4).
- "The mouth of fools feedeth on folly" (v. 14).
- "The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things" (v. 28).

"Wise"--

- "The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright" (v. 2).
- "He that regardeth reproof getteth prudence" (v. 5).
- "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge" (v. 7).
- "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge" (v. 14).
- "A wise son maketh a glad father" (v. 20).
- "A man of understanding maketh straight his going" (v. 21).
- "To the wise the way of life goeth upward, That he may depart from Sheol beneath" (v. 24).
- "The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life shall abide among the wise" (v. 31).

"Fools"--

- "The mouth of fools poureth out folly" (v. 2).
- "A fool despiseth his father's correction" (v. 5).
- "The heart of the foolish doeth not so" (v. 7).
- "The mouth of fools feedeth on folly" (v. 14).
- "A foolish man despiseth his mother" (v. 20).
- "Folly is joy to him that is void of wisdom" (v. 21).

CHAPTER 15

"Righteous"--

- "In the house of the righteous is much treasure" (v. 6).
- "The prayer of the upright is his delight" (v. 8).
- "He loveth him that followeth after righteousness" (v. 9).
- "The path of the upright is made a highway" (v. 19).
- "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" :v. 28).
- "He heareth the prayer of the righteous" (v. 29).

"Wicked"--

- "In the revenues of the wicked is trouble" (v. 6).
- "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 8).
- "The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 9).
- "There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way" (v. 10).
- "The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things" (v. 28).
- "Jehovah is far from the wicked" (v. 29).

"Abomination"--

- "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 8).
- "The way of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 9).
- "Evil devices are an abomination to Jehovah" (v. 26).

"Rebuke"--

- "A fool despiseth his father's correction" (v. 5).
- "He that regardeth reproof getteth prudence" (v. 5).
- "There is grievous correction for him that forsaketh the way" (v. 10).
- "He that hateth reproof shall die" (v. 10).
- "A scoffer loveth not to be reprov'd" (v. 12).
- "The ear that hearkeneth to the reproof of life Shall abide among the wise" (v. 31).
- "He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul" (v. 32).
- "He that hearkeneth to reproof getteth understanding" (v. 32).

PONDERING THE PROVERBS

DON'T TAKE UP WITH FOOLS

How true is the statement made in 13:20, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Why does God warn people about becoming a companion of fools? Because there are those who seem to know no better than to throw themselves into the direct influence of those whom God labels as fools. Anybody who has no more judgment than to take up with fools will probably not have enough judgment to preserve him from becoming like them.

Again God warns, "Go from the presence of the foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge" (14:7). This is more than a warning; it is a commandment. It shows that we must make judgment of others in order to know with whom to be companions and with whom not to be.

Especially do those who are younger (immature in judgment) and those who are known for being easily affected by their surroundings need to regard these true warnings from Proverbs.

HE IS A GOD WHO CHASTENS

"Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth: even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (3:11,12).

Just as any wise, loving, concerned parent corrects his child, so does God His. Sometimes we make mistakes in our discipline, but God doesn't. When we do wrong, we can be sure that God is not going to stand idly by and permit us to continue in the way of wrong-doing unchastened. He loves us too much to see us continue that way. When we fail to regard His will, He expects that we will regard His chastening.