

Wise Up!
A Study in the Book of Proverbs
Message #19– The LORD and the King
Proverbs 16 (1/14/2018 PM)

❖ **The plans of man and the sovereignty of God (1-9)**

The focus in these verses is using wisdom in the decision making process. The word “preparations” (1) is the idea of placing things in order like arranging soldiers on the battlefield. We can devise our plans but only God can give bring them into reality. The writer most likely has prayer in mind here.

➤ The real issue is the condition of the heart (2).

God judges people not just on our actions but on the basis of why we act. We are all apt to be blind to our own faults. We all need the humble self-awareness of Paul, 1 Corinthians 4:4. The only evaluation that truly matters is the Lord’s. (3) “Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established.” The word “commit” means to roll over. It pictures rolling over a burden to one stronger than me as in Psalm 55:22. The word “thoughts” means our plans. The N.T. counterpart to this is Philippians 2:12-13,

▪ **God is sovereign in every situation (4).**

JFB, “His own glory is the end of God’s doings in providence and grace.” Even punishment for the ungodly is consistent with God’s justice. Pride can be hidden in the heart from the eyes of men but not from the gaze of God (5). The phrase “join forces” is from hand to hand. This expresses the consecutive connection of causes through which God works. It means that the proud will surely be punished (18-19). The Jews observe that this verse (18) stands at the exact center of the entire book of Proverbs.

➤ God has provided atonement for man’s sin (6).

Sin cannot go unpunished but God in his “mercy” *hesed* has provided a way for sin to be atoned for. The “atonement” means to cover and this is according to “truth.” Man’s sin cannot be simply overlooked. This verse expresses both salvation and sanctification. In salvation the enmity between man and God is removed. Since we are at peace with God we can strive to be at peace (7) with men through obedience to His Word, Romans 12:18. God honors that kind of attitude and action. Godly living is the best way to live even it means having less (8 & 17). We have seen the principle of the two ways repeatedly in Proverbs (25). Verse 9 restates verse 1 the idea being man proposes, God disposes. (9) “A man’s heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.”

The attributes of a godly king (10-15)

These proverbs were initially taught to young people both at home and in school. Some believe they were particularly taught to the young nobles of Israel who would become the future leaders of the nation. This helps us to understand this section concerning how a king should conduct himself. We should also be reminded of what scripture says of us. Revelation 1:5-6, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father...” These characteristics are the ideal of what a king should be.

There should be a devotion to justice and truth (10).

The idea here is that the kings of Israel were to speak as God’s representatives. They were to be just rulers of the people. The same could be said of any position of leadership in the home, the church, or government held by a believer. Merchants carried their weights for measuring their goods in a bag. The idea is that the LORD is behind these standards (11). Dishonesty and injustice erode away the king’s authority and would topple his throne (12).

▪ **One should employ wisdom when approaching a ruler (13).**

Godly rulers hate wrongdoing and value honesty and integrity. Rulers can at times be capricious and irrational. Wisdom is essential when dealing with a ruler under these circumstances (14). These types of rulers had the power of life and death (15).

❖ **The beauty of healing words (20-24)**

Healing words come from an obedient heart of faith (20).

The old adage is hurting people hurt people but healed people heal people The idea is that attractive speech makes learning desirable (21). Wise teachers choose their words carefully to enhance the learning experience. The fool brings punishment upon himself because of his foolishness (22).

➤ The wise person’s mouth reveals a teachable spirit (23).

We said last week that our mouth is connected to our heart. (24) The (24) “bones” are the foundation of the body. A healthy soul promotes a healthy body.

❖ **Beware of ungodly people (27-30)**

Solomon warns against sinful people who are scheming against the righteous (27). He puts effort into ensnaring people with his words “like a burning fire” c.p. James 3:6.

➤ The ungodly delight in sowing **discord** among God’s people.

This is one of the things (28) that the LORD hates, Proverbs 6:19. As the farmer plows and sows his seed so this person sows his or her dissension.

➤ The ungodly seek to **draw** the righteous into their web of sin (29-30).

They are not content to wallow in their own sin but want others to join them. They entice with their eyes and their speech. They try to draw people into arguments and conflict. Their appeal can be to both the young and the old so all must be aware of them. (31) “The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness.” Wisdom can come with age but it is possible to be an old fool. The wise person gains a measure of self control with God’s help. (32) “He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.” In a time when safety depended on the might and skill of the soldier this is a surprising statement.

Conquering *Oneself* Is a Greater Conquest than Conquering a *City*