

PROVERBS 28: 1 The wicked flee when no one pursues; but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

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The timidity of the wicked. Quick succession in the government of a country is a punishment to the land. Of the poor who oppress the poor. The upright poor man is preferable to the wicked rich man. The unprofitable conduct of the usurer. The prosperity of the righteous a cause of rejoicing. He is blessed who fears always. A wicked ruler a curse. The murderer generally execrated. The faithful man. The corrupt judge. The foolishness of trusting in one's own heart. The charitable man. When the wicked are elevated, it is a public evil.

Verse 1

The wicked flee - Every wicked man, however bold he may appear, is full of dreary apprehensions relative to both worlds. But the righteous has true courage, being conscious of his own innocence, and the approbation of his God. The unpituous fleeith - Old MS. Bible. This word is often used for impious, wicked, ungodly; hence it appears that our word pity anciently meant piety or godliness.

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PROVERBS 28: 2 In rebellion, a land has many rulers, but order is maintained by a man of understanding and knowledge.

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Verse 2

Many are the princes - Nations, as nations, cannot be judged in a future world; therefore, God judges them here. And where the people are very wicked, and the constitution very bad, the succession of princes is frequent - they are generally taken off by an untimely death. Where the people know that the constitution is in their favor, they seldom disturb the prince, as they consider him the guardian of their privileges.

But by a man of understanding - Whether he be a king, or the king's prime minister, the prosperity of the state is advanced by his counsels.

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PROVERBS 28: 3 A needy man who oppresses the poor is like a driving rain which leaves no crops.

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Verse 3

A poor man that oppressteth the poor - Our Lord illustrates this proverb most beautifully, by the parable of the two debtors, Mat 18:23. One owed ten thousand talents, was insolvent, begged for time, was forgiven. A fellow servant owed this one a hundred pence: he was insolvent; but prayed his fellow servant to give him a little time, and he would pay it all. He would not, took him by the throat, and cast him into prison till he should pay that debt. Here the poor oppressed the poor; and what was the consequence? The oppressing poor was delivered to the tormentors; and the forgiven debt charged to his amount, because he showed no mercy. The comparatively poor are often shockingly uncharitable and unfeeling towards the real poor.

Like a sweeping rain - These are frequent in the East; and sometimes carry flocks, crops, and houses, away with them.

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PROVERBS 28: 4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked; but those who keep the law contend with them.

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Verse 4

They that forsake the law - He that transgresses says, in fact, that it is right to transgress; and thus other wicked persons are encouraged.

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PROVERBS 28: 5 Evil men don't understand justice; but those who seek the LORD understand it fully.

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Verse 5

They that seek the Lord understand all things - They are wise unto salvation; they "have the unction from the Holy One, and they know all things," 1Jn 2:20, every thing that is essentially needful for them to know, in reference to both worlds.

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PROVERBS 28: 6 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity, than he who is perverse in his ways, and he is rich.

PROVERBS 28: 7 Whoever keeps the law is a wise son; but he who is a companion of gluttons shames his father.

PROVERBS 28: 8 He who increases his wealth by excessive interest gathers it for one who has pity on the poor.

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Verse 8

He that by usury - increaseth his substance - By taking unlawful interest for his money; lending to a man in great distress, money, for the use of which he requires an exorbitant sum. O that the names of all those unfeeling, hard-hearted, consummate villains in the nation, who thus take advantage of their neighbour's necessities to enrich themselves, were published at every market cross; and then the delinquents all sent to their brother savages in New Zealand. It would be a happy riddance to the country.

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PROVERBS 28: 9 He who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

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Verse 9

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law - Many suppose, if they do not know their duty, they shall not be accountable for their transgressions; and therefore avoid every thing that is calculated to enlighten them. They will not read the Bible, lest they should know the will of Good; and they will not attend Divine ordinances for the same reason. But this pretense will avail them nothing; as he that might have known his master's will, but would not, shall be treated as he shall be who did know it, and disobeyed it. Even the prayers of such a person as this are reputed sin before God.

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PROVERBS 28: 10 Whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way, he will fall into his own trap; but the blameless will inherit good.

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#### Verse 10

Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray - He who strives to pervert one really converted to God, in order that he may pour contempt on religion, shall fall into that hell to which he has endeavored to lead the other.

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PROVERBS 28: 11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes; but the poor who has understanding sees through him.

PROVERBS 28: 12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory; but when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.

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#### Verse 12

When righteous men do rejoice - When true religion is no longer persecuted, and the word of God duly esteemed, there is great glory; for the word of the Lord has then free course, runs, and is glorified: but when the wicked rise - when they are elevated to places of trust, and put at the head of civil affairs, then the righteous man is obliged to hide himself; the word of the Lord becomes scarce, and there is no open vision. The first was the case in this country, in the days of Edward VI.; the second in the days of his successor, Mary I: Popery, cruelty, and knavery, under her, nearly destroyed the Church and the State in these islands.

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PROVERBS 28: 13 He who conceals his sins doesn't prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

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#### Verse 13

He that covereth his sins - Here is a general direction relative to conversion.

1. If the sinner do not acknowledge his sins; if he cover and excuse them, and refuse to come to the light of God's word and Spirit, lest his deeds should be reprov'd, he shall find no salvation. God will never admit a sinful, unhumbled soul, into his kingdom.

2. But if he confess his sin, with a penitent and broken heart, and, by forsaking every evil way, give this proof that he feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, then he shall have mercy. Here is a doctrine of vital importance to the salvation of the soul, which the weakest may understand.

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PROVERBS 28: 14 Blessed is the man who always fears; but one who hardens his heart falls into trouble.

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Verse 14

Happy is the man that feareth alway - That ever carries about with him that reverential and filial fear of God, which will lead him to avoid sin, and labor to do that which is lawful and right in the sight of God his Savior.

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PROVERBS 28: 15 As a roaring lion or a charging bear, so is a wicked ruler over helpless people.

PROVERBS 28: 16 A tyrannical ruler lacks judgement. One who hates ill-gotten gain will have long days.

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Verse 16

The prince that wanteth understanding - A weak prince will generally have wicked ministers, for his weakness prevents him from making a proper choice; and he is apt to prefer them who flatter him, and minister most to his pleasures. The quantum of the king's intellect may be always appreciated by the mildness or oppressiveness of his government. He who plunges his people into expensive wars, to support which they are burdened with taxes, is a prince without understanding. He does not know his own interest, and does not regard that of his people. But these things, though general truths, apply more particularly to those despotic governments which prevail in Asiatic countries.

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PROVERBS 28: 17 A man who is tormented by life blood will be a fugitive until death; no one will support him.

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Verse 17

That doeth violence to the blood - He who either slays the innocent, or procures his destruction, may flee to hide himself: but let none give him protection. The law demands his life, because he is a murderer; and let none deprive justice of its claim. Murder is the most horrid crime in the sight of God and man; it scarcely ever goes unpunished, and is universally execrated.

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PROVERBS 28: 18 Whoever walks blamelessly is kept safe; but one with perverse ways will fall suddenly.

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Verse 18

Shall fall at once - Shall fall without resource, altogether.

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PROVERBS 28: 19 One who works his land will have an abundance of food; but one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

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Verse 19

He that tilleth his land - See Pro 12:11.

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PROVERBS 28: 20 A faithful man is rich with blessings; but one who is eager to be rich will not go unpunished.

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Verse 20

He that maketh haste to be rich - See Pro 13:11; Pro 20:21.

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PROVERBS 28: 21 To show partiality is not good; yet a man will do wrong for a piece of bread.

PROVERBS 28: 22 A stingy man hurries after riches, and doesn't know that poverty waits for him.

PROVERBS 28: 23 One who rebukes a man will afterward find more favour than one who flatters with the tongue.

PROVERBS 28: 24 Whoever robs his father or his mother, and says, "It's not wrong." He is a partner with a destroyer.

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Verse 24

Whoso robbeth his father - The father's property is as much his own, in reference to the child, as that of the merest stranger. He who robs his parents is worse than a common robber; to the act of dishonesty and rapine he adds ingratitude, cruelty, and disobedience. Such a person is the compatriot of a destroyer; he may be considered as a murderer.

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PROVERBS 28: 25 One who is greedy stirs up strife; but one who trusts in the LORD will prosper.

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Verse 25

Shall be made fat - Shall be prosperous.

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PROVERBS 28: 26 One who trusts in himself is a fool; but one who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

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Verse 26

He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool - For his heart, which is deceitful and desperately wicked, will infallibly deceive him.

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PROVERBS 28: 27 One who gives to the poor has no lack; but one who closes his eyes will have many curses.

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Verse 27

Be that giveth unto the poor - See the notes on Deu 15:7 (note), Detueronomy Deu 19:17 (note), Deu 22:9 (note).

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PROVERBS 28: 28 When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous thrive.

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