

CHAPTER 19

Ver. 1. *Better [is] the poor that walketh in his integrity*, etc.] In the uprightness of his heart before God and men; who is sincere in the worship of God, and in the profession of his name, and walks in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; and is upright, harmless, and inoffensive in his conversation with men; and studies to exercise a conscience void of offence to both, and continues herein. A man may be a poor man with respect to worldly things, and yet be rich towards God; may be a truly gracious good man, honest, sincere, and upright in heart and life: and such an one is better

than [he that] is perverse in his lips, and is a fool; that is, than a rich man, as the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions supply it, and as the antithesis requires; “that is perverse in his lips”, or “whose ways are perverse”, as the Syriac version; that acts the deceitful part both by words and actions towards those that are about him, not being honest and plain hearted as the poor man is; and who uses those beneath him very roughly; and concerning oppression speaks loftily, and lets his tongue run both against God in heaven and man on earth, by which he shows he is a fool: for his riches do not give him wisdom; and his words and actions declare he wants it; men may be poor, and yet wise; and a matt may be rich, and yet a fool: or is confident^{f534}; that is, trusts in his riches, and is opposed to a poor man, so R. Saadiah Gaon. This verse and (~~20102~~ Proverbs 19:2) are not in the Septuagint and Arabic versions.

Ver. 2. *Also, [that] the soul [be] without knowledge, [it is] not good*, etc.] Without knowledge of things natural and civil, especially without the knowledge of God and Christ, and divine and spiritual things; to be without this is not good, yea, very bad; for men without such knowledge and understanding are, like the beasts that perish, and for lack of it do. Jarchi interprets it, without the law. Or, “to be without the knowledge of the soul is not good”^{f535}; so the Targum, Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions,

“he that knoweth not his soul, it is not good for him;”

that does not know he has a soul, or however takes no more care of it than if he had none; who knows not the worth and value of it, its state and

condition, and the danger it is in, and the only way of attaining the salvation of it;

and he that hasteth with [his] feet sinneth; who engages in anything ignorantly and rashly, he misses the mark, and fails in the performance of it, for want of due consideration and care. The Targum is,

“he that is swift with his feet to evil is a sinner;”

whose feet run to evil, to commit robbery, as Aben Ezra; or to shed blood; (see ²⁰¹¹⁶Proverbs 1:16).

Ver. 3. *The foolishness of man perverteth his way*, etc.] The sinfulness of his heart and nature; the folly which is bound up in it causes him to go astray out of the way in which he should go, or makes things go cross with him; so that the ways he takes do not prosper, nor his schemes succeed; but everything goes against him, and he is brought into straits and difficulties;

and his heart fretteth against the Lord; laying all the blame on him; and ascribing his ill success, not to his own sin and folly, but to divine Providence, which works against him; and therefore frets and murmurs at him; and, instead of charging his own ways with folly, charges the ways of God with inequality; (see ²³⁸²⁵Ezekiel 18:25 ²¹¹¹⁶Jude 1:16).

Ver. 4. *Wealth maketh many friends*, etc.] Or “adds”^{f536}; it increases the number of them: so the poet^{f537}, “donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos”; and to this agrees what the wise man says, (²¹⁴²⁰Proverbs 14:20);

but the poor is separated from his neighbour; or “friend”^{f538}; he will not visit him as he did in his prosperity, nor suffer him to come into his house or company, or come near him; he is separated from his affection, friendship, and presence: so another poet^{f539},

“if thou art rich, thou wilt have many friends; but, if poor, few.”

Ver. 5. *A false witness shall not be unpunished*, etc.] He that bears false witness against his neighbour in an open court of judicature; though he may not be detected by men, and so escape the punishment due to such offenders by the laws of God and men; yet God, who knows all hearts and actions, will not suffer him to go with impunity; if not punished in this world, he shall be in the world to come; for bearing false witness, or perjury, is a grievous offence to God;

and [he that] speaketh lies shall not escape; even he that useth himself to lying in private conversation shall not escape the reproach of men; for nothing is more scandalous than lying; nor the wrath of God, such shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, (^{<6208>}Revelation 21:8).

Ver. 6. *Many will entreat the favour of the prince*, etc.] Or of the liberal and bountiful man; as kings and princes generally are, (^{<6225>}Luke 22:25); such have many to wait upon them, and are humble petitioners to them. Aben Ezra and Gersom interpret the many of great and honourable men, who are courtiers to kings and princes; who wait upon them, ask favours of them, and seek for places under them. The Targum is,

“there are many that minister before a prince;”

he has many servants, and some of them nobles;

and every man [is] a friend to him that giveth gifts; or “to a man of gift”^{f540}: who has it in his power to give, and has a heart to it; who is both a rich man and a liberal man; who is both able and willing to communicate to the necessities of others: such a man not only has the poor his friends, but others will speak well of him, and will make application to him on account of the poor; and, for the sake of doing good to them, will court his friendship and acquaintance. Bayne interprets this “man of gift” of Christ, who ascended on high, and received gifts for men, and gives them to men.

Ver. 7. *All the brethren of the poor do hate him*, etc.] They despise him on account of his poverty; they neglect him, and do not take care of him; they reckon him a reproach unto them, and do not choose to own him; all which may be interpreted an hatred of him;

how much more do his friends go far from him? or “his friend”, every one of his friends; or “his neighbour”^{f541}: for if his brethren, who are his own flesh and blood, show so much disrespect unto him; much more will those who are only his neighbours, or were in friendship with him while in prosperity; these wilt stand at a distance from him, and not come near him, now he is poor and in distress; (see ^{<8903>}Job 19:13,14);

he pursueth [them with] words; [yet] they are wanting [to him]; or, “they [are] not”^{f542}; he presses them with earnest entreaties to relieve him; he urges their own words and promises, and fetches arguments from them, and uses them as far as they will go; but all signifies nothing; his own

words and petitions are to no purpose; and their words and promises are all smoke and vapour, vain and empty. Some understand this, as Gersom, not of the poor man that follows vain words^{f543} and empty promises, and buoys himself up with them that such an one and such an one has promised to be his friend, of which nothing comes; but of the friend that separates from the poor man, and pursues him with words of accusation, charging it on him as his own fault that he is poor; which accusations are not true. This is one of the fifteen places observed by the Masoretes, in which it is written **al** , “not”, and read **wl** , “to him”: both may be retained, and read, “they [are] not to him”^{f544}; not profitable to him; either his own words, his petitions; or the words of others, their promises.

Ver. 8. *He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul*, etc.] Wisdom and knowledge in things natural and civil; and especially in things divine, spiritual, and evangelical; particularly he that gets Christ, the Wisdom of God, and a saving knowledge of him; (see ^{<1083>}Proverbs 3:13). Or, “he that getteth a heart”^{f545}; a good heart, as the Targum explains it; which is a new heart, and a new spirit; a clean heart and a right spirit; a heart of flesh, a soft, tender, and contrite one, in opposition to a hard heart, a heart of stone: a wise and understanding heart, such an one as Solomon had; a heart to know the Lord, and to fear him; in which his laws are written, the graces of his Spirit are implanted; and in which God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, dwell: he who is desirous of such a heart seeks after it, prays for it, and uses all means to obtain it; and who, through the grace of God; does possess it, as the word signifies; he by all this shows that he has a regard to the good and welfare of his immortal soul; when such, who indulge to ignorance and a wicked heart, wrong and hate their own souls; see (^{<1024>}Proverbs 29:24);

he that keepeth understanding shall find good; retains the wisdom he has got; holds fast instruction, and keeps it, which is committed to him; abides by the doctrines of the Gospel, and does not depart from them; keeps the ordinances of it, which it is his wisdom and understanding to do; (see ^{<1046>}Deuteronomy 4:6); he finds his account in all this; he finds that which is good, good for him now and hereafter; he finds Christ, and life in him; peace, joy, and comfort in this world: and, in the world to come, glory, honour, and happiness.

Ver. 9. *A false witness shall not be unpunished*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{<1095>}Proverbs 19:5”);

and [he that] speaketh lies shall perish; or “be lost”, shall be undone for ever; he shall not enter into the holy city, but have his part in the lake of fire: they that speak lies in hypocrisy, doctrinal ones, and are given up to believe and profess them, such shall be damned, (^{<3011>}2 Thessalonians 2:11,12).

Ver. 10. *Delight is not seemly for a fool*, etc.] Such an one as Nabal, whose name and nature were alike; and whose prosperity ill became him, and the mirth and delight he had in it, (^{<0255>}1 Samuel 25:25,36); for, as the wise man elsewhere says, “the prosperity of fools shall destroy them”, (^{<3003>}Proverbs 1:26); they do not know how to make a right use of their prosperity; nor to moderate their enjoyments, pleasures, and delights. Some understand this of spiritual delight in the Lord; in his ways and ordinances, which wicked men are strangers to: and a very uncomely thing it is for such persons to talk of spiritual joy and delight, and of their communion with God, when they live in sin;

much less for a servant to have rule over princes; this was a sight which Solomon had seen, but was very disagreeable to him; and was one of the four things the earth cannot bear; the insolence of a servant, when he becomes master over his superiors, is intolerable; see (^{<3182>}Proverbs 30:22 ^{<2107>}Ecclesiastes 10:7). It may be spiritually applied to such who are servants of sin; to whose sensual appetites and carnal affections the more noble and princely powers of the soul, the understanding and mind, become subject; which is very improper and unseemly.

Ver. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger*, etc.] That he does not show it immediately; but takes time to consider of the offence given him, and makes use of a proper time to resent what is fit should be resented; he is a wise and discreet man that is slow to anger, (^{<3142>}Proverbs 14:29 16:32). He is most like to God, who is “longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth”, (^{<0346>}Exodus 34:6); and it is to the honour of his “name” that he “defers [his] anger”, and “refrains from” cutting off those that offend him, (^{<2389>}Isaiah 48:9);

and [it is] his glory to pass over a transgression; to forgive an offence committed; it is the duty and interest of a man to do so, and it is to his honour; as the contrary greatly reflects dishonour on him, and tends to his disgrace and reproach, if not to his ruin; see (^{<4082>}Matthew 18:32-35).

Ver. 12. *The king's wrath [is] as the roaring of a lion*, etc.] Which is very terrible when hungry, and is after its prey, and has got it. Kings, especially tyrannical ones, are compared to lions; as Nebuchadnezzar by Jeremiah, (³⁰⁴⁷Jeremiah 4:17 50:17); and Nero by the Apostle Paul, (³⁰⁴⁷2 Timothy 4:7); and the rage of such is very dreadful, as Ahasuerus's was to Haman. Jarchi interprets the king, of the holy blessed God. It may be applied to Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who is said to cry with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and whose wrath is terrible to wicked men, and even to the kings of the earth, (⁶¹⁸⁵Revelation 5:5 10:3 6:15-17);

but his favour [is] as dew upon the grass; which refreshes and revives it, and causes it to grow and flourish: and so the favour and good will of a king to his subjects delights them, and causes joy and cheerfulness in them; and such an effect has the love of God and Christ on the children of men, (³⁸⁴⁶Hosea 14:6).

Ver. 13. *A foolish son [is] the calamity of his father*, etc.] Or, “the calamities of his father”^{f546}; he brings them to him. A very great affliction he is, and which has many distresses and sorrows in it; as loss of reputation and credit in his family, which is sunk by his behaviour, instead of being supported and increased; loss of substance, through extravagance and riotous living, and the ruin of his soul and body by his wicked practices; (see ³⁰⁰⁸Proverbs 10:1);

and the contentions of a wife [are] a continual dropping; or like the dropping of rain, in a rainy day, into a house out of repair, and which is very uncomfortable to, the inhabitants of it; (see ³⁰⁷⁵Proverbs 27:15). Such are the contentions of a peevish, ill natured, and brawling wife, who is always scolding; and which is a continual vexation to a man, and renders him very uneasy in life: such a continual dropping was Xantippe to Socrates, who teased him night and day with her brawls and contentions^{f547}. A great unhappiness each of these must be!

Ver. 14. *Houses and riches [are] the inheritance of fathers*, etc.] Which they are careful to provide and leave to their children. This they may and often do, build or purchase houses, and procure great riches, and put their children into the possession of them;

and, or but,

a prudent wife [is] from the Lord; one that behaves well to her husband, manages the affairs of her house with wisdom, and brings up her children

in all orderly manner: such a wife no man has from the care and provision of his parents; nor so much from his own good choice and industry as from the kind providence of God, to which he should ascribe it; his parents may give him houses and lands, but it is God that gives him a wise and discreet woman to be an helpmeet to him; see (⁴¹⁸²Proverbs 18:22).

Ver. 15. *Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep*, etc.] Slothful persons are generally sleepy, and are very desirous of sleep, and indulge themselves in it; they spend their time, day and night, in sleep and drowsiness; and are quite careless and unconcerned about either their temporal or eternal good; (see ⁴¹⁶⁹Proverbs 6:9-11);

and an idle soul shall suffer hunger; and perish with it, both in a temporal and spiritual sense: an idle person, that will not work, ought not to eat; and an idle soul, or one that is unconcerned about his soul, and the spiritual food of it, shall perish for want of it.

Ver. 16. *He that keepeth the commandment*, etc.] Either of parents, as children ought to do; or of masters, as servants should; or of kings and princes, as is the duty of subjects in all things lawful: or rather of God; every command of his, whether of a moral or positive nature, which, though they cannot be perfectly kept, yet should as much as in man lies, in faith, from a principle of love, and to the glory of God: and such a man

keepeth his own soul, or “observes”^{f548} it; he shows that he has a concern for its welfare and peace; for though peace does not arise from keeping the commandments of God, yet such have great peace of soul who do love and keep the law of God; though there is no reward for, yet there is a reward in keeping the divine commands; though salvation is not hereby, yet blessed are they that do his commands; by which it appears they have a right to enter into the city, into eternal happiness, (⁴¹⁹⁶Psalm 119:165 19:11 ⁴⁶²⁴Revelation 22:14);

[but] he that despiseth his ways: which are at and proper for him to walk in, as Aben Ezra observes; or who is negligent of his ways, does not care in what ways he walks, or what is the issue of them; he walks in the ways of his own heart, and in the sight of his eyes; has his conversation according to the course of this world; walks with a multitude, with a crowd, to do evil, in the broad road which leads to destruction, and yet is quite careless about it: or that despises the ways of the commandment or word of God, which that directs to; for that is a lamp and a light, which men would do

well to take heed to, as it shows them the ways in which they should walk; but these they neglect and contemn: or he that despises the ways of God, the ways he himself takes in the salvation of men, all whose ways are mercy and truth; that despises the ways of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Jesus Christ: he

shall die; he is dead in sins already, and he shall die the second death, that neglects and despises so great salvation, and all the ways of the Lord, (^{<SIB>}Hebrews 2:3 10:26-29). There is a “Keri”, or marginal reading, which we follow; but the “Cetib”, or written text, is, “he shall be killed”, or put to death; and so the Syriac version; immediately, by the hand of heaven, by the Lord himself, before his time; or by the judges and civil magistrates; his sins being openly known, as Aben Ezra.

Ver. 17. *He that hath pity unto the poor lendeth unto the Lord*, etc.] A man, whose heart is full of compassion to the poor, and whose hands distribute to their necessities, from a true principle of love and charity to men, and with a view to the glory of God, and not from any selfish principle and with an end; such a man’s gift to the poor is a loan to the Lord; it is not cast away upon the creature, but is a “depositum” in the hands of God, and shall be returned with advantage;

and that which he hath given will, he pay him again; either in this life, in things temporal and spiritual, increasing his worldly substance, blessing his posterity, granting him larger measures of grace, indulging him with his gracious presence, and giving him peace of mind, which passeth all understanding; or in the world to come; not as a reward of debt, but of grace; (see ^{<SIB>}Ecclesiastes 11:1,2 ^{<SIB>}Matthew 10:42 25:35).

Ver. 18. *Chasten thy son while there is hope*, etc.] Of guiding and keeping him in the right way, as long as corrections are or can be hoped to be of use; while in a state of infancy, childhood, and youth; while under parental government; and before habits in sin are grown strong, and the case become desperate, and he is hardened, and proof against all instruction and discipline;

and let not thy soul spare for his crying; the noise he makes, the tears he sheds, the entreaties he uses to keep off the rod; let not a foolish pity and tenderness prevail to lay it aside on that account the consequence of which may be bad to parent and child; see (^{<SIB>}Proverbs 13:24 23:13,14). The Targum is,

“but unto his death do not lift up thy soul;”

or to the slaying of him^{f549}, as the Vulgate Latin version; and this sense Jarchi gives into: and then the meaning is, that though parents should be careful to give due correction to their children, so long as there is hope of doing them good, yet not in a brutal and barbarous manner, to the endangering of their lives: as some parents are too indolent, mild, and gentle, as Eli was; others are too wrathful and furious and use no moderation in their corrections, but unmercifully beat their children; such extremes ought to be avoided. Gersom interprets the word of crying, as we do.

Ver. 19. *A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment*, etc.] Either a child that is of a wrathful disposition, and provokes his parent to wrath; or a parent that chastises his child in wrath; each shall suffer for it; or any man that gives way to wrath and anger and is continually quarrelling, he involves himself in trouble; and is punished, as his offence requires, according to law, either in his person or estate;

for if thou deliver [him], yet thou must do it again; if he is got out of one broil, he will get into another quickly; if he clear of one lawsuit, another will be commenced against him in a short time; if he is discharged and freed from a penalty he is justly subject to, it must be done again and again; he will fall into the same evil, and there is no end of appearing, for him and serving him; a wrathful man brings himself into great trouble, as may be seen in Shimei, (^{<10107>}2 Samuel 16:7) (^{<10106>}1 Kings 2:46).

Ver. 20. *Hear counsel, and receive instruction*, etc.] Of parents, masters, and ministers; especially the counsel and instruction of Wisdom, of Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God, the wonderful Counsellor; and of his Gospel and of the Scriptures, which are able to make a man wise unto salvation;

that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end; in the latter end of life, at death; that then it may appear a man has been so wise as to be concerned for a future state, for the good of his soul in another world; by listening to the counsel and instruction of Christ, in his word; by looking to him, and believing in him, for life and salvation; by leaning and living upon him; and committing the affairs of his soul, and the salvation of it, to him.

Ver. 21. *[There are] many devices in a man's heart*, etc.] Some about civil things; to get wealth and riches: to obtain honour and glory among men; to attain to a long life, and to perpetuate their memories after death:

some about sinful things; to gratify their carnal lusts and sensual appetites; and to do mischief to others, particularly the people of God, and the cause and interest of Christ: some about religious things; coming new doctrines, devising new ordinances and modes of worship; contriving other methods of salvation than by Christ; as by the light of nature; by the law of Moses; by mere morality, civility, and external justice between man and man; by keeping to the religion they were born and brought up in; and by a mere outward profession of religion, and submission to ordinances, and performance of duties, and a multitude more of the like kind;

nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand; and can never be frustrated by the devices of man's heart, though there are many, and that but one; (see ^{<4330>}Psalm 33:10,11 ^{<3460>}Isaiah 46:10). This may be applied to the Gospel, and the scheme of salvation in it, called the whole counsel of God, (^{<407>}Acts 20:27); it being the fruit of infinite wisdom, and the effect of a divine council between the eternal Three, and full of the best advice and instructions to the sons of men; and which has stood, and shall stand, notwithstanding the persecutions of wicked men, the craft of false teachers, and the ridicule of a profane world; it will continue till all the elect are gathered in, even, to the end of the world; and so will the ordinances of it, which are also called the counsel of God, (^{<4070>}Luke 7:30); and which will continue till the second coming of Christ. Moreover, the purposes of God, his counsels of old, or his eternal decrees, may be here meant; which are wisely formed in his own breast, and are not frustrable; and according to which counsel of his will all things are done in nature, providence, and grace; all things in this world are ordered as he pleases, and all things are done as he has ordered them; all his purposes are or will be fulfilled; his designs will be accomplished in the world and in his church, in spite of all the schemes, contrivances, and opposition of men and devils.

Ver. 22. *The desire of a man [is] his kindness,* etc.] Either the grace and kindness of God, which is, desirable by every sensible man, as being most excellent, and better than life and anything in it; or it is his desire to show kindness. A good man is desirous of riches, that he might have it in the power of his hands to do good to others; and a beneficent man, who has it in his power, is desirous of an opportunity of showing kindness to his fellow creatures and friends; and such a disposition and conduct render a man very desirable and amiable; it is the beauty of a man, as Ben Melech; yea, a man that is not able to do a kindness to another, yet has a desire to do it, his good will is his kindness, and the will is taken for the deed.

Gersom takes the word in the sense of “reproach”, as it is sometimes used; and understands it of the sinful desires of the heart, the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, which are evil continually, and so matter of reproach;

and a poor man [is] better than a liar; who is a rich man, as the Septuagint and Syriac versions add; who denies that he has ability to relieve the poor, when he has; or promises to do it, and does it not; such men of high degree are a lie indeed! and the poor man, whom he should relieve, is a better man than he; or that would relieve another, but it is not in his power to do it.

Ver. 23. *The fear of the Lord [tendeth] to life*, etc.] “Godliness”, of which the fear of the Lord is a principal part, has “the promise of this life and that to come”, (^{<508>}1 Timothy 4:8): the fear of God is the beginning of a spiritual life; and it leads to eternal life, as Gersom observes, and is connected with it;

and [he that hath it] shall abide satisfied; with his lot and portion in this life; with the good things of it he has, being content therewith and “godliness with contentment is great gain”, (^{<506>}1 Timothy 6:6): such a man has enough; he has all things in a spiritual sense; he is full of the blessings of goodness; he is blessed with all spiritual blessings; his mouth is satisfied, and his mind is filled with good things; and so he rests and abides night after night, and day after day;

he shall not be visited with evil; nothing shall hurt him; all his afflictions, his worst things, his evil ones: work together for his good; and they shall never separate from the love of God, nor anything that befalls him in this life, (^{<503>}Romans 8:28,38,39); (see ^{<510>}Psalm 91:10).

Ver. 24. *A slothful [man] hideth his hand in [his] bosom*, etc.] In cold weather to keep it warm, and at other times, as unwilling to use it in labour; it is the proper posture and just attitude of a slothful man. The word for “bosom” is sometimes used for a “pot” or “platter”^{f550}; and then the sense is, that he puts his hands under a pot over a fire to warm them; or in one removed at some distance from the fire, as Jarchi; or rather it may signify his putting his hand into a plate of food, and yet so slothful, as it follows,

and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again; so sluggish, that he will rather starve than be at the pains to feed himself; he will not take his hand out of his bosom, to take food out of the dish to feed himself with;

and even when his hand is in the dish, he will not take it from thence again, and lift it to his mouth; an hyperbolical expression. Gussetius^{f551} thinks, it may have respect to such slothful men, who are careless and negligent to their souls; who, though they have the holy Scriptures in their hands, like a vessel full of wholesome food for the soul, yet will not make use of the least mite out of them, that they may receive eternal life.

Ver. 25. *Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware*, etc.] That is, give reproof to a man that scoffs at religion, and makes a jest of all that is good; for though it may be of no use to him who will despise it, yet it may be observed, and be useful to another that hears it; who, though void of understanding, yet not hardened in impiety as the other, but open to conviction, “will become cunning”,^{f552}, as it may be rendered; or learns wisdom, and becomes hereby a knowing and understanding man; he hears another reprov'd, and fears, and becomes a wise man; so that though reproof may be lost on one, it succeeds in another, which is an encouragement to give it;

and reprove one that hath understanding, [and] he will understand knowledge; he will grow wiser and wiser; he will improve in the knowledge of things; (see ²⁰⁰⁸Proverbs 9:8).

Ver. 26. *He that wasteth [his] father*, etc.] His father's substance, which he gave him first as his portion, and afterwards by paying his debts, and getting him out of prison and out of broils, and that wastes his spirits and his health, and brings his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave;

[and] chaseth away [his] mother: alienates her affections from him, who once had too great a fondness for him; causes her to quit her house, not being able to bear the sight of him and of his actions:

[is] a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach; causes shame to his parents, as well as to himself; and a reproach upon them, as well as on his own character. It may be read thus,

“a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach, wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother^{f553}.”

Ver. 27. *Cease, my son, to hear the instruction*, etc.] The counsel of bad men, or the doctrine of false teachers. The words are spoken either by Solomon to his son; or by Wisdom, that is, Christ, to everyone of his children, to beware of false prophets, and take heed what they hear; (see

~~1075~~ Matthew 7:15 ~~11024~~ Mark 4:24); such as the doctrines of the church of Rome; concerning the Scriptures, forbidding the people to read them; setting unwritten traditions upon a level with them, and making the pope an infallible interpreter of them; concerning merit, works of supererogation, indulgences, pardons, penance, purgatory, etc. such as the instruction of the Arians, Sabellians, Socinians, Pelagians, and Arminians, concerning the Trinity, the deity of Christ, his satisfaction, imputed righteousness, the power and purity of human nature, and man's free will;

[that causeth] to err from the words of knowledge; the words of the living God, the Scriptures of truth; which communicate knowledge, and are profitable for instruction in righteousness; are the means of the true knowledge of God; that there is one, and that he is possessed of all perfections: particularly that he is gracious and merciful, and pardons all manner of sin; that he is in Christ, the God of all grace; that he is the God and Father of Christ, and the covenant God and Father of all his people in him; they give knowledge of his mind and will concerning the salvation of men, and of his ways and worship. The wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, the salutary doctrines of the Gospel, may be here meant; those words of grace, wisdom, and knowledge, which come from him, and give knowledge of his person, offices, relations, incarnation, and blessings of grace by him; from whence they are called the word of peace and reconciliation, the word of righteousness, the word of life, and the word of salvation. Now these are all words of knowledge; and are the means of a spiritual, experimental, and fiducial knowledge of Christ, which is preferable to all other knowledge, and even to everything in the world; and therefore care should be taken, and everything avoided that tends to cause to err from these words and doctrines, which convey, promote, and improve this knowledge. Jarchi and Aben Ezra transpose the words, thus;

“cease, my son, to err from the words of knowledge, to or that thou mayest hear instruction and the latter makes mention of such an interpretation, cease, my son, from the words of knowledge, if thou wouldest hear instruction, and after that err:”

that is, better never hear and know at all, than to turn from those doctrines and instructions; (see ~~6022~~ 2 Peter 2:20,21).

Ver. 28. *An ungodly witness scorneth judgment*, etc.] Or, “a witness of Belial”^{f554}. A false witness is not awed by the place of judgment where he is; nor by the judge before whom he is; nor by the law, the rule of

judgment, nor by the punishment of perjury; he scorns all these, and scoffs at them, and proceeds in bearing a false testimony: or he covers that which is right and just, and eludes judgment by specious and sophistic arguments and pretences. Or this may be understood of a false teacher, that scorns the rule of judgment, or colours over things, to make them plausible, and seem to be agreeable to it;

and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity; greedily, and with pleasure commits it; as a hungry man takes in his food; or a thirsty man drinks down water: and in like manner are false doctrines imbibed by men of perverse minds.

Ver. 29. *Judgments are prepared for scorners*, etc.] Either by the civil magistrate, or by the Lord, and indeed by both; and if they miss the one, they will certainly meet the other; though they mock at present punishment and a future judgment, yet everlasting fire is prepared for them, (~~4254~~ Matthew 25:41);

and stripes for the back of fools; as scorners are; which shall be inflicted on them sooner or later; if they are not stricken with the stripes of men, they shall endure the strokes of divine justice and vengeance hereafter.