

## CHAPTER 22

**Ver. 1.** *A [good] name [is] rather to be chosen than great riches*, etc.]

The word “good” is not in the text, but is rightly supplied, as it is by the Targum, Septuagint, and Vulgate Latin versions; for it is not any name that is more eligible than riches; nor is it a need name among any sort of persons; for to have a good name with some turns to a man’s reproach rather than to his credit; but a good name among good men, a name in the house of God, which is better than sons and daughters; a new name, the name of the children of God, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it; this is to be preferred to a multitude of riches: it is not to be procured by them, and is where they are not, or are lost, but this continues; (see ~~2001~~ Ecclesiastes 7:1);

*[and] loving favour rather them silver and gold*; favour with God and man, especially with God, whose loving kindness is better than life, and all the enjoyments of it: or, as it may be rendered, “grace [is] better than silver and gold”<sup>f594</sup>; the grace of God through Christ, the grace of Christ, in whom all fulness of it dwells, the grace of the Spirit of Christ; faith is more precious than gold that perisheth; and if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would be contemned; the Spirit and his grace are not to be purchased for money.

**Ver. 2.** *The rich and poor meet together*, etc.] In an hostile way, as some; they rush upon one another; the rich despise the poor, and the poor envy the rich; they cannot speak well one of another, as the Arabic version; or they are dependent on one another, they cannot do without each other; as in the natural body one member cannot say to another, I have no need of thee; so, in the body politic, the rich and the poor cannot say they have no need of one another; the rich stand in need of the poor to till their land, to plough and sow, and do all other servile works for them; and the poor have need of the rich to employ them; have need of their money as their wages for their work, to support themselves and families with: or they sometimes change conditions, and so meet; the poor grow rich, and the rich become poor; the one goes uphill and the other downhill, and so meet in their passage. They meet together in all places of the earth; go where you will, there are rich and poor. The godly rich and poor meet together in one place to worship God; they meet together in a Gospel church state, enjoying the

same privileges and ordinances; and will all meet the Lord, and all meet together at his judgment seat; and they will meet in heaven, and be together to all eternity, where the distinction will cease: and the wicked rich and poor meet together to commit sin; and they meet together in the grave<sup>f595</sup>, where there is no difference; and they will meet at the bar of God at the last day, and in hell, where they will be together for evermore;

*the Lord [is] the Maker of them all*: not only as men, but as rich men and poor men; God gives riches to whom he pleases, and poverty to whom he pleases; riches and poverty are according to the order of divine Providence; and he can and does change scenes at his pleasure; wherefore the rich should consider themselves as dependent on him, and not despise and crush the poor; and the poor should be content with their state, as being allotted to them by the Lord, who can alter it when he thinks fit.

**Ver. 3.** *A prudent [man] foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself*, etc.] A wise man, whose eyes are in his head, who looks about him and before him, and is cautious and careful of his conduct and behaviour; he foresees the evil of sin he is liable to be drawn into by such and such company, snares, and temptations; and therefore he keeps from them, and abstains from all appearance of evil, or what would lead him to it; and he foresees the evil of punishment, or the judgments of God that are coming on for sin; and he betakes himself to the Lord, to those hiding places and chambers of retreat and protection he has provided for his people, till the indignation be overpast; (see <sup>2350</sup>Isaiah 26:20);

*but the simple pass on, and are punished*: foolish persons, devoid of the grace of God and the fear of him, go on careless and unconcerned in their sinful course of life, transgressing the law of God; they proceed from evil to evil, from lesser to greater sins; they go on in the broad road to destruction, and are punished with temporal judgments here, and with everlasting destruction hereafter.

**Ver. 4.** *By humility [and] the fear of the Lord*, etc.] Some render it, “the reward of humility, which [is] the fear of the Lord”<sup>f596</sup>; so the Targum; an humble man is blessed with it. Jarchi’s note is,

“because of humility, the fear of the Lord comes;”

humility leads on to the fear of the Lord; he that behaves humbly towards man comes at length to fear the Lord, and be truly religious: though these are rather to be considered as the graces of the Spirit of God, which go

together where there is one, there is the other; he that is humbled under a sense of sin, and his own unworthiness, fears the Lord; and he that fears the Lord, and his goodness, will walk humbly before him; they both flow from the grace of God, are very ornamental, and attended with the following happy consequences;

*[are] riches, and honour, and life*; spiritual riches, the riches of grace and glory; honour with God and men now, and everlasting life in the world to come.

**Ver. 5.** *Thorns [and] snares [are] in the way of the froward*, etc.] Who walks contrary to the will and law of God; such a man meets with troubles, which are as thorns, grieving and distressing to him; and is taken in snares, and brought into difficulties, out of which he is not easily extricated; the thorns of affliction, and the snares of Satan: by the one his way is hedged up, and in the other his feet are taken;

*he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them*; he that is concerned for the good of his soul, is careful for the welfare of that, and takes heed to his ways where and how he walks, will be far both from the way of the froward, and from the thorns and snares which are in his way.

**Ver. 6.** *Train up a child in the way he should go*, etc.] As Abraham trained up his children, and those born in his house, in the way of the Lord, in the paths of justice and judgment; which are the ways in which they should go, and which will be to their profit and advantage; see (<sup>0144</sup>Genesis 14:14 18:19); and which is the duty of parents and masters in all ages, and under the present Gospel dispensation, even to bring such who are under their care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, (<sup>006</sup>Ephesians 6:4); by praying with them and for them, by bringing them under the means of grace, the ministry of the word, by instructing them in the principles of religion, teaching them their duty to God and man, and setting them good examples of a holy life and conversation; and this is to be done according to their capacity, and as they are able to understand and receive the instructions given them: “according to the mouth of his way”<sup>f597</sup>, as it may be literally rendered; as soon as he is able to speak or go, even from his infancy; or as children are fed by little bits, or a little at a time, as their mouths can receive it;

*and when he is old he will not depart from it*; not easily, nor ordinarily; there are exceptions to this observation; but generally, where there is a

good education, the impressions of it do not easily wear off, nor do men ordinarily forsake a good way they have been brought up in<sup>f598</sup>; and, however, when, being come to years of maturity and understanding, their hearts are seasoned with the grace of God, they are then enabled to put that in practice which before they had only in theory, and so continue in the paths of truth and holiness.

**Ver. 7.** *The rich ruleth over the poor*, etc.] Usurps a dominion over them, and exercises it in a rigorous, oppressive, and tyrannical manner; otherwise they are generally the rich that rule, and if they rule well, in a lawful, gentle, and righteous manner, it is commendable;

*and the borrower [is] servant to the lender*; being under obligation to him, he is forced to be subject to him, and comply with his humours, and do and say as he would have him; it was a happiness promised to the Israelites, that they should lend to many nations, but not borrow, (<sup><6596></sup>Deuteronomy 15:6); compare with this (<sup><6604></sup>Nehemiah 5:4,5).

**Ver. 8.** *He that soweth iniquity<sup>f599</sup> shall reap vanity*, etc.] He that practises sin, and is frequent in the commission of it; indulges to it in a profuse way, as the sower plentifully scatters his seed; such shall reaper possess nothing but sin and wickedness; for, what a man sows, that shall he reap; he shall eat the fruit of his doings, and have the reward of his works; (see <sup><6608></sup>Job 4:8 <sup><6607></sup>Galatians 6:7,8); or “nothing”,<sup>f600</sup> mere emptiness; it shall not answer; he shall have in the end neither pleasure nor profit, but the contrary; “shall reap evil things”, as the Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate Latin versions render it;

*and the rod of his anger shall fail*; with which he has ruled and smitten others in an angry and cruel manner; this shall be taken from him; his authority shall fail, and he shall become subject to others, and be used in like manner; (see <sup><6604></sup>Isaiah 14:4-6). R. Joseph Kimchi interprets it of “the rod of the increase” of the earth, or the rod or flail with which the fruits of the earth are threshed or beaten out, which should fail before they were reaped; and Schultens<sup>f601</sup> has reference to the same, and gives the sense, that a wicked man that sows iniquity, when he thinks his harvest is ripe, shall be beaten with the flail, by which he shall be consumed; and he that threshed others shall be threshed himself.

**Ver. 9.** *He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed*, etc.] Or “a good eye”,<sup>f602</sup>; who looks about him for proper objects to do good unto; looks

pleasantly on them, and deals out cheerfully and bountifully to them; he shall be blessed with an increase of temporal good things, with spiritual blessings, and with eternal glory and happiness; when he does what he does from principles of grace, with a view to the glory of God, not depending on what he does, but upon the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ;

*for he giveth of his bread to the poor*; what is his own and a part of it; not all, for he reserves some as he ought for himself and his; but he does not eat his morsel alone, he gives of it to the necessitous; his beneficent hand is a proof of his bountiful eye and liberal heart.

**Ver. 10.** *Cast out the scorner*, etc.] That makes a mock at sin, a jest at religion, and scoffs at all good men, and everything serious and spiritual; cast such an one out of all company and conversation; out of the family, as mocking Ishmael was cast out of Abraham's family; and out of the church, and all religious societies. Jarchi interprets it of the evil imagination or corruption of nature; but this will continue with a man as long as he lives, and, though it may be weakened and subdued, it is not cast out;

*and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease*; which are caused by the scorner, who stirs up contention and strife in all company where he is, in families, and churches; and is continually casting reproach on good men and things; but, when he is cast out, everything of this nature ceases, and peace and love take place.

**Ver. 11.** *He that loveth pureness of heart*, etc.] Though man's heart is naturally impure, and all that is in it, the thoughts, affections, mind, conscience, understanding, and will; yet there is such a thing as pureness of heart; as where the grace of God is; where there it pure love to God, Christ, and to holy and heavenly things and persons; where there is pure and unfeigned faith in Christ, and a purifying hope of eternal life by him; where the Holy Spirit dwells as a sanctifier, and Christ dwells by faith; where there is sincerity and integrity; and where the heart is sprinkled by the blood of Christ from an evil conscience: and, though none are entirely free from impurity of flesh and spirit, yet every good man hates the impurity that is in him, and loves purity, and is desirous of it, and makes use of all means for it; and he loves a man of a pure heart, as Aben Ezra interprets it; he loves pureness of heart in himself and others. Some versions understand this of God: the Septuagint and Arabic versions are, "God loveth holy hearts"; and so the Targum,

“God loveth the pure in heart:”

the Syriac version differs,

“he loves God that is pure in heart;”

but all wrong; the sense is as before given;

*[for] the grace of his lips*; or, “grace [is in] his lips”; or, “his lips [are] grace”<sup>f603</sup>, or gracious; as the lips of Christ, though in a greater measure and degree, (<sup>98B</sup>Psalm 45:2); as is a man’s heart, so are his lips, A man of a pure heart will speak a pure language; a good man will talk of good things; a wise man of wisdom, and a gracious man of the grace of God; of the doctrines of grace he has received; of the blessings of grace bestowed on him; of the promises of grace applied unto him; of the experiences of grace he has been favoured with; of things grateful and acceptable to others, which minister grace, and are to the use of edifying;

*the king [shall be] his friend*; carry himself friendly to him, admit him to familiarity with him, take him into his court, and make him of his privy council; this is what a king should do, and what a wise and good king will do, and it is his interest so to do: a man of an upright heart, and of a graceful speech, is or should be regarded by princes; as Hushai the Archite by David; and Daniel even by Nebuchadnezzar, a Heathen king. Jarchi’s note is,

“the holy blessed God loves and embraces him;”

and this sense may very well be received: the Lord loves purity of heart; he is good to them that are of a clean heart; he loves graceful lips, or lips speaking grace, in prayer, praise, or Christian conversation: he is a friend to such; to the pure he shows himself pure; the pure in heart shall see him, and ever dwell with him: Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, loves purity and righteousness, and hates iniquity; the lips of his people are pleasing to him, they are like a thread of scarlet; he loves to hear their voice, especially speaking of his own grace; he is a friend unto them, one that loves at all times, and sticks closer than a brother.

**Ver. 12.** *The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge*, etc.] That is, the providence of God, whose eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth; these preserve the knowledge of himself, even among the Heathens in some measure; for what may be known of God is manifest in them, and showed

to them: more particularly his providence has preserved the Scriptures, the means of knowledge, which men would have destroyed; and preserves men of knowledge, as Aben Ezra interprets it, the ministers of the word, the stars he holds in his right hand; and he preserves spiritual and experimental knowledge in the hearts of his people, and causes it to increase; and continues his Gospel and a Gospel ministry in the world, till they all come to the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God. Or his eyes observe, look unto with delight and pleasure, knowledge and men of knowledge, that know him, and do his will;

*and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor*; the perfidious, treacherous man; the false teacher, that corrupts the word of God, and handles it deceitfully: the doctrines of such he overthrows, and confutes, and brings to nothing, by his Spirit in his faithful ministers; and causes truth to prevail, and all iniquity to stop its mouth: particularly the words and doctrines of the great transgressor, the lawless and wicked one, the man of sin, antichrist; these have been exposed and overthrown already, and will be more and more so in God's due time.

**Ver. 13.** *The slothful [man] saith, [there is] a lion without*, etc.] Or, "in the street". This he says within himself; or to those who call out to him, and put him on doing the business of his proper calling, whether in the field or elsewhere, which, through his slothfulness, he has a disinclination to; and therefore frames excuses, and suggests this and that difficulty or danger in the way, expressed by a "lion without"; and which shows the folly and weakness of his excuses, since lions do not usually walk in cities, towns, and villages, and in the streets of them, but in woods and mountains;

*I shall be slain in the streets*; by the lion there; or I shall never be able to get over the difficulties, and through the dangers, which attending to business will expose me to. Some apply this to the difficulties that slothful persons imagine in the learning of languages, arts, and sciences; as Jarchi applies it to the learning of the law.

**Ver. 14.** *The mouth of strange women [is] a deep pit*, etc.] The mouth of harlots; the kisses of their mouth, their fair speech and flattering words, their amorous talk, and lascivious and wanton language, ensnare and draw unwary persons to commit lewdness with them, which bring them into a pit of ruin and destruction; a filthy one, and very deep, out of which it is not easy nor usual to be extricated: the allusion is to beasts taken in a pit dug

for them; and these are as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed;

*he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein*; who has been guilty of other sins, and such as have caused the Lord to abhor him, and therefore leaves him to fall into this: one sin not only leads on to another, but is the punishment of another; men are seldom guilty of this sin of whoredom, but who have been first abandoned to other vices very provoking to God; (see <sup><2076></sup>Ecclesiastes 7:26). Jarchi interprets all this of idolatry; and it may be very well applied to the whore of Rome, and the harlots she is mother of; who, by her fair words and false doctrines, by her mouth speaking blasphemies and lies in hypocrisy, by her golden cup in her hand full of abomination and filthiness of fornication, and by her sorceries, have deceived many, and brought them into the pit of perdition and ruin: and these are such whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life; but are rejected of God, and given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, (<sup><6704></sup>Revelation 17:4,5,8 <sup><5121></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:11,12).

**Ver. 15.** *Foolishness [is] bound in the heart of a child*, etc.] That is, sin, the greatest of all folly; this is naturally in the heart of man; it is in the heart of a child, it is in him from his infancy; it is bound in his heart, it is rooted and riveted in him, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; it is what cleaves close to him, and he has a strong affection for and desire after: the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, (<sup><0082></sup>Genesis 8:21); so that he is not easily brought off of sin, or becomes wise;

*[but] the rod of correction shall drive it far from him*; the rod used by parents, for the correction of sin and folly, is a means of making children wise, and of restraining the folly that is bound up in them; and of reclaiming them from those sinful ways, which the folly of their hearts leads them to, and so in some measure of driving it far from them.

**Ver. 16.** *He that oppresseth the poor to increase his [riches]*, etc.] By taking away from them the little they have; by keeping back their hire, defrauding them of the just wages of their labours; or by usury and extortion, or any other unjust method, whereby they distress the poor, and enrich themselves;

*[and] he that giveth to the rich [shall] surely [come] to want*: that gives to those that are richer than he; or that are in greater power and authority, that they may protect him in the possession of his ill gotten riches; yet,



after all, it shall not thrive and prosper with him, it will all issue in poverty and want: or, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “he shall give to one more rich, and shall want”; he shall be forced to give it to another richer than he, and of greater power, and so shall get nothing by his oppression of the poor; but as he has served the poor, so shall he be served himself, and be brought to beggary and want; (see <sup><A113></sup>Proverbs 21:13).

**Ver. 17.** *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise*, etc.] Here begins a new part or division of this book. According to some, the “third”; the “first” ending with (<sup><A108></sup>Proverbs 9:18), the “second” at (<sup><A1216></sup>Proverbs 22:16), and a “third”, beginning here, and ending with (<sup><A1041></sup>Proverbs 24:34). It is certain that what follows from hence to the end of that is written in another style, by way of exhortation, caution; and instruction, and is directed to particular persons: as here an exhortation is made to Solomon’s son, or to those that attended his instruction; or rather to the children of Wisdom, that is, Christ; to listen attentively to “the words of the wise”; of Solomon, and other wise men before him, or contemporary with him; or rather of Wisdom and her maidens, Christ, and the wise men sent by him; who are made wise to salvation, and furnished for every good work by him, from whom the words of the wise come; and who speak the wisdom of God in a mystery; and whose doctrines are to be heard and received, not as the word of men, but as the word of God;

*and apply thine heart unto my knowledge*; the knowledge of divine and spiritual things Christ instructs in, and the knowledge of himself; which is preferable to all other knowledge, and to thousands of gold and silver; and in comparison of which all things are but loss and dung; and therefore should be applied unto with intenseness of mind, and cordially received.

**Ver. 18.** *For [it is] a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee*, etc.] Or, “in thy belly”<sup><A604></sup>. That is, in thine heart, in the inmost recesses of it; where the words or doctrines of the wise should be received in the love of them, and carefully laid up and retained; which will upon reflection yield much pleasure, like Ezekiel’s roll, which was in his belly as honey for sweetness; and which also is very profitable as an antidote against sin, (<sup><A3911></sup>Psalm 119:11);

*they shall withal be fitted in thy lips*; become them, and be suitable and graceful to them: or, “shall be ordered [and disposed] in” or “by thy lips”<sup><A605></sup>; being received into the heart, and digested there, they shall easily and freely go off the tongue, which shall be as the pen of a ready writer;

they shall be delivered in a regular manner, with great liberty and facility; by a good digestion of Gospel truths, and a comfortable experience of them, persons become apt to teach others.

**Ver. 19.** *That thy trust may be in the Lord*, etc.] By means of the words of the wise, or doctrines of the Gospel, faith in Christ is first had; men are directed and encouraged hereby to believe in him; and by the same means faith is increased, confirmed, and established. This is the end of penning the Scriptures, and of the Gospel ministry, as follows:

*I have made known to thee this day, even to thee*; the said words and doctrines in the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of them; giving not only a notional, but a spiritual and experimental knowledge of them. The Lord has particular persons to whom he will make known these things in a saving way; it is “to thee, even to thee”; and to everyone whom God has chosen, and Christ has redeemed: and he has particular times and seasons for it, “this day”; which is a time of life and love; when darkness is removed, and the light of grace shines, and makes it day; and may respect the whole Gospel dispensation, which is the accepted time and day of salvation.

**Ver. 20.** *Have not I written to thee excellent things*, etc.] In the Scriptures. Some render it, “three things”<sup>f606</sup>; and think that Solomon refers to the three divisions of the Scriptures among the Jews, the law, the prophets, and holy writings; so Jarchi; but some of those writings then were not: or to the three books wrote by him; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Others render it, “in a threefold way”<sup>f607</sup>, as the Targum and several versions; that is, in various ways, in different forms and styles, in order the better to inform and instruct. But it is best, with Kimchi, Gersom, and Ben Melech, to render it, “excellent things”, as we do; such are the truths of the Gospel; they are more excellent than those that are only known by the light of nature, or by the law of Moses: such as suspect the love and grace of God; the person and offices of Christ; peace, pardon, righteousness, atonement, life and salvation, by him. And these are said to lie

*in counsels and knowledge*; in disclosing the counsels of God, according to which they are; in giving the best of counsels to men; to perishing sinners, to look to Christ for salvation; to naked ones, to buy of him white raiment, or the robe of his righteousness; to guilty and filthy ones, to apply to his blood for pardon and cleansing; to hungry and thirsty ones, to come unto him for food, the bread of life, and water of life; and to weary ones, to him

for rest; and all to do their duty both to God and men: and they also respect knowledge; the knowledge of divine and heavenly things; the knowledge of God in Christ, and of his perfections, as displayed in his salvation; the knowledge of Christ, what he is in himself, what he has done for his people, and is unto them; and especially the knowledge of salvation by him; all which the Gospel is a means of.

**Ver. 21.** *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth,* etc.] Such are the doctrines of the Gospel; they are “the words of truth”; are written in the Scriptures of truth; come from the God of truth; the subject matter of which is Christ, who is the truth, and which the Spirit of truth leads into: there is a “certainty” in these; they are in the sure word of prophecy; are contained in the inspired and infallible word of God, and are no other than the Gospel of God; nothing is more sure than that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and truly and properly God; and that salvation is alone by him; and that whoever believes in him shall be saved; with many other things, which ministers of the word should affirm with boldness and assurance; and which others may come to a certain knowledge of, even to the riches of a full assurance of understanding; and which is the end of their being written in the word, and made known in the ministry of it;

*that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee;* or, “return”<sup>f608</sup> them to those that send to know what are the words of truth; that inquire concerning them with meekness and fear, and to whom a reason of the hope is to be given; as such are capable of, who have had the certainty of these words made known unto them, or who have been assured of the truth of them: and so Jarchi interprets it, to them that ask of thee instruction; as if it was written, as Lyra says it should, *Æyl awçl* , “to them that inquire of thee”. It may be rendered, “to them that send thee”<sup>f609</sup>; to search for those things, and get the knowledge of them, in order to communicate them, which, when obtained, may be done. Unless God, Father, Son, and Spirit, should be intended, who are concerned in the sending of ministers to preach the Gospel to men; to whom they are to return an account of the words of truth, and of their dispensation of them to the souls of men; which when faithfully done, and success, they give up their account with joy, and not with grief.

**Ver. 22.** *Rob not the poor, because he [is] poor,* etc.] And cannot help himself; cannot go to law with him that has injured him, and defend his

own cause; which the other knowing, is the more emboldened to spoil and defraud him, which is an aggravation of his sin: or, “for he is poor”<sup>f610</sup>; to rob any man is an evil and an injurious thing; but to rob the poor is cruel and barbarous; rather something should be given them, and not anything taken from them: or, “though he is poor”<sup>f611</sup>; let not that be an inducement to injure him, but the contrary;

*neither oppress the afflicted in the gate*; or “the poor”<sup>f612</sup>; the same as before, only a different word used: when he comes into a court of judicature, which was usually held in the gates of a city, (<sup><0890></sup>Ruth 4:1,2); and applies for redress of any grievance, do not crush him in the gate, or oppress him in judgment; nor wrest his cause, and do him wrong; but let him have justice done him, though poor. Some understand this of using the poor ill, when they come to their gates to beg; which sense is favoured by the Septuagint version; but the former is best. One might have expected, after such a preface or introduction as in the preceding verses, that something of more importance, something more spiritual and evangelical, would have followed: this shows the great regard the Lord has to the poor, and how much they are on his mind, and how near they lie to his heart; especially the poor of the flock, worried and spoiled by antichrist; (see <sup><3810></sup>Zechariah 11:7,11).

**Ver. 23.** *For the Lord will plead their cause*, etc.] If counsellors at the bar will not, he will; if judges on the bench will not do them justice, he will; he will judge the poor of the people; he will plead their cause, and plead it thoroughly, till he has brought forth judgment unto victory: woe to the man against whom Jehovah pleads; happy the poor on whose side he is; for their Redeemer is mighty, the Lord of hosts is his name, (<sup><4970></sup>Psalm 72:4 <sup><2810></sup>Jeremiah 50:34);

*and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them*; they could only spoil the poor of their goods, but the Lord can and will spoil and destroy the souls of the spoilers in hell: or, “spoil them that spoiled their soul” or “life”<sup>f613</sup>; that is, who spoiled them of their goods, and took away that small pittance they had, which was their life or livelihood; they shall be spoiled themselves that spoil others; the same measure they have meted out shall be measured out to them again; God will destroy them that destroy the earth, even antichrist and his followers, the oppressors of Christ’s poor on earth, (<sup><6118></sup>Revelation 11:18).

**Ver. 24.** *Make no friendship with an angry man*, etc.] Do not associate with him; contract not a familiarity with him; make him not a companion; take him not into an intimacy, or use him as a particular friend and acquaintance: a man should be courteous, and carry it civilly to all men; but he should take care whom he admits as his bosom friend; he should be cautious in his choice of a familiar friend, and not receive any; and, among the rest, avoid an angry and passionate man, one who is much given to passion himself, and stirs it up in others; for there can be no lasting peace and pleasure in such a man's company and conversation;

*and with a furious man thou shall not go*: not take a walk with him, much less a journey; or shall not be frequently together. It may be rendered, “unto a man of wraths”, or of great wrath and “fury, thou shall not come”; not enter into his house, nor seek his company, and court his conversation, which rather should be shunned.

**Ver. 25.** *Lest thou learn his ways*, etc.] And be as wrathful and furious, as quarrelsome and contentious, as he is. Evil works and ways are soon learned; men are more ready to imitate what is evil than what is good: Joseph learned to swear in Pharaoh's court; and the Israelites learned the works of the Heathen, among whom they were mingled; “evil communications corrupt good manners”, (~~4653~~ 1 Corinthians 15:33). Many men, naturally mild and gentle, tenderhearted and compassionate, by being brought up among or conversing with bloodthirsty Papists, and imbibing their cruel notions and sentiments, have become fierce, and as furious persecutors of others;

*and get a snare to thy soul*; be drawn into sin, by speaking passionate words, or doing rash actions, which will bring on punishment, either in this world, or in that to come, or in both; which may affect the soul or life here; the taking of it away, or the eternal damnation of the soul hereafter.

**Ver. 26.** *Be not thou [one] of them that strike hands*, etc.] Or “among them”<sup>f614</sup>, of the number of them, that do as they do, give their hand or their bond for others; he surety for them, as it is explained in the following clause; (see ~~2108~~ Proverbs 6:1 17:18);

*[or] of them that are sureties for debts*; contracted by others; that engage for the payment of them, in case the principal fails: and it is much if persons that keep indifferent company, angry and furious men, who are often in

broils and quarrels, and spend their time and substance in strife and contention, are not drawn into engagements of this kind.

**Ver. 27.** *If thou hast nothing to pay*, etc.] When the debtor this, and the creditor demands the debt of the surety: it is weakness in a man to be a surety for another, when he knows he is not able to pay the debt he is bound for, since it may be an injury to himself and family; but it is a piece of wickedness to engage for the payment of a debt, in case of insolvency, which he knows he is not able to answer; for this is deceiving and imposing upon the creditor; and therefore it is no wonder, being provoked by such ill usage, if he goes to extremity, as follows:

*why should he take away thy bed from under thee?* as in all likelihood he will, being irritated by such a conduct; and as he might, notwithstanding the law in (<sup><1226></sup>Exodus 22:26,27); for that respects a pledge, and not a debt; and raiment pledged, the covering of a man when in bed, and not the bed itself; for even wife and children might be taken for debt, (<sup><1241></sup>2 Kings 4:1 <sup><1025></sup>Matthew 18:25). This is said to deter from suretyship, especially in such circumstances; since a man may bring himself into such a condition as not to have a bed to lie on; yea, to have it taken from under him when upon it; and be turned out from house and home, naked and destitute.

**Ver. 28.** *Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set.*] Or, “the ancient border” or “boundary”<sup>f615</sup>; by which lands, estates, and inheritances, were marked, bounded, and distinguished; set by ancestors in agreement with their neighbours; which to remove was contrary to a law, and a curse is denounced upon those that did it, (<sup><1594></sup>Deuteronomy 19:14 27:17); and was always reckoned a very heinous crime in early times; (see Gill on “<sup><1242></sup>Job 24:2”). This was so sacred a thing among the Romans, that they had a deity which presided over those bounds, and had its name from them. Some apply this, in a political sense, to laws of long standing, and customs of long prescription; and others interpret it, in a theological sense, of doctrines and practices settled by the fathers of the church; which, if understood of Christ and his apostles only, will be allowed; but if of the ancient fathers of the church that followed them, it should not be received; since they were but fallible men, and guilty of many errors and mistakes, both in doctrine and practice.

**Ver. 29.** *Seest thou a man diligent in his business?* etc.] In the business of his calling, be it what it will, whether for himself or his master; constant in it, swift, ready, and expeditious at it; who industriously pursues it,

cheerfully attends it, makes quick dispatch of it; does it off of hand, at once, and is not slothful in it, nor weary of it; when you have observed and taken notice of such a man, which is not very common, you may, without a spirit of prophecy, foresee that such a man will rise in the world;

*he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean [men]*, or “obscure persons”<sup>f616</sup>; he shall not continue in the service of ignoble persons, or keep company with them; but he shall be taken into the service of princes and noble men, and be admitted into their presence, and receive favours from them; as Joseph, who was industrious and diligent in his business in Potiphar’s house, was in process of time advanced, and stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt, (~~0130~~Genesis 39:4 41:46). This may be spiritually applied. Every good man has a work or business to do in a religious way; some in a higher sphere, as officers of churches, ministers and deacons; the work of the one lies in reading, study, meditation, and prayer, in the ministration of the word and ordinances, and other duties of their once; and the business of the others in taking care of the poor, and the secular affairs of the churches; others in a lower way, and common to all Christians, which lies in the exercise of grace, and performance of all good works, relative to themselves, their families, and the church of God. Now ministers that are diligent in teaching and ruling; and deacons that do their office well; and private Christians, who are steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; are ready to every good work, heartily engaged in it, and constantly at it; shall not be company for the sons of darkness, unregenerate men, who are in the dark, and darkness itself; what communion has light with darkness, with works of darkness, they should be not workers of? or have any fellowship with the prince of darkness, from whose power they are delivered; but shall have society with the saints, who are made kings and priests unto God; shall be admitted into the presence of the King of kings now, and have communion with him; and shall stand before him at the great day with confidence, and not be ashamed; shall stand at his right hand, and shall be for ever with him. So the Jews<sup>f617</sup> interpret this place, “he shall not stand before dark ones”, in hell; “he shall stand before kings”, in the garden of Eden, in paradise; that is, in heaven.