

## CHAPTER 29

**Ver. 1.** *He that being often reported hardeneth [his] neck*, etc.] Or “a man of reproofs”<sup>f799</sup>; either a man that takes upon him to be a censurer and reprover of others, and is often at that work, and yet does those things himself which he censures and reproves in others; and therefore must have an impudent face and a hard heart a seared conscience and a stiff neck; his neck must be an iron sinew and his brow brass: or rather a man that is often reproved by others by parents by ministers of the Gospel, by the Lord himself, by the admonitions of his word and Spirit and by the correcting dispensations of his providence; and yet despises and rejects all counsel and admonition, instruction and reproofs of every kind, and hardens himself against them and shows no manner of regard unto them. The metaphor is taken from oxen, which kick and toss about and will not suffer the yoke to be put upon their necks. Such an one

*shall suddenly be destroyed*; or “broken”<sup>f800</sup>; as a potter’s vessel is broken to pieces with an iron rod, and can never be put together again; so such persons shall be punished with everlasting destruction, which shall come upon them suddenly, when they are crying Peace to themselves notwithstanding the reproofs of God and men;

*and that without remedy*; or, “and there [is] no healing”<sup>f801</sup>; no cure of their disease, which is obstinate; no pardon of their sins; no recovery of them out of their miserable and undone state and condition; they are irretrievably lost; there is no help for them, having despised advice and instruction; (see <sup><1052></sup>Proverbs 5:12,13).

**Ver. 2.** *When the righteous are in authority*, etc.] Or “are increased”<sup>f802</sup>; either in number or in riches, or in power and dominion; are set in high places, and have the exercise of civil government and the execution of the laws in their hands; for the protection of good men in their civil and religious privileges, and for the punishment of evil men; for the encouraging of all that is good, and for the discouraging of everything that is bad;

*the people rejoice*; the whole body of the people, because of the public good; a state is happy under such an administration; everyone feels and enjoys the advantage of it; (see <sup><1043></sup>1 Kings 4:20);

*but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn*; or “groan”<sup>f803</sup>, or “will groan”, under their tyranny and oppression, and because of the sad state of things; the number of good men is lessened, being cut off, or obliged to flee; wicked men and wickedness are encouraged and promoted; heavy taxes are laid upon them, and exorbitant demands made and cruelty, injustice, and arbitrary power exercised; and no man’s person and property safe; (see <sup><4001></sup>Proverbs 10:11 28:12,28).

**Ver. 3.** *Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father*, etc.] He that is a philosopher, especially a religious one, that not only loves and seeks after natural wisdom, but moral wisdom and knowledge; and more particularly evangelical wisdom, Christ the Wisdom of God, who is to be valued and loved above all things; the Gospel of Christ, which is the wisdom of God in a mystery; and the knowledge of it which is the wisdom which comes from above and is pure and peaceable; and which lies much in the fear of God, and in the faith of Jesus Christ, attended with all the fruits of righteousness: such a son makes glad his father, both because of his temporal good, since he does not waste but improve the substance he has given him; and because of his spiritual and eternal welfare; and since instead of being a reproach he is an honour to him; (see <sup><4001></sup>Proverbs 10:1);

*but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth [his] substance*: his father has given him, and comes to want and beggary; all which is a grief to his parents: or, “that feeds harlots”<sup>f804</sup>; who live in a riotous and voluptuous manner, and soon drain a man of his substance, and bring him to a morsel of bread; (see <sup><4053></sup>Luke 15:13,14,30 <sup><4066></sup>Proverbs 6:26); and such a son grieves his father, seeing he spends his substance and damns his soul.

**Ver. 4.** *The king by judgment establisheth the land*, etc.] By executing, judgment and justice among his subjects, he establishes the laws of the land, and the government of it; he secures its peace and prosperity, and preserves his people in the possession at their properties and privileges; and makes them rich and powerful, and the state stable and flourishing, so that it continues firm to posterity; such a king was Solomon, (<sup><4498></sup>2 Chronicles 9:8);

*but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it*; that, is, a king that does so; Gersom observes that he is not called a king, because such a man is not worthy of the name, who takes gifts and is bribed by them to pervert judgment and justice; whereby the laws of the nation are violated, and the

persons and properties of his subjects become the prey of wicked men; and so the state is subverted and falls to ruin: it is in the original text, “a man of oblations”<sup>f805</sup>; the word is generally used of the sacred oblations or offerings under the law; hence some understand it of a sacrilegious prince who of his own arbitrary power converts sacred things to civil uses. The Targum, Septuagint, Syriac and Arabic versions render it, a wicked and ungodly man; and the Vulgate Latin version, a covetous man; as such a prince must be in whatsoever light he is seen, whether as a perverter of justice through bribes, or as a sacrilegious man; though it may be rendered, “a man of exactions”<sup>f806</sup>, for it is used of the oblation of a prince which he receives from his people, (<sup><860></sup>Ezekiel 45:9,13); as Aben Ezra observes; and so it may be interpreted of a king that lays heavy taxes upon his people, and thereby brings them to distress and poverty, and the state to ruin.

**Ver. 5.** *A man that flattereth his neighbour*, etc.] That speaks smooth things to him gives him flattering titles, speaks fair to his face, highly commends him on one account or another:

*spreadeth a net for his feet*; has an idle design upon him, and therefore should be guarded against; his view is to draw him into a snare and make a prey of him; he attacks him on his weak side, and hopes to make some advantage of it to himself; wherefore flatterers should be avoided as pernicious persons; or he spreads a net for his own feet, and is taken in the snare which he had laid for his neighbour; or falls into the pit he dug for him, as Gersom observes; (see <sup><810></sup>Psalm 140:5 <sup><810></sup>Hosea 5:1).

**Ver. 6.** *In the transgression of an evil man [there is] a snare*, etc.] Or, according to the accents in some copies, “in the transgression of a man is an evil snare”, as Aben Ezra observes the words may be read; there is a snare in sin to man himself; one sin leads on to another, and a man is snared by the works of his own hands, and is implicated and held in the cords of his own iniquity, and falls into the snare of the devil, out of which he is not easily recovered; and the transgression of one man is a snare to another; he is drawn into sin by ill examples; and, by indulging himself in sin, the evil day comes upon him unawares as a snare; and sooner or later he is filled with horrors of conscience, anguish, and distress;

*but the righteous doth sing and rejoice*; not at the snares of others, their sin or punishment; for such a man rejoices not in iniquity, though he sometimes does at the punishment of sinners, because of the glory of the divine justice; and Gersom thinks this is here meant; see (<sup><880></sup>Psalm 58:10);

but rather, as he also observes, the righteous man rejoices at his deliverance from the snares of sin and Satan, and of the world; he rejoices in the righteousness by which he is denominated righteous; not his own, but the righteousness of Christ, it being so rich and glorious, so perfect and complete; he rejoices in salvation by him it being so suitable, so, real, so full, so free, and so much for the glory of God; he rejoices in the pardon of his sins through the blood of Christ, and in the expiation of them by his sacrifice; he rejoices in his person, in the greatness, fitness, fulness, and beauty of it; he rejoices in all his offices he bears and executes, and in all the relations he stands in to him; he rejoices in his word and ordinances, in the prosperity of his cause and interest, in the good of his people, and in hope of the glory of God; and even sings for joy in the view of electing, redeeming, and calling grace, and eternal life and happiness; he has peace of conscience now, fears no enemy, nor any danger, and expects a life of glory in the world to come; and oftentimes sings on the brink of the grave, in the view of death and eternity.

**Ver. 7.** *The righteous considereth the cause of the poor*, etc.] Not his poverty and distress, so as to relieve him, which yet he does, (<sup><B40E></sup>Psalm 41:1); nor the person of the poor in judgment, and which he ought not to do; for as he should not regard a rich man's person, and favour him, because he is rich; so neither a poor man, because he is poor, through an affectation of mercy, (<sup><B915></sup>Leviticus 19:15); but the cause of the poor, and the justice of that, and do him justice, though a poor man. This is to be understood chiefly of a civil magistrate, a judge righteous; who will take notice of and regard a poor man's cause, and take a good deal of pains and care that he is not injured. Or, "knoweth the judgment of the poor"<sup>f807</sup> he acquaints himself with his case, makes himself thoroughly master of it, searches out his cause as Job did, (<sup><B916></sup>Proverbs 29:16);

*[but] the wicked regardeth not to know [it]*; or, "does not understand knowledge"<sup>f808</sup> of the poor man's cause and case; and there being no money to be had, he does not care to consider it, and look into it, and get knowledge of it, and do him justice; he will not take his cause in hand, or plead it.

**Ver. 8.** *Scornful men bring a city into a snare*, etc.] Such as despise dominion, speak evil of dignities; proud and haughty men, that speak loftily, and with a contempt of their superiors; or who make a mock at religion, and scoff at all that is good and serious; these bring the inhabitants

of a city into a snare, to rebel against their governors, and so into mischief and ruin: or, they “burn a city”, as the Septuagint and Syriac versions<sup>f809</sup>; they inflame it, or blow it up into a flame; raise a combustion in it, and fill it with strifes and contentions; and bring down the wrath of God upon it, like fire: or, they “blow upon a city”<sup>f810</sup>; raise storms and tempests in it; turn all things upside down, and throw it into the utmost confusion, or blow it up;

*but wise [men] turn away wrath*; the wrath of men, by their wise counsels and advice, and appease tumults and seditions, and restore things to a quiet and settled state; or the wrath of God, by interposing with their prayers between him and a sinful people, as Moses did, (<sup>39623</sup>Psalm 106:23).

**Ver. 9.** [*If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man*, etc.] Enters into a controversy with him, either by word or writing, in order to convince him of his folly and wickedness, of his errors and mistakes;

*whether he rage or laugh, [there is] no rest*; that is, either whether the fool is angry with the wise man, and rages at him and abuses him, and calls him names, or laughs at him, and scoffs at all his arguments, reasons, and advice; yet the wise man does not cease from proceeding in the contest with him; or he is not dejected and cast down, and discouraged; or, as the Targum is,

“he is not broken;”

but patiently bears his wrath fury, his scoffs and jeers: or else whether the wise man deals roughly or gently with the fool, in a morose or in a mere jocular way: it has no upon him; he is never the better for it; he does not acquiesce or rest in what he says like the Pharisees in Christ’s time, who are compared to surly children: who, when “piped to, danced not”; and, when “mourned to, lamented not”, (see Gill on <sup>4116</sup>Matthew 11:16-17”). The design of the proverb is to show, that all labour to reclaim a fool from his folly is lost, let a man take what methods he will, (<sup>3172</sup>Proverbs 27:22).

**Ver. 10.** *The bloodthirsty hate the upright*, etc.] Cain did Abel; and as the wicked world hate all good men, and persecute them, even unto death;

*but the just must seek his soul*; either the soul of the bloodthirsty, and that either the good of their souls; seek their spiritual welfare, and pray for it, even though they are so cruel and inhuman: or just magistrates will seek after such persons, to punish them for shedding the blood of the upright. Or else the meaning is, that just persons seek the soul of the upright, and

make inquisition for the blood of such, to punish for it; which comes to the same sense, as Aben Ezra observes: or rather, such seek to defend and preserve the soul or life of upright men from those that hate and persecute them. Jarchi illustrates it by (<sup><0223></sup>1 Samuel 22:23); the Targum is,

“men that shed blood hate integrity; but the upright seek it.”

**Ver. 11.** *A fool uttereth all his mind*, etc.] At once; tells all he knows, all that is in his breast; whatever he thinks, and all that he intends to do; what or whom he loves or hates. Or, “a fool brings out all his wrath”; so the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions: he cannot restrain it, nor hide it; it breaks out at once, even all of it, and is soon known, as in (<sup><0216></sup>Proverbs 12:16);

*but a wise [man] keepeth it in till afterwards*; reserves his mind, and thoughts, and designs, to himself; and does not discover them until a proper opportunity offers, when to disclose them is most to advantage; or he restrains his wrath and anger, defers showing it to a proper time, when it may answer a better purpose, and he may do it without sin.

**Ver. 12.** *If a ruler hearken to lies*, etc.] To men that tell them in order to soothe and flatter him, or to hurt the character and reputation of others, that they may raise their own: rulers should not listen to and encourage such sort of persons; for, as lying lips do not become a prince, so it is not right to have liars about him; David would not suffer such to dwell in his court, (<sup><0107></sup>Psalms 101:7);

*all his servants [are] wicked*; or the greatest part of them: for a ruler of such a disposition will take none but such into his service, that flatter him, and calumniate others; and such a conduct, being pleasing and agreeable to him, is a temptation to his ministers to act the same wicked part; as is a prince, such are his courtiers; his example has a great influence upon them.

**Ver. 13.** *The poor and the deceitful man meet together*, etc.] Or “the usurer”<sup><0811></sup>; who by usury, by fraud and deception, is possessed of the mammon of unrighteousness, and is become rich; he and the poor man meet together; and so the sense is the same as in (<sup><0212></sup>Proverbs 22:2).

*the Lord lighteneth both their eyes*; with the light of natural life, and with the light of natural reason, (<sup><0004></sup>John 1:4,9); and so is the same as being “the Maker of them all”, in the above place; or he bestows his providential favours on both; causes his sun to shine upon the rich and poor, the wicked

and the righteous, (<sup><4156></sup>Matthew 5:45). Or it may be understood of the light of grace; for though, for the most part, God chooses and calls the poor of the world, and lightens their eyes with the light of his grace, when not many wise and noble are called and enlightened; yet this is not restrained wholly to men of one and the same condition of life; yea, God sometimes calls and enlightens publicans, tax gatherers, and extortioners, as Matthew and Zacchaeus.

**Ver. 14.** *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor*, etc.] That truly executes justice and judgment among all his subjects, particularly the poor, who are too often neglected, because they cannot afford persons to plead their cause: such a king was Solomon; and especially the Messiah, of whom he was a type, (<sup><4974></sup>Psalm 72:1,2,4,12,13);

*his throne shall be established for ever*; be secure to him as long as he lives, and to his posterity after; justice to all men, and mercy to the poor, are the support of a prince's throne; (see <sup><4118></sup>Proverbs 20:28 25:5).

**Ver. 15.** *The rod and reproof give wisdom*, etc.] Are the means of giving wisdom to a child, reprov'd by its parent with the rod; and of driving out foolishness from him, and of making him wiser for the time to come; he shunning those evils for which he was before corrected, (<sup><4025></sup>Proverbs 22:15); So the children of God grow wiser by the corrections and chastisements of their heavenly Father, which are always for their good; and he is a man of wisdom that hearkens to the rod, and to him that has appointed it, and learns the proper instructions from it, (<sup><3119></sup>Micah 6:9);

*but a child left to [himself] bringeth his mother to shame*; a child that has the reins thrown upon his neck, is under no restraint of parents, but suffered to take his own way, is left to do his own will and pleasure; he does those things which his parents are ashamed of, one as well as another; though the mother is only mentioned, being generally most fond and indulgent, and most criminal in suffering children to have their own wills and ways; and so has the greater share in the shame that follows on such indulgences.

**Ver. 16.** *When the wicked are multiplied*, etc.] Or "are in authority"<sup>f812</sup>; as the word is rendered, (<sup><4110></sup>Proverbs 29:2);

*transgression increaseth*; among the common people, being encouraged by their wicked rulers, whose examples they follow; or as the wicked



themselves increase, in numbers, in age, in power, and riches, their sins increase too;

*but the righteous shall see their fall*, from their places of authority and power, of honour, riches, and grandeur, into a low and despicable condition, into ruin and destruction; and that with pleasure, because of the glory of God, his wisdom, justice, truth, and faithfulness, displayed therein; (see <sup><1580></sup>Psalm 58:10).

**Ver. 17.** *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest*, etc.] Ease of mind, satisfaction and contentment, freedom from all anxious thoughts and cares; the correction being taken in good part, and succeeding according to wish and design;

*yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul*; by his tenderness to his parents, obedience to them, and respect for them; by his prudent behaviour among men; by his sobriety, diligence, and industry in his calling; by his fear of God, and walking in his ways; than which nothing can give a greater delight and pleasure to religious parents.

**Ver. 18.** *Where [there is] no vision, the people perish*, etc.] That is, “no prophecy”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; and which is often the sense of the word, as the vision of Isaiah is the prophecy of Isaiah; and, in the New Testament, prophesying is often put for preaching; and here vision, or prophecy, signifies the public ministering of the word and ordinances, and want of persons to administer them; no expounder, as the Septuagint version; or interpreter, as the Arabic. This was the case in the latter end of Eli’s life, (<sup><0901></sup>1 Samuel 3:1); in Asa’s times, and before, (<sup><445B></sup>2 Chronicles 15:3); in the Babylonish captivity, (<sup><3075></sup>Ezekiel 7:26 <sup><3109></sup>Lamentations 2:9); in the times of Antiochus, (<sup><1749></sup>Psalm 74:9); when John the Baptist and Christ first came preaching the word, (<sup><4035></sup>Matthew 9:36); and now is the case of the Jews, and will be till the time of their conversion. So it was in the Gentile world, before the Gospel was brought into it, (<sup><4473></sup>Acts 17:30); and so it now is in those places where the seven churches of Asia were; and in all Asia, which once heard the word of the Lord, even all that large country; and now it is not heard at all in it, but covered with Mahometan darkness. And this is the case in all Popish countries, subject to the see of Rome, where the word of God is not preached to the people, nor suffered so much as to be read by them; and even in reformed churches, for the most part, only a little morality is preached, and not the Gospel of Christ; so that here the people are



perishing for lack of knowledge, (<sup>2006</sup>Hosea 4:6); and when the witnesses will be slain, who now prophesy in sackcloth, there will be an entire stop put to prophesying or preaching for a while; but, when they shall rise, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God, through the ministry of the word. Now, where there is no preaching, men perish in their sins; the word being the ordinary means of grace, of regeneration, conversion, faith, and salvation; without which, men know nothing of Christ, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life by him: and where there is preaching, yet it not being of the right kind, there is no spiritual knowledge spread by it, no food for souls under it; they perish with hunger, as the prodigal did, or are in starving and famishing circumstances; no comfort for the people of God, who perish in their comforts under such a ministry, (<sup>481B</sup>1 Corinthians 8:11); and poison is spread among others; false doctrine eats as a canker, and destroys souls. Again, where there is right vision and prophecy, or true preaching of the word, and that is despised and neglected, men perish notwithstanding; as the Jews of old, and all deniers and contemners of the word now, (<sup>443B</sup>Acts 13:41 <sup>501B</sup>Hebrews 2:3); and this seems to be intended here, as appears by the following clause. The word translated “perish” has various senses, which agree with the text. It may be rendered, “the people become idle”, or “cease”<sup>f813</sup>; from the performance of good works, grow dissolute in their manners, and licentious in their practices: or “they become refractory”<sup>f814</sup>; fierce, obstinate, and ungovernable, and rebel against their superiors: or they are “made naked”<sup>f815</sup>; stripped of their ornaments; of their privileges, civil as well as religious, which is often the case where no vision is; as well as of all virtue and morality, and of the blessing and protection of God;

*but he that keepeth the law, happy [is] he:* not the moral law, which no man can keep perfectly, but the law of faith. It may be rendered, “happy is he that observes doctrine”<sup>f816</sup>; the doctrine of the Gospel, where it is preached; that attends to it, values and esteems it, receives it by faith, and with meekness; blessed is he, blessed are his eyes and ears; he sees wondrous things out of this law or doctrine, and he hears and knows the joyful sound, which brings salvation and eternal life unto him!

**Ver. 19.** *A servant will not be corrected by words,* etc.] Not by them only, especially one that is of a servile, surly, and untractable disposition; otherwise a good servant, and well disposed to his master, and willing to serve him, and promote his interest, a word is sufficient for such an one; when he is bid to go, he goes; or to come, he comes, (<sup>480B</sup>Matthew 8:9); or

if he has done wrong, and his fault is told him, he will amend another time; whereas a rough ill natured servant will not regard words, but must have blows to correct him;

*for though he understand;* what his master says, and what is his will, and knows he has done wrong, and ought to do otherwise, which is an aggravation of sin:

*he will not answer;* own his fault and promise to do better for the future; through the surliness of his nature, and contempt of his master, whom he does not think worthy of an answer: so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “he despises to answer”; thus Job was used by his servants, (<sup><896></sup>Job 19:16); There is an answering which is forbidden servants, (<sup><309></sup>Titus 2:9); but this what becomes them, and is expressive of their respect and reverence to their masters, and their ready, hearty, and cheerful obedience to them; and which especially should be in Christian servants to Christian masters, (<sup><500></sup>1 Timothy 6:1 <sup><405></sup>Ephesians 6:5-7).

**Ver. 20.** *Seest thou a man [that is] hasty in his words,* etc.] Swift to speak either before God or men; that takes upon him to speak upon a subject, or return an answer to a question, before he has thoroughly thought of it, and well considered it, and digested what he should say; (see <sup><200></sup>Ecclesiastes 5:2 <sup><309></sup>James 1:19); or “hasty in matters”<sup>F817</sup>; in his business; runs rashly and precipitately into things, without duly considering within himself what is right and proper to be done, and without taking the advice of others;

*[there is] more hope of a fool than of him;* of one that has not the gift of elocution, or not so much sagacity in business, and yet takes time to think, and advises with others.

**Ver. 21.** *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child,* etc.] In a very tender and affluent way uses him with great familiarity; makes him sit at table, with him, feeds him with dainties, and clothes him in the most handsome manner, as if he was one of his own children:

*shall have him become [his] son at the length:* he will expect to be used as a son; he will not care to do any servile work, or anything, especially that is hard and laborious; he will be for supplanting the son and heir, and think to inherit all himself; or, however, become proud, haughty, and saucy. Jarchi interprets this of the evil imagination, or the corruption of nature, which is in a man from a child; which, if cherished and not subdued, wilt in the issue rule over a man: and some apply it to the body; which, if delicately

pampered, and not kept under, will be master of the soul, instead of servant to it, and its members be instruments of unrighteousness.

**Ver. 22.** *An angry man stirreth up strife*, etc.] In families, neighbourhoods, communities, churches, and commonwealths; that is, one that is given to anger, and gives way to it, in whom it prevails and rules;

*and a furious man aboundeth in transgression*; or, “a master of wrath or fury”<sup>f818</sup>; one much addicted to it: or, “the husband of wrath”: wedded to it, as a man to his wife: or, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “who is easy to be angry”; is easily provoked, wrath rises up in him at once; this leads him on to many sins, as cursing, swearing, murder,

**Ver. 23.** *A man’s pride shall bring him low*, etc.] As the pride of Adam, in affecting to be as gods, knowing good and evil; he lost the image of God; was brought into a state of darkness and ignorance, into debt and to a dunghill, to beggary and rags; filled with loathsome diseases, and left in thralldom and bondage to sin and Satan; and so all his posterity were brought into the same low estate. This might be exemplified in particular persons, in Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, and others; and, as will be in that monster of pride, the man of sin and antichrist; who will be humbled and brought low in the midst of his pride and boasting, (<sup>f687</sup>Revelation 18:7,8);

*but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit*; not who are humble in appearance only, or merely in words, having a show of humility, a voluntary and affected one; but really in their hearts; whose spirits are humble and contrite; who are so in spiritual things, and are made so by the Spirit of God: they are such who are truly sensible of sin; of their folly, and want of spiritual knowledge; of their impotence, and weakness to do anything that is spiritually good; of their spiritual poverty, and want of righteousness; who see that salvation is all of grace; and that whatever they have is owing to the grace of God; that they are deficient in all their duties, and these insufficient to justify them before God; who submit to the righteousness of Christ, and give all the glory of salvation to the grace of God. These, as they are honourable, being clothed with humility, which is itself an ornament of great price; so they are honoured with more grace from the Lord; they are beautified with the garments of salvation; they have the honour to have the spiritual and gracious presence of God, and fellowship with him, who dwells with such as are of an humble spirit: these are the meek and lowly, that shall inherit the new earth, and reign as kings

with Christ in it; and the poor in spirit, to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs: and this honour is durable, they shall always abide in it; the grace they have, which makes them glorious, springs up unto eternal life; and the glory they shall have is an eternal weight of glory, a crown of glory that fadeth not away: for so the words may be rendered, “the humble in spirit shall lay hold on glory”,<sup>f819</sup> or “honour”; possess it and enjoy it: or rather “shall retain”,<sup>f820</sup> it; shall hold it fast, as the word is translated in (~~<2118>~~ Proverbs 3:18 11:16); The sum of the proverb, in both parts, is the same with the words of Christ, often used by him, (~~<2132>~~ Matthew 23:12 ~~<2141>~~ Luke 14:11 18:14).

**Ver. 24.** *Whoso is partner with a thief*, etc.] That robs and steals, and raises away another man’s property; which to do is sinful and contrary to the law of God, and punishable by it; and so it is to join with him in the theft, or to devise, or consent unto it; or to receive the stolen goods, or to hide and conceal them; or to hide the thief, or the theft, and not declare them; (see ~~<2138>~~ Psalm 50:18 ~~<2123>~~ Isaiah 1:23). Such an one

*hateth his own soul*; that is, he is not careful of it, he is not concerned for its welfare as he should be; for otherwise no man, properly speaking, hates his own flesh or body, and much less his soul; but he is negligent of the good of it, and, for the sake of the mammon of unrighteousness, runs the risk of the ruin of it; by which he shows that he loves the world more than his own soul; when the profit of the whole world is nothing to the soul of man, (~~<2136>~~ Matthew 16:26); (see ~~<2136>~~ Proverbs 8:36);

*he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth [it] not*; or “does not declare it”,<sup>f821</sup>; he heareth the cursing of those that have lost their goods, and yet he does not declare where they are, and who is the author of the theft, though he knows; or, being suspected of being concerned in it, or, at least, of knowing who did it, he is had before a civil magistrate, and an oath is given him, which he takes, and yet he conceals the matter: which is an aggravation of his sin, and brings ruin to his soul. So the Targum,

“an oath is determined (or brought to him) and he confesseth not.”

Some understand this of a distinct evil, of hearing cursing and swearing, and taking the name of God in vain, and blasphemy against him; yet, through fear of incurring the displeasure of men, and being reckoned a busy body, or through indifference and want of zeal for the glory of God, do not discover it, or inform of it, to a proper person, for the punishment

of such; (see <sup><f821></sup>Leviticus 5:1); and render the words <sup>f822</sup>, as “he that is partner with a thief hateth his own soul; [so] he that heareth cursing, and betrayeth it not.”

**Ver. 25.** *The fear of man bringeth a snare*, etc.] Either that which is subjectively in man; not a divine fear, or the fear of God, that grace which is put into the heart, for that leads to no snare, but tends to life; but a human fear, a servile one, a distrust of the power and providence, grace and goodness, of God, which has torment in it; which brings into bondage, and into many distresses and difficulties, and is opposed to trust in the Lord: or objectively, which has man for its object; a fear of losing the favour and friendship of men, of not having honour and applause from them; and a fear of their reproaches and reviling; of the wrath of men, of persecution from them, and of sufferings by them, even death itself; which has been sometimes a snare to ministers of the word, to drop or conceal some truths of it; and to professors of religion, not to embrace, own, and profess them; as many, through fear of the Jews, would not profess Jesus to be the Messiah, though they knew he was, (<sup><f823></sup>John 7:13 9:21 12:42,43); yea, such a fear has been a snare to the best of men, and leads into temptation and sin; as particularly Abraham and Peter, (<sup><f822></sup>Genesis 12:12,13 20:11 <sup><f824></sup>Matthew 26:69-74);

*but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe*; that trusts in the Lord as the God of nature and providence, and the God of all grace, for all mercies, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, and leaves himself and case with him; such an one is safe from men, and the fear of them, and from snares and temptations, and sin and mischief, which come by them: or, “shall be lifted up on high”<sup>f823</sup>; he is upon a high rock, firm and sure; he dwells on high, his place of defence is the munition of rocks; he is in a high tower which is impregnable, in a city of refuge where he is safe; he is as immovable as Mount Zion; he is above the fear of man, or danger from him; he is out of the reach of all his enemies, men or devils; (see <sup><f825></sup>Proverbs 18:10).

**Ver. 26.** *Many seek the ruler’s favour*, etc.] Or “face”<sup>f824</sup>; are very desirous of being admitted into his presence, and of having his company and conversation; of having an opportunity to ask a favour of him, and of receiving honour from him, and of gaining him on their side, to take their part in a cause depending; (see <sup><f826></sup>Proverbs 19:6);

*but [every] man's judgment [cometh] from the Lord*; who has the hearts of kings and rulers in his hand, and directs them in bestowing their favours, and in determining causes; so that all things are ultimately from the Lord; and therefore it is best to seek unto him, and trust in him: or the state and condition and circumstances of men, as to riches and honour, and the like, are all from the Lord, according as he sees fit; who sets up one and pulls down another, according to his pleasure.

**Ver. 27.** *An unjust man [is] an abomination to the just*, etc.] Not his person, but his actions, his unrighteous actions, his ungodly life and conversation; which a man, holy, just, and good, loathes and abhors, and cannot forbear expressing his abhorrence of; and therefore shuns his company, and will have no fellowship with him. And, on the other hand,

*[he that is] upright in the way [is] abomination to the wicked*; that man that is upright in heart and life, that walks according to the rule of the divine word, in the path of holiness, in the way of truth and righteousness, he is abhorred by a wicked man; he cannot have any pleasure in his company; he is under some awe and restraint which is disagreeable to him; and he cannot bear the reproofs he gives him; besides, if he is silent, his whole life and conversation carries in it a tacit reproof, conviction, and condemnation of him. There always has been a mutual enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, (<sup><DOCID></sup>Genesis 3:15).