

Proverbs 10 – The Proverbs of Solomon: Wisdom in Short Sentences

With the beginning of chapter 10, the Book of Proverbs shifts into a new format. Up to this point, the material followed a consistent flow of thought—paragraphs built around a theme, often addressed to *"my son."* But now, beginning with Proverbs 10:1 through 22:16, we enter a different section: 375 short, standalone proverbs, mostly consisting of two-line statements. Each one contains a compact truth, often framed as a contrast—righteousness vs. wickedness, wisdom vs. foolishness, diligence vs. laziness.

This isn't random trivia—it's divinely inspired truth, carefully packaged for memorization, meditation, and practical application. Interestingly, the number of proverbs in this section (375) matches the numerical value of Solomon's name in Hebrew—a possible sign of intentional design and authorship.

Wisdom That Blesses or Burdens (v. 1)

"A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother." (Proverbs 10:1 NKJV)

Wise children bring joy to their parents. Foolish children bring sorrow. One walks in truth and integrity; the other ignores correction and brings emotional pain to those who love them.

Personal Application:

How we live affects more than just ourselves. Wisdom honors those who raised us and blesses future generations. Your choices—today—can bring healing or heartache to the people closest to you.

The Worth of Righteous Living (vv. 2–3)

"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death. The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish, but He casts away the desire of the wicked." (vv. 2–3)

Wealth gained by dishonest means has no lasting value. But living rightly before God brings a kind of protection and provision that money can't buy.

Personal Application:

God takes care of those who walk with Him. Your honest labor, your integrity in business, your refusal to cut corners—all of it matters. It may not make headlines, but it is seen by the Lord.

Work Ethic and Reputation (vv. 4–5)

"He who has a slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a wise son; he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame."

God honors diligence. Laziness, especially when responsibility calls, leads to lack and regret. Timing matters—wise people work while it's day.

Personal Application:

Don't let opportunities slip by. Laziness may seem harmless now, but over time it builds a life of missed potential. God calls us to be faithful stewards of our time, energy, and responsibilities.

Legacy and Influence (vv. 6–7)

“Blessings are on the head of the righteous... The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will rot.”

Righteous living leaves a legacy that outlives you. People may forget what you earned, but they will remember how you lived.

Personal Application:

Ask yourself: *What kind of legacy am I building?* When your name comes up years from now, will it inspire others—or cause them to wince?

Character, Correction, and Words (vv. 8–21)

This section touches on several themes:

- The wise accept correction; the foolish resist and fall (v. 8).
- The righteous speak words that give life; fools speak words that destroy (vv. 11, 14).
- Love covers sin, while hatred stirs up conflict (v. 12).
- Too many words lead to sin; restraint shows wisdom (v. 19).
- The tongue of the righteous nourishes many (v. 21).

“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.” (v. 12)

This echoes 1 Peter 4:8: *“Love will cover a multitude of sins.”*

Personal Application:

Be the kind of person who builds others up, not tears them down. Be slow to speak and quick to listen. And remember: love doesn't ignore sin, but it seeks restoration—not destruction.

God's Blessing vs. Man's Striving (v. 22)

“The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.”

This is one of the great promises of this chapter. What God gives is good. It doesn't come with the regret, guilt, or destruction that often follows worldly gain.

Personal Application:

You can chase what the world calls success and be miserable. Or you can walk with God, let Him bless you in His time, and enjoy the peace that comes with it. Let God write your story.

Consequences and Endings (vv. 23–32)

This closing section continues the pattern of contrast:

- Fools enjoy doing wrong (v. 23).
- What the wicked fear comes upon them; the righteous see their desires fulfilled (v. 24).

- The wicked are blown away like a storm; the righteous are a lasting foundation (v. 25).
- The fear of the Lord brings long life; wickedness cuts life short (v. 27).
- The righteous speak what is right; the wicked speak perversity (v. 32).

Personal Application:

We're not just reading clever sayings. We're reading spiritual realities. The decisions you make today shape your direction—and eventually your destiny. Are you building your life on wisdom or folly? On truth or lies? On reverence for God or self-centered goals?

Final Thoughts: The Beauty of Hebrew Wisdom

Unlike Western poetry, which relies on rhyme and rhythm, Hebrew poetry is rooted in thought structure—mainly through contrast (antithesis) and parallelism. Proverbs 10 is a masterclass in Hebrew poetic form, offering deep truths in short, punchy lines.

Every verse in this chapter is a spiritual seed—compact, but powerful. And like seed, the benefit doesn't come just by observing it, but by planting it in your life.

A Prayer for Wisdom

Father, help us to treasure Your wisdom more than silver or gold. Make us people who love righteousness, pursue honesty, and walk humbly before You. Teach us to fear You—not with dread, but with reverence. Let our words build others up. Let our actions reflect Your heart. May our lives be a testimony to Your grace, and may the memory we leave behind bring blessing. In Jesus' name, Amen.