

## TEXT — 11:1-11

1. A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah;  
But a just weight is his delight.
2. When pride cometh, then cometh shame;  
But with the lowly is wisdom.
3. The integrity of the upright shall guide them;  
But the perverseness of the treacherous shall destroy them.
4. Riches profit not in the day of wrath;  
But righteousness delivereth from death.
5. The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way;  
But the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.
6. The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them;  
But the treacherous shall be taken in their own iniquity.
7. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish;  
And the hope of iniquity perisheth.
8. The righteous is delivered out of trouble;  
And the wicked cometh in his stead.
9. With his mouth the godless man destroyeth his neighbor;  
But through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered.
10. When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth;  
And when the wicked perish, there is shouting.
11. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted;  
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:1-11

1. What is meant by "balance" (v. 1)?
2. Name two Bible characters whose perverseness brought their destruction (v. 3).
4. What is meant by the "day of wrath" (v. 4)?
5. Give a Biblical illustration of the righteousness of the perfect directing his way (v. 5).
6. How much is v. 6 like v. 5?
7. What dies besides a wicked person's body (v. 7)?
8. What is meant by "the wicked cometh in his stead" (v. 8)?
9. Why would a man destroy his neighbor (v. 9)?
10. Illustrate both truths in v. 10 with kings of the Old Testament.
11. Does "blessing" mean "prayers for the city" or the blessings of God upon the righteous (v. 11)?

12. How could a city be overthrown by the mouth of the wicked (v. 11)?

#### PARAPHRASE OF 11:1-11

1. The Lord hates cheating and delights in honesty.
2. Proud men end in shame, but the meek become wise.
3. A good man is guided by his honesty; the evil man is destroyed by his dishonesty.
4. Your riches won't help you on Judgment Day; only righteousness counts then.
5. The upright are directed by their honesty; the wicked shall fall beneath their load of sins.
6. The good man's goodness delivers him; the evil man's treachery is his undoing.
7. When an evil man dies, his hopes all perish, for they are based upon this earthly life.
8. God rescues good men from danger while letting the wicked fall into it.
9. Evil words destroy. Godly skill rebuilds.
10. The whole city celebrates a good man's success--and also the godless man's death.
11. The good influence of godly citizens causes a city to prosper, but the moral decay of the wicked drives it downhill.

#### COMMENTS ON 11:1-11

V. 1. A perusal of this chapter will show that its sayings deal principally with honesty, integrity and uprightness in human relationships. A "false balance" was a set of dishonest scales. That God is concerned about honesty in business is evident from this verse and from Lev. 19:35,36; Deut. 25:13-16; Prov. 20:10, 23.

V. 2. A double contrast: "pride" vs. "lowly" and "shame" vs. "wisdom". Pulpit Commentary: "Self-assertion and self-confidence shall meet with mortification and disgrace in the end."

V. 3. A triple contrast: "integrity" vs. "perverseness"; "the upright" vs. "the treacherous"; and "guide" vs. "destroy". The integrity of Joseph "guided" him with reference to Potiphar's wife (Gen 39:7-12), and the perverseness of Absalom "destroyed" him (II Sam. 15-18).

V. 4. "Clarke": "Among men they can do all things; but they cannot purchase the remission of sins, nor turn aside the

wrath of God when that is poured out." Observe this fact in I Pet. 1:18; Prov. 10:2; Eze. 7:19; Zeph. 1:18. If one could gain the whole world, he could not redeem his lost soul by offering it to God at judgment (Mark 8:36, 37). But righteousness has a great bearing on one's being delivered when God raises to punish (Gen. 7:1; II Pet. 2:5,7).

V. 5. This saying is similar to v. 3. We observe that a person spends a lifetime developing his righteousness, and all the while it is the directing force of his life. Remember the wickedness of Judas and the downfall it brought him (Matt. 26:14-16; Matt. 27:3-5).

V. 6. One's righteousness that has directed him (v. 5) also delivers him from many a destruction. A treacherous person is one bent on injuring another for his own sinful gain. But such are often taken in the plot they laid for others: Psa. 9:15; Prov. 5:22; Eccl. 10:8.

V. 7. Compare with Prov. 10:28. Get this lesson: there is nothing good beyond death for the wicked. Death dashes his earthly hopes to the ground, and eternity holds nothing good for him.

V. 8. God's providential leadership and His answer of the righteous people's prayers brings about this deliverance (II Kings 18:28--19:19, 35). On the wicked coming in his stead, "Young" translates: "The righteous from distress is drawn out, And the wicked goeth in instead of him." "American Bible Union version:" "The righteous was delivered out of trouble; And the wicked came into his place." Amplified speaks of the wicked getting into trouble instead of the righteous.

V. 9. This verse well fits a court scene where the false witness can destroy his neighbor and where the faithful witness can deliver the innocent. Naboth was destroyed through false witnesses (I Kings 21:1-13).

V. 10. This verse and the one following have sayings about the "city". Good kings were honored because of their successful reigns (II Chron. 32:33; 35:24, 25); not so with the bad kings (II Chron. 24:25). Consider also Prov. 28:12-18. There must have been much rejoicing when both Athaliah and Herod the Great died.

V. 11. Prov. 29:8 says, "Scoffers set a city in a flame" (mighty cities, after being conquered, were often burned--Josh. 6:24; 8:19); "But wise men turn away wrath" (by submitting rather than resisting an over-powering enemy--Jer. 27:4-11).

## TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:1-11

1. The sayings in this chapter mainly have to do with what?
2. How strongly does God express His feelings about dishonesty in business (v. 1)?
3. What precedes destruction?
4. What precedes honor?
5. How did Joseph's integrity guide him in the Potiphar's-wife situation (v. 2)?
6. How did Absalom's perverseness destroy him (v. 2)?
7. What statement shows that righteousness is actually more powerful than riches (v. 4)?
8. How did Judas's wickedness bring about his downfall (v. 5)?
9. Who is a treacherous person? What often happens to them that they do not expect (v. 6)?
10. What happens to the wicked's hope at death (v. 6)?
11. How did Hezekiah's righteousness deliver him and Jerusalem out of trouble (v. 7)?
12. What is meant in v. 8 by "the wicked cometh in his stead?"
13. How can one's mouth destroy his neighbor (v. 9)?
14. Cite two rulers whose death must have brought rejoicing to their people (v. 10).
15. How could scoffers set their city aflame (v. 11)?
16. How would wise men often turn away wrath from their city (v. 11)?

## TEXT — 11:12-21

12. He that despiseth his neighbor is void of wisdom;  
But a man of understanding holdeth his peace.
13. He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets;  
But he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter.
14. Where no wise guidance is, the people falleth;  
But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.
15. He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it;  
But he that hateth suretyship is secure.
16. A gracious woman obtaineth honor;  
And violent men obtain riches.
17. The merciful man doeth good to his own soul;  
But he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.
18. The wicked earneth deceitful wages;

- But he that soweth righteousness hath a sure reward.
19. He that is stedfast in righteousness shall attain unto life; And he that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death.
  20. They that are perverse in heart are an abomination to Jehovah;  
But such as are perfect in their way are his delight.
  21. Though hand join in hand, the evil man shall not be unpunished;  
But the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:12-21

1. Is lack of respect equivalent to "despising," or is "despising" always active (v. 12)?
2. Is a talebearer one who bears falsehoods, or is he also one who reveals truths that ought to be kept secret (v. 13)?
3. "Faithful" to whom or to what in v. 13?
4. According to v. 14 one should have both ..... and ..... counselors.
5. What is meant by being "surety" for another (v. 15)?
6. What would be included in being a "gracious" woman (v. 16)?
7. Does society or God (or both) cause the statements in v. 17 to come true?
8. What are "deceitful" wages (v. 18)?
9. "Soweth righteousness" reminds one of what well known New Testament passage (v. 18)?
10. What are the contrasts in v. 19?
11. Name Bible Characters who you consider were "perverse in heart" (v. 20).
12. What is meant by "hand join in hand" (v. 21).
13. What is meant by the "seed of the righteous" (v. 21).

## PARAPHRASE OF 11:12-21

12. To quarrel with a neighbor is foolish; a man with good sense holds his tongue.
13. A gossip goes around spreading rumors, while a trustworthy man tries to quiet them.
14. Without wise leadership, a nation is in trouble; but with good counselors there is safety.
15. Be sure you know a person well before you vouch for his credit! Better refuse than suffer later.

16. Honor goes to kind and gracious women, mere money to cruel men.
17. Your own soul is nourished when you are kind; it is destroyed when you are cruel.
18. The evil man gets rich for the moment, but the good man's reward lasts forever.
19. The good man finds Life; the evil man, Death.
20. The Lord hates the stubborn but delights in those who are good.
21. You can be very sure that the evil man will not go unpunished forever. And you can also be very sure that God will rescue the children of the godly.

#### COMMENTS ON 11:12-21

V. 12. Following Rom. 12:18 is much wiser than despising one's neighbor. Yet many disregard it. Needless or selfish strife is a work of the flesh and not of the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-23). If you say all that can be said, you will have all the trouble that can be had!

V. 13. A double contrast: "talebearer" vs. "faithful spirit" and "reveleth" vs. "concealeth". The first statement is found also in Prov. 20:19. Wisdom dictates that some things should not be told. Both Lev. 19:16 and I Tim. 5:13 show that talebearing is wrong.

V. 14. A double contrast: "no wise guidance" vs. "multitude of counsellors" and "falleth" vs. "safety". The last statement is found also in Prov. 24:6. Kings always had counsellors, and in time of war they depended much upon them. Prov. 15:22 shows that all of us have need of counsel at times. This verse is just the opposite of a know-it-all.

V. 15. Suretyship is when one promises to stand good for the obligation of another if he cannot pay. How many people have "smarted" for co-signing notes of others!

V. 16. A triple contrast; "gracious" vs. "violent"; "woman" vs. "men"; and "honor" vs. "riches." A gracious woman prefers honor to riches, but violent men sacrifice honor to gain riches.

V. 17 The merciful man does good to himself in that others will show mercy to him (Matt. 5:7; Matt. 25:34, 35). On the other hand the cruel are asking for trouble, and it will surely come to him (I Kings 21:17-19).

V. 18. Sometimes it looks like the wicked prosper in this

world (Psa. 37:35), but they will be cut down (Psa. 37:1, 2, 10, 12-15, 17, 20, 38). They have sown to the flesh, and they will reap corruption (Gal. 6:8). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Sowing to righteousness leads to a sure reward (Hos. 10:12; Jas. 3:18; Psa. 37:3-6, 11, 18, 19, 29-31, 37).

V. 19. A double contrast: "steadfast in righteousness" vs. "pursueth evil" and "life" vs. "death". As sinners pursue evil, godly people forsake evil and follow after righteousness and godliness (I Tim. 6:11; Tit. 2:12). The results? "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17). See also the great passage, Rom. 2:6-8.

V. 20 A triple contrast: "perverse" vs. "perfect"; "in heart" vs. "in their way"; and "abomination to Jehovah" vs. "his delight". Instances of perverse hearts and God's reaction: Pharisees (Luke 16:14, 15; 18:9-14; Matt. 15:1-9; 23:25-28) and Simon of Samaria (Acts 8:20-22). Instances of good people who pleased the Lord: Job (Job 1:8) and Mary of Bethany (Luke 10:39, 42; Mark 14:3-9). God delights as much in the righteous as He deplores the wicked.

V. 21. The opening statement is also in Prov. 16:5. Clarke: "Let them confederate as they please to support each other, justice will take care that they escape not judgment." Other passages on the deliverance of the righteous: Prov. 16:4,8; Gen. 7:1).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:12-21

1. What two ways is wisdom shown in the neighborhood (v. 12)?
2. Does a faithful person spread rumors and tales or seek to suppress such (v. 13)?
3. What about the person who seeks no counsel or guidance from others (v. 14)?
4. How is "smarting" sometimes connected with suretyship (v. 15)?
5. What are the differing goals of a gracious woman and violent men (v. 16)?
6. How is one being good to himself when he shows mercy to others (v. 17)?
7. How does one trouble his own flesh by being cruel (v. 17)?
8. In what sense are the gains of the wicked "deceitful" (v. 18)?

9. What chapter in Psa. emphasizes the sure reward of the righteous?
10. What are the differing attitudes toward evil and righteousness on the part of the wicked and the righteous (v. 19)?
11. What are the differing outcomes of pursuing evil and righteousness (v. 19)?
12. What group of perverse people of Jesus' day were especially abominable (v. 20)?
13. Does God overlook the righteousness of the righteous (v. 20)?
14. What is meant by "hand join in hand" (v. 21)?

## TEXT — 11:22-31

22. As a ring of gold in a swine's snout,  
So is a fair woman that is without discretion.
23. The desire of the righteous is only good;  
But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.
24. There is that scattereth, and increaseth yet more;  
And there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth only to want.
25. The liberal soul shall be made fat;  
And he that watereth shall be watered also himself.
26. He that withholdeth grain, the people shall curse him;  
But blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.
27. He that diligently seeketh good seeketh favor;  
But he that searcheth after evil, it shall come unto him.
28. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall;  
But the righteous shall flourish as the green leaf.
29. He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind;  
And the foolish shall be servant to the wise of heart.
30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;  
And he that is wise winneth souls.
31. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth;  
How much more the wicked and the sinner!

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 11:22-31

1. Illustrate a woman with discretion (v. 22).
2. What is the comparison between her and the hog with a gold ring (v. 22)?
3. Do "desire" and "expectation" in v. 23 stand for "hope" or for what actually results?

4. Find the agricultural setting in v. 24.
5. What is meant by "liberal" in v. 25?
6. What is meant by "fat" (v. 25)?
7. What New Testament passage does the last statement in v. 25 call to mind?
8. How do we know that "withholdeth" in v. 26 means "won't sell"?
9. Why would the owner withhold the grain (v.26)?
10. Whose favor is obtained in v. 27--God's or man's (or both)?
11. Cite instances of people's seeking evil (v. 27)?
12. Show from the Bible that man should not trust in riches (v. 28).
13. What does Psa. 1:3 say about the leaf of the righteous (v. 28)?
14. How does one "trouble his own house" (v. 29)?
15. Give an illustration of the foolish serving the wise (v. 20; .
16. What is meant by "tree of life" in v. 30?
17. In Solomon's day what did "winning souls" mean or involve (v. 30)?
18. What are some of the earthly recompenses upon the righteous (v. 31)?
19. What are some of the earthly recompenses upon the wicked (v. 31)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 11:22-31

22. A beautiful woman lacking discretion and modesty is like a fine gold ring in a pig's snout.
23. The good man can look forward to happiness, while the wicked can expect only wrath.
- 24,25. It is possible to give away and become richer! It is also possible to hold on too tightly and lose everything. Yes, the liberal man shall be rich! By watering others, he waters himself.
26. People curse the man who holds his grain for higher prices, but they bless the man who sells it to them in their time of need.
27. If you search for good you will find God's favor; if you search for evil you will find His curse.
28. Trust in your money and down you go! Trust in God and flourish as a tree!
29. The fool who provokes his family to anger and resentment will finally have nothing worthwhile left. He shall be the

servant of a wiser man.

30. Godly men are growing a tree that bears lifegiving fruit, and all who win souls are wise.
31. Even the godly shall be rewarded here on earth; how much more the wicked!

#### COMMENTS ON 11:22-31

V. 22. We might ask, "What is a ring of gold if it be on a swine's snout? Does it make the hog? And what is physical beauty if the woman has no discretion? Is physical beauty all that counts?"

V. 23. Instead of "wrath", "Young's Literal translation" gives "transgression", and the "Septuagint" gives "shall perish". The passage means that the righteous desire only that which is good while the wicked desire that which is wrong ("transgression") or that which brings God's "wrath," causing them to perish." How wonderful to have right desires! And how bad to crave the wrong thing!

V. 24. "Scattereth" here has reference to giving to the needy (Psa. 112:9). Judiciously helping the needy does not impoverish us (God blesses us), but if we withhold from them, God will withhold from us. II Cor. 9:6: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." An old epitaph: "What we spent, we had; what we saved, we lost; what we gave, we have."

V. 25. "Liberal" here means "generous"; "fat" means "prosperous". Promised also in Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

V. 26. Often the rich withhold selling grain during shortages to let the price go higher and higher. How the people will curse such a character! But how the same people would bless him for not waiting for higher prices but releasing to their need!

V. 27. One who seeks to do right will obtain the favor of both man and God. As a young man Jesus "advanced...in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). So did the child Samuel (I Sam. 2:26). So will a virtuous person (Prov. 31:28-31). Those who traffic in evil will have evil (trouble) come upon them: Esth. 7:10; Psa. 7:15, 16; 9:15, 16; 10:2; 57:6.

V. 28. This man trusts his riches rather than God, something consistently condemned in the Bible: Job 31:24; Psa. 52:8; Mark 10:24; I Tim. 6:17. The righteous are often compared to the flourishing tree or leaf: Psa. 1:3; 52:8; 92:12; Jer. 17:8.

V. 29. God is displeased with one who makes trouble for his parents and brothers and sisters. He will inherit the "wind" (get nothing) rather than be included in the family inheritance. In life the foolish "serve" or work for the "wise". The man wise enough to choose what he wants to succeed in and prepares himself for it gets much farther than the man who idly drifts from job to job and from day to day.

V. 30. Men draw good from the lives of the righteous. To partake of the good from their lives is like eating of the tree of life. The righteous wisely win souls from the wrong to the right. This is a great Old Testament verse on the good influencing the bad over to the right way of life.

V. 31. The New Testament mainly points to the final reaping of what we have sown (Gal. 6:7-9), yet there are earthly as well as eternal consequences of our sowing (Matt. 6:33; I Tim. 4:8). There are two yokes that one can wear in life: Christ's and Satan's. Christ invited those worn out with the terrible load of sin (wearing Satan's yoke) to come to Him and to take His yoke instead, promising them soul-rest and a much better and easier way to live (Matt. 11:28-30). When one considers the sorrows and disappointments and intrigue and distrust that sin brings to a person, truly the way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15).

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 11:22-31

1. In what way is a beautiful woman with no judgment like a hog with a gold ring in its nose (v. 22)?
2. What do some other versions give instead of "wrath" in v. 23?
3. Tell in your own words what v. 24 means.
4. What are the meanings of "liberal" and "fat" as used in v. 25?
5. "Withholdeth grain" in what sense (v. 26)?
6. What two things are different people seeking, according to v. 27, and what are their prospects at succeeding at their endeavor?
7. "Trusting in riches" is set over against trusting in ..... (v. 28)

8. Cite two passages that liken the righteous to a flourishing tree or leaf (v. 28).
9. What will one "inherit" from his family who has caused them endless trouble (v. 20)?
10. In life who serves whom among the wise and the foolish (v. 29)?
11. Discuss the question of the righteous person's influence from v. 30.
12. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the
12. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the righteous right in this life (v. 31)?
13. What are some of the earthly recompenses of the wicked in this life (v. 31)?

#### NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 11

*"What are you doing to yourself?"--*

"The wicked will fall by his own wickedness" (v. 5).

"The merciful man doeth good to his own soul" (v. 17).

"He that is cruel troubleth his own house" (v. 17).

"He that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death" (v. 19).

"He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind" (v. 29).

*"Abomination and delight"--*

"A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah; But a just weight is his delight" (v. 1).

"They that are perverse in heart are an abomination to Jehovah; But such as are perfect in their way are his delight" (v. 20).

*"Destruction"--*

"The perversness of the treacherous shall destroy them" (v. 3)

"With his mouth the godless man destroyeth his neighbor" (v. 9)

"The city....is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (v. 11).

"He that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death" (v. 19)

"He that trusteth in his own riches shall fall" (v. 28).

## CHAPTER 11

### *"Deliverance"--*

"Righteousness delivereth from death" (v. 4).

"The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them" (v. 6).

"The righteous is delivered out of trouble" (v. 8).

"Through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered" (v. 9).

"The seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (v. 21).

### *"Righteous"--*

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them" (v. 3).

"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way" (v. 5).

"The righteous is delivered out of trouble" (v. 8).

"Through knowledge shall the righteous be delivered" (v. 9).

"When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth" (v. 10).

"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted" (v. 11).

"He that soweth righteousness hath a sure reward" (v. 18).

"He that is steadfast in righteousness shall attain unto life" (v. 19).

"The seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (v. 21).

"The desire of the righteous is only good" (v. 23).

"He that diligently seeketh good seeketh favor" (v. 27).

"The righteous shall flourish as the green leaf" (v. 28).

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (v. 30).

"The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth" (v. 31).

## PRIDE IS A TROUBLE-MAKER

"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife" (28:25), and 13:10 says, "Only by pride cometh contention."

When one is proud, he is going to try to have his own way no matter what. He will not concede that he has been wrong or that he could even be wrong. He is a self-centered, conceited man who is going to ram-rod his way through anything (or anybody) that would resist him.

It should be easy to admit error when one sees his mistake, but pride will not permit a person to make such an admission. He would rather defend himself though in error than to concede the truth. Thus, trouble arises through pride. And there are other ways too in which pride causes trouble.

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### PRIDE LEADS DOWN—NOT UP

“A man’s pride shall bring him low” (29:23). There is a lot in that simple statement. A man’s pride is actually self-exaltation. A proud man lifts himself up. But, this proverb so wisely says that his pride will actually bring him down in time. And it will. As 16:18 says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

Haman’s pride brought his destruction. So did Nebuchadnezzar’s make a beast of the field of him for seven years. Peter’s trusting in his own moral strength led to his downfall, for he didn’t watch and pray as he should have done. And the persons of the Bible, as well as the persons of any community, give one ample examples of this sad fact.

### PRIDE CONTRASTED WITH WISDOM

A proud person glories in his exalted or inflated thoughts of himself. He thinks he is “it”, or she thinks she is “it”. But, Proverbs lists pride as foolish and in a number of passages contrasts it with wisdom. 14:3 says, “In the mouth of the FOOLISH, is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.” 11:2 says, “When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.” And 13:10 says, “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.” One is not well advised who is proud in heart. He has been using the wrong standard of measure. He is viewing himself in the light of his own thoughts, and they are warped. Anyone is foolish who views himself primarily in the light of his own thoughts. What God thinks of us is always right, and the common consensus of thought concerning us is also to be taken into consideration.

Let us see, then, that pride has no chance to get a start in our hearts. Let us pull out the first appearance of it lest it grow and take possession of our hearts.