

TEXT — 19:1-10

1. Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity
Than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool.
2. Also, that the soul be without knowledge is not good;
And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.
3. The foolishness of man subverteth his way;
And his heart fretteth against Jehovah.
4. Wealth addeth many friends;
But the poor is separated from his friend.
5. A false witness shall not be unpunished;
And he that uttereth lies shall not escape.
6. Many will entreat the favor of the liberal man;
And every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.
7. All the brethren of the poor do hate him:
How much more do his friends go far from him!
8. He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul:
He that keepeth understanding shall find good.
9. A false witness shall not be unpunished;
And he that uttereth lies shall perish.
10. Delicate living is not seemly for a fool;
Much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 19:1-10

1. What is a synonym for "integrity" in v. 1?
2. Why is it not good to remain ignorant (v. 2)?
3. Is all "haste" sinful or just some (v. 2)?
4. When does the heart fret against Jehovah (v. 3)?
5. When is a poor person separated from his friend (v. 3)?
6. What class of persons likes to make friends of the wealthy (v. 4)?
7. Will it be God or man who will do the punishing (v. 5)?
8. If everybody is a friend to one who gives gifts, why don't all people love God because of His gifts (v. 6)?
9. What kind of words does he use as he pursues them (v. 7)?
10. In what sense is "love" used in v. 8?
11. Why would v. 9 and v. 5 both be included in the same chapter?
12. What is "delicate living" (v. 10)?
13. What does "not seemly" mean (v. 10)?

PARAPHRASE OF 19:1-10

1. Better be poor and honest and rich and dishonest.
2. It is dangerous and sinful to rush into the unknown.
3. A man may ruin his chances by his own foolishness and then blame it on the Lord.
4. A wealthy man has many "friends"; the poor man has none left.
5. Punish false witnesses. Track down liars.
6. Many beg favors from a man who is generous; everyone is his friend!
5. Punish false witnesses. Track down liars.
6. Many beg favors from a man who is generous; everyone is his friend!
7. A poor man's own brothers turn away from him in embarrassment; how much more his friends! He calls after them, but they are gone.
8. He who loves wisdom loves his own best interest and will be a success.
9. A false witness shall be punished and a liar shall be caught.
10. It doesn't seem right for a fool to succeed or for a slave to rule over princes!

COMMENTS ON 19:1-10

V. 1. This is very similar to Prov. 28:6. Pulpit Commentary: "The poor man who lives a guileless, innocent life, content with his lot and using no wrong means to improve his fortunes, is happier and better than the rich man who is hypocritical in his words and deceives others and has won his wealth by such means." There is often a connection between being poorer and honest and being dishonest and getting rich. The "fool" in this verse is apparently a rich fool.

V. 2. A double contrast: "Soul without knowledge" vs. "hasteth with his feet" and "not good" vs. "sinneth". It is not good for one to be without knowledge when God has given us minds in which to store and which can use knowledge and many means by which to acquire it. God was pleased that Solomon wanted wisdom (1 Kings 3:9,10). See also v. 8. One without knowledge often acts hastily (No sense of caution) and errs as a result.

V. 3. "Clarke": "They get into straits and difficulties

through the perverseness of their ways; and...they fret against God; whereas...they are the causes of their own calamities." Rom. 1:19-32 gives a running account of the way mankind subverted its way: they began with a knowledge of God; there came a time when they did not glorify Him as they should; darkness set in upon their unspiritual hearts; in their conceit they began making idols, and the longer they went the worse representation of God they made; they came to be filled with all kinds of wickedness; God finally gave up on them until Gospel times.

V. 4. Compare v. 7. People like to identify with someone who will be a credit to them in the eyes of men, not with someone who will discredit them. The poorest of families don't have very many real friends: those who will claim them, invite them over, etc. (Prov. 14:20). Sometimes even relatives practically disown extreme poverty cases.

V. 5. Another case of Hebrew parallelism in which the latter statement is a restatement of the first. This verse is almost identical to v. 9. For the punishment of false witnesses, see Prov. 21:28; Deut. 19:16-19.

V. 6. They seek his favor for what he can do for them. A saying: "Be an unusual success, and you will have many false friends and true enemies." This can raise the question: Do people love you or what you can do for them? Let a child show up on the school ground with a sack of candy, and everybody wants some; "you know me," many will say.

V. 7. Compare with v. 5; Prov. 14:20. In v. 6 everybody wants to be a friend of the well-to-do, the one who gives gifts; but in this verse a man's friends and relatives even go away from him, not wanting to have anything to do with him. Even the poor man's words of appeal fall on deaf ears.

V. 8. He loves his soul because wisdom is good for the soul (v. 2). Proverbs pictures wisdom as something to "get" (4:7). We are to "buy the truth" (Prov. 23:23). We are to give wisdom an exalted place in our lives (Prov. 4:8). But this verse also talks about keeping understanding. "Get" it, and then "forget it not" Prov. 4:5 would tell us.

V. 9. A false witness, in those instances of lying about others, would be breaking the 9th Commandment (Exo. 20:16). God says such must be punished (v. 5).

V. 10. "Delicate living" is luxurious living. "Seemly" means "fitting for." Both statements of this verse show

somebody out of place: a fool living luxuriously and a servant ruling over princes. Neither one is in order. Appropriately does Prov. 30:21-23 say, "For three things the earth doth tremble, And for four, which it cannot bear: For a servant when he is king; And fool when he is filled with food..." History tells us of a man who wanted to guard against falling into the very things of which this verse speaks. He was Agathocles, ruler of Syracuse. He rose from the lowly occupation of a potter and to remind himself of his lowly origin, he ate off cheap earthenware.

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 19:1-10

1. What kind of "fool" is evidently under consideration in v. 1?
2. Why is the honest poor better off than such a person (v. 1)?
3. Why does one lacking knowledge often act hastily (v. 2)?
4. What Bible character did not want to live without knowledge (v. 2)?
5. Tell of the account in Rom. 1 of mankind subverting its way (v. 3).
6. How does wealth make friends for a person (v. 4)?
7. Sometimes what kind of friends (v. 4)?
8. Why is the poverty-stricken family often ostracized and even disowned by their own relatives (v. 4)?
9. What did God say about punishing false witnesses (v. 5)?
10. What is the problem of friends you make and keep through gifts (v. 6)?
11. Contrast vs. 6,7.
12. The two verbs in v. 8 talk of doing what two things with knowledge?
13. A false witness often violates which of the Ten Commandments (v. 9)?
14. According to v. 10 what two things are out of order?

TEXT — 19:11-20

11. The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger;
And it is his glory to pass over a transgression.
12. The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion;
But his favor is as dew upon the grass.
13. A foolish son is the calamity of his father;
And the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

14. House and riches are an inheritance from fathers;
But a prudent wife is from Jehovah.
15. Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep;
And the idle soul shall suffer hunger.
16. He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his soul;
But he that is careless of his ways shall die.
17. He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah,
And his good deed will he pay him again.
18. Chasten thy son, seeing there is hope;
And set not thy heart on his destruction.
19. A man of great wrath shall bear the penalty;
For if thou deliver him, thou must do it yet again.
20. Hear counsel, and receive instruction,
That thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 19:11-20

1. What does it mean "to pass over a transgression" (v. 11)?
2. Find the contrasts in v. 12.
3. What two sources of trouble can a man have in his own home (v. 13)?
4. How does a "prudent wife" act (v. 14)?
5. What is "slothfulness" (v. 15)?
6. Comment on "he that is careless of his ways shall die" (v. 16).
7. How and when will God repay him (v. 17)?
8. How does one chasten his child (v. 18)?
9. How would one "set" his heart on his child's destruction (v. 18)?
10. Why do some people get angry so easily (v. 19)?
11. How would you relate Rehoboam's case to v. 20?

PARAPHRASE OF 19:11-20

11. A wise man restrains his anger and overlooks insults. This is to his credit.
12. The king's anger is as dangerous as a lion's. But his approval is as refreshing as the dew on grass.
13. A rebellious son is a calamity to his father, and a nagging wife annoys like constant dripping.
14. A father can give his sons homes and riches, but only the Lord can give them understanding wives.
15. A lazy man sleeps soundly--and goes hungry!

16. Keep the commandments and keep your life; despising them means death.
17. When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord--and He pays wonderful interest on your loan!
18. Discipline your son in his early years while there is hope. If you don't you will ruin his life.
19. A short-tempered man must bear his own penalty; you can't do much to help him. If you try once you must try a dozen times.
20. Get all the advice you can and be wise the rest of your life.

COMMENTS ON 19:11-20

V. 11. Prov. 14:29 says, "He that is slow to anger is of great understanding," very similar to this verse that credits it to his "discretion". Prov. 16:32 credits it to ruling his spirit (self-control). It takes both wisdom and self-control to remain calm and collected and Christian under fire and under pressure. It is this ability that enables him to "pass over a transgression of another", which is said to be a "glory" to him. To lose one's temper is not a "glory" to him but a "shame". When one passes over a transgression, he is like God: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" (Mic. 7:18).

V. 12. Numerous passages compare a king's wrath to a roaring lion: Prov. 20:2; 16:14; 28:15. Prov. 16:25 also compares a king's favor to refreshing moisture. "Geike": "The secret of the luxuriant fertility of many parts of Palestine lies in the rich supply of moisture afforded by the sea-winds which blow inland each night and water the face of the whole land...From May till October rain is unknown, the sun shining with unclouded brightness day after day. The heat becomes intense, the ground hard; and vegetation would perish but for the moist west winds that come each night from the sea. The bright skies cause the heat of the day to radiate very quickly into space so that the nights are as cold as day is the reverse...To this coldness of the night air the indispensable watering of all plant-life is due. The winds, loaded with moisture, are robbed of it as they pass over the land, the cold air condensing it into drops of water, which fall in a gracious rain of mist on every thirsty blade...The amount of moisture thus poured on the thirsty vegetation during the night is very great.

Dew seemed to the Israelites a mysterious gift of Heaven, as indeed it is. That the skies should be stayed from yielding it was a special sign of Divine wrath...The favor of an Oriental monarch could not be more beneficently conceived than by saying that while his wrath is like the roaring of a lion, his favor is as the dew upon the grass."

V. 13. A man is in a bad way when his children are no good and his wife is a constant nagger. Concerning "calamity" "Pulpit Commentary" says, "Calamity in the Hebrew is in the plural number, as if to mark the many and continued sorrows which a bad son brings upon his father, how he causes evil after evil to harass and distress;" and of the contentions of a wife it says, "The flat roofs of Eastern houses, formed of planks loosely joined and covered with a coating of clay or plaster, were always subject to leakage in heavy rains. The irritating altercations and bickering of a cross-grained wife are compared to this continuous drip of water." A Scotch saying: "A leaky house and a scolding wife are two bad companions." Other passages on the foolish son: Prov. 10:1; 15:20; 17:21,25. Other passages on the contentious wife: Prov. 21:9; 27:15.

V. 14. We may get material inheritances from our parents (II Cor. 12:14), but a wise wife is a gift from God (Prov. 18:22). This saying is a bold contrast to v. 13: in this verse many blessings come to us because of our families ("inheritance from fathers" and a "prudent wife").

V. 15. Slothfulness, idleness, excessive sleep, and poverty are connected in this and other passages in Proverbs (6:9-11; 10:4; 20:13; 23:21). Two apt sayings: "Idleness is a living man's tomb" and "Sloth is the mother of poverty".

V. 16. A double contrast: "He that keepeth the commandment" vs. "he that is careless of his ways" and "keepeth his soul" vs. "shall die". One who is obedient to God is careful about his ways, and God blesses him with the salvation of his soul, but one who is disobedient to God is careless about his ways, and the wages of sin is and has always been death (Gen. 2:17; Isa. 1:19,20; Rom. 6:21,23; 8:6; Phil. 3:19; Jas. 1:15).

V. 17. The wording implies "giving to the poor". To "pity" is to feel for, to make their burden your burden, to be touched enough about their situation to stop what you are doing and help them. This we are taught to do: Luke 11:41; 12:33; Gal. 6:10; I John 3:17; Jas. 1:27; Matt. 25:35-36. Cornelius (Acts 10:2,4; and Dorcas (Acts 9:36) were alms givers. Give to

the poor, and God has promised to pick up the debt (Luke 14:12-14). Notice the message of Prov. 28:27.

V. 18. Correction administered in time without which the child's mischief becomes meanness, and the character becomes set in wickedness. Other passages teaching parental correction: Prov. 13:24; 23:13,14; 29:17. A German saying: "It is better that the child weep than the father." "Clarke": "It is better that the child may be caused to cry, when the correction may be healthful to his soul, than that the parent should cry afterwards, when the child is grown to man's estate, and his evil habits are sealed for life." Non-chastening parents finally give up on their children and seem content to await the inevitable (whatever may result in life for them, which in Old Testament days would have been death by stoning: Deut. 21:18-21). But this verse would condemn such parents.

V. 19. A man given to wrath always turns to it when things don't go as he would have them. It is a sign of a character-weakness: the inability to cope with either one's situation or one's limitations. A man who loses his temper is like a man who gets drunk: it won't be the last time. "Pulpit Commentary": "While his disposition is unchanged, all your efforts will be useless, and the help which you have given him will only make him think that he may continue to indulge his anger with impunity."

V. 20. One's wisdom is constituted of what one gains on his own and of what others seek to share. The more one has, the more apt he is to listen to what others would impart to him, and the less wisdom one has, the less apt he is to regard the good advice of others. "Pulpit Commentary": "Wisdom gathered and digested in youth is seen in the prudence and intelligence of manhood and of old age."

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 19:11-20

1. What two qualities does it take to remain calm under pressure (v. 11)?
2. What is the significance of "glory" in v. 11?
3. Comment upon Palestine's "dew" (v. 12).
4. What is the significance of "calamity" being plural in Hebrew (v. 13)?
5. What is a wife's contentions compared to (v. 13)?
6. If one has a prudent wife, he should give the credit (v. 14).

7. Find four things in v. 15 that go together.
8. What is the double contrast in v. 16?
9. What does it mean to "pity" the poor (v. 17)?
10. Name one Bible character commended for almsgiving (v. 17).
11. When should chastening be administered (v. 18)?
12. It is better for whom to weep (v. 18)?
13. What is periodic wrath a sign of (v. 19)?
14. Why should a young person especially listen to others (v. 20)?

TEXT — 19:21-29

21. There are many devices in a man's heart;
But the counsel of Jehovah, that shall stand.
22. That which maketh a man to be desired is his kindness;
And a poor man is better than a liar.
23. The fear of Jehovah tendeth to life;
And he that hath it shall abide satisfied;
He shall not be visited with evil.
24. The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish,
And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.
25. Smite a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence;
And reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.
26. He that doeth violence to his father, and chaseth away his mother,
Is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach.
27. Cease, my son, to hear instruction
Only to err from the words of knowledge.
28. A worthless witness mocketh at justice;
And the mouth of the wicked swalloweth iniquity.
29. Judgments are prepared for scoffers,
And stripes for the back of fools.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 19:21-29

1. What does the "counsel of Jehovah" mean in v. 21?
2. Why does kindness make one desired (v. 22)?
3. What is different about the construction of v. 23?
4. Are there actually people this lazy (v. 24), or is this a hyperbole?
5. Who are the "simple" in v. 25?

6. Why would anybody act like this (v. 26)?
7. Why do people accept false counsel (v. 27)?
8. Who is a "worthless witness (v. 28)?
9. Who are "scoffers" and "fools" in v. 29?

PARAPHRASE OF 19:21-29

21. Man proposes, but God disposes.
22. Kindness makes a man attractive. And it is better to be poor than dishonest.
23. Reverence for God gives life, happiness, and protection from harm.
24. Some men are so lazy they won't even feed themselves!
25. Punish a mocker and others will learn from his example. Reprove a wise man and he will be the wiser.
26. A son who mistreats his father or mother is a public disgrace.
27. Stop listening to teaching that contradicts what you know is right.
28. A worthless witness cares nothing for truth--he enjoys his sinning too much.
29. Mockers and rebels shall be severely punished.

COMMENTS ON 19:21-29

V. 21. It is not what man wants that always comes to pass but what God decrees (or allows). See Psa. 33:10,11; Prov. 16:1,2; Isa. 14:26,27; 46:10; Heb. 6:17. God "worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Eph. 1:11). Men in a human council meeting thought they could stop Christianity (Acts 4:17), but they passed away, and the Word of God is still living, active, and powerful. Herod of Acts 12 took up against the church, killed James, and intended to kill Peter, but before the chapter was ended, he was dead, and in contrast to him Acts 12:24 says, "But the word of God grew and multiplied."

V. 22. This verse states that which we desire in people, and heading the list is "kindness". We like people who are kind; we like to be around them; their influence upon us is good. We appreciate their thoughtfulness; we appreciate their willingness to be helpful. We are comfortable and at-home in their presence. An unkind person is just the opposite of the above. The Bible says, "Be ye kind" (Eph. 4:32); "Love...is kind" (I Cor. 13:4). Concerning the second statement of the verse, this chapter has

already shown that people go from and do not want to claim close connections with the extremely poor (vs. 4,7), yet they prefer a poor man to a liar (compare v. 1). A man who will lie to others will lie to you. He is one you cannot trust, for he is not conscientious before God and with men. He makes a poor friend.

V. 23. This verse departs from Proverbs' customary two-line verses. Notice the three lines here. "Tendeth" shows the usual or general results of fearing Jehovah. It means, other things being equal, that one who fears God will live longer-not only longer, but he will reap more satisfaction from living than those who lack it, the reason being that he will have fewer hardships because of not being visited with evil from God. The "fear of Jehovah" takes us back to the first real saying in Proverbs: "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7).

V. 24. Proverbs has much to say about lazy people: they spend much time sleeping (6:9; 24:30-34; 20:4; 26:13). This verse "out-lazies" the others as it pictures a man putting his hand into the dish to get something to eat and then being too lazy to lift it to his mouth (Prov. 26:15). When one is too lazy to feed himself, he is as lazy as he can get. Yet, all of life becomes a burden to the ambitionless person, the person with no purpose, no motivation. Arabic proverb: "He dies of hunger under the date tree."

V. 25. A scoffer is out of order whether he scoff at God or is plagued with the spirit of scoffing at people. He should be dealt with (the younger the better). The verse implies that even if he doesn't profit by it, the onlooking who might have taken up his ways will be affected for good (compare Deut. 13:10,11). Reproving a wise person definitely aids him, for he wishes to increase his learning, and he is wise enough to see the rightness of the rebuke (last part of Prov. 9:9). Prov. 21:11 is very similar to this verse in both of its statements: "When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise; And when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge."

V. 26. The language suggests that the "son" is a grown son, not a child. It is speaking of gross mistreatment of aged parents. While our present society has many instances of this in comparison to Bible days, this verse indicates that there were some bad offspring in Bible days. Remember that parents are to be honored, not thus dishonored. Such conduct causes "shame" to his suffering parents and "reproach" against his own name in

the community. Prov. 17:2 also speaks of a "son that causeth shame."

V. 27. It does no good to be exposed to good instruction if it is not going to be followed. There are those who seem to be listening to what you are telling them, but they are only being polite or do not wish to engage in open disagreement, for when they go their way they have not been changed by what they have heard. In time Christian teachers will cease instructing people if they will not be obedient (Acts 18:5,6).

V. 28. A "worthless witness" would include both a false witness (speaking lies) and one who refused to witness (would not tell what he knew). To do either is to mock rather than further justice. Justice dictates that the verdict be built upon the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. One the latter part of the verse: "Mischief is the object of his passionate desire: it is a real enjoyment to him to produce calamity; he swallows it eagerly as if it were a sweet fruit (Job 20:12; Isa. 28:4); he "drinketh it in like water" (Job 15:16)—("Lange").

V. 29. Another Hebrew parallelism: "judgments" and "stripes" go together as do "scoffers" and "fools". The verse is picturing an adult rather than a child, the "judgments" and "stripes" being public punishments. A child may be "foolish" (Prov. 22:15), but he is not a full-fledged "fool", but if one grows up, and his foolishness continues, and it is the recognized course of his life, then he is indeed a "fool". Other passages on such punishments: Prov. 10:13; 26:3.

NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 19

"Poor"--

"Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity Than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool" (v. 1).

"The poor is separated from his friend" (v. 4).

"All the brethren of the poor do hate him: How much more do his friends go far from him! He pursueth them with words, but they are gone" (v. 7).

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto Jehovah" (v. 17).

"A poor man is better than a liar" (v. 22).

"Rich"--

"Wealth added many friends" (v. 4).

"House and riches are an inheritance from fathers" (v. 14).

CHAPTER 19

"Fools"--

"Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity Than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool" (v. 1).

"The foolishness of man subverteth his way" (v. 3).

"Delicate living is not seemly for a fool" (v. 10).

"A foolish son is the calamity of his father" (v. 13).

"Stripes for the back of fools" (v. 29).

"Speech"--

"Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity Than he that is perverse in his lips" (v. 1).

"A false witness shall not be unpunished; And he that uttereth lies shall not escape" (v. 5).

"A false witness shall not be unpunished; And he that uttereth lies shall perish" (v. 9).

"The contentions of a wife are a continual dripping" (v. 13).

"A poor man is better than a liar" (v. 22).

"A worthless witness mocketh at justice; And the mouth of the wicked swalloweth iniquity" (v. 28).

"Knowledge"--

"That the soul be without knowledge is not good" (v. 2).

"He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: He that keepeth understanding shall find good" (v. 8).

"Hear counsel, and receive instruction, That thou mayest be wise in they latter end" (v. 20).

"Smite a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence; And reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge" (v. 25).

"Scoffers"--

"Smite a scoffer (v. 25).

"Judgments are prepared for scoffers" (v. 29).

"Anger"--

"The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger" (v. 11).

"The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion" (v. 12).

"A man of great wrath shall bear the penalty; For if thou deliver him, thou must do it yet again" (v. 19).

"Sons"--

"A foolish son is the calamity of his father" (v. 13).

"Chasten thy son, seeing there is hope; And set not thy heart on his destruction" (v. 18).

"He that doeth violence to his father, and chaseth away his

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mother, Is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach”
(v. 26).

“*Wife*”--

“The contentions of a wife are a continual dripping” (v. 13).

“A prudent wife is from Jehovah” (v. 14).

“*Slothfulness*”--

“Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; And the idle soul shall suffer hunger” (v. 15).

“The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish, And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again” (v. 24).

“*Heart*”--

“His heart fretteth against Jehovah” (v. 3).

“There are many devices in a man’s heart; But the counsel of Jehovah, that shall stand” (v. 21).