**Proverbs 17-20**

**17**Better a dry crust with peace and quiet
    than a house full of feasting, with strife.

**2**A prudent servant will rule over a disgraceful son
    and will share the inheritance as one of the family.

**3**The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold,
    but the Lord tests the heart.

**4**A wicked person listens to deceitful lips;
    a liar pays attention to a destructive tongue.

**5**Whoever mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker;
    whoever gloats over disaster will not go unpunished.

**6**Children’s children are a crown to the aged,
    and parents are the pride of their children.

**7**Eloquent lips are unsuited to a godless fool -
    how much worse lying lips to a ruler!

**8**A bribe is seen as a charm by the one who gives it;
    they think success will come at every turn.

**9**Whoever would foster love covers over an offense,
    but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

**10**A rebuke impresses a discerning person
    more than a hundred lashes a fool.

**11**Evildoers foster rebellion against God;
    the messenger of death will be sent against them.

**12**Better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs
    than a fool bent on folly.

**13**Evil will never leave the house
    of one who pays back evil for good.

**14**Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam;
    so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.

**15**Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent -
    the Lord detests them both.

**16**Why should fools have money in hand to buy wisdom,
    when they are not able to understand it?

**17**A friend loves at all times,
    and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

**18**One who has no sense shakes hands in pledge
    and puts up security for a neighbor.

**19**Whoever loves a quarrel loves sin;
    whoever builds a high gate invites destruction.

**20**One whose heart is corrupt does not prosper;
    one whose tongue is perverse falls into trouble.

**21**To have a fool for a child brings grief;
    there is no joy for the parent of a godless fool.

**22**A cheerful heart is good medicine,
    but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

**23**The wicked accept bribes in secret
    to pervert the course of justice.

**24**A discerning person keeps wisdom in view,
    but a fool’s eyes wander to the ends of the earth.

**25**A foolish son brings grief to his father
    and bitterness to the mother who bore him.

**26**If imposing a fine on the innocent is not good,
    surely to flog honest officials is not right.

**27**The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint,
    and whoever has understanding is even-tempered.

**28**Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent,
    and discerning if they hold their tongues.

**18**An unfriendly person pursues selfish ends
    and against all sound judgment starts quarrels.

**2**Fools find no pleasure in understanding
    but delight in airing their own opinions.

**3**When wickedness comes, so does contempt,
    and with shame comes reproach.

**4**The words of the mouth are deep waters,
    but the fountain of wisdom is a rushing stream.

**5**It is not good to be partial to the wicked
    and so deprive the innocent of justice.

**6**The lips of fools bring them strife,
    and their mouths invite a beating.

**7**The mouths of fools are their undoing,
    and their lips are a snare to their very lives.

**8**The words of a gossip are like choice morsels;
    they go down to the inmost parts.

**9**One who is slack in his work
    is brother to one who destroys.

**10**The name of the Lord is a fortified tower;
    the righteous run to it and are safe.

**11**The wealth of the rich is their fortified city;
    they imagine it a wall too high to scale.

**12**Before a downfall the heart is haughty,
    but humility comes before honor.

**13**To answer before listening -
    that is folly and shame.

**14**The human spirit can endure in sickness,
    but a crushed spirit who can bear?

**15**The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge,
    for the ears of the wise seek it out.

**16**A gift opens the way
    and ushers the giver into the presence of the great.

**17**In a lawsuit the first to speak seems right,
    until someone comes forward and cross-examines.

**18**Casting the lot settles disputes
    and keeps strong opponents apart.

**19**A brother wronged is more unyielding than a fortified city;
    disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.

**20**From the fruit of their mouth a person’s stomach is filled;
    with the harvest of their lips they are satisfied.

**21**The tongue has the power of life and death,
    and those who love it will eat its fruit.

**22**He who finds a wife finds what is good
    and receives favor from the Lord.

**23**The poor plead for mercy,
    but the rich answer harshly.

**24**One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin,
    but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

**19**Better the poor whose walk is blameless
    than a fool whose lips are perverse.

**2**Desire without knowledge is not good -
    how much more will hasty feet miss the way!

**3**A person’s own folly leads to their ruin,
    yet their heart rages against the Lord.

**4**Wealth attracts many friends,
    but even the closest friend of the poor person deserts them.

**5**A false witness will not go unpunished,
    and whoever pours out lies will not go free.

**6**Many curry favor with a ruler,
    and everyone is the friend of one who gives gifts.

**7**The poor are shunned by all their relatives -
    how much more do their friends avoid them!
Though the poor pursue them with pleading,
    they are nowhere to be found.

**8**The one who gets wisdom loves life;
    the one who cherishes understanding will soon prosper.

**9**A false witness will not go unpunished,
    and whoever pours out lies will perish.

**10**It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury -
    how much worse for a slave to rule over princes!

**11**A person’s wisdom yields patience;
    it is to one’s glory to overlook an offense.

**12**A king’s rage is like the roar of a lion,
    but his favor is like dew on the grass.

**13**A foolish child is a father’s ruin,
    and a quarrelsome wife is like
    the constant dripping of a leaky roof.

**14**Houses and wealth are inherited from parents,
    but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

**15**Laziness brings on deep sleep,
    and the shiftless go hungry.

**16**Whoever keeps commandments keeps their life,
    but whoever shows contempt for their ways will die.

**17**Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord,
    and he will reward them for what they have done.

**18**Discipline your children, for in that there is hope;
    do not be a willing party to their death.

**19**A hot-tempered person must pay the penalty;
    rescue them, and you will have to do it again.

**20**Listen to advice and accept discipline,
    and at the end you will be counted among the wise.

**21**Many are the plans in a person’s heart,
    but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.

**22**What a person desires is unfailing love[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16948b)];
    better to be poor than a liar.

**23**The fear of the Lord leads to life;
    then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

**24**A sluggard buries his hand in the dish;
    he will not even bring it back to his mouth!

**25**Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence;
    rebuke the discerning, and they will gain knowledge.

**26**Whoever robs their father and drives out their mother
    is a child who brings shame and disgrace.

**27**Stop listening to instruction, my son,
    and you will stray from the words of knowledge.

**28**A corrupt witness mocks at justice,
    and the mouth of the wicked gulps down evil.

**29**Penalties are prepared for mockers,
    and beatings for the backs of fools.

**20**Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler;
    whoever is led astray by them is not wise.

**2**A king’s wrath strikes terror like the roar of a lion;
    those who anger him forfeit their lives.

**3**It is to one’s honor to avoid strife,
    but every fool is quick to quarrel.

**4**Sluggards do not plow in season;
    so at harvest time they look but find nothing.

**5**The purposes of a person’s heart are deep waters,
    but one who has insight draws them out.

**6**Many claim to have unfailing love,
    but a faithful person who can find?

**7**The righteous lead blameless lives;
    blessed are their children after them.

**8**When a king sits on his throne to judge,
    he winnows out all evil with his eyes.

**9**Who can say, “I have kept my heart pure;
    I am clean and without sin”?

**10**Differing weights and differing measures -
    the Lord detests them both.

**11**Even small children are known by their actions,
    so is their conduct really pure and upright?

**12**Ears that hear and eyes that see -
    the Lord has made them both.

**13**Do not love sleep or you will grow poor;
    stay awake and you will have food to spare.

**14**“It’s no good, it’s no good!” says the buyer -
    then goes off and boasts about the purchase.

**15**Gold there is, and rubies in abundance,
    but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel.

**16**Take the garment of one who puts up security for a stranger;
    hold it in pledge if it is done for an outsider.

**17**Food gained by fraud tastes sweet,
    but one ends up with a mouth full of gravel.

**18**Plans are established by seeking advice;
    so if you wage war, obtain guidance.

**19**A gossip betrays a confidence;
    so avoid anyone who talks too much.

**20**If someone curses their father or mother,
    their lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness.

**21**An inheritance claimed too soon
    will not be blessed at the end.

**22**Do not say, “I’ll pay you back for this wrong!”
    Wait for the Lord, and he will avenge you.

**23**The Lord detests differing weights,
    and dishonest scales do not please him.

**24**A person’s steps are directed by the Lord.
    How then can anyone understand their own way?

**25**It is a trap to dedicate something rashly
    and only later to consider one’s vows.

**26**A wise king winnows out the wicked;
    he drives the threshing wheel over them.

**27**The human spirit is[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16982c)] the lamp of the Lord
    that sheds light on one’s inmost being.

**28**Love and faithfulness keep a king safe;
    through love his throne is made secure.

**29**The glory of young men is their strength,
    gray hair the splendor of the old.

**30**Blows and wounds scrub away evil,
    and beatings purge the inmost being.