



Proverbs - Chapter Twenty Eight

VI Proverbs 25:1-29:27 - Further Wise Sayings of Solomon (continues)

Summary of Chapter Twenty Eight

Better to be poor and honest than crooked and rich. Whoever confesses sins will find mercy. Whoever trusts in the Lord will prosper.

Introduction to Proverbs 27:11-28:1 (continued)

This section opens with a paternal appeal similar to those in Chapters 1-9 and then has an inclusio, i.e. literary bookends, made up of v.12 (the simple plunge heedlessly into danger) and Proverbs 28:1 (the wicked flee when there is no danger). Between these two are various pieces of advice for the young man on prudence and integrity. The point of the whole section is this: the one who has both prudence and integrity will neither stumble into trouble nor live in fear of retribution.

- ¹ The wicked flee when no one pursues,
but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

Proverbs 28:1

The wicked flee when no one pursues. This speaks of a confusion and fear that properly belong to the wicked, not to the godly and wise. This is both because they are under God's displeasure and because they lack the strength and courage of the Holy Spirit: *<<I will set my face against you, and you shall be struck down by your enemies; your foes shall rule over you, and you shall flee though no one pursues you>>* (Leviticus 26:17).

The righteous are as bold as a lion. God's righteous ones stand even when someone or something comes against them, and with God's strength they are as

bold as a lion, the king of the jungle, like the tribe of Judah from whom the Messiah would come: <<*Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He crouches down, he stretches out like a lion, like a lioness—who dares rouse him up?*>> (Genesis 49:9). On the righteous Derek Kidner commented, “The straightforward man, like the lion, has no need to look over his shoulder. What is at his heels is not his past (Numbers 32:23) but his rearguard: God’s goodness and mercy (Psalm 23:6).”

Introduction to Proverbs 28:2-12

For the most part the meanings of these proverbs, taken individually, are self-evident. Taken as a group, however, they indicate that righteous individuals are an essential component of a just society. That is, one will not have good social order where many individuals, and especially those with power, are unjust.

The structure of the text suggests its unity. Verse 2, which says that a society thrives when people have understanding but that it has many rulers when it is evil, brackets the entire section when connected with v.12, which says that people celebrate the success of the righteous but hide when the wicked come to power. So these verses form an inclusio. Also, two catchwords link v.2 and v.12. In v.2, rulers are ‘many’ (Hebrew *rab*), but in v.12, glory is ‘great’ (Hebrew *rab*); v.2 speaks of a wise ‘ruler’ or ‘man’ (Hebrew *’adam*), but v.12 speaks of ‘people’ (Hebrew *’adam*) hiding. Between these two verses there are many other parallels among the proverbs. Verses 3 and 8 both concern how one treats the ‘poor,’ whether with oppression (v.3) or with kindness (v.8). Verses 4, 7, and 9 teach that one’s attitude toward the ‘law’ (Hebrew *torah*) is the fundamental determiner of whether one will be good or evil. Verses 5 and 10 speak about knowing right from wrong (v.5) and about leading others in the right or wrong path (v.10). Also, the word evil (Hebrew *ra’*) links v.5 to v.10. Finally, v.6 says that a poor man can be morally superior to a ‘rich man,’ and v.11 says that a poor man can see through the pretension of a ‘rich man.’ Taken together, this section shows that, for the society as a whole to be well off, each member must practice integrity, and that is especially true for its rulers. The three proverbs on the law (v.4, v.7, and v.9) indicate that a healthy fear of the Lord, as reflected in people’s respect for the Torah, is the only thing that will enable people to maintain integrity.

- ² When a land rebels
it has many rulers;
but with an intelligent ruler
there is lasting order.

Proverbs 28:2

When a land rebels it has many rulers. The ‘many rulers’ may refer to the increasing number of officials in the bureaucracy, or to rapid changes of ruling dynasty, as seen in the northern kingdom of Israel, or to the breakup of central government with local lords dominating. Any of these can follow from the lack of moral integrity in the people, and especially in those charged with leading the land. This is clearly not a blessing from God.

But with an intelligent ruler there is lasting order. Instead of many rulers, God blesses a land with a person of understanding and knowledge. Great and godly leaders can be a wonderful blessing to a nation and to a church community. It was for this reason that God sent Joseph to Egypt: *<<And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt>>* (Genesis 45:5-8).

- ³ A ruler who oppresses the poor
is a beating rain that leaves no food.

Proverbs 28:3

A ruler who oppresses the poor is a beating rain that leaves no food. Although the NRSVA translates this a ‘a ruler’ others believe his to refer to a poor person who oppresses another poor person. One might think that a poor man would have great sympathy for others who are poor, but this is not always the case. There are the poor who oppress the poor. This destructive rain leaves the people hungry and without hope. So is the effect of a person who oppresses the poor. Adam Clarke observed, “Our Lord illustrates this proverb most beautifully, by the parable of the two debtors, Matthew 18:23, &c. Here the poor oppressed the poor; and what was the consequence? The oppressing poor was delivered to the tormentors; and the forgiven debt charged to his amount, because he showed no mercy. The comparatively poor are often shockingly uncharitable and unfeeling towards the real poor.”

- ⁴ Those who forsake the law praise the wicked,
but those who keep the law struggle against them.

Proverbs 28:4

Those who forsake the law praise the wicked. When the fundamental principles of justice are forsaken, it does not benefit the righteous. It gives benefit and praise to the wicked. Kidner noted, “Without revelation, all is soon relative; and with moral relativity, nothing quite merits attack. So, e.g. the tyrant is accepted because he gets things done; and the pervert, because his condition is interesting.”

Those who keep the law struggle against them. Those who do honour and promote the rule of law will resist and oppose the wicked. They understand the principle the Apostle Paul would later explain in Romans 13:1-7, that one reason God gives law and government to men is to restrain the wicked, to contend with them.

John Trapp used the phrase struggle against them to remember the combative nature of Martin Luther: “It was the speech of blessed Luther, who though he was very earnest to have the communion administered in both kinds, contrary to the doctrine and custom of Rome, yet if the Pope, says he, as pope, commanded me to receive it in both kinds, I would but receive it in one kind; since to obey what he commands as pope, is a receiving of the mark of the beast.”

At the time of writing, 31st October 2017, it is exactly 500 years since Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the door of Schlosskircher in Wittenberg. Thankfully, the church of Jesus Christ generally recognises the rights of the various denominations to seek God in many different ways and such bigoted views of Roman Catholicism are not generally held by members of the Anglican communities. Love for neighbour has not always existed in Christianity. Hopefully, that is an attitude confined to history.

- ⁵ The evil do not understand justice,
but those who seek the Lord understand it completely.

Proverbs 28:5

The evil do not understand justice. There are those who are fundamentally evil or wicked, and simply do not understand justice. They do not understand the principles of justice and how they apply to themselves.

Those who seek the Lord understand it completely. The godly understand justice and much more. They seek the Lord, fear the Lord, and have his wisdom: <<*Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own*>> (John 7:17).

- ⁶ Better to be poor and walk in integrity
than to be crooked in one’s ways even though rich.

Proverbs 28:6

Better to be poor and walk in integrity. There are worse things than poverty, and to be a wicked man or woman who does live in integrity is worse: <<**Better the poor walking in integrity than one perverse of speech who is a fool**>> (Proverbs 19:1). This is an encouragement to the poor who often are despised.

Than to be crooked in one's ways even though rich. A rich man or woman who is twisted in their life before God or man is worse off than the godly poor person. People, especially Christians, are defined more by their character than by their bank account, financial worth or even social status.

7 Those who keep the law are wise children,
but companions of gluttons shame their parents.

Proverbs 28:7

Those who keep the law are wise children. Obedience is a proof of wisdom: <<**Has the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obedience to the voice of the Lord? Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams**>> (1 Samuel 15:22b), and: <<**Hear, my child, and be wise, and direct your mind in the way**>> (Proverbs 23:19). Those who claim to be discerning or wise yet live in fundamental disobedience show their folly.

But companions of gluttons shame their parents. One does not have to be given over to ruinous appetites themselves to be a shame to their family; simply being a companion of such can embarrass the family, and will only cause harm.

8 One who augments wealth by exorbitant interest
gathers it for another who is kind to the poor.

Proverbs 28:8

One who augments wealth by exorbitant interest gathers it for another who is kind to the poor. There are some who become rich through economic violence. They charge high and unfair interest (usury) or they use their power to cheat and steal (extortion). God will not allow these oppressive criminals to have the last word. In the resolution of God's judgement, the wealth of the wicked is simply gathered for those who have love and pity for the poor.

Kidner commented, "Usury or (RSV) interest: the Mosaic law shows that the legitimacy of it depends on its context: what was quite proper in terms of economics (Deuteronomy 23:20) was pronounced improper in terms of family care (Deuteronomy 23:19)." Adam Clarke pronounced a sharp curse against those who took advantage of the need of others with usury and extortion: "O

that the names of all those unfeeling, hard-hearted, consummate villains in the nation, who thus take advantage of their neighbour's necessities to enrich themselves, were published at every market cross; and then the delinquents all sent to their brother savages in New Zealand. It would be a happy riddance to the country."

⁹ When one will not listen to the law,
even one's prayers are an abomination.

Proverbs 28:9

When one will not listen to the law. God wants his people to always have an open and attentive ear towards his word, i.e. the law. To have no hunger for God's word or to give it no attention is a sign of spiritual sickness in the child of God. Clarke commented, "Many suppose, if they do not know their duty, they shall not be accountable for their transgressions; and therefore avoid every thing that is calculated to enlighten them. But this pretence will avail them nothing; as he that might have known his master's will, but would not, shall be treated as he shall be who did know it, and disobeyed it." Paul agreed with this sentiment: <<*All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all*>> (Romans 2:12-16).

Even one's prayers are an abomination. God is not bound to hear or honour the one who neglects his word. Before Christians would speak to God in prayer they should humbly and attentively read or listen to his word, or their prayers may be an arrogant abomination.

Jesus taught: <<*But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him*>> (John 4:23), and Paul indicates that the Holy Spirit should guide Christian prayers: <<*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words*>> (Romans 8:26). However, both of these truths can be achieved by studying and accepting the written word of God.

- 10 Those who mislead the upright into evil ways
will fall into pits of their own making,
but the blameless will have a goodly inheritance.

Proverbs 28:10

Those who mislead the upright into evil ways will fall into pits of their own making. There are those who take pleasure in causing the godly to go astray. It makes them feel better and perhaps superior to those who are upright. Kidner observed, “This attracted some of Christ’s strongest words: see Matthew 5:19; 18:6; 23:15.”

The blameless will have a goodly inheritance. God has a way of protecting those who are upright and walk in the truth, even if they seem to or actually do go astray for a time, hence the need for a Messiah: <<*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all*>> (Isaiah 53:6). God knows how to put the wicked in their place, i.e. his own pit, and he knows how to make sure that the blameless will inherit what is good. God does not leave the final word to the wicked person with their evil plans. Clarke noted, “He who strives to pervert one really converted to God, in order that he may pour contempt on religion, shall fall into that hell to which he has endeavoured to lead the other.”

- 11 The rich is wise in self-esteem,
but an intelligent poor person sees through the pose.

Proverbs 28:11

The rich is wise in self-esteem. It is not unusual for rich people to be proud, and to think of themselves as wise. Other proverbs explain that wisdom often leads to wealth, but not every rich person has gained their wealth through wisdom: <<*As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment*>> (1 Timothy 6:17).

An intelligent poor person sees through the pose. The poor person with wisdom stands above the rich with a fool’s pride: <<*Now there was found in it a poor, wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. So I said, ‘Wisdom is better than might; yet the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heeded.’ The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouting of a ruler among fools*>> (Ecclesiastes 9:15-17). That wise poor person may examine the rich person, i.e. sees through the pose, not the other way around. There are some lessons only

poverty can teach, and one should never forget those lessons, even if they become wealthy.

- ¹² When the righteous triumph, there is great glory,
but when the wicked prevail, people go into hiding.

Proverbs 28:12

When the righteous triumph, there is great glory. When those who live with wisdom and righteousness rejoice because of the condition of their community, it is good for everyone. There is great glory: <<*As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!'*>> (Luke 19:37-38).

When the wicked prevail, people go into hiding. Even wicked people do not want to be ruled by other wicked people. A culture may live off the inheritance of a previous righteous generation, but when the wicked arise those benefits and the freedoms righteousness bring will slowly diminish.

- ¹³ No one who conceals transgressions will prosper,
but one who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

No one who conceals transgressions will prosper. Since Adam and Eve, human instinct leads people to cover up their sins. A person's conscience makes them ashamed of their sin and they do not want others to see it. Some people even think they can hide it from God. Yet, this natural instinct to cover sin does not benefit anyone. It prevents Christians from being real about their condition before God.

In a sermon on this proverb, Charles Spurgeon described some of the many ways people attempt to cover their sin - all of them in vain:

- Excuses and justifications.
- Secrecy.
- Lies.
- Schemes to evade responsibility.
- Time.
- Tears.
- Ceremonies or sacraments.

One who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. The path to receiving God's mercy is to confess and repent, i.e. to forsake such sin: <<*When you realize*

your guilt in any of these, you shall confess the sin that you have committed>> (Leviticus 5:5), <<Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord', and you forgave the guilt of my sin>> (Psalm 32:5), <<Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: atone for your sins with righteousness, and your iniquities with mercy to the oppressed, so that your prosperity may be prolonged>> (Daniel 4:27), and: <<If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness>> (1 John 1:9). This is the way to prosper spiritually and in life in general and receive God's mercy.

- 14 Happy is the one who is never without fear,
but one who is hard-hearted will fall into calamity.

Proverbs 28:14

Happy is the one who is never without fear. Sadly, reverence and happiness are not commonly associated together. The reverent person is often thought to be sour and unpleasant. Nevertheless, to the degree that one can be always reverent, they can genuinely content. Happy in the Psalms and Proverbs is often translated as blessed: <<*Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit*>> (Psalm 32:1-2).

One who is hard-hearted will fall into calamity. Here, reverence and hardness of heart are set as opposites. A person who hardens their heart will not be a truly reverent person; but they will fall into calamity either in this life or the life yet to come.

- 15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear
is a wicked ruler over a poor people.

Proverbs 28:15

Like a roaring lion or a charging bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people. With these vivid images, Solomon described the effect of a wicked ruler over poor people. The wicked ruler treats those of low standing, the poor people, with unpredictable, uncontrollable ferocity. Such a person is dangerous toward the poor. Satan is an even greater danger to the unwary: <<*Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour*>> (1 Peter 5:8).

- 16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor;
but one who hates unjust gain will enjoy a long life.

Proverbs 28:16

A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor. The foolish ruler, the one who lacks understanding, will oppress their people. Their reign will be unhappy and insecure because of the foolish way they lead, or even mislead, their people.

One who hates unjust gain will enjoy a long life. If a person is wise enough to hate covetousness, they will likely be wise in other responsibilities as a ruler. It is likely that their days as a ruler will be prolonged. This can perhaps be seen in the life of King Hezekiah, whose life and reign was prolonged by the will of God alone: <<*Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: 'Turn back, and say to Hezekiah prince of my people, Thus says the Lord, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake'*>> (2 Kings 20:4-6).

- ¹⁷ If someone is burdened with the blood of another,
let that killer be a fugitive until death;
let no one offer assistance.

Proverbs 28:17

If someone is burdened with the blood of another, let that killer be a fugitive until death. It can be supposed that this may happen because the person burdened with bloodshed has a guilty, anxious mind that clouds and confuses their thinking, and they end up in a pit. Or, it may happen because God's curse is on the person burdened with bloodshed. Kidner remarked, "The proverb states that the offender himself (like the smitten Azariah, 2 Chronicles 26:20) hastens to his punishment, once his conscience is awake."

Let no one offer assistance. As the person guilty of bloodshed falls into the consequences of their own actions, let no one help them. Often it is best to let people suffer the consequences of their sins. Clarke noted, "He who either slays the innocent, or procures his destruction, may flee to hide himself: but let none give him protection. The law demands his life, because he is a murderer; and let none deprive justice of its claim."

Charles Bridges commented, "Protests against all capital punishment is misnamed philanthropy. Shall man pretend to be more merciful than God? Pity is misplaced here. The murderer, therefore, of his brother is his own murderer. Let God's law take its course." He was careful to add: "Yet we must not cast out his soul. Visiting the condemned cell is a special exercise of mercy. While we bow to the stern justice of the great Lawgiver, joyous indeed it is to

bring to the sinner under the sentence of the law the free forgiveness of the Gospel; not as annulling his sin, but showing the over-abounding of grace beyond the abounding of sin.”

- ¹⁸ One who walks in integrity will be safe,
but whoever follows crooked ways will fall into the Pit.

Proverbs 28:18

One who walks in integrity will be safe. This proverb probably does not have eternal salvation in mind; instead, the idea is being saved or rescued from the calamities and troubles of life. Especially under the old covenant, God’s blessing and protection was upon those who walk blamelessly: <<*I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father*>> (2 John 4), and: <<*I was overjoyed when some of the friends arrived and testified to your faithfulness to the truth, namely, how you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth*>> (3 John 3-4).

Whoever follows crooked ways will fall into the Pit. The one who is twisted and crooked in his dealings cannot expect God’s blessing and protection. That crooked, twisted person should expect to suddenly fall one day.

- ¹⁹ Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread,
but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

Proverbs 28:19

Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread. The reward of work is a harvest. The one who tills their land will enjoy the harvest that comes, and therefore have plenty of bread.

One who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty. The one who ignores their work to have a good time by following frivolity but will not enjoy the fruit of the harvest the way the hard-working person will. Instead of plenty of bread the lazy, frivolous man will have plenty of poverty. The Prodigal Son was a fulfilment of this: <<*A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, “How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!>> (Luke 15:13-17).*

20 The faithful will abound with blessings,
but one who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 28:20

The faithful will abound with blessings. This is true as a general principle; faithfulness and obedience to God's law brings blessings. It was especially true under the old covenant, where God promised blessings on the obedient and curses on the disobedient; refer to Deuteronomy Chapters 27-28.

One who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished. The one who hastens to be rich is almost always willing to cheat or compromise to gain their wealth. God promises that this one will be punished, either in this life or the next. Bridges added, "Even if no criminal means are resorted to, yet the immoderate desire, the perseverance in every track of Mammon, the labouring night and day for the grand object, and the delight and confidence in the acquisition all prove the idolatrous heart and will not go unpunished." Paul put it like this: <<*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains*>> (1 Timothy 6:10).

21 To show partiality is not good —
yet for a piece of bread a person may do wrong.

Proverbs 28:21

To show partiality is not good. In the court of law and in daily dealings with people, Christians especially should not show partiality: <<*You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour*>> (Leviticus 19:15), <<*They band together against the life of the righteous, and condemn the innocent to death*>> (Psalm 94:21), and: <<*It is not right to be partial to the guilty, or to subvert the innocent in judgement*>> (Proverbs 18:5). They should be the ones who do not favour or condemn others based on their race, class, nationality, or influence.

For a piece of bread a person may do wrong. Because justice and the opinion of others can be easily bought, Christians should determine that they will not be bribed for partiality and they should be aware that others may be easily bought. Kidner observed, "The price can go still lower, to as little as the fancied approval of a stronger personality; and the preacher (Ezekiel 13:19) is as vulnerable as the judge."

- 22 The miser is in a hurry to get rich
and does not know that loss is sure to come.

Proverbs 28:22

The miser is in a hurry to get rich and does not know that loss is sure to come. The stingy, ungenerous person will run after riches with the same energy that they will use to selfishly hold on to what they have. Because God's blessing does not rest on the stingy, ungenerous person, poverty will come upon them - and they will not consider or expect it: <<*The faithful will abound with blessings, but one who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished*>> (Proverbs 28:20), <<*But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction*>> (1 Timothy 6:9).

- 23 Whoever rebukes a person will afterwards find more favour
than one who flatters with the tongue.

Proverbs 28:23

Whoever rebukes a person will afterwards find more favour than one who flatters with the tongue. It may be necessary to rebuke a person, but it is to invite their displeasure. Still, it should be done in confidence that when done well, when done in Christian love, the one who rebukes will find more favour afterward. The one who rebukes may not be as welcomed as the one who flatters, but the sacrificial service of the one who rebukes will bring the person more favour than the one who always praises them: <<*Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts, but profuse are the kisses of an enemy*>> (Proverbs 27:5-6).

- 24 Anyone who robs father or mother
and says, 'That is no crime',
is partner to a thug.

Proverbs 28:24

Anyone who robs father or mother and says, 'That is no crime', is partner to a thug. There are some who have little conscience about stealing from their parents. Out of some sense of entitlement, they rob them and then say, "It is no transgression." Despite whatever sense of entitlement the thief may have, they are right next to a destroyer, someone who spreads and even loves destruction. Clarke commented, "He who robs his parents is worse than a common robber; to the act of dishonesty and rapine he adds ingratitude, cruelty, and disobedience."

25 The greedy person stirs up strife,
but whoever trusts in the Lord will be enriched.

Proverbs 28:25

The greedy person stirs up strife. A proud man or woman is constantly causing strife, because they want the attention and pre-eminence. That does not agree with most people, so there is strife.

Whoever trusts in the Lord will be enriched. To trust in the Lord is presented as a contrast to the proud heart. That one should expect to be spiritually enriched, as they humbly trust God and forsake pride: <<*Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit*>> (Jeremiah 17:7-8), and: <<*Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it*>> (1 Timothy 6:6-7).

26 Those who trust in their own wits are fools;
but those who walk in wisdom come through safely.

Proverbs 28:26

Those who trust in their own wits are fools. There is a strong urge - promoted to people by the world, the flesh, and the devil - to trust one's own rationale and to 'follow the heart' instead of humbly receiving their values, morals, and wisdom from God's word. This trusting in their own heart leads one to become a fool. For answers, values, and guidance people should not look within, but look to the Lord: <<*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight*>> (Proverbs 3:5), and: <<*Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise*>> (1 Corinthians 3:18).

Bridges observed, "To trust an impostor who has deceived us a hundred times or a traitor who has proved himself false to our most important interests is surely to deserve the name of fool. This name, therefore, the Scriptures, using great plainness of speech, give to the person who trusts in himself." Clarke added, "For his heart, which is deceitful and desperately wicked, will infallibly deceive him."

Those who walk in wisdom come through safely. In contrast to trusting their own heart, people should instead give attention to walking wisely. Instead of operating on the basis of how they feel they should direct themselves to wise living in what they do.

27 Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing,
 but one who turns a blind eye will get many a curse.

Proverbs 28:27

Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing. God promises to bless the generous heart, and one way that generosity should be expressed is to give to the poor, something Paul determined to do in his ministry: <<*They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do*>> (Galatians 2:10).

One who turns a blind eye will get many a curse. God will not bless the one who ignores the troubles of the poor and needy.

28 When the wicked prevail, people go into hiding;
 but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 28:28

When the wicked prevail, people go into hiding. When wicked men come to places of prominence and rule, it is bad for the community. Freedom and blessing to the community are much less present and in response men hide themselves.

When they perish, the righteous increase. When the wicked and their influence pass, the righteous will increase, along with their influence. This is a blessing for a community or a nation. An example of this was seen in the early ages of the Christian church, after the death of the persecuting King Herod Antipas, the word of God grew and multiplied: <<*On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat on the platform, and delivered a public address to them. The people kept shouting, 'The voice of a god, and not of a mortal!' And immediately, because he had not given the glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents*>> (Acts 12:21-24).