**Proverbs Chapter 11 (Lesson #12)**

**31** Additional Proverbs from the Pen of Solomon

**WELL BEING THROUGH OUR ACTIONS (11:1-8)**

***11:1 ¶ A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight.***

Before the standardization of weights and measures, the merchants themselves were expected to maintain the standards. Most food products were purchased by weight, so accurate measurements were critical.

Solomon writes that a false balance, slicing a little of the top for yourself is an **“abomination” to the Lord**. The word abomination brings with it the idea of hatred and disgust, it is something that **excites God’s moral outrage**.

**BUT**, the juxtaposition: A just weight, fair treatment, honest activity, fair balances are his delight.

***Vs 2 ¶ When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.***

Pride distorts our view of reality and our decision-making ability. It is an **unrealistic and exaggerated opinion of oneself**. It takes God of the throne of our heart and places self on the throne.

Pride is worse than a **character flaw**, it leads to foolish choices that bring, as Solomon says, **disgrace**. Pride comes with the warning that it will **ruin us** in a **most disgraceful way**.

**BUT,** with **humility** is **wisdom which in turn leads to eternal life**.

One author wrote this about 11:2: *“Do you grasp the importance of this lesson? You will never hear or read a more important warning for your life. Pride will destroy you, but it will destroy you disgracefully and shamefully before all men. Humility will lift you up before both God and good men.”*

***Vs 3 ¶ The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.***

The desire to live in a truthful and upright way is a guide to those who choose that path.

It is a **guide** that leads in a **clear direction**, it is a guide that puts one on a path of no regrets, it is a guide that leads to life. **When you and I choose what is right, we never need look back over our shoulder.**

**BUT,** the crookedness, the perversity, the crooked dealings of the treacherous, destroys them. It brings them to ruin.

***Vs 4 ¶ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.***

Money in this life might buy the jury and the judge. But, no amount of money or riches can delay, derail, or in any way help a man avoid the **“day of wrath.”** Riches will not profit on judgment day!

**BUT,** righteousness delivers from death. The only righteousness that can deliver from death must be perfect and it must be alien (not coming from or residing with us), for we have all sinned (Rom 3:23).

God’s righteousness is the righteousness that ultimately delivers from eternal death.

***Vs 5 ¶ The righteousness of the blameless keeps his way straight, but the wicked falls by his own wickedness.***

How is a **man-made righteous**? To use proverbs language, the **fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom**, to bring that into the New Testament, man becomes righteous by placing faith in Jesus.

**But there is more in living isn’t there?**

Life can be like a mind field, we can stumble aimlessly through the field, or we can allow the word of God, the source of moral and ethical rightness, **to keep our path straight and safe**.

**BUT**, the wicked, those who reject God’s wisdom fall by their own folly, they are **destroyed by their own wickedness**. The wicked will have no one to blame but themselves for their own utter and final ruin.

***Vs 6 The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the treacherous are taken captive by their lust.***

First, we were told the righteousness of the upright keeps them on the right path, now we are told it also **delivers them**. Do not let the slight alteration of the idea and associated repetition go to waste.

God is highlighting this point; God is putting an exclamation mark on this point. Our choices matter, choose wisely, choose wisdom. Both the wisdom of God (Jesus) and God’s wisdom (His Word).

**BUT,** the **treacherous**, the wicked, those who reject God’s wisdom and refuse to in any way attempt to bridle their lusts, will be **taken captive by those same lusts!**

***Vs 7 ¶ When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.***

In the midst of these **antithetical proverbs** is a **synonymous proverb**.

This is a simple yet profound fact. The sinner while living might have been having great fun with a future of expectations, plans, dreams, and schemes set before him, but with the unrepentant sinner’s death is also the death of all future hope, all future joy, all future planned expectations.

**Death steals away all future hope** for the wicked (including wealth). It turns out not only can the sinner not take his wealth to the grave, nor can he take all that wealth had previously purchased.

***Vs 8 ¶ The righteous is delivered from trouble, and the wicked walks into it instead.***

A man who walks in wisdom is delivered from many a trouble. For the righteous God has not promised a trouble-free life, but He has promised that He will deliver them from that trouble!

**AND,** although and is used Solomon is **contrasting two points**, and the **contrast is very surprising**.

The righteous is delivered from trouble and seemingly at the same time, **the wicked walks into it instead (the implication is instead of the righteous).**

**This is the divine reversal!** The righteous find themselves in trouble and God delivers them while the wicked find can find themselves in a smooth place and God switches their outcomes and leaves the wicked in trouble.

**SECURITY FROM DESTRUCTIVE SPEECH THROUGH KNOWLEDGE (11:9-15)**

***Vs 9 ¶ With his mouth the godless man would destroy his neighbor, but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.***

The wicked, lead others to wickedness. They deceive with their mouths by leading their neighbors into sin.

**BUT,** by knowledge, the righteous are delivered. The knowledge that delivers is knowing Jesus and knowing God’s words. These are the things that deliver the righteous!

***Vs 10 ¶ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish there are shouts of gladness.***

Favoring the cause of the righteous, causes a city, state, or nation to rejoice. Righteous and fair laws lead to a citizenry that rejoices.

Consider how much Egypt rejoiced to have Joseph as its rulers. Enacting laws that are righteous and fair brings rejoicing.

AND, when the wicked perish there are shouts of joy. When the Pharoah of the Exodus died Israel danced on the banks of the Red Sea. When Hitler was found dead, the world rejoiced.

***Vs 11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.***

You and I can bless Yulee and Fernandina more than our elected officials. Our prayers are more influential than Town Meetings. That is not to say we should not engage in the political process, that is to say is the most important thing we can do for our city, state and nation is pray. The blessings of the upright exalt cities.

**BUT,** there is the juxtaposition.

The mouth of the wicked, is its overthrow. The Hebrew word literally means to **tear down**. By the mouth of the wicked is a city torn down and destroyed.

***Vs 12 ¶ Whoever belittles his neighbor lacks sense, but a man of understanding remains silent.***

The one who despises his neighbor lacks sense. A man who is critical, negative, and insulting to his neighbor is a man who lacks wisdom, he lacks heart or understanding. Our mouth which only exposes what is in our heart, can show that we lack understanding.

**BUT,** a man of understanding or discernment keeps quiet.

Wise men should quickly be moved to pity and or prayer prior to contempt and scorn of their neighbors.

Speech is one of the most certain elements of wisdom or a lack of wisdom. Being slow to speak and careful as to what we speak are both signs of wisdom.

***Vs 13 Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.***

The slander is a revealer of secrets. BUT, a faithful man is able to keep silent, to keep things covered.

Gossiping is a sin; silence can be a mark of a man who is faithful.

***Vs 14 ¶ Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.***

Most good decisions are made through council of the wise. Decisions made in a vacuum often lead to disaster or a Solomon says results in the fall of people.

**BUT,** in an abundance of wise counselors, those who possess Hokema, (biblical wisdom) there is safety!

Wisdom would tell us that the larger the decision the more godly counselors we should involve

***Vs 15 ¶ Whoever puts up security for a stranger will surely suffer harm, but he who hates striking hands in pledge is secure.***

To put up security for a stranger is to guarantee the performance or action of a person you do not know through some financial obligation. To cosign for others, particularly those we really do not know well is risky business that can cost us. Solomon warns of this behavior multiple times in the Proverbs. This type of risk can bring future pain, for the one who does it will SURELY suffer hard.

BUT, the one who hates striking hands in pledge is secure. The wise avoid putting up security for others understanding the risk. If we are going to cosign for another’s debt, we should do so only after adequate prayer.

**Benevolence and community (11:16-22):**

***Vs 16 ¶ A gracious woman gets honor, and violent men get riches.***

Here a simple rule for women and men. Graciousness brings honor, it really is that simple.

**AND,** While the gracious woman finds honor. A violent man will get temporary wealth. As a gracious woman gets honor, the strong man will amass, at least temporary riches.

***Vs 17 ¶ A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself.***

A kind and merciful man, who focuses on others, finds in the end Yahweh returns it upon his own head. In being kind in merciful to others, we not only bless those around us, but Yahweh returns those blessings upon us.

We do not bless to be blessed, but when we focus on blessing others, Yahweh focuses on blessing us.

BUT, a man who is cruel to others will find in the end he is delivering harm to himself.

Men, here is a proverb we must live by. Live life to be a blessing to others and leave the ultimate outcome to God.

***Vs 18 ¶ The wicked earns deceptive wages, but one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward.***

The wicked cheat themselves. They labor for that which perishes; thus, their wages are deceptive. They labor for something only to find once they receive it only emptiness and vanity. Equally, the man who works himself to death, seldom finds happiness.

BUT, the one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward!

***Vs 19 ¶ Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live, but he who pursues evil will die.***

Living a life that glorifies God, one who is steadfast in the pursuit of righteousness (found in Christ) and wisdom (found in God’s word) will live. Both an abundant life in this life and eternal life in the next.

**BUT,** the one who pursues evil will die.

Sin may bring pleasures for the moment, but ultimately all it has to offer is death (eternal death).

***Vs 20 ¶ Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD, but those of blameless ways are his delight.***

A person who has a crooked heart is an abomination to Yahweh! The Hebrew word **means twisted, distorted, perverse** or **perverted**.

The man with a crooked heart thinks perverse things and ultimately acts on those perverse thoughts. The man with a crooked heart is an evil man and thus an abomination to Yahweh.

BUT, those who are the opposite of crooked, the righteous, the humble, those who have given their life to Christ and are committed to living life by God’s wisdom, those are Yahweh’s delight.

God’s eyes are upon those who fear him (Ps 33:18) He withholds no good thing from them (Ps 84:11), Yahweh delights in them!

***Vs 21 ¶ Be assured, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered.***

This is as clear as it gets, Solomon says, rest assured, an evil person, (one who rejects God and His Word) will not go unpunished. There will be a payday for the wicked.

**BUT,** the offspring of the righteous will be delivered. God will deliver those who have imputed righteousness and their families.

Our **decision to follow Jesus** and our **daily choices matter**, they not only affect us, but they affect our children and our grandchildren!

***Vs 22 ¶ Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.***

What a bizarre picture! A big stinking pig with a gold ring in its snout! That picture is like a beautiful woman without discretion. A beautiful woman who lacks discretion or judgment. Discretion is part of wisdom, the power to judge rightly and well as right understanding and discernment. A beautiful woman who lacks discretion is like a pig with a golden ring.

**desire and fulfillment (11:23-27)**

***Vs 23 ¶ The desire of the righteous ends only in good; the expectation of the wicked in wrath.***

The desire of the righteous is here compared to the expectation of the wicked. Like many of Solomon’s proverbs the full proverb helps shed light on each half.

The desire of righteous man (and we have defined righteous) ends in good, his expectations of future bliss in Yahweh will be fully realized.

BUT, the desires of the wicked, the hopes expectations of the wicked will end in wrath!

***Vs 24 ¶ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.***

**This is the math of God’s economy. Generosity pays**. The tight-fisted man in God’s economy ends up poorer than the open-handed man.

Giving of our wealth for the good of men and the expansion of the Kingdom will cause our riches to increase.

BUT, withholding “what we should give” only brings poverty.

Many times, I have heard people say I know I should give more, but I just do not have it to give. I would encourage us when we find ourselves there to simply ask ourselves are we withholding what we should be giving.

One commentator said this: *Every time there is an opportunity to give to God, to the poor, or to compensate someone working for you, give more than average, more than normal, more than you would have given without this proverb.*

***Vs 25 ¶ Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.***

Here it is again, **this is the math of God’s economy, generosity pays.** If we give liberally to the poor, and to the work of the Kingdom, we will be blessed.

If we water, a metaphor for giving money to the poor and kingdom work, we will be watered!

***Vs 26 ¶ The people curse him who holds back grain, but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.***

The people curse the one who holds back what should be given.

To hold back grain for more gain, when we should be selling, causes other people to curse us.

**BUT,** a blessing is upon the head of the one who sells.

***Vs 27 ¶ Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor, but evil comes to him who searches for it.***

Diligently implies with difficulty. What are we really seeking? Are we seeking to do good and help our fellow man, even when it is difficult, then we have the promise of the favor of God.

**BUT,** if we are diligently searching for evil, we can rest assured we are likely to find it!

**certain gain or loss (11:28-31)**

***Vs 28 ¶ Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.***

If we put our trust in riches, in money, it will fall, and we will find calamity in the end. Riches cannot protect us nor in the end prosper us.

**BUT,** the righteous and as implied by this proverb those who seek righteousness as defined by God, first in His Son and second in His word, they will flourish.

Trusting in money brings no promise of flourishing, but trusting in Christ and His Word has not only the promises of in this life, but in the life to come!

As you consider this Proverb about trusting in riches, I would remind you it was written by the most materially wealthy person the ancient world knew, King Solomon.

***Vs 29 ¶ Whoever troubles his own household will inherit the wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.***

This is a serious proverb and one we would do well to meditate on. Whoever troubles his house will inherit the wind.

Men there is a laundry list of ways we can trouble our own homes. Time would not permit me to cover them all (pornography, sexual relationships outside of the marriage bed, overbearing leadership, love of money, ignoring God’s word, lack of balance in all the areas of our life, etc.

Those who would foolishly trouble their own homes, will inherit the wind. **We might say God will blow it all away!** In the end you have an empty hand of air.

**AND,**

The fool will be servant to the wise of heart. Troubling your own house has steep consequences and that person may in the end find themselves a servant to the wise of heart, those who possess wisdom.

***Vs 30 ¶ The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise.***

A good life, a life that pursues righteousness (both in Christ and His word) is a **tree of life to others**. A live well lived (for the glory of God and the good of others) is a **tree of life to others**.

A righteous man has a positive effect on those around him.

**AND,** the one who focuses on capturing souls is wise!

In these two clauses Solomon is saying, first a good life, is a tree of life to others, and the one who captures (wins) souls is wise!

We win souls by sharing the gospel and praying for the Spirit to call men out of darkness into God’s marvelous light!

***Vs 31 ¶ If the righteous is repaid on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!” (Pr 11:1-31 ESV)***

The full meaning does not become evident until the full Proverb is considered.

For the believer your eternal reward is heaven or hell. It is eternity with God enjoying Him, or eternity away from God under His wrath.

But, it is also true that **righteousness comes with benefits in this life**. That is a point made throughout the Bible.

If that is so, that the righteous do receive good things here on earth, then it only seems to reason that the opposite will be true for the wicked and the sinner, they too will be repaid on earth, or as Solomon says: **how much more for them!**