

Proverbs 28 addresses the subject of governance over fallen human nature.

Proverbs 28:1: *The wicked **flee** when no one is pursuing, but the **righteous** are bold as a lion.*

- To correctly interpret the meaning of this proverb, we need to understand that every person – saved or unsaved, has a “guilt complex.” It is placed in our conscience by God our Creator. Jesus spoke of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world after His ascension into heaven. It is the Holy Spirit who attempts to draw all free-willed people to Christ by convicting them of their guilt and transgressions. Psychologists have labeled this the guilt complex; they can shift the focus of it, but never eliminate it; John 16:8: ***And when he comes, he [The Holy Spirit] will convince the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.*** ^[NLT] The unforgiven will _____ from their own conscience, not understanding that it is God’s Holy Spirit calling them to repentance, and the forgiveness they so desperately seek; that which those made _____ in Christ, have already found.

Proverbs 28:2: *By the transgression of a land many are its princes, but by a man of understanding and knowledge, so it **endures**.*

- Oh! How true this proverb rings for our nation today? There is corruption and moral degradation at the highest levels of our government. Whenever there is moral rot within a nation, it becomes weak, ineffective, and subject to revolution followed by unpopular change. An unstable government is easily toppled by forces that seek to inflict an evil ideology on the people. When the nation’s government is staffed with wise and knowledgeable leaders, there will be stability, and it will _____.

Proverbs 28:3: *A poor man who **oppresses** the lowly is like a driving rain which leaves no food.*

- This proverb speaks to the fallen nature of the unregenerate person and our need for godly government to prevent abuse. Sadly, often when a person familiar with a low position in life, comes to a place of power or authority, he is quick to exercise it by _____ing those underneath; and usually, far more severely than that of a person previously familiar with position and authority.

Proverbs 28:4: *Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law strive with them.*

- Wicked people form alliances, encouraging and strengthening one another. Romans 1:32 reads: *They are fully aware of God's death penalty for those who do these things, yet they go right ahead and do them anyway. And, worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.* ^[NLT] In effect, when we reject godly principles, we are praising the wicked. When we openly and willingly obey God's law, we become an affront to the _____.

Proverbs 28:5: *Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all things.*

- During our study of the book of Proverbs, we have learned that God calls the person who has refused His free gift of salvation, that is, a New Nature, and that coupled with the guiding renewing hand of His Holy Spirit, like a fool. The fool does not understand God's _____.

Proverbs 28:6: *Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than he who is crooked though he be rich.*

- Jesus warned us in Matthew 6:19-20, not to ". . . store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. [20] Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves.
[NLT]

Jesus went on to say; "***Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God.***" ^{Luke}

12:21 [NLT] Our proverb tells us it is better to be _____ and go through life with an integrity that represents the attributes of His indwelling Spirit, than to be a _____ rich man, who has only the coming judgment to fear.

Proverbs 28:7: *He who keeps the law is a discerning son, but he who is a companion of gluttons **humiliates** his father.*

- **Young people who obey the law are wise; those who seek out worthless companions _____ and grieve their parents.**

Proverbs 28:8: *He, who increases his wealth by **interest** and usury, gathers it for him who is gracious to the poor.*

- **This proverb only makes sense if we first examine the principles of the Law that is behind it. In Exodus 22:25, the Law prohibits a person under law to charge interest to a fellow Israelite who is also under the Law and in need. "*If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest*". ^[NIV] The Law continues and is more deeply defined in Leviticus 25:36-37: *Do not take interest of any kind from him, but fear your God, so that your countryman may continue to live among you.* ^[37] *You must not lend him money at interest or sell him food at a profit.* ^[NIV]**

According to the Law in Deut. 23:20; You may charge a foreigner interest, but not a brother Israelite, so that the Lord your God may bless you in everything you put your hand to in the land you are entering to possess. ^[NIV]

So, when the proverb states, "A person who makes money by charging interest will lose it." It was in direct reference to lending to God's people. Does that principle carry forth into the New Testament? I believe so since only the penalty of the Law has been removed and not the principle. I personally know of two instances where large sums of money were involved. Both happened in my early stages of ministry. In a small town where I lived, there was a pastor who had a grand plan for God and borrowed money from fellow Christians to implement his proposal. The towns Christians rallied and willingly lent substantial sums with an expectation of a future interest and profit on their loans. Needless to say, they lost it all. Was this principle involved? I am not really sure, but if they truly believed it was God's work, they should have lent without the expectation of a usurious _____ drawn against fellow Christians.

Proverbs 28:9: *He who turns away his ear from listening to the law; even his prayer is an abomination.*

➤ There is only one prayer that an unsaved person can pray that God will not turn away from, and that is a prayer of repentance coupled with an expectation of salvation and renewal. Luke 11:9: *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."* ^[NIV] You may ask what door? To which Jesus has already replied; *'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.'* Rev. 3:20 [NASB] *"The door to heaven is narrow. Work hard to get in, because many will try to enter,"* Luke 13:24 [NLT] All other prayers of the unredeemed are an _____ to Him, because they have arrogantly refused the freely given sacrifice of His only Son, Christ Jesus. The prayers of a person who ignore the principles of God are despised.

Proverbs 28:10: He who leads the upright astray in an evil way, Will himself fall into his own pit, But **the blameless will inherit good.**

In this case, the success of ungodly men is their own misery. Jesus promised to those made _____ by His sacrificial death and an inheritance of eternal life with Him. **Matthew 6:33:** "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ^[NASB] In the same light, the book of Hebrews warns us . . . not [to] be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. **Hebrews 6:12** ^[NASB]

Proverbs 28:11: *The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding sees through him.*

➤ To gain a better grasp on the intent of Solomon's parable, we can substitute the word "noble" or one that is in popular usage today, "elitist" for his term, translated *rich man*. The elitists see themselves as _____, when in truth, they are but worldly, able to view things only through the five senses of the flesh; whereas Spirit-filled Christians have the benefit of God's wisdom and insight and are able to see beyond worldly wisdom.

Proverbs 28:12: *When the righteous triumph, there is great glory, but when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.*

➤ I believe that the American experiment of Liberty has brought to light this proverb. America, founded on the biblical principles, has amply demonstrated that there is glory in the land when the righteous have liberty. In my personal view, evidenced by the moral degradation and corruptness that now surrounds us, the _____ are rising to power and ordinary citizens will _____.

Proverbs 28:13: *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.*

- Nothing is hidden from God. Only a fool can indulge sin and think he will get by with it. The person who tries to _____ his _____ from God can never know any true peace, only as we humbly confess our sins, with true repentance and faith, can we experience the mercy of God. 1st John 1:8-9: *If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. [9] But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. [NLT] Paul, the apostle, puts it this way; If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. Romans 8:6 [NLT]*

Proverbs 28:14: *How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.*

- The Hebrew word for fear is their word **pachad**, [**paw-*kkad***] and can mean to *fear* in general, or to stand in awe; the context in this passage would dictate the latter. A person who holds God in absolute reverence, and awe, is a person that God will bless. It is the fool who _____ his heart and depends on self-reliance alone, that falls into _____. 1st Cor. 10:13: *No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. [NASB]*

Proverbs 28:15: *Like a roaring lion and a rushing bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people. [16] A leader who is a great oppressor lacks understanding, but he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.*

- God has given us the government because of our natural human bent on evil and sin. Those to whom He has given authority, when they abuse it and become _____ s_; their apparent lack of understanding about a day when they too shall be judged by the One who

_____ unjust gain and holds them in contempt, becomes obvious.

Proverbs 28:17: *A man who is laden with the **guilt** of human blood will be a fugitive until death; let no one support him.*

- **A murderer's tormented conscience will drive him into the grave. We are not to protect his or attempt to ease his _____! God, our Designer has created us this way that we may repent and turn to Him. Conviction is the work of God's Holy Spirit to bring persons to a place of peace between themselves and their Maker. John 16:8: "**And He, [God's Holy Spirit] when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment.**" [NASB]**

Proverbs 28:18: *He who walks blamelessly will be **delivered**, but he who is crooked will fall all at once.*

- **We just covered a similar proverb in 14; where we read a Pauline passage, (1st Cor. 10:13) which clearly showed that the bond-servant of Christ would be _____ with God's help: *God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.* [NASB]**

Proverbs 28:19: *He who tills his land will have plenty of food, but he who follows empty pursuits will have **poverty** in plenty.*

- **There was a time and will come again when our God will *restore all things and once again make total provision for His family. It will be a time in a new heaven and on a new earth, when there will be no more _____, but until then; according to Genesis 3:19: *All your life you will sweat to produce food, until your dying day. Then you will return to the ground from which you came. For you were made from dust, and to the dust you will return.*" [NLT]**

***Compiler's note: I believe that in the end, after the Great White Throne Judgment, God will restore all things to His**

original design, Acts 3:21 tells us; *For he must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his prophets.* [NLT]

Peter gives us a little more insight in 2nd Peter 3:13 as to what that restoration may be: . . . *we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world where everyone is right with God.* [NLT]

And the apostle John in the book of Revelation, chapter 21, and verse 1 confirms what was written long ago by the prophet Isaiah; ^{Isaiah 65:17} "Look! *I am creating new heavens and a new earth—so wonderful that no one will even think about the old ones anymore.* [NLT] John writes; ^[Rev. 21:1] *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone.* [NLT]

Proverbs 28:20: *A faithful man will abound with blessings, but he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.*

- The true way to be happy, is to be _____ and honest; not to scheme for wealth without regard to right or wrong.

Proverbs 28:21: *To show partiality is not good, because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.*

- Showing _____ is never a good thing, yet some are so weak that they will pervert justice for something as small as a piece of bread.

Proverbs 28:22: *A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth and does not know that want will come upon him.*

- The persons with little regard for godly ways never seriously thinks about how quickly God may take his ill-gotten _____ from them and leave them in poverty.

Proverbs 28:23: *He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue.*

- In the end, most will have a better opinion of one who earnestly and sincerely corrects, than one with a silver _____, who flatters. For the child of God, integrity counts.

Proverbs 28:24: *He who robs his father or his mother, and says, "It is not a transgression," Is the companion of a man who destroys.*

- Exodus 20:12 told the Israelites and alternatively, us today to: *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.* ^[NASB] Jesus had an occasion to condemn the religious leaders during His tenure on earth, for perverting God's principles; they were convincing young adults to give money to the temple rather than to care for their aging parents ^[see Matt. 15:5-6] In essence, they encouraged the children to _____ from their parents, and became _____ in the theft.

Proverbs 28:25: *An arrogant man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.*

- God continues to bring to the forefront the attributes of our fallen nature. Here He deals with pride which is the root of arrogance. The humble person who puts his _____ in our Lord will prosper.

Proverbs 28:26: *He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered.*

- Only a _____ thinks he can provide for his own salvation or through our corrupt flesh win the favor of God. Jesus said in John 14:6: . . . ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."*** ^[NLT]

Proverbs 28:27: *He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.*

- If you recall, we covered similar proverbs twice before. Proverbs 19:17 has special relevance to this proverb: *If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord—and he will repay you!* When we invest our monetary wealth in helping those who are struggling, it is as if we were lending to our Lord. The corollary of ignoring them and that mission is to become a _____ before our God.

Proverbs 28:28: *When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; But when they perish, the righteous increase.*

- This also is a proverb that we have covered at least twice before. When evil comes to power in a government, even though God has given humankind government to protect the unalienable rights of all; the true church will go underground and _____. As soon as conditions change, the church will emerge and _____ larger and stronger than before. I recently heard the story of a Chinese woman, who told a Christian businessman, that she will be praying for crises in America so that the American church could become strong again.