



22 *As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.* 23 *The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.* 24 *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* 25 *The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.* 26 *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.* 27 *He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.* 28 *He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.* 29 *He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.* 30 *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.* 31 *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.* (Prov 11:22-31)

A jewel of gold is quite attractive by virtue of its beauty and purity, but when ensconced in the ugly and unsanitary snout of a pig, it suddenly loses its appeal. It is difficult to admire the jewel while disregarding its setting. **22 As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.** I have in my lifetime met many women whose beauty I considered very appealing, but later thought them a waste of God's artful touch. Their crass and unseemly behavior diminished completely whatever appeal their beauty had once fostered. I must admit that, to the contrary, I have seen many women whose appearance at first seemed plain and unappealing but who, after evidencing grace and refinement, proved to be most beautiful. If we will remember that we are sons and daughters of the Most High King, we should quit ourselves as Princes and Princesses deserving of the title.

23 The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is

wrath. Though we may be frail of strength and power, our hearts must always DESIRE goodness and good will to all. Our first thought at seeing a little child should be the thought of parental love and care - not how the child may be egregiously used or abused. The righteous take great joy when goodness triumphs. They expect goodness and they celebrate its victories. The wicked are not so. They could care less if little children are murdered on foreign fields in the name of religion. In fact, they have no comment at all regarding such atrocity. They only consider how they might get some deceptive advantage over a fellow man or woman, or how they might use even the most innocent among us for their profit. A righteous outcome is the very thing which they vehemently oppose. They shall be satisfied, surely, with their own outcomes which shall be the abode of all their bedfellows in the fire-wreathed halls of Hell. If we sow the wind, we shall reap the whirlwind - a matter of great application to our own nation!

24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. I have known fellow Christians who were of limited means who never hoarded a dime or a loaf of bread, but shared their cupboards liberally with the poor. Yet, it seems that they never lacked bread in the pantry or funds upon which they could survive. ***Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.*** (Eccl 11:1-2) On the contrary, I have known (even professing Christians) who were not generous. They hoarded their increase but seemed always to be poor and lacking. Money is not evil in and of itself, but it is the "love of money" that is the root of all evil. ***6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*** (1 Tim 6:6-10) How many so-called "first churches" have ministers drawing a salary plus benefits of \$200,000 in part paid by widows out of their meager social security checks? We need to set our priorities in line with those of Godly people.

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. Here is a principle found repetitively throughout Scripture perhaps owing to our slow learning of it. ***If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.*** (Prov 25:21-22) By the way, I feel obligated to point out that a 'personal' liberality is intended here and not that brand of confiscation and redistribution of property called liberalism in modern America.

26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it. Today's verses are almost wholly devoted to the p[roper] stewardship of treasure with which the Lord has blessed us. I have read a recent study that suggests that, though millions are starving in India today, there is ample food stores to feed the population. The grain is stored in great warehouses in which speculators hoard the supply in order to gain an advantageous market share. In the end, rodents and other creatures devour and ruin the grain while it remains securely locked away. During the famine of Joseph's day, the hungry hordes of people who streamed into Egypt seeking grain never complained that it was made available to them at a price. They rejoiced that someone had the wisdom to store up supplies during the plenteous years for distribution during the lean.

27 He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him. The honest fellow who is always honest and straightforward in his dealings with superiors may have days of failure, but the employer will always prefer him over the shyster who seeks advantage by deceitful means. The worker of goodness certainly procures the favor of God while the greedy soul shall be rewarded in kind by the greed of God towards him.

28 He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch. The human soul is not subject to improvement by the addition of material riches. It is fed by the righteous hope and goodness of God and His Word. The righteous sink their roots deep down by the river's edge until they tap into that refreshing Water of Life which Christ supplies. From such an idyllic position, they shall not be moved. He that trusts in wealth and fame has no root at all. All of his nutrition comes from above the waterline where no thirst can be quenched.

29 He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart. Modern America has troubled her own house for the past several decades with illicit sex, murders, and every vile sin. We are presently struck with destroying winds. *Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.* (Psalms 58:9, see also Prov 1:27) Perhaps many who read my constant references to the sins of my nation will think me overly judgmental. Allow me to say that it is not **MY** judgment, but the judgment of the **Lord** that is cited against all who turn from God in apostasy and indifference. Perhaps the next verse cited dealt with that which the Lord wrote upon the sand before the Woman taken in Adultery: *O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.* (Jeremiah 17:13) Has not America forsaken the God of our Founding Fathers?

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. My heart is sorrowful to consider the fallen state of our church and nation. Had we chosen, as did our Forefathers, the fruit of the Tree of Life (which is righteousness), we would not suffer today from so many social and physical disabilities. Christ was represented at Eden by that Tree of Life. Every religion in America today has the benefit of public recognition EXCEPT Christianity. How sad. The works of righteous people and nations are like a tree of life to all others. Remember when America was a beacon light of hope to the entire world? Remember when our laws were equally applied to every citizen without exception? Remember when our children bowed their heads in school to pray? Remember? Now we stagger and stumble as blind men from one false promise to another. If the true Christians would shine forth and proclaim the Gospel without fear or hesitation, perhaps we could win enough souls from the comfort of the false pews and sin-ridden streets to restore her to the apple of God's eye.

31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner. The righteous man or woman often looks upon the presumed success of the wicked in wonder and amazement, but such a view is not real. Please KNOW that the righteous are also rewarded in this present life as well as the next. Righteous nations who call upon the Lord will also be nations of prosperity and security. The wicked men who hi-jacked the revolution in Tsarist Russia (1917) denied God in all their dealings. But they promised the people a just balance and liberty beyond description. The people of Russia, under Lenin and Stalin, got neither. Instead, they got poverty and want, hardship and torment. That nation suffered for nearly 100 years due to their lack of Godliness, and suffer even until this very day! Shall we follow

in those bloody and tragic footsteps, Friend?