

Proverbs 26 - Fools; Laziness; Gossip; Backbiting

V. Solomon's proverbs that were either collected or copied by Hezekiah's scribes (Prov 25:1—29:27)

(1) Part one: sixteen groups of proverbs (Prov 25:1— 27:27)

(K) Related to fools (26:1-12)

(L) Related to laziness (26:13-16)

(M) Related to speech (26:17-28)

Proverbs 26

(K) Related to fools (26:1-12)

1 Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest, So honor is not fitting for a fool.

1 Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest, So honor is not fitting for a fool.

1 Like snowfall in summer or rain at harvest time, so honor is inappropriate for a fool.

1 As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honor is not seemly for a fool.

2 Like a sparrow in *its* flitting, like a swallow in *its* flying, So a curse without cause does not come *to rest*.

2 Like a sparrow in *its* flitting, like a swallow in *its* flying, So a curse without cause does not alight.

2 Like a fluttering sparrow or a swallow in flight, a curse without cause will not alight.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.

3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.

3 A whip is for the horses, a bridle is for the donkey, a rod is for the back of fools.

3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Do not answer a fool according to his foolishness, Or you will also be like him.

4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Or you will also be like him.

4 Don't answer a fool according to his foolishness, or you will be just like him.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer a fool as his foolishness *deserves*, So that he will not be wise in his own eyes.
5 Answer a fool as his folly *deserves*, That he not be wise in his own eyes.
5 Answer a fool according to his foolishness, or he will think himself to be wise.
5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

6 One who sends a message by the hand of a fool Chops off *his own* feet *and* drinks violence.
6 He cuts off *his own* feet *and* drinks violence Who sends a message by the hand of a fool.
6 Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.
6 He that sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off the feet, and drinks damage.

7 *Like* useless legs to one who cannot walk, So is a proverb in the mouths of fools.
7 *Like* the legs *which* are useless to the lame, So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
7 Useless legs to the lame— that's what a proverb quoted by a fool is.
7 The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling, So is one who gives honor to a fool.
8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling, So is he who gives honor to a fool.
8 Tying a stone to a sling— that's what giving honor to a fool is.
8 As he that binds a stone in a sling, so is he that gives honor to a fool.

9 *Like* a thorn *that* sticks in the hand of a heavy drinker, So is a proverb in the mouths of fools.
9 *Like* a thorn *which* falls into the hand of a drunkard, So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
9 A thorn in the hand of a drunkard— that's what a proverb quoted by a fool is.
9 As a thorn goes up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouths of fools.

10 *Like* an archer who wounds everyone, So is one who hires a fool or hires those who pass by.
10 *Like* an archer who wounds everyone, So is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by.
10 An archer who shoots at anyone— is like someone who hires a fool or anyone who passes by.
10 The great God that formed all things both rewards the fool, and rewards transgressors.

11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit, So is a fool who repeats his foolishness.
11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly.

11 A dog that returns to its vomit is like a fool who reverts to his folly.

11 As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly.

12 Do you see a person wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

12 Do you see a man who is wise in his own opinion? There's more hope for a fool than for him.

12 See thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

(L) Related to laziness (26:13-16)

13 A lazy one says, "There is a lion on the road! A lion is in the public square!"

13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road! A lion is in the open square!"

13 The lazy person claims, "There is a lion in the road! There's a lion in the streets!"

13 The slothful man says, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

14 As the door turns on its hinges, So *does* a lazy one on his bed.

14 As the door turns on its hinges, So *does* the sluggard on his bed.

14 The door turns on its hinges— as does the lazy person on his bed.

14 As the door turns upon his hinges, so does the slothful upon his bed.

15 A lazy one buries his hand in the dish; He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.

15 The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.

15 The lazy person buries his hand in the dish, but he's too tired to bring it to his mouth again.

15 The slothful hides his hand in his bosom; it grieves him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 A lazy one is wiser in his own eyes Than seven *people* who can give a discreet answer.

16 The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

16 The lazy person is wiser in his own opinion than seven men who can give an appropriate response.

16 The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

(M) Related to speech (26:17-28)

17 *Like* one who takes a dog by the ears, So is one who passes by *and* meddles with strife not belonging to him.

17 *Like* one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by *and* meddles with strife not belonging to him.

17 Picking up a dog by the ears— that's what someone is like who meddles in another's fight.

17 He that passes by, and meddles with strife belonging not to him, is like one that takes a dog by the ears.

18 Like a maniac who shoots flaming arrows, arrows, and death,

18 Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows and death,

18 Like the maniac who shoots fiery darts and deadly arrows—

18 As a mad man who casts firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 So is a person who deceives his neighbor, And says, "Was I not joking?"

19 So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, "Was I not joking?"

19 that's what someone is like who lies to his neighbor and then says, "I was joking, wasn't I?"

19 So is the man that deceives his neighbour, and says, Am not I in sport?

On Gossip and Backbiting

20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no gossip, quarreling quiets down.

20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

20 Without wood, the fire goes out. Without a gossip, contention stops.

20 Where no wood is, there the fire goes out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceases.

21 *Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious person to kindle strife.

21 *Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.

21 Charcoal is to hot coals as wood is to fire; so also a quarrelsome man fuels strife.

21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The words of a gossip are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.

22 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.

22 The words of a gossip are like delicate morsels; they sink down deep within.

22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

23 *Like* an earthenware vessel overlaid with silver impurities Are burning lips and a wicked heart.

23 *Like* an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross Are burning lips and a wicked heart.

23 A clay vessel plated with a thin veneer of silver— that's what smooth lips with a wicked heart are.

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 One who hates disguises *it* with his lips, But he harbors deceit in his heart.

24 He who hates disguises *it* with his lips, But he lays up deceit in his heart.

24 Someone who hates hides behind his words, harboring deceit within himself.

24 He that hates dissembles with his lips, and lays up deceit within him;

25 When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, Because there are seven abominations in his heart.

25 When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart.

25 Though he speaks graciously, don't believe him, for there are seven detestable things in his heart.

25 When he speaks fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.

26 *Though his* hatred covers itself with deception, His wickedness will be revealed in the assembly.

26 *Though his* hatred covers itself with guile, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

26 Though malice disguises itself with deception, its evil will be exposed publicly.

26 Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.

27 One who digs a pit will fall into it, And one who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.

27 He who digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.

27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and the stone will come back on whoever starts it rolling.

27 Whoso digs a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

28 A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

28 A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth causes ruin.

28 A lying tongue hates those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth works ruin.

Conscious of having wronged another, and being determined not to confess it, the dissembler will store his heart with hatred against the object of his wrongdoing. To hide his wretched feelings, such a one will flatter with his lips while all the time he is plotting the ruin of his victim. — H.A. Ironside