

Through the Bible

PROVERBS

Zac Poonen



Illustrations by Vinay Kuruville

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CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

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PROVERBS



THE BOOKS OF PSALMS AND PROVERBS DESCRIBE **TWO** ASPECTS OF OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE. PSALMS SPEAKS OF OUR TRUST IN GOD AND WORSHIP OF HIM. PROVERBS DEALS WITH THE **OTHER** HALF OF THE CIRCLE OF OUR LIFE -- OUR DAILY **WALK** IN THIS WORLD AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. THESE TWO MUST ALWAYS GO TOGETHER. WE MUST NOT BE SO HEAVENLY MINDED THAT WE ARE OF NO **EARTHLY** USE. NEITHER MUST WE BE SO EARTHLY MINDED THAT WE ARE OF NO USE TO **GOD**.



THE FIRST NINE CHAPTERS ARE DIRECTED PRIMARILY TO **YOUNG PEOPLE**: "TO KNOW WISDOM AND INSTRUCTION, TO **DISCERN** THE SAYINGS OF UNDERSTANDING" (1:2). THESE THREE WORDS HAVE A DISTINCTIVE MEANING IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

- **WISDOM** REFERS TO THE DIVINE NATURE.
- **INSTRUCTION** REFERS TO **PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE** THAT COMES THROUGH DISCIPLINE.
- **UNDERSTANDING** REFERS TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS WAYS.

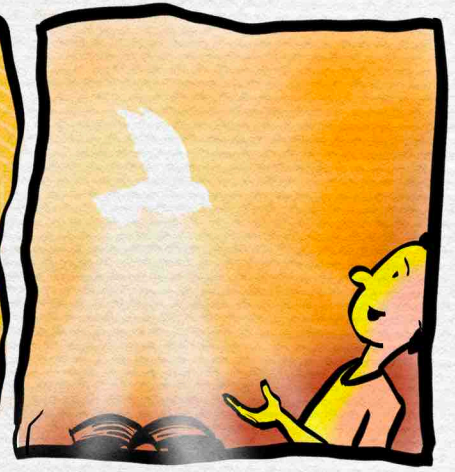


TRUE WISDOM IS TO HAVE A REVERENCE FOR GOD. MANY PEOPLE CRACK JOKES ABOUT GOD AND ABOUT SPIRITUAL THINGS. HUMOUR IS A GIFT OF GOD. BUT WE MUST **NEVER** MAKE GOD AND DIVINE THINGS THE SUBJECT OF A JOKE. WE MUST NEVER MAKE HELL THE SUBJECT OF JOKES -- BECAUSE HELL IS AN **AWFUL** REALITY. A PERSON WHO REVERENCES GOD WILL NEVER JOKE ABOUT HELL

THE VERY FIRST THING THE WRITER HAS TO SAY IS THIS: "THE **FEAR** OF THE LORD IS THE **BEGINNING** OF KNOWLEDGE" (1:7). THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF FEAR THAT WE CAN HAVE OF GOD -- ONE IS WRONG AND THE OTHER IS RIGHT. THE **WRONG** TYPE OF FEAR IS THE FEAR THAT **GOD** MAY HURT US. THE RIGHT TYPE OF FEAR IS THE FEAR THAT **WE** MAY HURT GOD. FALSE RELIGIONS **MAJOR** ON THE FIRST TYPE OF FEAR. THE **HOLY SPIRIT** CAN BE **GRIEVED** BY SOMETHING WE DO OR SAY OR THINK. SUCH A FEAR IS ACTUALLY A **REVERENCE** FOR GOD.



HE GOES ON TO WARN YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE TYPE OF **COMPANY** THEY KEEP. "IF SINNERS ENTICE YOU, DON'T LISTEN TO THEM. DON'T ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO DRAG YOU IN THEIR WORLDLY WAYS" (VERSE 10). STAND **ALONE** IF NECESSARY, FOR THE LORD. ONE OF THE **MOST** IMPORTANT THINGS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO LEARN IS TO SAY, "NO. I CAN'T COME ALONG WITH YOU." THAT MAY OFFEND MANY OF YOUR FRIENDS.



TO ALL SUCH YOUNG MEN, GOD GIVES A **PROMISE**: "I WILL POUR OUT MY **SPIRIT** ON YOU, AND I WILL MAKE KNOWN MY WORDS UNTO YOU"



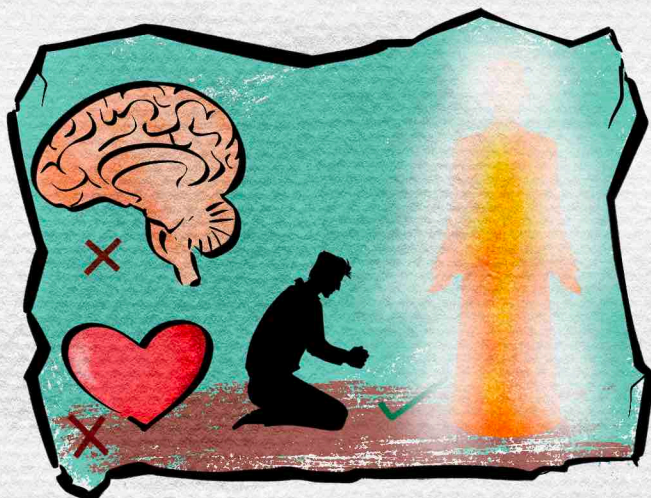
HE GOES ON TO SAY THAT IF YOU **REFUSE** WISDOM'S INVITATION, ONE DAY WHEN YOU ARE IN **TROUBLE**, AND YOU CALL FOR HELP, YOU MAY **NOT** FIND IT (1:24--33). WE MAY NOT FIND WISDOM LATE IN LIFE, IF WE HAVE NEGLECTED IT IN YOUR EARLIER YEARS.



.. IF WE STUDY GOD'S WORD **ACADEMICALLY**, WE CAN'T GET WISDOM. GOD HAS TO POUR OUT HIS SPIRIT UPON US SO THAT HIS WORDS BECOME **LIVING** TO US.



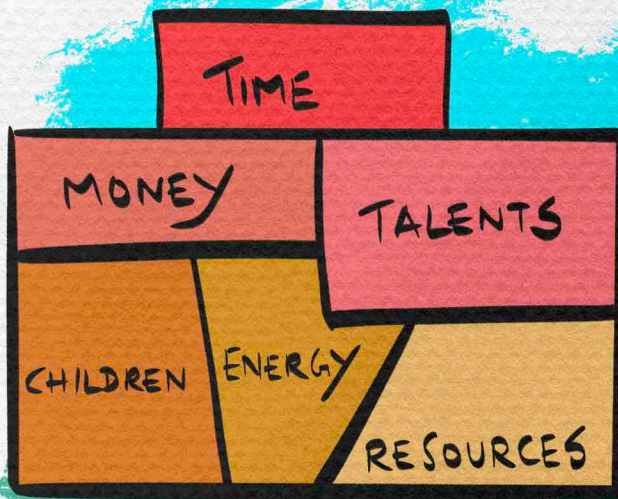
CHAPTER 3:5, 6: "**TRUST** IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR **HEART** AND DO **NOT** LEAN ON YOUR **OWN UNDERSTANDING**. IN ALL YOUR WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AND HE WILL MAKE YOUR PATHS STRAIGHT." THIS IS A PROMISE OF GUIDANCE. GOD WILL DIRECT OUR PATHS IF WE FULFIL THE CONDITIONS. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS?



FIRST OF ALL: WHILE WE CAN USE OUR REASON OR INTELLIGENCE, WE SHOULD NOT **DEPEND** ON IT.

SECONDLY: **ACKNOWLEDGE** GOD IN ALL YOUR WAYS. THAT MEANS TO OBEY EVERY SINGLE THING THAT GOD REVEALS TO YOU. GIVE THE LORD **FIRST** PLACE IN EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE. THEN THE LORD WILL LEAD YOU IN HIS PERFECT WILL.

SO IT SAYS IN CHAPTER 2:4, "SEEK FOR **WISDOM** AS YOU WOULD SEEK FOR **SILVER** AND **HIDDEN TREASURES**. THE WISDOM THE LORD GIVES WILL DELIVER US "FROM THE WAY OF **EVIL**, FROM THE **MAN** WHO SPEAKS PERVERSE THINGS, AND FROM THE **STRANGE WOMAN**" (VERSES 12, 16). YOUNG MEN NEED TO BE PROTECTED FROM EVIL MEN WHO TRY TO **DECEIVE** THEM AND EVIL WOMEN WHO TRY TO **ATTRACT** THEM.

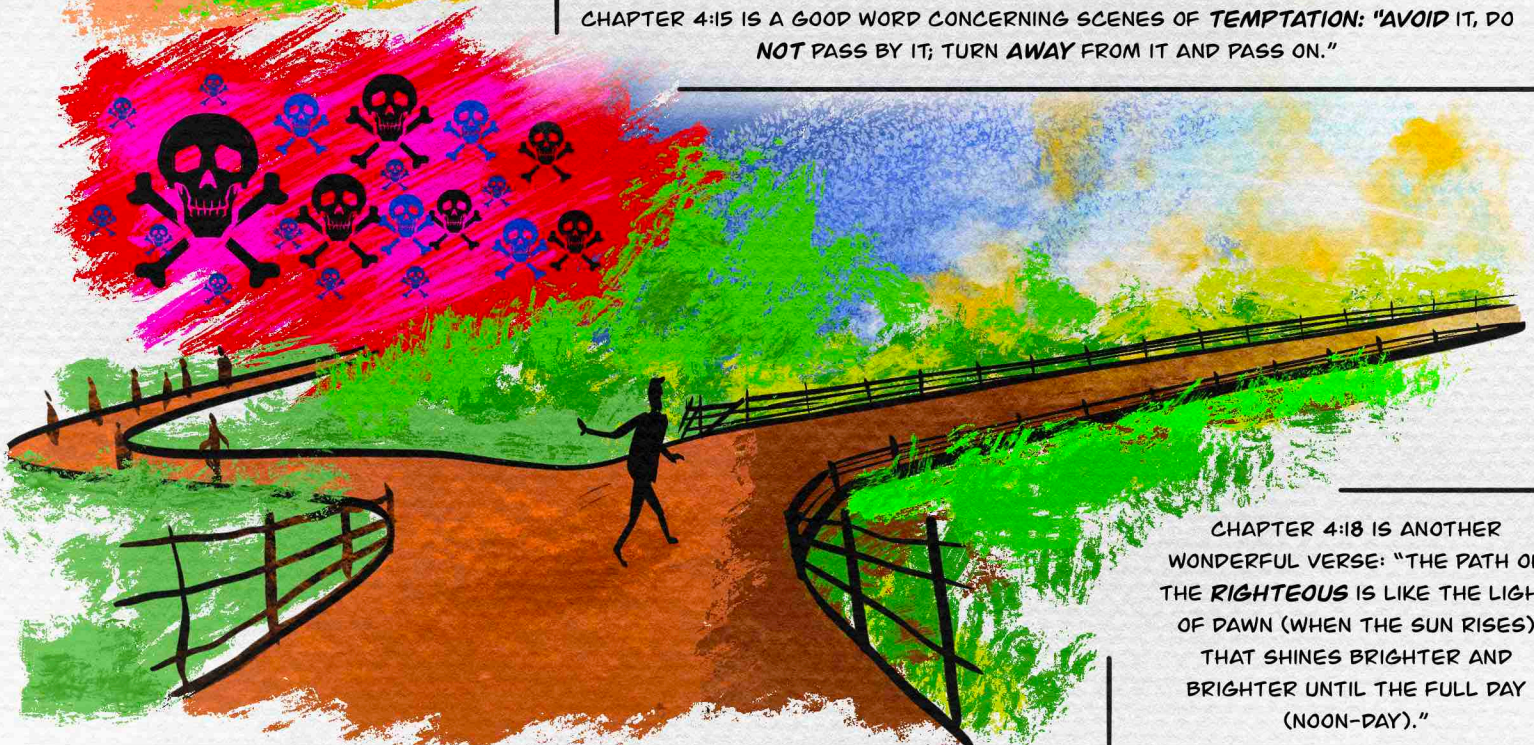


"HONOUR THE LORD FROM YOUR **WEALTH**" (3:9). WE MUST LEARN TO GIVE TO GOD JOYFULLY -- FROM THE WEALTH OF OUR TIME, OUR **ENERGY**, OUR **MONEY**, OUR **RESOURCES**, OUR **TALENTS**, OUR **CHILDREN**, AND EVERY OTHER AREA OF OUR WEALTH.



CHAPTER 4:12 HAS A VERY BEAUTIFUL PROMISE. A LITERAL PARAPHRASE OF IT WOULD READ: "AS YOU GO, **STEP BY STEP** THE WAY WILL OPEN UP BEFORE YOU." YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW EVEN WHAT LIES TWO STEPS AHEAD OF YOU. TAKE THE FIRST STEP THAT YOU CAN SEE. YOU WILL THEN SEE THE NEXT STEP. THIS IS HOW GOD GUIDES US. DOORS MAY LOOK TO BE **CLOSED** IN FRONT OF US. BUT AS WE **APPROACH** THEM, THEY WILL OPEN AUTOMATICALLY. BUT THEY WON'T OPEN UNTIL YOU COME **NEAR** THEM. THAT IS HOW OUR GOD LEADS US ON. SO **DON'T** BE HESITANT OR **AFRAID** IF YOU SEE A DOOR CLOSED IN FRONT OF YOU. TAKE THE STEP **GOD** SHOWS YOU **NOW**.

CHAPTER 4:15 IS A GOOD WORD CONCERNING SCENES OF **TEMPTATION**: "**AVOID** IT, DO **NOT** PASS BY IT; TURN AWAY FROM IT AND PASS ON."




CHAPTER 4:18 IS ANOTHER WONDERFUL VERSE: "THE PATH OF THE **RIGHTEOUS** IS LIKE THE LIGHT OF DAWN (WHEN THE SUN RISES) THAT SHINES BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER UNTIL THE FULL DAY (NOON-DAY)."

THIS IS GOD'S PERFECT **WILL** FOR EVERYONE OF HIS CHILDREN -- THAT THEY SHOULD BECOME **MORE** AND MORE LIKE **CHRIST** EVERY DAY OF THEIR LIVES, FROM THE TIME THAT THEY ARE BORN AGAIN (WHEN THE SUN RISES), UNTIL THE DAY THAT CHRIST COMES BACK (NOON-DAY). ALONG THAT PATH, WE WILL GET MORE AND MORE **REVELATION** ON GOD'S **WORD**, MORE AND MORE **LIGHT** ON THE CORRUPTION OF OUR SELF-LIFE, MORE AND MORE WISDOM FOR PRACTICAL SITUATIONS THAT WE FACE, ETC. IF YOU WALK ALONG THIS PATH OF THE **RIGHTEOUS**, YOU WILL NEVER BACKSLIDE, JUST LIKE THE SUN NEVER GOES BACK IN THE SKY. WHY THEN IS IT SO **RARE** TO FIND CHRISTIANS WHO LIVE LIKE THIS? BECAUSE MOST OF CHRISTENDOM LIVES AT A SUBSTANDARD LEVEL. WE MUST NOT LET OUR LIFE SINK TO THE LEVEL OF THE BELIEVERS **AROUND** US. OUR EYES MUST BE FIXED ON THE **LORD** ALONE. WE MUST SEEK TO WALK AS HE WALKED.




Watch over your heart!

CHAPTER 4:23: "WATCH OVER YOUR HEART WITH ALL **DILIGENCE** FOR FROM IT FLOW THE SPRINGS OF LIFE." EVERYTHING THAT COMES OUT OF OUR LIFE FLOWS FROM OUR **HEART** -- OUR WORDS, OUR MINISTRY, EVERYTHING. SO WE MUST ENSURE THAT OUR HEARTS ARE KEPT PURE AT ALL TIMES. ONLY THUS WILL THE **CHANNEL** BE CLEAN FOR THE LIVING WATERS TO FLOW FROM HEAVEN THROUGH US, TO OTHERS.




CHAPTER 4:25: "LET YOUR EYES LOOK DIRECTLY AHEAD AND LET YOUR GAZE BE FIXED **STRAIGHT** IN FRONT OF YOU." THIS HAS REFERENCE TO TEMPTATIONS THAT COME THROUGH THE EYES AND IS VERY GOOD ADVICE FOR **YOUNG** PEOPLE. BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ALLOW YOUR EYES TO LOOK AT. SET THE **LORD** IN FRONT OF YOU AND LOOK STRAIGHT AT HIM. AS LONG AS WE LIVE IN THIS WORLD, WE CAN'T AVOID BEING TEMPTED BY WHAT WE SEE. BUT WE CAN AVOID THE SECOND LOOK. WE CAN DESTROY OUR LIFE AND OUR USEFULNESS TO GOD, IF WE DON'T **CONTROL** OUR EYES.



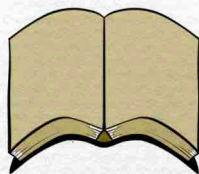
"Drink water out of your **own** well"

Go to the ant, O lazy man.
Observe her ways and be **wise**!"

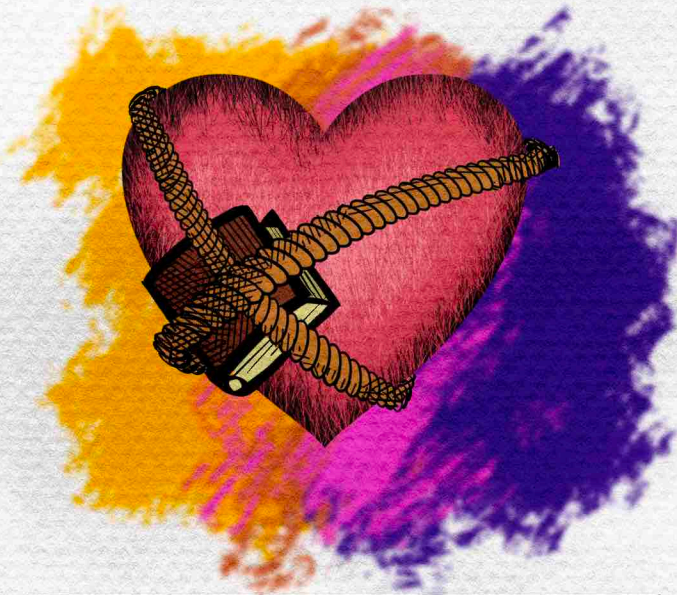


CHAPTER 5:15: THIS IS A WARNING TO HUSBANDS TO BE SATISFIED WITH THEIR OWN WIVES AND NOT TO LONG AFTER OTHER WOMEN -- SOMEONE **ELSE'S** WELL. SEXUAL ENJOYMENT IS PERFECTLY **RIGHT** AND GOOD WITHIN MARRIAGE. IT IS **EVIL** AND **SATANIC** OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER 6:6--10: THE ANT GATHERS FOOD IN **HARVEST-TIME**, BECAUSE IT HAS FORETHOUGHT FOR THE FUTURE. IT REALISES THAT FOOD WON'T BE AVAILABLE IN THE WINTER. HOW SMALL THE BRAIN OF THAT ANT IS. YET IT HAS ENOUGH SENSE IN THAT TINY BRAIN TO STORE FOOD FOR THE FUTURE. HOW MUCH **WISER** WE WHO ARE CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE SHOULD BE! WE SHOULD NOT SPEND ALL THE MONEY WE EARN EACH MONTH, AND HAVE NO SAVINGS AT ALL FOR THE FUTURE.



THE SAME PRINCIPLE APPLIES IN **SPIRITUAL** MATTERS AS WELL: CONSIDER THE MATTER OF STORING UP GOD'S **WORD** IN YOUR MIND. ONCE YOU ARE MARRIED AND HAVE CHILDREN, YOU WON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO STUDY GOD'S WORD.



IF WE ARE **RESTLESS** AND UNABLE TO **SLEEP** PROPERLY AT NIGHT, IT COULD BE BECAUSE WE HAVE DISOBEYED GOD'S WORD SOMEWHERE AND HAVE A **BAD CONSCIENCE**. A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS THE BEST **PILLOW** TO SLEEP ON. AND WHEN WE WAKE UP, GOD'S WORD WILL GUIDE US IN EACH STEP OF OUR DAILY LIFE. THAT IS HOW GOD WANTS US TO LIVE.



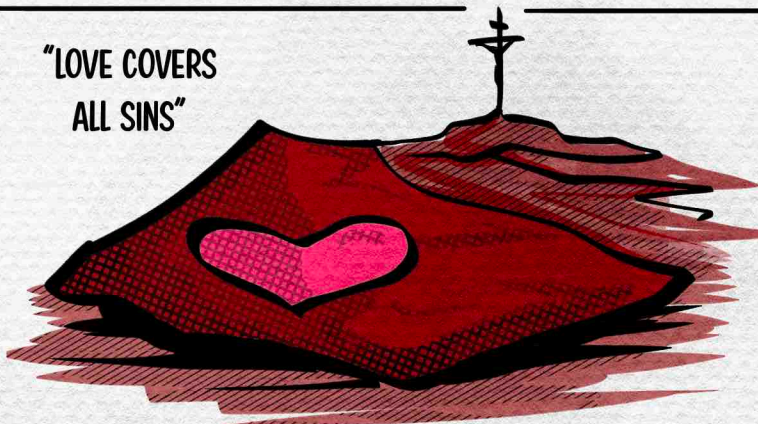
CHAPTER 6:21 EXHORTS US TO BIND GOD'S WORD **CONTINUALLY** ON OUR **HEART**, FOR THEN, "WHEN WE WALK ABOUT, IT WILL GUIDE US, WHEN WE SLEEP IT WILL WATCH OVER US, AND WHEN WE WAKE UP, IT WILL TALK TO US" (6:22). GOD'S WORD WILL GUIDE US AND KEEP US, DAY AND NIGHT.



CHAPTER 7 TELLS THE STORY OF A VERY **FOOLISH** YOUNG MAN WHO VISITS A LOOSE WOMAN WITHOUT ANY MORALS. IT IS A **STRONG** WARNING TO YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE CAREFUL OF ALL **FRIENDSHIPS** AND **ASSOCIATIONS** WITH WOMEN. ONE STEP LEADS TO ANOTHER VERY **QUICKLY** IN THIS AREA; WOMEN HAVE RUINED THE LIVES OF MANY FINE YOUNG BELIEVERS AND ROBBED THEM OF THE MINISTRY THAT GOD HAD PLANNED FOR THEM. **YOUNG MEN** SHOULD READ THIS CHAPTER **FREQUENTLY**.

CHAPTER 8 SPEAKS ABOUT **WISDOM** (PICTURED AS A WISE WOMAN) INVITING PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO HER. "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO LISTENS TO ME, WATCHING DAILY AT MY **GATES**" (VERSE 34). WE MUST LISTEN TO WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY TO US EVERY **MORNING** AND **THROUGHOUT** THE DAY. THAT WILL PROTECT US FROM MANY DANGERS. CHAPTER 9:1: WISDOM BUILDS A HOUSE (THE CHURCH) ON SEVEN **PILLARS**. THESE **SEVEN PILLARS** ARE LISTED IN **JAMES 3:17**: BEING PURE, PEACEABLE, GENTLE, REASONABLE, FULL OF MERCY, UNWAVERING, AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. THE **CHURCH** IS BUILT ON THESE **PILLARS**.

"LOVE COVERS
ALL SINS"



CHAPTER 10:12 "LOVE COVERS ALL SINS." PETER QUOTES THIS IN HIS EPISTLE (1 PETER 4:8). IF YOU REALLY **LOVE** A PERSON YOU WILL **COVER** HIS WEAKNESSES AND **NOT EXPOSE** THEM. THAT IS HOW GOD HAS DEALT WITH US. HE HAS NOT EXPOSED OUR PAST SINS TO ANYONE. WE MUST **TREAT OTHERS** IN THE SAME WAY THAT **GOD** HAS TREATED US. CHAPTER 17:9: "HE WHO COVERS A TRANSGRESSION SEEKS LOVE." DID SOME- BODY DO YOU SOME WRONG? DID SOMEONE HURT YOU OR INSULT YOU? **FORGIVE IT AND IGNORE IT.**

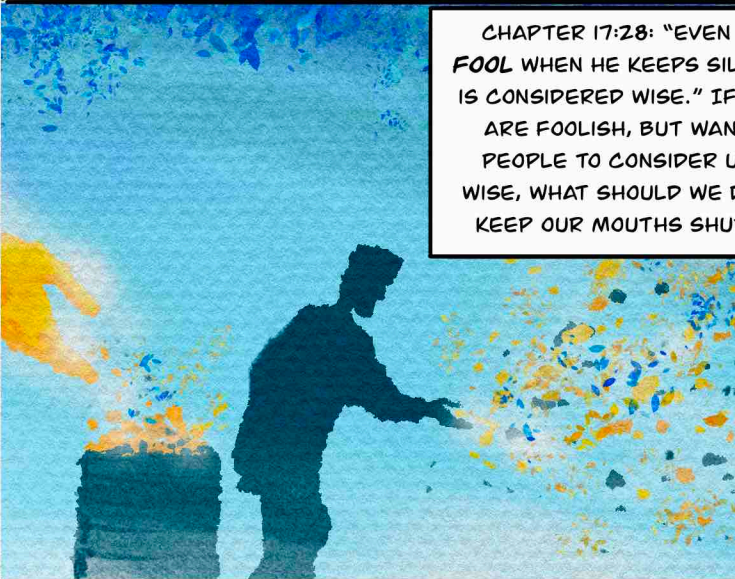


CHAPTER 10:22: "IT IS THE BLESSING OF THE LORD THAT MAKES RICH, AND HE ADDS NO SORROW TO IT." SOME TRANSLATIONS PUT THAT LAST PART AS: "**TOILING** DOES NOT **INCREASE** IT." THE BLESSING OF THE LORD PROVIDES US WITH ALL THAT WE NEED FOR OUR LIFE ON EARTH. SO LET US ALWAYS SEEK FOR THE BLESSING OF THE LORD UPON OUR LIVES.



CHAPTER 11:24: "THERE IS ONE WHO **SCATTERS**, YET INCREASES ALL THE MORE." THIS IS ONE OF THE **PARADOXES** OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE THAT ONE WHO **GIVES** RECEIVES **MORE**, BECAUSE **GOD** BLESSES HIM.

CHAPTER 10:31: "THE MOUTH OF THE **RIGHTEOUS** FLOWS WITH WISDOM." YOU CAN KNOW WHETHER YOU ARE RIGHTEOUS OR NOT BY THE WAY YOU SPEAK. A RIGHTEOUS MAN'S MOUTH ALWAYS COMES FORTH WITH WORDS OF **WISDOM**.
CHAPTER 11:3: "THE INTEGRITY OF THE UPRIGHT MAN WILL GUIDE HIM." GOD LOOKS FOR **INTEGRITY** AND **HONESTY** FIRST OF ALL IN US. AND IF WE ARE HONEST, WE WILL FIND THAT WE ARE GUIDED ARIGHT INTO GOD'S PERFECT WILL.



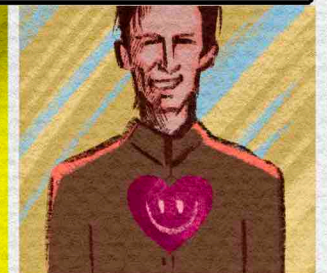
CHAPTER 17:28: "EVEN A **FOOL** WHEN HE KEEPS SILENT IS CONSIDERED WISE." IF WE ARE FOOLISH, BUT WANT PEOPLE TO CONSIDER US WISE, WHAT SHOULD WE DO? KEEP OUR MOUTHS SHUT!!



CHAPTER 12:23: "A WISE MAN CONCEALS KNOWLEDGE". THAT MEANS THAT A WISE MAN IS **RELUCTANT** TO DISPLAY HIS KNOWLEDGE. HE MAY KNOW A GREAT DEAL; BUT HE IS **MODEST** ABOUT IT. A FOOLISH MAN HOWEVER IS READY TO GIVE HIS **OPINION** ON EVERYTHING.

JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED. FREELY GIVE" (MATTHEW 10:8). GOD HAS **FREELY** GIVEN US SO MANY THINGS. WE MUST GIVE TO OTHERS **FREELY** TOO....THE WIDOW IN THE GOSPELS, HAD ONLY TWO MITES. SHE GAVE WHAT SHE HAD, AND I AM SURE THAT GOD HONOURED HER AND SHE SUFFERED NO LACK.

"HE WHO WATERS OTHERS WILL HIMSELF BE WATERED" (VERSE 25). IF YOU WANT GOD TO WATER YOU AND KEEP YOU **FRESH**, YOU MUST WATER OTHERS. WHY ARE MANY CHRISTIANS SO STALE AND **DRY**? BECAUSE GOD IS NOT **WATERING** THEM. AND WHY IS GOD NOT WATERING THEM? BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT WATERING OTHERS. BEGIN TO **THINK** ABOUT THE **NEEDS** OF **OTHERS** AND SEE HOW YOU CAN BLESS THEM. YOU WILL THEN FIND THAT GOD BLESSES **YOU** ABUNDANTLY.



CHAPTER 14:12: "THERE IS A WAY WHICH SEEMS **RIGHT** TO A MAN, BUT ITS END IS THE WAY OF **DEATH**." THIS VERSE IS **REPEATED** IN CHAPTER 16:25. IT IS WISE TO BE **HUMBLE** AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE KNOW ALMOST **NOTHING**. SO LET US SEEK THE LORD FOR HIS WISDOM. EVEN IN THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES, LET US **ACKNOWLEDGE** THAT WE ARE **STUPID** AND **FOOLISH** AND CAN GO TOTALLY ASTRAY IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF IT IF WE ARE NOT GIVEN **REVELATION** BY HIS **SPIRIT**. GOD SAYS TO US, "MY **WAYS** ARE NOT **YOUR WAYS**" (ISAIAH 55:8).

CHAPTER 15:13: "A JOYFUL HEART MAKES A **CHEERFUL** FACE." IT IS JOY IN THE HEART THAT BRINGS BRIGHTNESS ON OUR FACES. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, WE HAVE **RIGHTEOUSNESS** WITH **JOY** IN THE **HOLY SPIRIT**



CHAPTER 16:18: "**PRIDE** GOES BEFORE DESTRUCTION AND A **HAUGHTY** SPIRIT BEFORE A **FALL**." THE REASON ANYONE FALLS INTO **SIN** IS BECAUSE HE IS **PROUD**.

WHEN WE DO SOMETHING STUPID, WE CAN BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THE CAUSE WAS **PRIDE**. THE **LORD** IS ABLE TO KEEP US FROM **FALLING** (JUDE 24). HOW DOES HE DO THAT? BY HUMBLING US TO **GROUND LEVEL**!

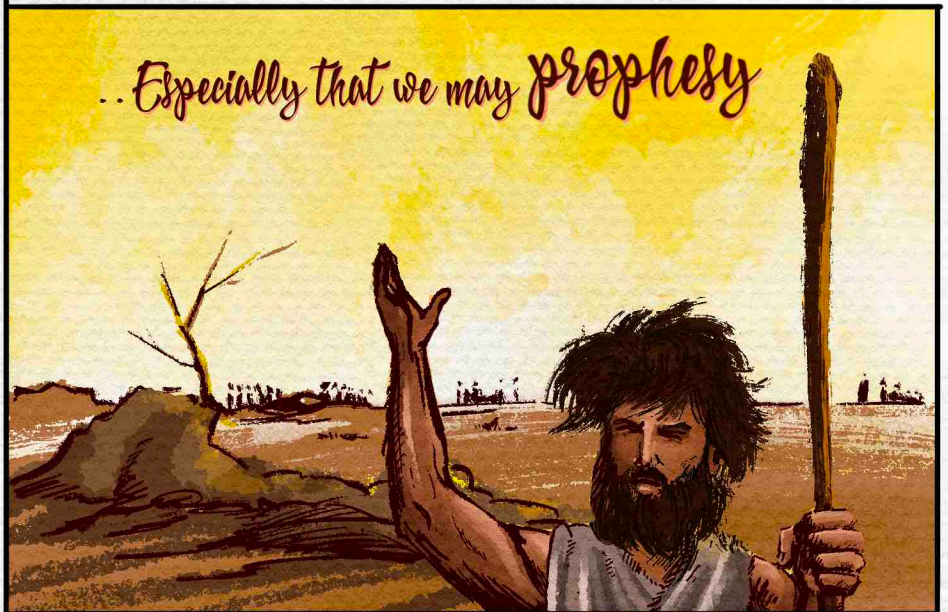
IF WE STAND OR EVEN SIT WE CAN FALL. BUT WHEN WE ARE **FLAT** ON OUR FACES ON THE GROUND, WE **CANNOT** FALL!! SO LET US KEEP OUR **MOUTH** IN THE **DUST** AT ALL TIMES IF WE DON'T WANT TO FALL.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH GOD MAY BLESS US OR USE US, LET US KEEP IN MIND OUR **LITTLENESS** BEFORE GOD. THUS WE WILL BECOME WORSHIPPERS OF GOD; AND WE WILL NEVER FALL. CHAPTER 18:12: "**HUMILITY** GOES BEFORE HONOUR." ARE YOU SEEKING FOR HONOUR FROM GOD? THEN **HUMBLE** YOURSELF.

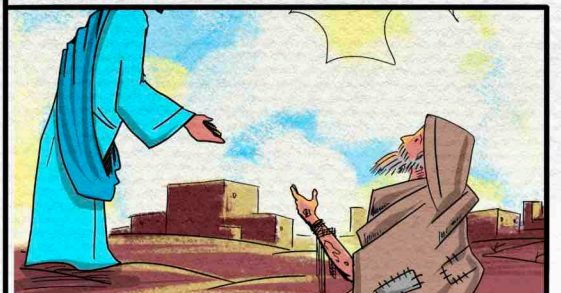


CHAPTER 18:16: "A MAN'S **GIFT** MAKES ROOM FOR HIM AND BRINGS HIM BEFORE GREAT MEN." IT IS THROUGH THE **GIFT** GOD GIVES US THAT HE MAKES ROOM FOR US TO SERVE IN THE **CHURCH**. WE ARE URGED TO "PURSUE AFTER SPIRITUAL GIFTS, ESPECIALLY THAT WE MAY **PROPHECY**" (1 CORINTHIANS 14:1).

TO **PROPHECY** IS TO SPEAK THE WORD OF GOD IN A WAY THAT CHALLENGES, CONVICTS, COMFORTS, ENCOURAGES AND BUILDS UP (1 CORINTHIANS 14:3). GOD DOESN'T GIVE HIS GIFTS TO THOSE WHO DON'T **VALUE** THEM. PEOPLE WILL TRAVEL HUNDREDS OF MILES TO LISTEN TO A MAN WHO HAS A MESSAGE FROM GOD. **JOHN THE BAPTIST** WAS IN THE **WILDERNESS** AND THE PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER JUDEA WENT OUT THERE TO HEAR HIM, BECAUSE HE HAD A MESSAGE FROM **HEAVEN**.



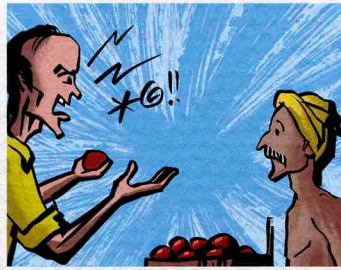
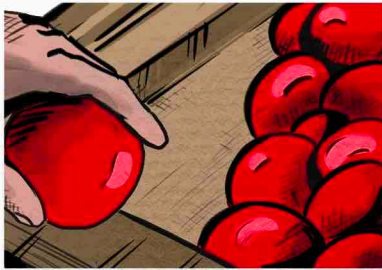
CHAPTER 18:21: "**DEATH** AND **LIFE** ARE IN THE POWER OF THE TONGUE." ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST, TONGUES OF **FIRE** APPEARED OVER THE **DISCIPLES** TO SHOW THAT GOD WANTED TO SET THEIR TONGUES ON **FIRE** WITH THE FIRE OF THE **HOLY SPIRIT**.



CHAPTER 19:17: "HE WHO IS **GRACIOUS** TO A POOR MAN LENDS TO THE **LORD**. AND HE WILL REPAY HIM FOR HIS GOOD **DEED**". THE POOR BELONG TO GOD AND HE CONSIDERS ANYTHING THAT WE DO FOR THE **POOR** AS SOMETHING DONE FOR **HIM**-- AND THAT IS WHY HE PROMISES TO REPAY US FOR OUR KINDNESSES.



JAMES 3:6 SAYS THAT THE TONGUE CAN BE SET ON FIRE WITH THE FIRE OF **HELL** TOO. GIVEN THE CORRUPTION OF OUR FLESH, IT IS ONLY IF OUR TONGUE IS CONTROLLED BY THE **HOLY SPIRIT** THAT WE CAN BE SAVED FROM SPREADING **DEATH** THROUGH OUR TONGUES.

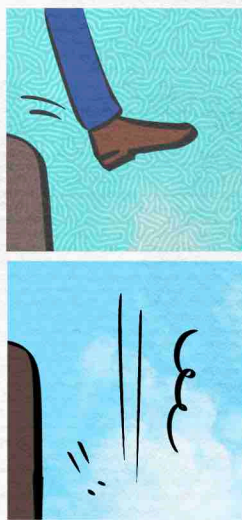


CHAPTER 20:14: "'BAD, BAD,' SAYS THE BUYER, BUT WHEN HE GOES HIS WAY THEN HE BOASTS". MOST PEOPLE USE THIS TECHNIQUE IN INDIA TO GET SOMETHING AT A LOWER PRICE FROM A SHOPKEEPER. I HAVE SEEN BELIEVERS ARGUE EVEN WITH **POOR** VEGETABLE-VENDORS, JUST TO GET SOMETHING FOR ONE RUPEE LESS. IS THAT CHRISTLIKE? THAT POOR MAN IS STRUGGLING TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY. GOD HAS GIVEN YOU FAR MORE THAN HIM. BE **GENEROUS**. LET US BE **GOOD** TO THE PEOPLE AROUND US, AND ESPECIALLY TO THE **POOR**.

CHAPTER 21:2: "EVERY MAN'S WAY IS **RIGHT** IN HIS **OWN** EYES, BUT THE LORD WEIGHS THE **HEARTS**." GOD LOOKS AT THE **MOTIVE** MORE THAN THE **ACTION**. WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT. CHAPTER 22:4: "THE REWARD OF **HUMILITY** AND THE **FEAR** OF THE LORD ARE RICHES, HONOUR AND LIFE."



CHAPTER 21:19: "IT IS BETTER TO LIVE IN A DESERT LAND THAN WITH A CONTENTIOUS AND VEXING WOMAN." HERE WE SEE WHAT GOD THINKS ABOUT A **NAGGING** WIFE.

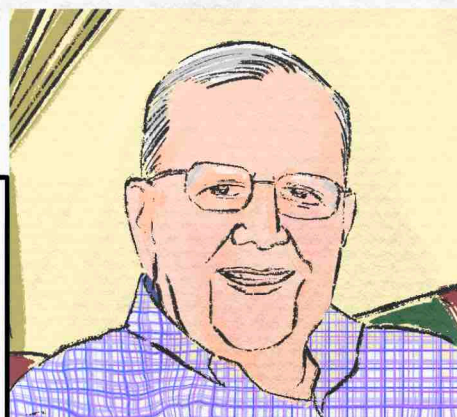


CHAPTER 21:13: "HE WHO SHUTS HIS EAR TO THE CRY OF THE **POOR** WILL ALSO CRY HIMSELF AND NOT BE ANSWERED." GOD TREATS US AS WE TREAT **OTHERS** -- **ESPECIALLY** THE **POOR**. THIS IS WHY GOD DOES **NOT** ANSWER THE PRAYERS OF MANY BELIEVERS.

CHAPTER 22:29: "DO YOU SEE A MAN **SKILLED** IN HIS WORK? HE WILL STAND BEFORE **KINGS**."



CHAPTER 22:6, 15: "TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO. EVEN WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT. IF A CHILD IS DISCIPLINED **WISELY** IN **LOVE**, HE WILL FOLLOW THE LORD WHEN HE **GROWS** UP AND LEAVES HOME TO FACE AN **EVIL** WORLD.



THIS IS A GOOD VERSE TO APPLY TO THE **DISCIPLINED** STUDY OF GOD'S **WORD** AND TO DILIGENCE IN SERVING THE LORD. GOD WILL OPEN MANY DOORS OF MINISTRY FOR SUCH A MAN TO SERVE HIS **CHILDREN** (WHO ARE THE **REAL** **KINGS** ON EARTH).

CHAPTER 23:22: "LISTEN TO YOUR FATHER WHO BEGOT YOU AND DON'T **DESPISE** YOUR MOTHER WHEN SHE IS **OLD**." MANY CHILDREN TODAY UNFORTUNATELY, DO NOT HONOUR AND RESPECT THEIR AGED PARENTS. THIS IS NOT ONLY **SAD**, BUT **EVIL**.



CHAPTER 23:31: "DON'T LOOK ON THE **WINE** WHEN IT IS RED, WHEN IT SPARKLES IN THE CUP." THIS IS AN EXHORTATION TO AVOID ALL **HIGHLY-FERMENTED WINE**..(ANY DRINK WITH A HIGH CONTENT OF **ALCOHOL**). THE WINE THAT JESUS DRANK AND THAT HE MADE AT CANA MUST THEREFORE HAVE BEEN HOME-MADE WINE THAT WAS NOT HIGHLY FERMENTED -- BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT JESUS OBEYED ALL OF GOD'S WORD AND SO HE MUST HAVE OBEYED THIS VERSE TOO.



CHAPTER 24:11, 12: "DELIVER THOSE WHO ARE BEING TAKEN AWAY TO DEATH. IF YOU SAY, 'SEE, WE DID NOT KNOW THIS,' DOES HE NOT CONSIDER IT WHO WEIGHS THE **HEARTS**?" THIS VERSE CAN BE TAKEN TODAY AS A CHALLENGE TO ENGAGE IN **EVANGELISM**. THE WORLD AROUND US NEEDS TO HEAR THE **GOSPEL** AND WE NEED TO GIVE IT TO THEM.

PREPARE YOUR WORK OUTSIDE..



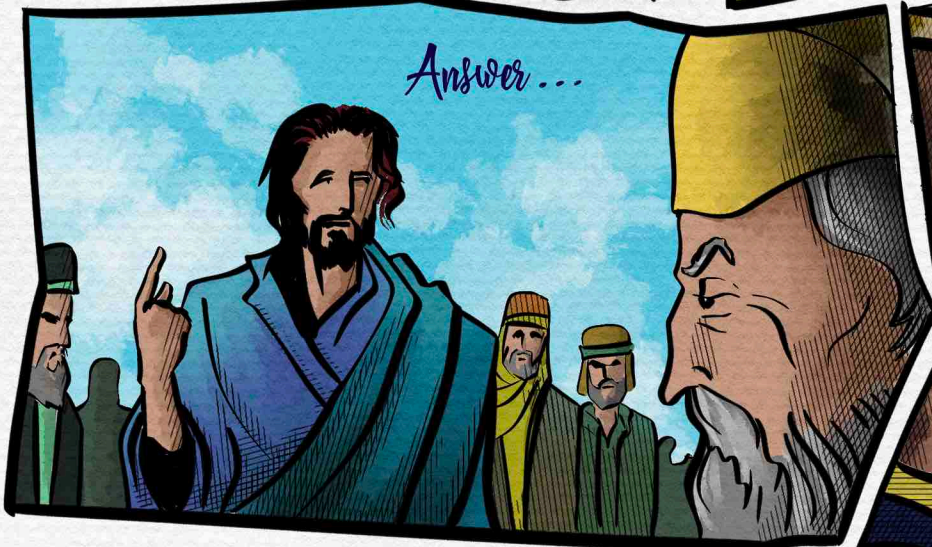
CHAPTER 24:27: "PREPARE YOUR WORK OUTSIDE AND MAKE IT READY FOR YOURSELF IN THE FIELD; **AFTERWARDS** THEN, BUILD YOUR HOUSE." THIS IS GOOD ADVICE FOR ALL YOUNG MEN CONSIDERING MARRIAGE. **FIRST** GET A JOB, THEN GET MARRIED. EARN ENOUGH MONEY TO SUPPORT A FAMILY, AND THEN LOOK FOR A WIFE TO BUILD YOUR FAMILY.



CHAPTER 24:30--34: HERE WE READ OF A **LAZY** MAN WHO DIDN'T TAKE CARE OF HIS FIELD AND SO THE FIELD WAS COVERED WITH THORNS. HE SLEPT WHILE OTHERS WERE WORKING. A **DILIGENT** MAN WILL HAVE A GOOD GARDEN AND A BLESSED MINISTRY. A **LAZY** MAN HOWEVER WILL HAVE MANY **REGRETS** BOTH ON EARTH AND IN ETERNITY.



CHAPTER 25:14: "LIKE CLOUDS AND WIND WITHOUT RAIN IS A MAN WHO BOASTS OF HIS GIFTS **FALSELY**." THERE ARE MANY PREACHERS TODAY, WHO CLAIM TO HAVE GIFTS OF HEALING AND OTHER SUPERNATURAL GIFTS, WHO ARE ONLY FOOLING **SIMPLE-MINDED** BELIEVERS. THAT IS COMPARED HERE TO A FARMER SEEING CLOUDS IN THE SKY AND HOPING THAT HIS FIELDS WILL GET RAIN, AND GETTING NOTHING! DON'T EVER CLAIM TO HAVE A GIFT THAT YOU DON'T HAVE. IF YOU HAVE A GIFT, IT WILL BE **EVIDENT** TO OTHERS.



CHAPTER 26:4 SAYS, "DO NOT ANSWER A FOOL ACCORDING TO HIS FOLLY". BUT THE VERY NEXT VERSE SAYS, "ANSWER A FOOL ACCORDING TO HIS FOLLY" (VERSE 5). JESUS ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS THAT HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM. BUT WHEN THE **PHARISEES** ASKED HIM QUESTIONS, HE DID NOT GIVE THEM SUCH CLEAR REPLIES. AND TO **HEROD**, HE GAVE **NO** REPLY AT ALL.



CHAPTER 26:27: "HE WHO **DIGS** A PIT WILL FALL INTO IT; AND HE WHO **ROLLS** A **STONE**, IT WILL COME **BACK** ON HIM." THIS IS A WARNING THAT THOSE WHO SEEK TO **HARM** OTHERS WILL FIND THE EVIL THEY PLAN COMING BACK TO HARM THEM. **HAMAN** IS ONE EXAMPLE OF THIS.

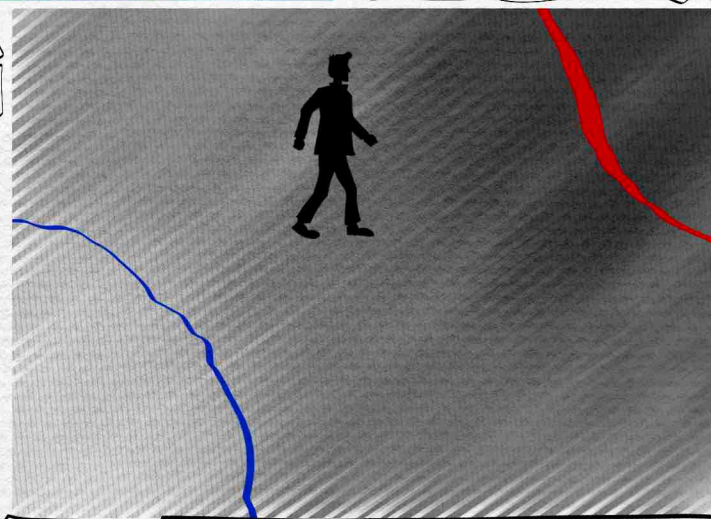


CHAPTER 27:1: "DO NOT BOAST ABOUT TOMORROW FOR YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT A DAY MAY BRING FORTH." JAMES TELLS US THAT WE MUST RECOGNISE THAT WE **CANNOT** BE **CERTAIN** WHETHER WE WILL LIVE FOR EVEN A SINGLE MORE DAY (JAMES 4:15).



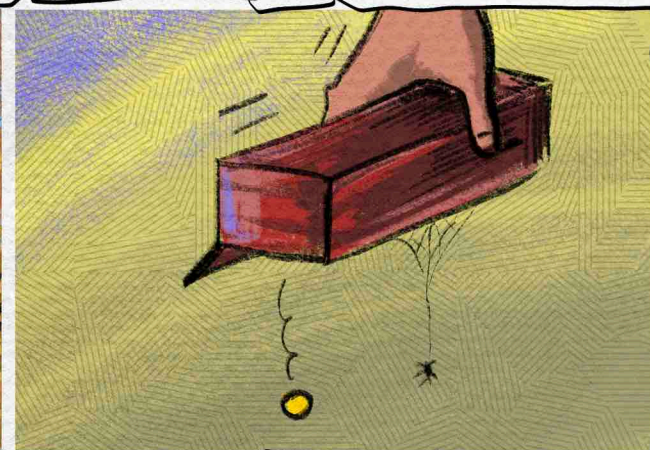
CHAPTER 27:23: "KNOW WELL THE CONDITION OF YOUR FLOCKS AND PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR HERDS." THAT IS A GOOD WORD FOR THOSE WHO ARE SHEPHERDS OF GOD'S FLOCK. A GOOD ELDER WILL KNOW THE **SPIRITUAL** CONDITION OF EVERY ONE OF THE BELIEVERS IN HIS CHURCH.

CHAPTER 27:2: "LET **ANOTHER** MAN PRAISE YOU AND NOT YOUR OWN MOUTH." THERE IS A LOT OF **SELF-PROMOTION** IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY, WHICH IS TOTALLY **FOREIGN** TO THE SPIRIT OF **CHRIST**.

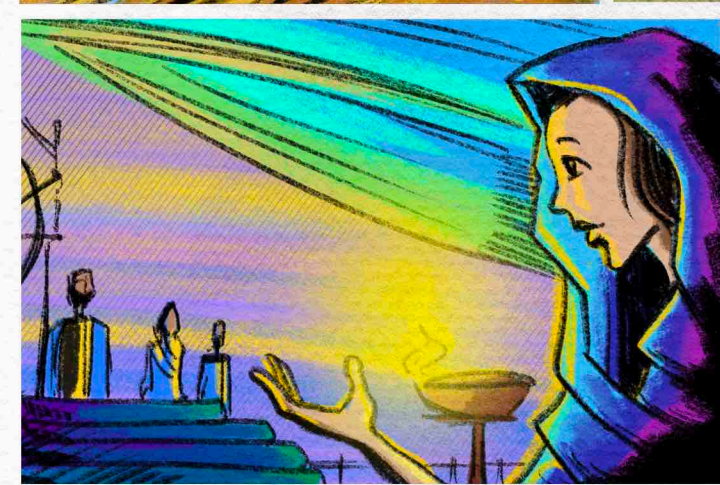


CHAPTER 28:13: "HE WHO CONCEALS HIS SINS WILL NOT PROSPER. BUT HE WHO CONFESSES AND **FORSAKES** THEM WILL FIND MERCY." THAT IS ONE OF THE CLEAREST VERSES IN THE BIBLE THAT TEACHES THAT CONFESSING OUR SINS TO GOD IS NOT ENOUGH. WE NEED TO **GIVE** THEM UP TOO.

CHAPTER 29:1: "A MAN WHO HARDENS HIS NECK AFTER MUCH REPROOF WILL SUDDENLY BE BROKEN BEYOND REMEDY." NO-ONE SHOULD KEEP ON TAKING **ADVANTAGE** OF GOD'S MERCY AND GOODNESS, BECAUSE HE WILL SUDDENLY FIND ONE DAY THAT HE HAS CROSSED "THE **RED LINE**" .HE CAN NEVER BE SAVED THEREAFTER.



CHAPTER 30 WAS WRITTEN BY A MAN NAMED AGUR. IN VERSE 7, 8, HE SAYS GIVE ME NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES.". PAUL, HOWEVER, SAID, "IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME WHETHER I AM POOR OR RICH. I CAN HANDLE **BOTH**" (PHILIPPIANS 4:12).



CHAPTER 31 WAS WRITTEN BY A KING NAMED LEMUEL AND HE LISTS SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HIS MOTHER TAUGHT HIM. AFTER SOME GOOD ADVICE IN VERSES 1 TO 9, WE COME TO THE LAST SECTION, VERSES 10--31. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT SECTION FOR ALL YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, BECAUSE IT TELLS US THE QUALITIES OF A GODLY WIFE. SHE WORKS WITH HER HANDS AND IS A VERY **HARD** WORKING PERSON. SHE GETS UP **EARLY** AND COOKS THE MEALS. SHE IS **ENTERPRISING** TOO. SHE MAKES CLOTHES AND SELLS THEM. SHE IS **DIGNIFIED** AND SHE SPEAKS WITH **WISDOM**. SHE HAS THE LAW OF KINDNESS ON HER TONGUE. SO WE SEE THAT HER HANDS ARE **HARD** AND HER TONGUE IS **SOFT**. UNFORTUNATELY, WITH MANY YOUNG SISTERS TODAY, THINGS ARE EXACTLY THE **OPPOSITE**. THEIR HANDS ARE SOFT (BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEVER WORKED HARD) AND THEIR TONGUE IS HARD (THEY ARE PROUD AND RUDE).