

Gleanings from the Book of Proverbs: The Tongue – Continued

Scripture Reading: Psalm 31:19-24

David's words, in this Psalm, certainly show the good influence he had on his son Solomon (Proverbs 4:1-9). As we consider more of what Solomon had to say about the tongue, let's take a moment to consider his father's words in Psalm 31:19-24:

When people fear / honor the Lord in their heart and demonstrate their trust in Him publicly, they can know that God has committed Himself to them with much goodness, which He will demonstrate publicly (Psalm 31:19).

Unknown and unseen to others, God allows His people to dwell in His presence where they can find strength and take counsel from the Lord. He protects them in an invisible pavilion – a shelter where the proud plots and words of man cannot hurt them (Psalm 31:20).

God's kindness and love support us when we are attacked. It is like we are in a fortress / a walled city which is besieged. We are not alone. God is with us (Psalm 31:21).

Sometimes we struggle with doubt, but God is still there and hears our heart-cries. Focus on why you love the Lord and encourage yourself with His promises. God will be faithful to preserve us, and to give us strength (Psalm 31:22-24).

With encouragement like this, we should not only persevere, but also gain help for how we think of God and speak of God, to the encouragement of others! May God be blessed by our tongues! See Psalm 19:14; 34:1-3; 51:15; 145:1-21.

This is the third lesson on "*The Tongue*." It is a topic that permeates the Bible. It is not really just about our words. It's about our hearts, our attitudes, and our actions, with other people, and also before God. We have looked at the power of life and death in the tongue. We have compared wisdom and discernment with foolishness. We have compared truth and lies, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred' We have also considered the matters of flattery, gossip, and slander. This lesson will deal with anger, self-control, and diplomacy.

Beware of an angry tongue – whether it is yours or somebody else's.

Proverbs 12:16; 14:17,29; 19:19; 21:24; 29:22; 30:33 – A wrathful tongue creates a reputation for foolishness and shame. A wrathful person will live in a cycle of conflict and trouble.

Proverbs 15:1,18; 16:32; 19:11; 29:8 – When one person doesn't control their attitude or their tongue, it is important that someone else does.

Proverbs 27:3; 22:24; 26:4-5; 29:9 – To have angry people in your life is like continually holding a heavy weight. It is burdensome to handle, like moving a lot of sand with a shovel. Angry people cause you to always be on guard. There is no rest. You must avoid the temptation to become like them. Avoid them.

Consider Philippians 2:1-3,14-16

Beware of too much talking – whether it is you or someone else.

Proverbs 10:19 cp. Ecclesiastes 5:1-3,7 – Talkativeness can easily get out of control and get you into trouble. It promotes foolishness, vanity, and sinfulness. It is like over-driving your headlights at night (when someone drives their car too fast for the visibility provided by the headlights – cp. talking more than what we are carefully thinking.). In Proverbs 18:21, “*love it*” means “*love the tongue*” (i.e. love to talk). This is another warning.

“Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.” (Psalm 141:3)