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Protection from Wicked People 2: 12-22

A proverb is a short and memorable saying designed to be our blueprint for living in the world that ADONAI has created. It is important to note that proverbs are not promises; they are generally true principles, all other things being equal.



Deliverance from the man with perverted speech (2:12-15): With **the wisdom of God** rooted in our hearts, we are fortified against two temptations that we face in our fallen world. **Lady Wisdom (to see link click [Am](#) - Lady Wisdom's Rebuke of the Foolish)** will save you from wicked people, from men of perverted speech. From those who left the straight paths to walk in darkness, who delight in doing evil and rejoice in the twisted ways of evil, whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in all their ways (2:12-15 Hebrew). The key in **verse 12** is **men of perverted speech**.

They are often highly impressive, successful, and formidable **men**. You secretly hope that **they** will include you in **their** "inner ring" at the office, the dorm, or recording studio. Over coffee and in a friendly conversation, the hint will come that

they want you, **they** are welcoming you in. It will mean a little bending of the rules now and then, but cool people are never held back by that! In your insecurity, you want to be included. But if you take that step, the next time you will go further away from **Messiah**, and the next time further still. You might end up in a scandal or even in prison . . . or you might end up on top of the heap. But either way, you will be a fool, with a heart that loves darkness.

Here is what you need to know, so that your heart can stay on alert as you move among such men this week. **Perverted speech** is not limited to bad words or dirty jokes. It even includes good words, but good words being used to turn things upside down. Upheaval, turning things upside down and inside out – that is the force of the Hebrew behind the word **perverted**. Words should represent reality, they should be true to what is; but words can be used to twist reality, words can be used to flip meanings into their opposite. In politics, for example, listen for the way people use a good word like “patriotism.” In sociology, listen for the way people use a good word like “family.” In the congregations of **God**, listen for the way people use a good word like “Jesus.” Bad men use good words to smuggle in bad realities, and some people are fooled. However, if **wisdom** has entered your heart, tricky words just won’t pass the smell test. You might not be able to explain what bothers you, but you will know darkness when you see it, and be protected by **the wisdom** that **ADONAI** gives us.

Deliverance from the adulteress with seductive words (2:16-19): Lady Wisdom will save you from the immoral woman, from the adulterous woman with her seductive words, who has abandoned her husband and ignores the covenant she made before God (2:16-17 NIV). The key in **verse 16** is **her seductive words**. Again, words are what you must watch for. When a married **woman** says to another man, “**I** want you, you’re handsome, you make **me** feel alive again” . . . that **woman**, even though **she** might appear to be spiritual, has forsaken the man **she** fell in love with and **has ignored her covenant before God**. **She** is not in love, **she’s** in lust; **her** husband means nothing to **her**, and **she** wants *you* involved in this sordid mess?

There is no such thing as a one-night stand. It isn’t that simple. It gets complicated. Fast. **Entering her house leads to death, it is the road to the grave. The man who visits her is doomed. He will never regain the paths of life (2:18-19 NLT).** We need nothing less than an almighty **Savior** to remove us from the bondage of sexual sin (see my commentary on **Deuteronomy Br - Do Not Commit Adultery**). Thank you **Yeshua**! But since **wisdom** has entered your heart,

you will know what to do, right then and there, at the moment of temptation. Run for the hills (see **Genesis Ji - Potiphar's Wife said: Come to Bed with Me! But Joseph Ran**)! If you are married, go home to your wife, look deeply into her eyes, tell her you love her, and give your heart to her completely, for the sheer joy of it, all over again. If you are single, go home, kneel down in prayer, and give yourself, body and soul, all over again to your **Savior** and **Lord**. This is **wisdom** that is protecting you.⁵⁹

Protection by the path of righteousness (2:20-22): So follow the steps of the good, and stay on the paths of the righteous (2:20 NLT). For the upright will live in the Land, and the blameless will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the Land, and the treacherous will be uprooted from it (2:21-22 Hebrew). In this file, **the path** metaphor emerges once again. The people from whom **the father** hopes **the son** will avoid are those who have left **the path** of **wisdom** and are now on **the crooked path** of **evil**. But **wisdom** is more than just avoiding sin; **wisdom** also leads us onto **the path** of **righteousness**.

The last two verses of **Chapter Two** reveal **Solomon** inviting **his** readers to understand **God's** covenant with **Isra'el**. The language used here is the covenant language of **the Torah**. As **Moses** said to **Isra'el**, "**Now if you listen obediently to the voice of ADONAI your God, taking care to do all His mitzvot that I am commanding you today, He will set you on high - above all the nations of the earth. Then all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of ADONAI your God**" (Deuteronomy 28:1-2). All the promised **blessings** then listed had to do with **the Land**: good crops, victory over enemies occupying **the Land**, and a **blessing** over country and city dwelling in **the Land** (see **Deuteronomy Fe - Blessings for Obedience**).

However, it wasn't all good news. **Moshe** continued: **But if you will not listen to the voice of ADONAI your God, to take care to do all His mitzvot and statutes that I am commanding you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you (Deuteronomy 28:15)**. The **curses** listed then perfectly align with **the blessings**, **cursed** crops, defeat by the enemies in **the Land**, and a **curse** over country and city dwellings (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Ff - Curses for Disobedience**). So, when **Solomon** speaks of **the upright** having a permanent dwelling in **the Land** and **the wicked** being **cut off**, the reference is understood to be in terms of **God's covenant** with **Isra'el** (see the commentary on **Genesis Eg - I am the LORD, Who Brought You Out of Ur of the Chaldeans**

to Give You This Land). Also, the word **cut off** comes from the same root (Hebrew: *karat*) used both for the **cutting of the covenant (Genesis 15:18a)**, and for **cutting off** those who fail to obey it (*karat* is used twenty-one times in **the Torah** for **cutting off** offenders from **the covenant people**). Clearly, **Solomon** is relating **wisdom** and **Torah**.⁶⁰

Interestingly, **the rabbis interpret nearly everything in Proverbs as referring to either the study of Torah or the lack of knowledge of Torah. Regarding Proverbs 1:20, Rashi states, “The wisdom of the Torah cries out in her streets to admonish [the people] to turn to them [the streets]. What are her streets? The study halls!” As Proverbs 2:21-22 shows, Solomon intended for wisdom to be related to and operate alongside the Torah. By studying and leading a life according to the Torah, “the upright will live in the Land,” also has a far eschatological context as well. As Rashi notes, the upright will live in the Messianic Kingdom but the wicked will descend to Sh’ol (see Af – Sh’ol). The promise of verse 21 is the same as found in Psalm 37:7 and 11, and Proverbs 10:30. The Land of ADONAI promised the patriarchs, is intended for God’s people whom He brought from the house of bondage in Egypt.**⁶¹

While this is, no doubt, reading a bit too much of **rabbinical ideas** about the study of **Torah** into the text, the basic interpretation is not far off. As **Proverbs 2:21-22** shows, **Solomon** intended for **wisdom**, as presented in **Proverbs**, to be related to and operate alongside **the Torah**. **Thus, Solomon’s whole way of presenting wisdom systematically for the learner is a way to teach Torah in its most practical form.** To be sure, **wisdom** is not identical with **Torah** and often extends beyond **its** strict mitzvot, but there is a great deal of overlap. Hence, **wisdom** can be seen as a great pleasure. It is a part of **God’s** revelation, for **ADONAI gives wisdom (2:6)**. In learning **wisdom**, a person will learn **righteousness, justice, and fairness**. Put into practice, these would have saved the righteous of the TaNaKh (and us today) from the consequences of sin that are faced daily by **those who speak deceitfully (Proverbs 2:12)**. Also, a regular supply of **wisdom** and **righteousness** will save one from the snares of sexual sin **(2:16-19)**. These benefits alone are a treasure, but **wisdom** will do even more. **It** will be a part of a right relationship with **ADONAI**. For **Solomon’s** original audience, this involved a literal, physical covenant of **blessing in the land of Isra’el**. But even for modern readers – both Jews and Gentiles – the basic principle is the same: **God** will **bless the righteous** and punish the wicked in this life. **Proverbs** give us a blueprint for

living. So, **wisdom** and **righteousness** will bring peace and **blessing**.⁶²

Lady Wisdom is saying in **Proverbs Chapter 2**, “**If** you seek newness of life in **Messiah** (see **An - Seek Wisdom**), **if** you will go deep within **Him**, and change within yourself (see **Ao - ADONAI Gives Wisdom**), **then** you’ll be prepared for life in the real world (see **Ap - Protection from Wicked People**).⁶³

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, praise **You** that **You** always abide in me (**John 14:23**). I do not have to wonder if you are busy elsewhere in the world handling big issues, for **Your** Presence fills the earth! How wonderful that **You** are always listening and watching over me, no matter what time of the day or the night it is! Though **David** was sought after by **Sha’ul** and **he** had to flee for **his** life, **You** were always watching and kept **Sha’ul** from killing **him**. **You** are never asleep nor busy. **My help comes from ADONAI, Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip. Your Keeper will not slumber. Behold, the Keeper of Isra’el neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalms 121:3-4). Your** love and **wisdom** both protected **David** from harm and allowed the trials to mold **him** to be the **wise** and strong **king** that **You** had promised **him** in the future. **You** never let a trial creep in that will hurt me. **Your** hands are both Mighty and gentle and **You** use the trial to perfect character. **We also boast in suffering - knowing that suffering produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Ruach ha-Kodesh who was given to us (Romans 5:3-5).** Thank you for always being right there with me to help and to guide, and for upholding me with **Your righteous right hand. Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Surely I will help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).** In **Messiah Yeshua’s** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*