

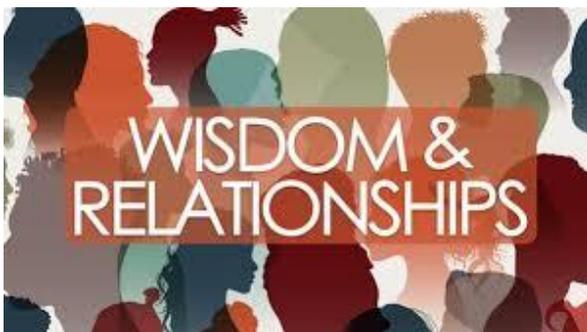
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Wisdom in Relationships

3: 27-35

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.

Proverbs Chapter 3 explains why **wisdom** matters and what **wisdom** creates. **Wisdom** matters, according to **3:13-26**, because **wisdom** is the open secret of the universe. It is not a private opinion, take it or leave it. **Wisdom** is how life works! We can disregard that for a while and get away with it, because **ADONAI** built it so well. But we want the last chapter of our stories to be the best, don't we? So **wisdom** matters. **Wisdom** also creates something, according to **3:27-35**. **Wisdom** creates a culture of life amid this culture of death called **the world (First John 2:15-16)**. **Wisdom** builds godly relationships. It is a shared experience of life in its **fullness (John 10:10)**. **Solomon** makes **three points** about this new culture of life: **help your needy neighbor, protect your innocent neighbor, and avoid your violent neighbor.**⁹⁷



Help your needy neighbor: First, in a culture of life, people help each other as much as they can. We cannot do the impossible. We cannot give what we do not have. But when it is in our power to do it, **wisdom** says, "Give it away." The grace of **Yeshua** taught the Apostle Paul to say: **I am a debtor (Romans 1:14 BLB)**. He did not see himself as a demander but **a debtor**. Nobody owed him a hearing. He

earned the right to be heard by loving people the way **ADONAI** loved him - graciously. Therefore the proverb says to us: **Do not withhold good from its owners when it's in your power to help them (3:27 Hebrew)**. If you have **good** that you can do for someone, then legally you own it, but morally they own it. You cannot be forced to be generous. But we sin against each other not only by the bad things we do, but also the **good** things we withhold. **Yeshua** withheld no good thing from you. Okay, now we know how to build a culture of life, by **His** power. We have opportunities all around us to breathe life into many people. We cannot do everything. But we must do something, for **His** sake. If we have the ability, they have the ownership. And we owe it today, not tomorrow.⁹⁸

Sometimes procrastination is a legitimate response to a trivial task. But because love is what matters most, it takes top priority. The Bible stresses it repeatedly. It says: **Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone (Galatians 6:10 NLT); use every chance you have for doing good (Ephesians 5:16 NCV).**⁹⁹ **Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back tomorrow, and then I'll help you" (Proverbs 3:28 Hebrew)**. We miss many opportunities for serving because we lack sensitivity and spontaneity. Great opportunities to serve never last long. You may only get one chance to serve that person, so take advantage of it.¹⁰⁰

Protect your innocent neighbor: **Trust** is the glue that holds a culture of life together. What do a husband and wife, for example, most need from each other? **Trust**. **The Lord** calls us to **trust Him** completely (**to see link click Ar - Straight Talk about Trust**), because **trust** is the basis on which real relationships can happen. We all know what it's like to **trust** someone and then have them turn on us. It's painful because **trust** is so profound. What then does **Lady Wisdom** say to us here (see **Am - Lady Wisdom's Rebuke of the Foolish**)? Negatively, **do not plot hard against your neighbor, for those who live nearby trust you (3:29 NLT)**. **Do not accuse a man without cause, when he has done you no harm (3:30 BSB)**. That is the culture of death. But heaven has come down to us through **Yeshua Messiah**. **He** defended us when we deserved judgment. Therefore, let's stick up for our innocent neighbors. This is wisdom, creating a culture of safety in a world that only wants to attack us.

Avoid your violent neighbor: Too many times today it seems as if the wicked prosper, and we are tempted to **envy** them. Asaph declared: **Surely God is good to Isra'el, to the pure in heart. But as for me, my feet almost slipped. My**

steps nearly slid out from under me. For I envied the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked (Psalm 73:1-3). But ADONAI says that's an abomination. In other words, it turns God's stomach. Therefore, Solomon directs us: Do not envy violent people or copy their ways (3:31 NLT). For the devious person is an abomination to ADONAI and He curses the house of the wicked. God loves to defend those whom no one else defends. He's not standing aloof; He is no spectator. But He takes the upright into His confidence and blesses the home of the righteous (3:32 NIV and 3:33 CJB). ADONAI mocks the mockers, but is gracious to the humble (3:34 NLT). The Septuagint translates verse 34 in a way that you might be familiar with: God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (quoted in James 4:6b). We can all do that, depending on how we understand verse 35. The wise will inherit honor, but fools are put to shame (3:35 NLT). Who are the wise? Who are the fools? Who really are the winners and the losers in this world? How you answer that question reveals how you see the cross of Yeshua. The world sees the cross as being for losers and failures and weaklings and outsiders. But those who placed their faith in the Son of God see the cross as representing everything to be admired and embraced and remembered . . . and trusted.¹⁰¹

Dear heavenly Father, praise You for loving me so that the last chapter of my life will be fantastic! In the book of life, the chapters are short and go by quickly, but the last chapter is so long - for all eternity! Living life with our eyes focused on pleasing you for all eternity, is wisdom. What matters most is to focus life's time and energy on what is eternal. When I honor You as my most passionate desire - then I am at peace (Philippians 4:6-7).

David's heart was set on pleasing God and even when he was forced to flee for his life and was so very thirsty in the wilderness. O God, You are my God, earnestly I seek You. My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. Not only did David not complain, but he turned his heart to praising God! Since Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You (Psalms 63:1 and 3).

Peace and joy fill my heart when I praise You, especially in a hard time, for I recognize that You are in control. You, God, have the final word and are working it all out to Your glory. The Great Sanhedrin called in the apostles, flogged them, ordered them not to continue speaking in the name of Yeshua, and let them go. So they left their presence, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to be dishonored on account of His name. And every



day, in the Temple and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming Yeshua as the Messiah. (Acts 5:40-42).

What a comfort it is to know that **God** withholds **nothing good from those who believe in Him. For ADONAI Elohim is a sun and a shield. ADONAI gives grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (Psalms 84:11).** Thank you for being so loving and wise, who plans for a wonderful last chapter of my life! In **Mesiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen