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## Peace Through Righteousness

### 29: 8-15

**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.**

**Mockers can get a whole city agitated, but the wise will calm everything down (29:8 Hebrew). Mockers are radical fools. They not only lack wisdom; they also ridicule those who do. When they have influence over a city, whether officially or by their own allegations, they get the whole city agitated. They are those who would take a bad situation and intensify it into a riot. On the other hand, the wise are coolheaded. In a bad situation, they would calm everyone down for the good of the community.**



The result of **righteousness will be peace, quietness, and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest (Isaiah 32:17-18).** This is seen more clearly in the progressive revelation of the B'rit Chadashah. The person who has received the grace of **ADONAI's** forgiveness is at **peace** with **Him. For He Himself is our peace (Ephesians 2:14a).** When **Yeshua's** character is central in our lives, we don't have to lean upon others to supply our own needs. The fact that this has not

produced significant long-term changes in the world is a testimony to the extent of our old sin nature. I don't know about your neighborhood, but there is no "Garden of Eden" sign posted in mine!

**The wise debate the stupid, and there is agitation and scoffing with no rest (29:9 Hebrew).** When **the wise** and **fools** get into a **debate**, this **proverb** asserts, there is not a reasoned, logical discussion that leads dispassionately toward resolution. Rather, there is chaos. **The fool** (here called **stupid**) will not listen to corrections (**29:1**) and will just cause more trouble. For this reason, **Proverbs** allows for the possibility of not entering into a **debate** with a **fool** to begin with (**to see link click Dj - How to Deal with the Fool**).<sup>533</sup>

**The bloodthirsty hate the innocent, but the upright seek to preserve his life (29:10 Hebrew).** In the first colon, **bloodthirsty** men loathe the integrity of **the upright**. Because **the wicked** despise all sense of decency or integrity, **they seek** to destroy it. The second colon forms a contrast; literally it reads, *as for the upright, they seek his life*. Normally this is a hostile act, but here the contrast requires the idea of **seek to preserve his life**. **Seek** here means to **seek** the welfare of someone. As a result, it means that **the upright** have a high regard for people of integrity.<sup>534</sup>

**A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man quietly holds it back (29:11 Hebrew).** **Fools** may not listen well, but **they** certainly talk a lot. But **their** talk gets them into trouble and also **agitates** others. **They** are not emotionally intelligent, and **their** talk will often inappropriately express emotions that will only inflame a situation (see **29:8** above). On the other hand, **the wise**, who are coolheaded, speak only when necessary and are helpful. **They** can also clean up the mess started by **the agitation of fools**.

**If a ruler listens to liars, all his advisors will be wicked (29:12 NLT).**

According to this proverb, it all begins with the ruler's lax ethics. If **the ruler** shows **himself** open to unethical influence, then everyone will take advantage of that fact. **A wicked** ruler leads to **wicked** officials serving under **him**. This **proverb** puts the ultimate blame for a troubled reign squarely with the person at the top. In **psalm 101:6b-8**, **David** declares that **he** would not tolerate deception or fraud: **Only the one walking in blamelessness will serve me. No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence. Each morning I silence all the wicked in the Land; I will cut off every evildoer from ADONAI's City** (see the commentary on **Psalms Zd -**

## Pledge of Integrity).

**The poor and the oppressor have this in common: ADONAI gives light to the eyes of both (29:13 CJB).** On the surface of things, nothing could seem to be farther apart than the rich and the poor, especially the rich who exploit the poor in order to get rich. The rich live lives of luxury and ease, while the poor are dirty and scrape by in life. But this proverb points to a very important truth: they are both **created in the image of God. So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them** (see the commentary on [Genesis Ao - Let Us Make Man in Our Image, In Our Likeness](#)). We might imagine that the intention of this **proverb** is to bring hope to **the poor**. Perhaps, however, it is meant to serve as a warning to those who exploit them and treat them like dirt under their feet. Perhaps this **proverb** serves both purposes. In any case it fits in with a group of **proverbs** that urge care for those who are **poor** (29:7 and 13 for example). The **proverb 22:2** closest to **it** in concept as well as form: **The rich and poor have this in common - ADONAI made them both.**<sup>535</sup>

**If a king judges the poor fairly (29:14a NLT).** This verse protects **verse 13** against the misinterpretation that since **God gives life to the oppressor, a king**, who is supposed to represent **God's** rule on earth (16:10-15 and 24:21-22), may be indifferent to **the oppression** of the powerless. In the first colon, **the king** is charged by **ADONAI** to care for all the socially vulnerable. In **Jeremiah 22:16**, when describing good **king Josiah**, **the prophet** noted: **He did what was right and just, so, as a result, all went well with him. He defended the cause of the poor and needy** (see the commentary on [Jeremiah Ai - Josiah Ruled For 31 Years from 640 to 609 BC](#)). Those in power are not to exploit those who are **weak**, but rather to take care of **them**. The second colon refers to the permanence of **God** (Psalm 111:3; Isaiah 57:15; Micah 7:18), notably **His throne**, the symbol of **the king's** authority to rule (Psalm 111:3; Isaiah 57:15; Micah 7:18), which **will last forever** (29:14 NLT).<sup>536</sup>

**The rod and correction produce wisdom, but a mother is disgraced by an undisciplined child (29:15 Hebrew).** Through progressive revelation, the B'rit Chadashah will eventually reveal that we are all sinners from birth (see the commentary on [Romans Bm - The Consequences of Adam](#)), **but the sages believed that people, having a choice in the matter, would do bad things.** Thus, modern Judaism says you are a sinner because you commit acts of sin; but the B'rit Chadashah says you commit acts of sin because you are a sinner.

Nevertheless, in the Dispensation of Torah (see the commentary on **Exodus Da - The Dispensation of the Torah**), the youths were anything but innocent. It takes energy to move from being a fool to being wise. Correction is required, and that often will have to be accompanied by **the rod of correction**. Physical punishment in gaining **wisdom** is a common theme in **Proverbs** (see **Cf - Spare the Rod, Spoil the Child**). With the strong emphasis on kindness throughout the book, this teaching certainly doesn't encourage parental abuse. Indeed, this **proverb** raises the question whether abuse is suffered where there is no discipline in a young person's life. Parents are motivated to do the hard work of **correction** in order to avoid the detrimental effects of rebellion on one's life, and the shame that a wayward child brings on a family.<sup>537</sup>