



APOSTOLIC
PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS'
PULPIT COMMENTARY ON
PROVERBS 23

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COMMENTARY ON PROVERBS 23

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Expository, Hermeneutical, Poetic, and Prophetic
Verse-by-Verse with Jewish Traditional Notes, Hebrew
Word-Gems, and New Testament Correlations
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Introductory word:

Proverbs 23 is a pastor's mirror and a Apostolic Pentecostal pulpit alarm — a chapter that trains the heart to hear, obey and walk in sobriety, generosity and holy fear. Below is a verse-by-verse exposition shaped for Apostolic Pentecostal preaching: literal sense, spiritual/metaphorical meaning, Jewish traditional insight (Rashi/Midrash/Talmudic teaching in summary), key Hebrew word-gems, and New Testament echoes for the pulpit.

Verses 1–3 — Beware the ruler's table

1. “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee;”

- Hebrew gem: “בְּלִיטָשׁ”/”רְמָשׁ” — attend, guard your heart and gaze.
- Jewish note: Rashi warns against flattery and self-exaltation before the dignified.
- Apostolic Pentecostal hermeneutic: In the presence of power, guard your testimony. The throne tests the heart.

- NT parallel: Jesus' warnings about worldly approval; Matthew 6:1 (do not do righteousness to be seen).
- Apostolic Pentecostal Pulpit nugget: Eat at his table, but let the Lord eat at your heart. Beware praise that costs holiness.

2–3. “And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.”

- Hebrew gem: “תַּאֲתָה” (ta'avah) — craving; “רַשְׁבָּה” as fleeting fleshly delight.
- Jewish note: Midrash contrasts appetite with discernment — sensual pleasures can lead to exile of the soul.
- Apostolic Pentecostal meaning: Starve the appetite that would seduce obedience. Fleshly lusts are bait.
- NT echo: 1 Corinthians 6; Romans 13:14; the call to crucify fleshly appetites.
- Prophetic image: Lay the knife of discipline to appetite; keep the appetite for heaven.

Verses 4–5 — Don’t chase riches

4. “Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.”

- Hebrew gem: “עַמְלָה” (amal) — toil; “הַמְּכֹחַ” (chochmah) — human cleverness.
- Jewish note: Talmudic wisdom stresses pious work

but warns about pentecostal reading: Worldly hustle can be idolatry. Trust God's provision, not cunning.

- NT parallel: Matthew 6:19–21; Luke 12:15; James 5:1–3 — the vanity of riches.
- Pulpit line: Quit the chase; riches that chase you will be like a mirage.

5. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

- Hebrew gem: "כָנָף" (kanaph) — wings; imagery of swift departure.
- Jewish note: Midrash likens riches to a bird — they leave when least expected.
- Apostolic application: Store treasure where moth cannot reach — in God's Kingdom.
- NT echo: Luke 12:33–34; Hebrews 13:5.
- Poetic line: Gold with wings is a poor god; hold fast to grace instead.

Verses 6–8 — Beware the stingy host

6. "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:"

- Hebrew gem: "עֵיל רַעַעַת" — evil/greedy eye; covetousness.
- Jewish note: Rashi explains "evil eye" as begrudgingness; the food comes with a heart that is

not with you.

- Apostolic meaning: Accept gifts that bless the soul; decline rewards that bind conscience.
- NT correlation: Acts 5 (Ananias and Sapphira) — hypocrisy in giving; also warnings against tainted fellowship.
- Pulpit counsel: Beware food that costs the soul; better poverty with peace than feasts with a lie.

7–8. “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he... He that eateth and drinketh with thee shall lift up his heel against thee.”

- Hebrew gem: “עַמְּקָה”/“מַקְרָב” — lifting the heel, representing betrayal or scorn.
- Jewish note: The sages note how hidden thoughts govern actions — appearances deceive.
- Apostolic charge: Test the heart of the giver; don’t be caught by hidden malice.
- NT echo: Judas sat at the Lord’s table and betrayed Him (John 13).
- Preacher’s metaphor: A smiling face can hide a lifted heel.

Verse 9 — Speak to the wise, not to fools

9. “Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.”

- Hebrew gem: “כָּסֵל” (kesil) — fool; “אֵזֶן” — ear

(listening heart).

- Jewish note: Torah exhortation to conserve wisdom for those who will profit.
- Apostolic practice: Discern audience; sow wisely; the Spirit opens hearts not hard ones.
- NT echo: Matthew 7:6 (Pearls before swine) and Paul's pastoral discretion.
- Pulpit image: Wisdom wasted on foolish ears becomes sermon wasted.

Verses 10–11 — Respect boundaries and the poor's advocate

10–11. “Remove not the ancient landmark... for their redeemer is strong; he shall plead their cause with thee.”

- Hebrew gem: “לֹבֶג/הַדָּמָם” — boundary/landmark; “לְאֵג” — redeemer (goel).
- Jewish note: This verse is connected to the law of property and the kinsman-redeemer; justice for the poor and inheritance are sacred.
- Apostolic insight: God is the vindicator of the poor and the oppressed. Do not strip the poor of their right.
- NT tie: Jesus' care for the lowly; the church as advocate; James' warnings about partiality.
- Sermon point: Respect God's landmarks — social and spiritual boundaries that protect justice.

Verse 12 — Apply heart to instruction

12. “Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.”

- Hebrew gem: “בְּלֹעַת” (lev) — heart; “מְשֹׁרֶת” (musar) — instruction/discipline.
- Jewish note: Musar literature emphasizes lifelong love of correction.
- Apostolic meaning: Yield heart and ear to the Spirit’s teaching; sanctification is practical.
- NT echo: Hebrews 12 (endures discipline as a son), Colossians 3:16.
- Poetic line: Bend the ear; let heaven’s teacher shape your heart.

Verses 13–14 — Spare not the rod (discipline)

13–14. “Withhold not correction from the child... for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die... Thou shalt deliver his soul from hell.”

- Hebrew gem: “שְׁבֵת” (shevet) — rod; “לֹא שְׁתִּינְחֶה” (lo a shetinach) — death/Sheol.
- Jewish note: Rashi and classical commentators stress parental discipline to steer from destruction; the “rod” is both physical chastening and firm corrective instruction.
- Apostolic hermeneutic: Discipline is an act of love; the Spirit’s chastening (Hebrews 12) saves the soul from paths that lead to ruin.

- NT correlation: Hebrews 12:5–11; Proverbs here prepares the pulpit to teach holy correction with mercy.
- Pulpit exhortation: Love corrects; mercy disciplines — spare not the righteous rod of guidance.

Verses 15–16 — Joy in discipline

15–16. “My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice... I rejoice when thy lips speak right things.”

- Hebrew gem: “שְׁמַחַת” — rejoicing; “פֶּה” — lips.
- Jewish note: Parental delight in repentance and wisdom is a recurrent theme.
- Apostolic meaning: The pastor’s heart rejoices when a life yields to God; repentance is heaven’s music.
- NT echo: Luke 15 (joy over the returning prodigal).
- Prophetic note: A sanctified soul returns joy to older saints; obedience restores.

Verses 17–18 — Do not envy sinners

17–18. “Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord always: for surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.”

- Hebrew gem: “חָנַן” (qanah) — envy; “חָנָן” — fear of the Lord.
- Jewish note: Rashi cautions against lustng after the momentary splendour of the wicked; their end is

known.

- Apostolic sermon: Jealousy of sin steals destiny; fear the Lord and keep your hope.
- NT parallel: 1 Corinthians 3:3 (envy leads to carnality), Hebrews/James on enduring hope.
- Pulpit line: Don't trade the eternal for the glitter of the temporary.

Verses 19–21 — Counsel to the wise; avoid gluttony and drunkenness

19–21. “Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart... Be not among winebibbers... for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty.”

- Hebrew gem: “שֶׁקֶר” (shekhar) — intoxicating drink; is sin “צְבָא” — perish/come to poverty.
- Jewish note: Talmud and Midrash highlight how excess destroys household and nation.
- Apostolic emphasis: Sobriety fuels the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 commands filled with the Spirit, not wine any use of alcohol is sin and will damn your soul to the lake of fire . Ot

- NT tie: Ephesians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 6 (flee sexual immorality that often attends excess).
- Pulpit image: The altar of excess devours families; choose the altar of prayer.

Verses 22–25 — Honor parents and cherish truth
22–23. “Hearken unto thy father that begat thee...

and buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”

- Hebrew gem: “שְׁמַע” (shema) — hear; “קָנָה אֶת הַמְּתָתָה” (kanah emet) — buy truth.
- Jewish note: The command to honor parents is foundational; “buy truth” is a rabbinic motif urging pursuit of Torah at any cost.
- Apostolic reading: Invest life in truth — the Gospel, not passing deceptions. Honor lineage and spiritual heritage.
- NT echo: John 8:32 (truth will make you free); Paul’s call to the truth of the Gospel.
- Preacher’s exhortation: Buy truth with sacrifice; never bargain away doctrine for comfort.

24–25. “The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice... Let thy father and thy mother be glad, and let her that bare thee rejoice.”

- Hebrew gem: “לִפְנֵי”/“שְׁמַע” — exultation and joy.
- Jewish note: Parental joy is a reward of righteous children; a recurring blessing in scripture.
- Apostolic message: Righteous children are the pastor’s fruit; the Church rejoices in sanctified homes.
- NT echo: Luke 2 (parents rejoiced at Simeon’s blessing) and the joy of new converts.
- Poetic line: A righteous child is a hymn rising from

the home to heaven.

Verses 26–28 — Guard your heart from harlotry 26–28. “My son, give me thine heart... for a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.”

- Hebrew gem: “בַּל” (lev) — heart; “הַנוֹּז” (zonah) — prostitute; “רַוֵּב/רַזֵּב” — pit.
- Jewish note: Rabbinic literature treats the “strange woman” as seduction away from covenant fidelity.
- Apostolic admonition: Guard the heart — sexual purity is holiness. Flee immorality (1 Cor. 6:18).
- NT correlation: Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5; Jesus’ warnings about lust (Matt. 5).
- Pulpit metaphor: The harlot’s house is a spiritual quicksand — save your heart.

Verses 29–35 — vine-wine from the vine
hconsequences-sin-its shas-to drink any kind of
alcohol has consequences

29. “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?”

- Hebrew gem: “לִיעּ תִּרְעָע/בַּצְעָע” — sorrow, contention, red eyes (from intoxication/strife).
- Jewish note: The rabbis list the calamities that

follow a life of drink and folly.

- Apostolic insight: These rhetorical questions unveil the fruit of living for appetite rather than Spirit.
- NT echo: Galatians 5:19–21; the consequences of the works of the flesh.
- Pulpit line: Who drinks the wine of the world? Then answer — the harvest is sorrow.

30–31. “They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine... Look not upon the wine when it is red... ”

- Hebrew gem: “קְרִי/קְרִתָּה” — lure and color (the seductive appearance).
- Jewish note: Midrash paints the wine as a deceptive painting — bright at first, bitter at end.
- Apostolic application: Do not be enticed by momentary color; the Spirit gives a steadier joy.
- NT tie: Romans 13:13–14; Ephesians 5:18.
- Homiletic: The cup that sparkles now will sting like a serpent later.

32–33. “At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder... ”

- Hebrew gem: “הַכְשִׁין/הַשִּׁין” — to bite/sting.
- Jewish note: Symbolic language used through scripture and rabbinic thought to depict sin’s poisonous end.

- Apostolic emphasis: The serpent's bite is shame, broken relationships, spiritual death; only Christ's healing counters it.
- NT resonance: 2 Corinthians 11:3; the serpent as the tempter — Christ as the healer (1 Peter 2:24).
- Prophetic image: The bite that seemed sweet reveals teeth at midnight.

34–35. “Thine eyes shall behold strange women... thou shalt say, They have beaten me, and I was not sick... I will seek it yet again.”

- Hebrew gem: “הַכֵּן” — strike; “רִיעָא” — awaken.
- Jewish note: Rabbinic tradition speaks of the addict's denial — “I was not sick” — and the cycle of return.
- Apostolic pastoral word: Addiction denies reality and repeats itself; repentance and deliverance ministry must be offered.
- NT connection: The prodigal's return juxtaposed with the house of slavery to sin; Galatians 5 deliverance themes.
- Pulpit urgency: He who says “I was not sick” needs a physician — Jesus is that physician.

Closing Pastoral Application — Gems and gold nuggets (summary):

- Discipline (musar) is saving: the rod when rightly

used turns a life from Sheol (see Hebrews 12).

- Wealth is a test: do not build houses on sand; be a steward who could sell all and follow Jesus (Mark 10:21; Acts 4:32–37 is the Apostolic model).
- Sobriety is sacred: the Spirit fills where wine empties; Ephesians 5 cautions us.
- Purity of heart is paramount: guard the heart with prayer, God’s Word, and holy fellowship (1 Corinthians 6; Proverbs’ warnings).
- Honor parents, pursue truth: “buy the truth and sell it not” — invest everything in Gospel truth; then honor will return to you and your parents.
- Beware hypocrisy and hidden malice: take care with those who feign friendship; the table can be a snare.

Jewish Traditional Map

(Rashi, Midrash, Talmud — summary of themes)

- Rashi: Emphasizes literal moral instruction — parental discipline, avoidance of gluttony, and the perils of wealth and seduction.
- Midrash: Amplifies Proverbs’ imagery — wine as a painted snare, the strange woman as a lure away from covenant; parental joy for righteous children.
- Talmudic sages: Repeatedly teach the value of musar (discipline), the danger of excess, and the sanctity of inheritance/landmarks and the poor’s rights. The rabbis commend “buying truth” as giving one’s life for Torah-truth.

(Notes: This is a summary synthesis of classical Jewish interpretive streams intended for pastoral enrichment; consult Rashi, Midrashim (e.g., Midrash Proverbs/Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer), and Talmudic tractates for word-for-word citations.)

Hebrew Word-Gems and New Testament Correlations (quick lexicon)

- שֶׁבֶת (shevet) — rod/discipline. NT correlate: Hebrews 12 (chastening of sons).
- מֻסָּר (musar) — instruction/discipline. NT correlate: “instruction” in pastoral epistles; sanctification.
- תְּאַוָּה (ta’avah) — appetite/lust. NT correlate: “lust of the flesh” (1 John 2; Galatians 5).
- יָיִן (yayin), שֵׁכָה (shekhar) — wine/intoxicant. NT correlate: Ephesians 5:18; Jesus’ use of wine imagery but call to sobriety.
- אֶתְתָּת (emet) — truth. NT correlate: John 14–17 (truth of the Gospel), John 8:32.
- זָנוֹת / זְנוֹת (zanah/zonah) — harlot/sexual immorality. NT correlate: 1 Corinthians 6; Hebrews 13:4.
- גּוֹלֵל (goel) — redeemer. NT correlate: Christ as Redeemer (Romans; Galatians).

Apostolic Pentecostal Homiletic Metaphors and Prophetic Thrust

- Preach discipline as deliverance: the rod that is used in love is an instrument of resurrection.
- Call the church back to communal sharing (Acts model) as an antidote to the slavish love of riches.
- Sound the sobriety alarm: the Spirit's filling is an alternative and greater intoxication than the world offers.
- Expose the seduction of the strange woman as any idol that asks for heart allegiance — pleasure, fame, money; call the faithful to covenant fidelity.

Final Exhortation (a pulpit charge)

Hearken, Apostolic Pentecostal Bride Church — who will hear His voice and obey? Proverbs 23 is a pastoral scalpel: cut away the appetite, the greed, the secret sin, the cold ambition. Buy truth; sell it not. Give your heart wholly to the Redeemer. Let the rod of godly love restore; let the Spirit fill where wine has emptied. Walk in the wisdom that keeps your family, honors your elders, and secures your hope.

May these verse-by-verse meditations feed your pulpit, feed your flock, and quicken the ear to the voice of the Holy Ghost.

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