



APOSTOLIC
PENTECOSTAL PREACHERS'
PULPIT COMMENTARY ON
PROVERBS 20

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COMMENTARY ON PROVERBS 20

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Expository, Verse-by-Verse Hermeneutical Study with Rabbinic (midrash/Talmudic/Rashi-type) Insight, Poetic/Solomonic Meaning, Metaphor, Apostolic Pentecostal Application, New Testament Connections, and Doctrinal Apologetics

Hermeneutical note: This commentary reads Proverbs by the literal-historical-grammatical method, informed by Jewish rabbinic sensibilities (midrashic resonance and classic interpretive motifs), the poetic/wisdom context of Solomon, and Apostolic Pentecostal theological lenses (Spirit-empowered life, holiness, accountability, and practical pastoral application). Where rabbinic voices are invoked I summarize characteristic traditional readings rather than quote specific texts; where New Testament parallels are given I point to thematic or explicit scriptural echoes that illuminate Apostolic Pentecostal doctrine and pastoral practice.

Verses

1. “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”. Drinking is an abomination. It’s sin to drink, one drop will dam your soul to Hell fire and then the lake of fire throughout all eternity.

- Plain sense: Intoxicants mislead, provoke foolish

behavior and loss of self-control.

- Rabbinic/midrashic motif: Wine uncovers the heart and therefore is both revealing and dangerous; sages warn against being mastered by drink.
- Poetic/Solomonic meaning: A brief, punchy proverb warning that what promises pleasure becomes a snare.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Ephesians 5:18 provides the New Testament counterpoint — do not be drunk / Don't drink wine but be filled with the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues . Temperance and Spirit-filling are practical marks of holiness and effective ministry.
- Pulpit point/. Apostolic Pentecostal apologetic: The church's call to sobriety is both moral and missional; spiritual authority and clear testimony require self-control given by His spirit.

2. “The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him sinneth against his own soul.”

- Plain sense: Royal authority is terrifying and dangerous to provoke.
- Rabbinic echo: Respect for authority—both human and divine—keeps one from ruin.
- Poetic meaning: Uses animal imagery to dramatize how dangerous ruling power can be when offended.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Respect for government and for God-ordained structures is

biblical (Romans 13), yet ultimate obedience is to God. Pastors must teach reverence for authority while calling rulers to righteousness.

- NT tie: Romans 13; also Hebrews on fearing God above men.

3. “It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.”

- Plain sense: Restraint preserves dignity; quarrelsome meddling exposes folly.
- Rabbinic/midrashic insight: Peace-seeking is a virtue; sages value measured speech and restraint.
- Poetic nuance: Honors the wise who step away from needless conflict.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Peacemaking (Matthew 5:9), self-control, and pastoral wisdom promote unity in the body and witness to the world.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Preachers Pulpit application: Teach congregants to choose their battles; pastoral discipline seeks restoration rather than perpetual strife.

4. “The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.”

- Plain sense: Laziness produces want; failure to work in season produces poverty later.
- Rabbinic parallel: The value of diligence and timely

labor is a staple of Jewish teaching.

- Apostolic Pentecostal Poetic meaning: Agricultural metaphor for spiritual and material stewardship.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Spiritual sloth leads to barren ministry; diligence in daily duties and in the work of the Lord yields harvest—spiritually and materially (Luke 10:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:10).
- Apostolic Pentecostal Apologetic note: Holiness demands work ethic; reliance on miracles is not a substitute for faithful stewardship.

5. “Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.”

- Plain sense: Human thought is deep and must be carefully drawn out by wisdom and questioning.
- Rabbinic/midrashic motif: Wisdom often lies hidden; skilled questioning draws forth understanding (like drawing water from a well).
- Apostolic Pentecostal Poetic aspect: Water = life; counsel like underground springs feeding action.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Spirit-led discernment and prayer (Acts 15; inner testimony) help leaders discern motives and counsel the flock well. Encourage discipleship that surfaces inner counsel by prayerful probing.
- NT tie: James 1-3 (wisdom from above) and pastoral discernment modeled in Acts.

6. “Many will swear falsely, but a faithful man who can find?”

- Plain sense: Professions of loyalty are common; true faithfulness is rare.
- Rabbinic echo: The emphasis on the rarity of integrity calls the community to value fidelity.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Poetic truth: Sharp lament—integrity is precious and scarce.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Preachers Pulpit application: Great emphasis on authentic converted life and accountable community—character over charisma. The Spirit produces faithfulness (Galatians 5).
- Apostolic Pentecostal Pulpit Preachers application: Build structures of accountability and measure leaders by fruit.

7. “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.”

- Plain sense: Righteous living begets blessing for one’s household.
- Rabbinic tradition: The righteousness of generations affects descendants; blessings flow through upright living.
- Poetic teaching: Moral legacy matters.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Preachers Pulpit application: Sanctified family life and godly parenting are ministry. Teach generational discipleship and the

witness of holiness in the home.

- NT tie: 2 Timothy 1—legacy of faith (Paul to Timothy).

8. “A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.”

- Plain sense: A righteous judge has power to quash wickedness even by a look—symbol of decisive authority.
- Rabbinic insight: The throne of judgment evokes God’s and human judges’ responsibility to uphold justice.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Preachers Poetic image: Eye as sovereign instrument of discernment and authority.
- Apostolic Pentecostal view application: Leaders must exercise godly discernment; church discipline must be righteous and restorative. Recognize God’s ultimate judgment while exercising mercy.

9. “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”

- Plain sense: No one is without sin; humility is needed.
- Rabbinic/midrashic stress: The Torah’s demand for inner purity is constant; confession and repentance are continuous.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Poetic confession: A

rhetorical question that humbles the hearer.

- Apostolic Pentecostal application: The doctrine of total depravity in practice calls believers to ongoing repentance and dependence on the blood of Christ and the sanctifying Spirit (1 John 1:8-9).
- Pulpit caution: Avoid self-deception; foster a culture of confession and restoration.

10. “Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and false balances are not good.”

- Plain sense: Dishonest commerce is detestable to God.
- Rabbinic tradition: Strong concern in Jewish law for honest measures; social justice theme.
- Poetic moral: Economic honesty is moral theology.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Integrity in church business, tithes/offering handling, and personal commerce is demanded. Gospel ethics touch marketplace behavior (Luke 6:31).
- Apostolic Pentecostal Apologetic: The church’s witness depends on transparent stewardship.

11. “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”

- Plain sense: Actions reveal character early.
- Rabbinic point: Deeds instruct character; training in ways of the Lord is essential early.

- Poetic note: Behavior is the index of nature.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Early discipleship and accountability in youth ministries matter; fruit matters over profession.

12. “The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.”

- Plain sense: God equips humans with faculties for perception and judgment.
- Rabbinic observation: Senses are divine gifts to be used righteously.
- Poetic theology: God’s providence includes the faculties of discernment.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Encourage spiritual sensitivity—ears to hear the Spirit and eyes to perceive truth. Spiritual gifts of discernment are a present reality (1 Corinthians 12).

13. “Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.”

- Plain sense: Diligence yields provision; sloth yields want.
- Rabbinic ethic: Industry is a virtue; Torah study at proper times.
- Poetic admonition: Wakefulness equals provision.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Spiritual watchfulness is essential—watch and pray.

Diligent evangelism and ministry produce spiritual nourishment (1 Thessalonians 5:6).

14. “It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.”

- Plain sense: Buyers cheat sellers with low offers, then boast—warning against dishonesty on both sides.
- Rabbinic stance: Business ethics must reflect covenant faithfulness.
- Poetic psychology: Shame of bargaining vs. hidden pride.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Teach honesty and humility in commerce and relationships. Pastors must model transparent dealings.

15. “There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.”

- Plain sense: Wisdom is worth more than riches.
- Rabbinic tradition: The Torah (wisdom) is more precious than jewels.
- Poetic image: Knowledge and wise speech are priceless.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Preaching and sound doctrine (truthful lips) are treasures. Value Spirit-led teaching over material gain.

16. “Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.”

- Plain sense: Be cautious; take security in risky lending or when relations might compromise.
- Rabbinic caution: Safeguards against deception and entanglement.
- Poetic warning: Protective counsel about guarantees and compromising pledges.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Counsel about relational wisdom—avoid placing oneself in compromising vows or surety. Pastoral counsel on boundaries and stewardship.

17. “Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.”

- Plain sense: Ill-gotten gain seems pleasurable but leads to bitterness.
- Rabbinic moral: Short-term pleasure yields long-term pain; ethical living prevails.
- Poetic contrast: Sweet now, choking later.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Temptations to short-cut holiness produce spiritual chokes; repentance and integrity bring lasting satisfaction (Galatians 6:7-8).

18. “Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.”

- Plain sense: Plans succeed with wise counsel; strategic consultation is necessary even in conflict.
- Rabbinic tradition: Counsel and plurality in decision-making are valued.
- Poetic insight: Wisdom in counsel sets the course for victory.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Church leadership must seek counsel (Acts 15 model). Strategic ministry planning should be prayerful and consultative.

19. “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.”

- Plain sense: Gossipers betray confidences and sow division; avoid flattering slanderers.
- Rabbinic teaching: Lashon hara (evil tongue) is destructive; silence and restraint are virtues.
- Poetic warning: Words as weapons or cures.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Guard the tongue (James 3). Establish culture of confidentiality, restoration, and truth-telling in the body.

20. “Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.”

- Plain sense: Dishonoring parents brings severe consequences; family covenant broken.

- Rabbinic emphasis: Honor parents is foundational; curse of parents or children is terrifying in tradition.
- Poetic severity: Darkness motif underscores final loss.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Uphold biblical family order; pastoral care for reconciliation, yet teach the seriousness of blatant rebellion (Ephesians 6:1-4; Matthew 15:4).
- Pastoral counsel: Seek repentance and restoration rather than prescriptive ostracism where possible.

21. “An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.”

- Plain sense: Wealth gained quickly often proves fleeting; true blessing is tested by time.
- Rabbinic caution: Wealth unearned invites spiritual peril; blessing is proven in the end.
- Poetic moral: Endurance and integrity in stewardship secure lasting blessing.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Teach patience, faithful stewardship, and suspicion of get-rich schemes claimed as “spiritual” blessings.

22. “Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.”

- Plain sense: Do not seek personal revenge; trust God’s justice.

- Rabbinic parallel: Leave vengeance to God; forgiveness and restraint are noble.
- Poetic and moral force: Patience and trust trump retaliation.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Jesus' ethic (turn the other cheek) and Paul's admonitions (Romans 12:17-19) support reliance on God. This is pastoral counsel for conflict resolution.
- Apologetic: Faith that God will vindicate his people undergirds patience under persecution.

23. “Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good.”

- Plain sense: Repeats v.10—emphasizing social justice and honest weights/measures.
- Rabbinic echo: Reiteration shows importance; marketplace ethics are religious.
- Poetic/structural note: Repetition emphasizes covenant moral economy.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Reinforce stewardship policies; honesty in church finances is non-negotiable.

24. “Man’s goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?”

- Plain sense: Providence guides human steps; we do not fully grasp God’s plan.

- Rabbinic insight: Divine providence and human responsibility interplay; humility before God's sovereignty.
- Poetic humility: Mystery of providence.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Encourage dependence on God's leading; prophetic insight must be tested (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21), and believers should cultivate prayerful discernment rather than presumption.

25. “It is a snare to say rashly, It is holy, and to make vows rashly: keep thyself from it.”

- Plain sense: Careful with vows; rash oaths are entangling.
- Rabbinic/midrashic emphasis: Vows are serious; the sages gave detailed rules about vows and vows' annulment in the synagogue context.
- Poetic caution: Sanctimony and rash vows trap the soul.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Connect to Jesus' teaching (Matthew 5:33-37) — let your yes be yes. Teach responsible commitments: marriage vows, ministry vows, and covenants must be prayerfully entered.

26. “A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.”

- Plain sense: A shrewd ruler breaks the power of the wicked decisively.
- Rabbinic image: Leaders have God-given duty to judge and protect the community.
- Poetic image: “Wheel” may suggest war machine or overturning power—dramatic justice.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Leadership must confront evil decisively; spiritual warfare is real and should be engaged in prayer, authority, and counsel.

27. “The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.”

- Plain sense: Human spirit is a lamp from the LORD that examines inner life.
- Rabbinic insight: Inner conscience is God-given; God knows the heart, man’s spirit helps self-knowledge.
- Poetic theology: Spirit as light; inward searching prompts repentance.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: There is resonance with the Holy Spirit’s illuminating work. Distinguish between the human spirit’s conscience and the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying illuminating ministry (1 Corinthians 2; Hebrews 4:12). Encourage self-examination under the Spirit’s light.
- Doctrinal note: While the Holy Spirit illuminates, the created human spirit also reflects God’s image; both realities inform pastoral care.

28. “Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.”

- Plain sense: Compassion and faithfulness sustain leadership.
- Rabbinic teaching: Rulers are to exercise mercy balanced with truth—Adamant for righteous governance.
- Poetic ideal: The throne stands by righteousness expressed as mercy and truth.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Leaders must balance prophetic truth with pastoral mercy. The apostolic ministry must be both bold in truth and tender in mercy (Galatians 6; 2 Corinthians 10–13 shows balance of correction and love).

29. “The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.”

- Plain sense: Youth glories in vigor; elders in the dignity of age.
- Rabbinic valorization: Respect for elders is a constant theme; age carries wisdom.
- Poetic observation: Each life stage has its glory.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: Value both youthful zeal (missionary outreach, evangelism) and elder wisdom (counsel, oversight). Promote intergenerational ministry.

30. “The blunted tooth shall be drawn out: and men shall take away a wicked man’s bone.”

- Plain sense: Removal of the source of harm — brute image of taking away what injures.
- Rabbinic interpretation: Harsh image of removing a threat; justice will disarm the wicked.
- Poetic force: A graphic proverb about eradication of what causes pain.
- Apostolic Pentecostal application: In spiritual warfare and church discipline, remove what persistently harms the body. Discipline aims at purification and restoration of health; in extreme cases, separation prevents greater harm (1 Corinthians 5).

Concluding Hermeneutical and Pastoral Summary

- Wisdom form and structure: Proverbs 20 uses vivid images, repetition, and short epigrams to teach moral discipline, social justice, prudent leadership, and interior spiritual vigilance. The canonical reading sees Solomon’s voice as part of God’s wisdom tradition; rabbinic readings add communal, legal, and ethical emphases. The Apostolic Pentecostal reading stresses the work of the Holy Spirit (sobriety, illumination, prayerful counsel), the priority of holiness in character and ministry, and practical

ethics for church life and witness.

- Methodological note for preachers: Move from literal meaning to theological application — (1) explain original sense; (2) explore Jewish/wisdom echoes to deepen cultural-historical texture; (3) connect to Christ and the Spirit (NT parallels); (4) draw pastoral, doctrinal, and missional implications for congregational life.
- Apostolic Pentecostal Doctrinal apologetics highlights: Proverbs 20 supports Apostolic Pentecostal emphases on (a) Spirit-filled sobriety (v.1 with Eph.5:18), (b) internal holiness and confession (v.9; 1 John 1:8–9), (c) authority and ordered leadership held accountable with mercy and truth (vv.2, 8, 26, 28), and (d) active spiritual discernment (vv.5, 27). The book's repeated insistence on integrity, honest weights, and truthful lips upholds a robust social ethic consistent with biblical orthodoxy and public witness.

Pastoral Preaching Suggestions (brief)

- Series theme: “Wisdom for the Way: Proverbs 20 — Character, Counsel, and Covenant”
- Sermon starters: v.1 “Filled with the Spirit vs. Filled with Wine”; v.5 “Drawing Deep Counsel”; v.22 “Leave Room for God’s Justice”; v.27 “The Spirit’s Light in the Inner Man.”
- Congregational application: Implement teaching

on stewardship policies, confidentiality guidelines, youth mentorship, elders' councils for counsel, and discipleship classes that combine biblical literacy with Spirit-led prayer.

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