

Commentary on Proverbs 25:2-10 By L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Series*) for **Sunday, September 25, 2011**, is from **Proverbs 25:2-10**. Five **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the [*Bible Lesson Commentary*](#) below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, which are also available on the [*Bible Lesson Forum*](#), will aid teachers in conducting class discussion.

Proverbs 25:2-10

(Proverbs 25:2) It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

God both and reveals and conceals depending on the situation. God will not throw His pearls of wisdom before swine. God reveals His glory throughout all creation, which the believing and discerning person recognizes. A few who think they are wise see no evidence of God's creation. Kings have more resources and time than most to search out and find the truth about God and reality. It is to their glory (or benefit and credit) when they use their time and resources to search out and focus on the true God and on doing God's will.

(Proverbs 25:3) Like the heavens for height, like the earth for depth, so the mind of kings is unsearchable.

Kings, or the leaders of nations, make decisions and take actions with counsel and sometimes without consulting others. Sometimes they totally disregard good advice and do what they choose to do simply because they have the power. Many times their actions are not understandable by anyone – sometimes because their decisions are foolish and at other times because they are wise.

(Proverbs 25:4) Take away the dross from the silver, and the smith has material for a vessel;

The dross is the name for the impurities in a metal. Sterling silver has copper added in the right amount for hardness, so the copper is not considered dross. Dross or impurities can add unwanted color (sometimes a black or brown color or spots) to silver, which will make the silver visually ugly and less valuable. A beautiful life is a pure life. If we live a pure life according to the will of God, a life cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, God has good material to use when He wants to make us into a usable vessel to serve Him and others.

(Proverbs 25:5) take away the wicked from the presence of the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

Just as a silversmith needs to remove dross from silver to make it more beautiful and usable, the wicked need to be taken from the presence of the king and the leaders of a nation. The wicked in business, church, or government are like dross or impurities: they can ruin the intended good work of a business, church, or government. Just as people are not drawn to want an ugly silver vessel with the discoloration of impurities, people are not drawn to or respect a life, business, church, or government that allows wicked behavior to continue. A wicked life or organization cannot be established indefinitely.

(Proverbs 25:6) Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great;

Sometimes people try to draw attention to themselves and their qualities before others who are great or have the power to advance them in their careers. Some try to take the rightful place of someone who is truly great. Admittedly, in this world, some find success doing these very things that the Bible advises against.

(Proverbs 25:7) for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble. What your eyes have seen

The Proverbs teach that it is better to be discovered and promoted for your excellent ideas and work

rather than be self-promoting and possibly demoted as a consequence. Prayer and wisdom can help you come to the favorable attention of others, rather than arrogantly or proudly advancing yourself before others.

(Proverbs 25:8) do not hastily bring into court; for what will you do in the end, when your neighbor puts you to shame?

A wise person will not make a hasty accusation against another either in or out of court. If you do bring into court something you have seen, you may not understand the entire situation, but have only glimpsed a small part of what has happened. Therefore, when the neighbor explains everything in court or elsewhere, and gives a reason for his actions, you may be ashamed.

(Proverbs 25:9) Argue your case with your neighbor directly, and do not disclose another's secret;

As a good neighbor, you should go directly to your neighbor if you believe a serious problem has arisen that may merit some judicial proceeding (unless this would endanger your family and yourself, which will need wisdom to discern). A wise person will know what to say and when, and will try to solve problems in peace insofar as they prayerfully and wisely can.

(Proverbs 25:10) or else someone who hears you will bring shame upon you, and your ill repute will have no end.

The Bible does not encourage or teach the notion that anyone should help cover up or conceal a crime or a wrongdoing. However, some secrets are justifiable and knowledge of such secrets should be kept confidential. If we become known as someone who cannot be trusted with a secret, we will never be able to overcome the distrust of a ruined reputation.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Compare Proverbs 25:2 and Matthew 7:6. How and why does God conceal some truths?
2. What kinds of dross need to be removed from businesses, churches, and governments?
3. What can result when wicked advisors are prohibited from influencing leaders?
4. Compare Proverbs 25:6-7 and Luke 14:7-11. How would you apply these teachings today?
5. What types of secrets should you disclose and what types of secrets should you keep confidential?

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