

## **Proverbs 20 – Various wise sayings**

Large parts of the book of Proverbs do not talk about just one thing. They go from one thing to another, very quickly. Each verse is a new proverb, and each needs to be read on its own.

We can see that wisdom is for all of life. There is drinking (v1), dealing with a ruler (v2), avoiding arguments (v3), working hard (v4), understanding hidden things (v5), finding true friends (v6) – and so on. God's wisdom is something for every situation. We should never trust in ourselves, but always be thinking what pleases our Maker.

V1 – The importance of self-control. A wise person should be led by truth, and led by the Holy Spirit. Pagans can be led away by other things, such as alcoholic drinks; but a Christian should not.

V2 – It is foolish to anger those who are more powerful than us. A king may do wrong; he may have many faults. But be careful – choose your fights wisely!

V3 – It is easy to start arguments. But wise people look to end them.

V4, 13 – Laziness leads to emptiness. Work is hard; but without it, we will hunger.

V5 – A wise man knows how to deal with others with understanding. Are we wise listeners? Can we discern where another person is going?

V6, 16 – Faithfulness is a very important thing. Do not look for friends who speak great words, but look for those who can be trusted. There are few of them! There are few things more foolish than to trust a stranger in this sinful world.

V7 – We should aim for a blameless life: one that is whole and pure in every way.

V8 – Justice needs just rulers. A just ruler brings great blessings to all his people.

V9 – We should know our own hearts. Before God, we are all sinners. Nobody should boast above others. We should all seek God's mercy and forgiveness.

V10 – God hates lying and cheating and stealing. There are few new things in the world. Traders have been cheating each other for thousands of years. But God looks at all that is done, and judges it. V14 It is not just sellers who are deceitful, but buyers too. We should be straightforward in our business dealings.

V11-12 – The most important thing in a person is character. Even children have character, and can be weighed. We cannot hide our hearts – people see how we live. God has given us all eyes and ears to see and hear what is done.

V15, 18 – Wisdom is worth more than all things. It is useful for all things.

V17 – People love their wicked ways, but afterwards they bring misery.

V19 – Beware of loose talk. It spoils lives. Be careful of those who talk too much.