

PROVERBS 27

IRON SHARPENS IRON

- 1** Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring.
- 2** Let another praise you, and not your own mouth;
a stranger, and not your own lips.
- 3** A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty,
but a fool's provocation is heavier than both.
- 4** Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming,
but who can stand before jealousy?
- 5** Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.
- 6** Faithful are the wounds of a friend;
profuse are the kisses of an enemy.
- 7** One who is full loathes honey,
but to one who is hungry everything bitter is sweet.
- 8** Like a bird that strays from its nest
is a man who strays from his home.
- 9** Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel.
- 10** Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend,
and do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity.
Better is a neighbor who is near
than a brother who is far away.
- 11** Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad,
that I may answer him who reproaches me.
- 12** The prudent sees danger and hides himself,
but the simple go on and suffer for it.
- 13** Take a man's garment when he has put up security for a stranger,

and hold it in pledge when he puts up security for an adulteress.

- 14** Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice,
rising early in the morning,
will be counted as cursing.
- 15** A continual dripping on a rainy day
and a quarrelsome wife are alike;
- 16** to restrain her is to restrain the wind
or to grasp oil in one's right hand.
- 17** Iron sharpens iron,
and one man sharpens another.
- 18** Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
and he who guards his master will be honored.
- 19** As in water face reflects face,
so the heart of man reflects the man.
- 20** Sheol and Abaddon (Hell & Destruction)
are never satisfied,
and never satisfied are the eyes of man.
- 21** The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold,
and a man is tested by his praise.
- 22** Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle
along with crushed grain,
yet his folly will not depart from him.
- 23** Know well the condition of your flocks,
and give attention to your herds,
- 24** for riches do not last forever;
and does a crown endure to all generations?
- 25** When the grass is gone and the new growth appears
and the vegetation of the mountains is gathered,
- 26** the lambs will provide your clothing,
and the goats the price of a field.
- 27** There will be enough goats' milk for your food,
for the food of your household
and maintenance for your girls.

STUDY NOTES

BlueLetterBible.org Commentary

Do not boast about tomorrow It is human nature to be overly confident in what future days hold. It is easy to boast about tomorrow, especially with our modern arrogance of continual progress.

Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; We should stay away from self-promotion in its many forms. Modern technology gives us many more methods and opportunities to praise ourselves, but we should avoid such self-praise.

...but who can stand before jealousy? Solomon pointed out that there is a power and destructive capability in jealousy that can even go beyond wrath and anger. It can make a bigger torrent of evil. It was envy that motivated the religious leaders to arrange the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:18).

Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Many are hesitant to rebuke others, especially others in God's family. But there is a time and place where rebuke is not only good it is better than the alternative. Love does little good when it is concealed.



Faithful are the wounds of a friend A mark of a true friend is that they will be willing to wound us with loving correction. The correction may not feel good — as genuine wounds — but it will be an expression of the love and faithfulness of a friend. **Profuse are the kisses of an enemy** This cautions us that not all kisses are the greetings of friends. They may come from an enemy and be deceitful.

One who is full loathes honey When our life is satisfied — either materially or physically — then we find it easy to hate and reject things that would otherwise be greatly desired, such as honey. **to one who is hungry everything bitter is sweet.** When a life is truly hungry, they will eat almost everything and consider it sweet. This is true in those deprived of food for long periods. It is also seen in the spiritual world, when those who are awakened as truly hungry souls are ravenous for spiritual food.

Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home. This made Spurgeon think about those who seem to wander from church to church. “Too many in our London churches are a sort of flying camp, always flying from one place to another—a set of gipsy-Christians, who have no settled abode, and no local habitation.” We have a place appointed by God, and we can be as out of place as a bird without a nest if we wander from it.

Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend, We should hold the bonds of friendship as dear and obligating, even beyond generations. Friends should not be forsaken.

The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it. Wisdom will lead a man or woman to anticipate danger and to take action, such as to hide from the coming evil. Those who are

naïve and untrained in wisdom are blind to the potential danger around them.

Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, will be counted as cursing. The sense here is of an over-the-top greeting and blessing, meant to flatter and manipulate. It is loud and it starts early in the morning. Something is amiss in such excessive praise.

Iron sharpens iron through striking, friction, and with sparks. We think of the iron of a blacksmith's hammer working on a sword to make it sharp. A man can be used to sharpen (improve and develop) his friend, but it may happen through a bit of friction and sparks.

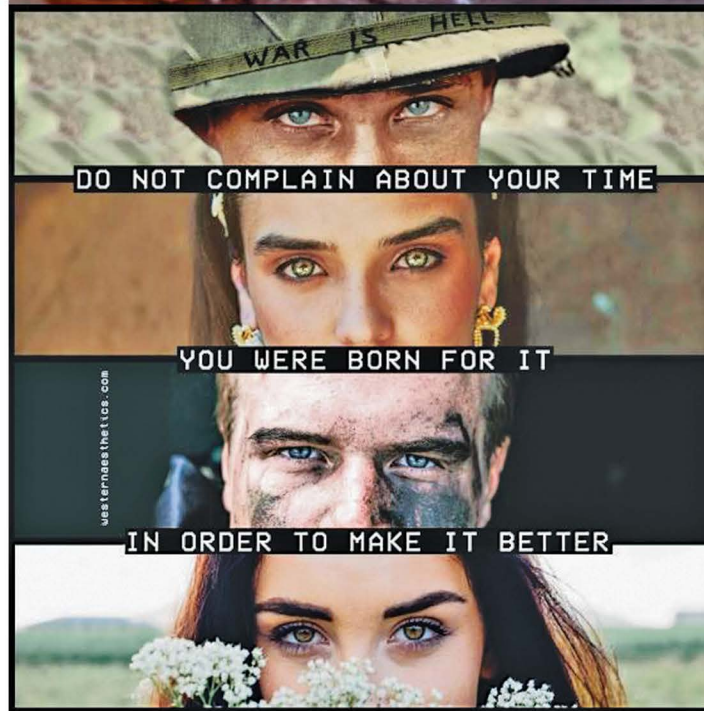
[Hell and destruction] are never full The grave and the world beyond will receive humanity and never become full. They are used here as figures of something that can never be satisfied. **and never satisfied are the eyes of man.** Our longing to look upon things we desire will never be satisfied; it must be controlled and brought under God's dominion. A man will never see enough alluring images of women or enough beautiful machines. The answer is having the need channeled and satisfied in God and what He provides.

Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his folly will not depart from him. Despite the rough treatment mentioned in the previous line, foolishness does not depart from the fool. One of the sad marks of the fool is that he will not learn. “Prisons were made into penitentiaries through the mistaken notion that confinement would bring repentance and effect a cure. Instead, many prisoners become hardened criminals. Divine grace that regenerates the fool is his only hope of being converted into a useful person.” (Waltke)

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