

With Interest

Proverbs 3:9-10; 10:22; 11:24-25

Dr. Pierre Cannings

I. Give v. 3:9

a. Honor 3:9

i. Honor

1. to honour God with sacrifices Is 43:23 Proverbs 3:9 presents the law's requirement that one should honor the Lord with his gifts and with the firstfruits of his entire harvest. Honoring God, then, is expressed in the commitment of both life and possessions to the Lord's service
2. 3:9 that this is the only time that sacrifice is prescribed
3. Commentaries note that this is the only place where Proverbs alludes to the ceremonial worship

ii. Wealth- Property

1. Abundance, usually of money or material goods, whose value is ordinarily expressed in terms of some understood unit, such as a national currency. It is virtually synonymous with riches, and both may refer to family, friends, or even moral qualities, in addition to material possessions
2. Wealth - The word here rendered *revenue* (*Increase*) commonly refers to agricultural produce
3. Proverbs is not so much concerning itself with ceremonial religion here as it is exhorting the reader to demonstrate gratitude toward and confidence in God (rather than in wealth).

iii. First 3:9

1. Produce

b. Scatter 11:24

- i. Scatter - to spread around, in the sense of to distribute freely, lavish
- ii. Generous 11:24 - Complete antithesis, ternary: one spends and grows, another hoards and declines.

c. Righteous – 10:22

II. Withdrawals v. 11:24

a. Justly Due

- i. Withhold - The inclusion states the general truth that one receives back according to one's own behavior while vv. 24–26 deal with the concrete issue of hoarding. Those who hoard by refusal either to give (v. 24

1. What the hoarder fails to realize, however, is that in the economy of God the greedy ultimately lose even the material things they try so hard to keep while the benevolent only prosper more and more
- ii. Justly - straightness, honesty
- iii. Results in Wants

III. Direct Deposit v. 3:9

a. Barns Filled 3:9

1. Barns - a storehouse, treasury
2. Plenty - satiety, abundance
3. This generosity is to be rewarded by the material blessings for the people (Deut 7:13; 28:8).

ii. Vats-

1. Overflow- to break through
 - a. New Wine - fresh must in the hollow of the winepress
 - b. The "new wine" designates the grape juice before fermentation

b. Increase 11:24

i. Prosperous 11:24

1. Watered 11:24 - The subject is, literally, "a soul of blessing," i.e., one who brings blessings to others, or in v 25b, "one who waters
2. sowing of seed: the sower is generous with the seed and is enriched by the harvest. But if he does not sow the due amount of seed, he suffers a lack of produce. Second, one *can* apply it to the moral realm: the generous person thrives, whereas the one who is stingy (toward others) does not. In other words, generosity can bring a blessing

c. Blessing of the Lord 10:22

i. Blessing –

1. blessing (sought and obtained) Bless/blessing has been most frequently understood in terms of benefits conveyed—prosperity, power, and especially fertility. This focus on the content of the benefit is now being viewed as secondary. The primary factor of blessing is the statement of relationship between parties. God blesses with a benefit on the basis of the relationship. The blessing makes known the positive relationship between the parties, whether a single individual
2. Rather, it affirms emphatically the activity of the Lord in the achievement of prosperity; the Lord is responsible, not human effort. See Ps 127:1–2
3. it does not mean that one gives up all personal activity. That would be contrary to the diligence inculcated in 10:4. Rather, it indicates the need to recognize human limitations, and to

consider the major role played by the Lord. Proverbs have to be balanced off each other

4. The first cl. affirms that physical wealth is the gift of God,
 5. The repetition of the subject by the insertion of *it* indicates that it is the divine blessing and not anything else that gives riches, that is, the divine blessing on the labor of men's hands
 6. passages like Ex. 14:14; ψ 118:8 do not bear on this question)—man is everywhere represented as working under God's direction; so ψ 127:2 affirms not that labor in itself is useless, but only labor unattended by the divine blessing. In 14:23 it is said that there is profit in all labor
 7. Only through righteousness and wisdom can one attain real security in life. The righteous can have wealth without the trouble that often goes with it
- ii. Rich Wealth measured in money, or the amount of property owned—whether land and buildings (Is 5:8–10), livestock (1 Sm 25:2, 3), or slaves (1 Sm 8:11–18). Great riches brought great influence and power, as the Hebrew word for “wealth” implies
 - iii. Adds no sorrow
 1. Sorrow – Strenuous and acquired with difficulty
 2. In the second cl. the term *sorrow* (sometimes = *painful effort, toil*) is used, as in 15:13 (*sorrow of heart or mind*), Gen. 3:16, for pain, suffering; the wealth bestowed by Yahweh is distinguished, as being free from sorrow, from ill-gotten gain, which brings evil with it (13:11; 15:6; 16:19; 21:6; 28:6). There is an implied antithesis between the wealth of good men and that of bad men.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Word Studies

Honor- to honour God with sacrifices Is 43:23¹ Only in the Bible, however, do we gain a true perspective on honor. The OT required children to honor their parents (Ex 20:12), a command that reappears in the ethic of the NT (Eph 6:1–2). Undergirding such action is an even more basic obligation: the giving of honor to God, who worthily merits our devoted obedience (Rv 4:11). Proverbs 3:9 presents the law’s requirement that one should honor the Lord with his gifts and with the firstfruits of his entire harvest. Honoring God, then, is expressed in the commitment of both life and possessions to the Lord’s service.²

Wealth- **wealth, property - Wealth.** Abundance, usually of money or material goods, whose value is ordinarily expressed in terms of some understood unit, such as a national currency. It is virtually synonymous with riches, and both may refer to family, friends, or even moral qualities, in addition to material possessions.³

Produce (yield) Ex 23:19; Deut 26:2; Mal 3:10⁴ the first and best part of the harvest⁵

Barns - ‘a storehouse, treasury: גִּידֻּדָּ: **stores**⁶

Plenty - satiety, abundance

Vats - **lower reservoir**, the collecting sink⁷

Overflow- to **break through**

¹ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 456.

² Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, [*Tyndale Bible Dictionary*](#), Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 611.

³ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [*“Wealth.” Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 2134.

⁴ [*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

⁵ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1679.

⁶ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 74.

⁷ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 429.

New wine- fresh must in the hollow of the winepress⁸

Commentary Studies

9–10 Sacrifices are mentioned in the book (7:14; 15:8; 21:3, 27), but A. Meinhold points out that this is the only time that sacrifice is prescribed. The reference is to the firstfruits; cf. Exod 23:19; Deut 26:1–3. This generosity is to be rewarded by the material blessings for the people (Deut 7:13; 28:8). The “new wine” designates the grape juice before fermentation.⁹

9, 10. Religious use of wealth.—9. Synonymous, ternary-binary (or, ternary). The word here rendered *revenue* (RV¹⁰. *Increase*) commonly refers to agricultural produce, and this sense is indicated by v. 10; elsewhere in Pr. (as, for example, in 16:8) the word appears to have a wider meaning. The reference in the injunction seems to be rather to a general righteous employment of riches than to the payment of the legal tithes. There is elsewhere in this part of the book (chs. 1–9) no reference to the ceremonial law as obligatory (in 7:14 sacrifice is mentioned as a popular observance), and the immediate context favors the more general interpretation. The term here rendered *the best* (ראשית) is so used in Am. 6:1; ψ 78:51; 105:36 (of persons) 1 Sam. 2:29; Am. 6:6 (of things).¹¹

Commentaries note that this is the only place where Proverbs alludes to the ceremonial worship.⁵¹²² Even so, the language here is not nearly so explicitly cultic as in Sirach 7:29–31. Proverbs is not so much concerning itself with ceremonial religion here as it is exhorting the reader to demonstrate gratitude toward and confidence in God (rather than in wealth).¹³

⁸ Ludwig Koehler et al., [The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1728.

⁹ Rowland E. Murphy, [Proverbs](#), vol. 22, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 21.

¹⁰RV. Eng. Revised Version.

¹¹ Crawford Howell Toy, [A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1899), 62.

¹²⁵² Delitzsch, *Proverbs* 1:89; Toy, *Proverbs*, 62; McKane, *Proverbs*, 293–94.

¹³ Duane A. Garrett, [Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs](#), vol. 14, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 81.

Proverbs 10:22

Word Studies

Blessing - **blessing** (sought and obtained¹⁴ Bless/blessing has been most frequently understood in terms of benefits conveyed—prosperity, power, and especially fertility. This focus on the content of the benefit is now being viewed as secondary. The primary factor of blessing is the statement of relationship between parties. God blesses with a benefit on the basis of the relationship. The blessing makes known the positive relationship between the parties, whether a single individual¹⁵

Rich - Wealth measured in money, or the amount of property owned—whether land and buildings (Is 5:8–10), livestock (1 Sm 25:2, 3), or slaves (1 Sm 8:11–18). Great riches brought great influence and power, as the Hebrew word for “wealth” implies.¹⁶

Sorrow – Strenuous and acquired with difficulty

Commentary Studies

The translation given above is the correct one. V 22b does not mean that the Lord does not add sorrow to the wealth (so Toy). Rather, it affirms emphatically the activity of the Lord in the achievement of prosperity; the Lord is responsible, not human effort. See Ps 127:1–2. This has the characteristic exaggeration of many proverbs; it does not mean that one gives up all personal activity. That would be contrary to the diligence inculcated in 10:4. Rather, it indicates the need to recognize human limitations, and to consider the major role played by the Lord. Proverbs have to be balanced off each other.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 161.

¹⁵ Kent Harold Richards, [“Bless/Blessing.”](#) ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 754.

¹⁶ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [“Riches.”](#) *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1858.

¹⁷ Rowland E. Murphy, [Proverbs](#), vol. 22, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 75.

Continuous or extensive (the second cl. completing the first by an additional detail), ternary. The first cl. affirms that physical wealth is the gift of God, as in chs. 1–9 this gift is ascribed to Wisdom. The repetition of the subject by the insertion of *it* indicates that it is the divine blessing and not anything else that gives riches, that is, the divine blessing on the labor of men's hands. In the second cl. the term *sorrow* (sometimes = *painful effort, toil*) is used, as in 15:13 (*sorrow of heart or mind*), Gen. 3:16, for pain, suffering; the wealth bestowed by Yahweh is distinguished, as being free from sorrow, from ill-gotten gain, which brings evil with it (13:11; 15:6; 16:19; 21:6; 28:6). There is an implied antithesis between the wealth of good men and that of bad men.—Elsewhere in OT., when a preposition follows the verb *add*, it is *to* (see Jer. 45:3), which would here be out of place.—This understanding of the term rendered *sorrow* is that of the Anc. Vrss. Some expositors,^{18*} taking it in the sense of *labor*, render: *and toil adds not to it* (namely, to the blessing), that is, human labor counts for nothing in the acquisition of wealth—it is all God's doing. But such a sharp separation between man's work and God's work is hardly an OT. conception (passages like Ex. 14:14; ψ 118:8 do not bear on this question)—man is everywhere represented as working under God's direction; so ψ 127:2 (which is cited by Ew¹⁹, De²⁰, Str²¹, as supporting their translation) affirms not that labor in itself is useless, but only labor unattended by the divine blessing. In 14:23 it is said that there is profit in all labor.²²

10:22–25 Only through righteousness and wisdom can one attain real security in life. The righteous can have wealth without the trouble that often goes with it (sycophants, legal problems), whereas the wicked will ultimately be brought down by the disaster they fear (vv. 22²³

^{18*} Saadia, Rashi, Luther, Ew., Hitz., De., Str., Kamp., Frank.

¹⁹Ew. H. Ewald.

²⁰De. Franz Delitzsch, *Das Salomon. Spruchbuch*. Friedr. Delitzsch, Assyr. Handwörterbuch.

²¹Str. H. L. Strack.

²² Crawford Howell Toy, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs*](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1899), 212–213.

²³ Duane A. Garrett, [*Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*](#), vol. 14, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 121.

Proverbs 11:24-25

Word Studies

Scatters - to spread around, in the sense of to **distribute freely, lavish**²⁴

Increases – to be added

Withholds

Justly **straightness, honesty**

Generous – soul of blessing

Prosperous – made fat

Waters – water thoroughly – watered deeply

Commentary Studies

24 A formula of fact, “there is” (וַיִּ), begins the saying, and participles introduce the agents. The proverb has been interpreted on more than one level. First, it could merely point out a paradox: the big spender somehow gets richer; his opposite, carefully sparing, becomes poorer. No explanation is given and no moral edge is intended; the saying registers a fact, observable if not frequent. This could be conceived as an application of a saying that originally referred to the sowing of seed: the sower is generous with the seed and is enriched by the harvest. But if he does not sow the due amount of seed, he suffers a lack of produce. Second, one *can* apply it to the moral realm: the generous person thrives, whereas the one who is stingy (toward others) does not. In other words, generosity can bring a blessing. The first interpretation seems preferable, but there is a division of opinion, and even translations differ. See also the *Explanation* below.

25 See also v 17 for the general idea. Here the meaning is more specific. The subject is, literally, “a soul of blessing,” i.e., one who brings blessings to others, or in v 25b, “one who waters.” The parallelism is synonymous, and this is rare in the opening chapters of the collection, but cf. v 29. The saying can be associated especially with v 24a; blessing (others) leads to prosperity.²⁵

24. Complete antithesis, ternary: one spends and grows, another hoards and declines. Lit. *there is one who spends*. The terms and the sense seem to be general—there is no special reference to almsgiving (as in ψ 112:9), but it is said that a just expenditure of one’s wealth, in every way, is rational policy, tending to gain. That the reference is to physical wealth (and not to thought and act) may be inferred from similar expressions in Pr. (11:25, 26; 14:23; 21:5), and that a general habit or policy is spoken of appears from the general character of the terms employed: experience teaches that the man of liberal methods prospers, and such an one, it is probably meant to say, has the blessing of God. The sage does not seem to have in mind a man’s care of

²⁴ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 921.

²⁵ Rowland E. Murphy, [*Proverbs*](#), vol. 22, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 83–84.

himself. *Proper* is that which is just, appropriate to the circumstances (the RV²⁶. rendering *more than is proper* is incorrect); *want* is lack, deficit. See a similar thought in BS. 11:11. In second cl. the Lat. (and so the Syr.) has, incorrectly: *Others seize what is not theirs, and are always in want.*—**25.** Synonymous (a form of rare occurrence in chs. 10–15), ternary. *Liberal man* is lit. *person* (lit. *soul*) *of blessing*, one who dispenses kindness, beneficence. *Prospered* is lit. *made fat*, metaphor derived from the condition of well-nourished animals or vegetables (Ju. 9:9; Isa. 30:23; Jer. 31:14; Job 36:16, cf. Pr. 13:4; 28:25); the metaphor in *waters*, *watered* is agricultural. The reference appears to be specifically to kindly, generous conduct toward others; the reward of such conduct is determined by social laws and by the divine approval.²⁷

What the hoarder fails to realize, however, is that in the economy of God the greedy ultimately lose even the material things they try so hard to keep while the benevolent only prosper more and more. Verses 23, 27 closely parallel each other²³²⁸⁴ and form an inclusio around vv. 24–26, all of which center on the theme of generosity and selfishness. The inclusio states the general truth that one receives back according to one’s own behavior while vv. 24–26 deal with the concrete issue of hoarding. Those who hoard by refusal either to give (v. 24)²³²⁹⁵ or to sell (v. 26) finally face not only widespread hatred (v. 26) but the poverty they dread as well (v. 24). The generous only have greater and greater prosperity (v. 25).²³³⁰⁶³¹

²⁶RV. Eng. Revised Version.

²⁷ Crawford Howell Toy, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs*](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 234–235.

²⁸²³⁴ Note that תַּאֲוֹת (“desire”) and תִּקְוֹת (“hope”) in v. 23 are answered by שֶׁחָר (“seeking”) and וְדִרַשׁ (“looking for”) in v. 27. Note also that the reward of the righteous, “good” (טוֹב), in v. 23a contrasts with “evil” (רָעָה) in v. 27b as עֲבָרָה (“[divine] wrath”) in v. 23b contrasts with רְצוֹן (“[divine] favor”) in v. 27a.

²⁹²³⁵ Charitable giving is the primary focus of v. 24, but refusal to give fair pay to workers may be implied in מִיִּשָּׁר (cf. Jas 5:1–4).

³⁰²³⁶ Dahood (*Proverbs*, 23–24) vocalizes the difficult form יוֹרָא as יוֹרָא and takes it as either a pual or hophal of וָרָא, “to be fat.” The parallel תִּדְשֵׁן (“be fat prosperous”) supports this.

³¹ Duane A. Garrett, [*Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*](#), vol. 14, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 127–128.