

“Altruistic Authority” Proverbs 13

1. Authority: the wise heeds authority while the scoffer (extreme fool) refuses rebuke and remains miserable.
2. The diets of the wise and foolish: wise words yield good produce vs fools with an ‘appetite for destruction.’
3. If v. 2 speaks of the products v. 3 their results.
4. I remember how when we were young we desired a good paying job which demanded little effort but didn’t consider that there is benefit to honest work. We were designed to labor and produce services and products, and God’s good design is not just the end but the means viz. blessing of working. Satisfaction comes with a job well done.
5. Is your word good? The upright hate the twisted deception of false witness and purposeful confusion while the wicked create such. Their fruit is rotten.
6. Righteous walk protects them on the path or keeps them on the path, while the wicked veer off it into mayhem.
7. Honesty / Humility: pretenders value esteem of others while the humble esteem God and obedience. The obedient are at peace and need not flaunt their blessings but humbly thank God as He prepares a table for them.
8. Option 1: A man’s riches can save him via ransom, but the poor hear no “rebuke” “threat” and thus are consumed by the circumstances. Option 2: They end up in the same place. Option 3: Benefits of not being rich is no threat of kidnapping. Option 4: The ransom is what the man is worth and his value is rich but the poor are not esteemed enough... Option 5: The rich may have leverage while the poor refuse instruction and are swept away.
9. “Light” here appears to be a metaphor for life energy, and when the lamp of the wicked is extinguished, it signifies at least removal of well-being if not death itself. This metaphor is used elsewhere (Job 18:6; 21:17; Prov. 20:20; 24:20 [where colon 2 is verbatim what we have here]).¹
10. Authority: Refusal to be corrected or even consider possible reproof is stubborn pride which keeps one in err and disillusioned. Not only that, but such an attitude causes quarrels. Teachability is a prominent motif.
11. Honest labor: Enduring labor sees honest gain as a godly beneficial vocation cf. v. 4.
12. Although there is a principle of delayed gratitude, delayed expectations bring us down. But when they are fulfilled, they vivify.
13. Cf. v. 10. “Word” conveys authoritative instruction.
14. Like the vivifying fulfilled desires, the law is a life-springing well which overcomes death.
15. Favor of good fruit. The tact of wisdom endears favor, while the rebel’s way endures difficulty.
16. Fruit of the tree is apparent; observe and act accordingly.
17. Envoys of trouble and truth: The unfaithful bring about or convey misleading info vs. the faithful who bring truth and health. See v. 5
18. Results of heeding or dismissing authority: poverty comes to those who disdain it and honor to those who receive it.
19. Consider v. 12’s “sick heart,” yet fruition vivifies while here, the fool has no hope of fulfillment of desires/achievements because to stop doing evil is an abomination to them.
20. Bad Co.: 1 Cor. 15:33. Influence is real. Peer pressure is real. Mob mentality is real. Surround yourself with the wise and become wiser still. You can tell a bit about one by the company he keeps. You can also tell a lot by whose enemies a person has. To accompany foolishness ends in destruction. I was influenced by the MTV generation.

¹ Longman, T., III. (2006). [Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Proverbs](#) (p. 286). Baker Academic.

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21. “Evil” or “trouble” (same word in v. 20 which is translated “destroyed”) is the outcome of the unregenerate “sinners.” But the righteous will be repaid with good.
22. Contrary to the trouble seeking sinners who cause destruction, the upright seek good for their grandchildren. This reversal of wealth seems to imply eschatological reversal – which is a biblical motif where God will ultimately take what the wicked stole from the upright and give it to the righteous and much more.
23. Another uncertain interpretation: Option 1: Gain forfeited by sloth and gain taken by the exploiters. Option 2: Fallowed land still produced fruit w/o farming and such was available to the poor, yet the rich took it away lit. “swept away.” In general the teaching is against injustice. It is obviously wrong to hoard when others are hungry and it is also obvious to forsake work when one could have provided for self and family.
24. Counter cultural discipline: Today, society says you hate your child if you whip her. The Bible says you hate your child if you don’t! Love is discipline, not unconditional approval. “Promptly” or “early” could mean both soon after the violation and early in life.
25. Satisfaction in righteousness: Though injustice is prevalent, God satisfies the upright. Is it well with your “soul”? Whereas the very soul of the upright are satisfied, not even the belly of the wicked is fulfilled. Those who exploit others will themselves be left empty. V. 9 and Matt. 6:22-23 convey the severity of this light of life vs the emptiness and darkness of death. *Matthew*’s context is not unlike *Proverbs* in that the fool values the temporal gain and winds up in utter darkness, while the wise value eternity and have treasures forevermore.

PC: Most of the sayings in *Proverbs* are simply stated observations and claims. These are without a defense (apologetic) and presuppose the authority of God’s revelations in His Word and world. Just as the laws of physics, which He created, are set with their consequences; so too the moral law and the respective consequences of both its adherence and its violations. Repeated themes are found in this chapter (13) and some prevalent ones include: authority, fruit (consequences), honesty, humility, and the trouble which comes from a neglect or despising of God’s authority. Apologetics are good to have a hold of, but what is more important is the adherence and proclamation of God’s eternal Word. These proverbs ring true on a surface level because such is empirically observed, but there is also a spiritual layer which rings even more vital and ultimate, as eternal life and death hinge on how each of us responds to God’s authority. An adherence to the Word enjoys both benefits now and forevermore, while rejection of it produces trouble, dissatisfaction, and utter darkness.