

# Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

## BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 16:18-33

**18** Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

**19** It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

**20** Whoever gives thought to the word[a] will discover good, and blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.

**21** The wise of heart is called discerning, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.

**22** Good sense is a fountain of life to him who has it, but the instruction of fools is folly.

**23** The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

**24** Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

**25** There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.[b]

**26** A worker's appetite works for him; his mouth urges him on.

**27** A worthless man plots evil, and his speech[c] is like a scorching fire.

**28** A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.


**29** A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good.

**30** Whoever winks his eyes plans[d] dishonest things; he who purses his lips brings evil to pass.

**31** Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.

**32** Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

**33** The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.



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## DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 16:18-33


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There have been many times I have made decisions based on my own desires or what I thought was a good way to go. These choices often came back to prove they were not the best decision, but the quick decision. My wife and I, when we were early in our marriage, decided to trade my car in for a new one. Our plan was to take a test drive and that was it. Of course, being young and easily persuaded, we ended up making the trade that night. No guidance from God was sought. No counsel from community was received. It was the "Bart and Amber Show" and we wanted a new vehicle. That vehicle ended up being quite a lemon. Experiences like these make certain verses in this passage stand out; verses 18, 25, and 33.

Verse 18 is likely one of the most known verses in the Bible, if not always known that it comes from the Bible. Often misquoted as "Pride goes (or comes) before a fall," it summarizes the sentiment of the advice. When we think that we are in charge, that our ideas are great, we often lead ourselves onto a terrible path of self-reliance and isolation. The only thing we can do well without the Lord first endowing us with the ability is sinning. James tells us, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (James 1:17). When we strike out on our own, without first consulting our Father in Heaven, we are setting ourselves on a dark path with many hidden traps waiting for us.

This leads to verse 25, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." When we take that dark path, there is no light to guide our steps. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Without the Lord leading us, through prayer, His word, and His people, our feet will tread in darkness and we will be unaware of the pit that awaits us just ahead.

To truly succeed in life, we must lay it all down in front of our Lord. Many times in the Bible, we read of casting lots to determine a course of action to take (Leviticus 16:8, Esther 3:7, Jonah 1:7, Acts 1:26). The purpose of the casting of lots was to put the decision out of mortal hands. Some call it "luck of the draw". But as Proverbs 16:33 tells us, "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." This is not telling us to live willy nilly, trusting every decision you make to the toss of the dice. It is saying that, ultimately the will of God will triumph. We are to seek His will above our own. In the house I grew up in, my parents had a framed print of these words: "Think of others first, yourself last, and God always." We should never take our eyes off God. When we do, we put ourselves first, setting our lives up for that fall. Instead, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (the things in life that we must make decisions about) will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33, parenthetical was inserted by me).



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**Questions:**

1. Where has pride taken hold in your heart?
2. In what ways have you tried to make your own path through life?
3. Do you attribute 'chance' or 'luck' to the results of decisions in your life? Remember that God is the one who ultimately leads the events, big and small, of life.