

# Proverbs 10:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

## Analysis

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The tongue of the just is as choice silver; the heart of the wicked is little worth. Righteous speech is precious and valuable like refined silver. Conversely, wicked hearts (and thus their speech flowing from hearts) are worthless. The contrast emphasizes both inner character (heart) and outer expression (tongue). What makes righteous speech valuable is the valuable heart from which it flows.

## Historical Context

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Silver required refining to remove impurities, making it valuable. Righteous speech similarly requires heart purification to produce valuable words worth heeding.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How valuable is your speech to others - choice silver or worthless dross?
2. What heart impurities need refining to produce more valuable speech?

## Interlinear Text

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רְשָׁעַ יָם  
of the wicked  
H7563

לְבָבָן  
the heart  
H3820

צַדְקָה  
of the just  
H6662

לְשָׁן  
The tongue  
H3956

בָּשָׂר  
is as choice  
H977

כְּבָשָׂר  
silver  
H3701

כְּבָשָׂר:

is little worth

H4592

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 12:18** (Parallel theme): There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.

**Jeremiah 17:9** (Evil): The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

**Genesis 6:5** (Evil): And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

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