

Proverbs 15:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

Analysis

The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things. Lev tsaddiq yehgeh la'anot (לֵב צַדִּיק יְהִגֵּה לְעָנוֹת), the heart of the righteous meditates to answer). Hagah (הָגָה, meditate, mutter, study) shows thoughtful preparation before speaking. Ufi resha'im yabiya' ra'ot (עַפֵּי רְשָׁעִים יָבִיאֵה רָא'וֹת) but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil). Naba (נְבָא, gush, pour forth, bubble) depicts uncontrolled speech. The righteous think before speaking; the wicked spew evil impulsively. Proverbs repeatedly urges thoughtful speech (15:2, 15:23, 16:23). James 1:19 commands being "slow to speak."

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom valued careful speech. Royal advisors deliberated before counseling kings. Legal witnesses considered testimony thoughtfully. Fools spoke rashly, causing damage. This proverb taught disciplined communication—thinking before talking. Jesus exemplified this, often asking questions rather than giving hasty answers, and remaining silent when strategic (Matthew 26:63, Mark 15:5).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Do you study your answers—thinking and praying before speaking—or pour out words impulsively?
2. What practices can help you become more thoughtful in speech (pausing, praying, considering consequences)?
3. How does the overflow of the heart (Luke 6:45) determine whether you study good answers or gush evil?

Interlinear Text

לִבְנָה	אֶלְיָקָה	הַיְהָבָה	לְעֹנָה וְתַחֲנָה	וְלֹבֶשֶׁת	רַשְׁעָה יְמָנָה
The heart	of the righteous	studieth	to answer	but the mouth	of the wicked
H3820	H6662	H1897	H6030	H6310	H7563
רַשְׁעָה יְמָנָה	לְעֹנָה וְתַחֲנָה	הַיְהָבָה	אֶלְיָקָה	לִבְנָה	רַשְׁעָה יְמָנָה
poureth	out evil things				
H5042	H7451				

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 3:15 (Parallel theme): But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Proverbs 15:2 (Parallel theme): The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

Proverbs 29:11 (Parallel theme): A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

Ecclesiastes 5:2 (Parallel theme): Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

Proverbs 10:19 (Parallel theme): In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

Proverbs 13:16 (Parallel theme): Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.

Proverbs 29:20 (Parallel theme): Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Proverbs 16:23 (Parallel theme): The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

Ecclesiastes 5:6 (Parallel theme): Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

Matthew 12:34 (Evil): O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.