

# Proverbs 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

## Analysis

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Showing partiality to the wicked and overthrowing the righteous in judgment are both evil. The Hebrew 'nasa panim' (accept/lift up the face) refers to favoritism based on status or bribes. To 'overthrow' (Hebrew 'natah'—turn aside, pervert) the righteous denies them justice. Reformed theology insists on impartial justice reflecting God's character (Deuteronomy 10:17). God shows no partiality, and neither should His people. This applies to judicial systems, church discipline, and personal relationships. Justice must be blind to status and favor, considering only truth and righteousness.

## Historical Context

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Mosaic law repeatedly commanded impartial justice (Leviticus 19:15, Deuteronomy 1:17). Israel's judges were to show no favoritism to rich or poor but render verdicts based solely on evidence and law.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. Do you show partiality in your judgments based on wealth, status, or relationship?
2. How can you ensure that your evaluations of others are fair and impartial?
3. What systems can be implemented in your spheres of influence to prevent favoritism?

## Interlinear Text

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שָׂא ת	פְּנֵי	רָשָׁע	לֹא	טוֹב	לְהִטּוֹת
to accept	the person	of the wicked	H3808	It is not good	to overthrow
H5375	H6440	H7563		H2896	H5186
צַדִּיק	בְּמִשְׁפָּט:				
the righteous	in judgment				
H6662	H4941				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Leviticus 19:15** (Righteousness): Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

**Proverbs 28:21** (Good): To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress.

**Deuteronomy 16:19** (Righteousness): Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

**Psalms 82:2** (Righteousness): How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

**Proverbs 17:15** (Righteousness): He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.

**Proverbs 24:23** (Judgment): These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

**Isaiah 5:23** (Righteousness): Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

**Job 34:19** (Parallel theme): How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.

**Matthew 22:16** (Parallel theme): And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

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