

POWER HOUR

10/18/2026

Lesson Text:
Proverbs 15:1-15

Related Scriptures:
Proverbs 17:22-28; James 1:19-27;
3:1-12; Psalm 69:30-36 &
1 Samuel 15:12-23

“A SOFT ANSWER OVER WRATH”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.
Proverbs 15:1 NLT

Time: between 971 and 931 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Proverbs 15:1-15 NLT

¹ A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare. ² The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing, but the mouth of a fool belches out foolishness. ³ The Lord is watching everywhere, keeping his eye on both the evil and the good. ⁴ Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. ⁵ Only a fool despises a parent's discipline; whoever learns from correction is wise. ⁶ There is treasure in the house of the godly, but the earnings of the wicked bring trouble. ⁷ The lips of the wise give good advice; the heart of a fool has none to give. ⁸ The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but he delights in the prayers of the upright. ⁹ The Lord detests the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue godliness. ¹⁰ Whoever abandons the right path will be severely disciplined; whoever hates correction will die. ¹¹ Even Death and Destruction hold no secrets from the Lord. How much more does he know the human heart! ¹² Mockers hate to be corrected, so they stay away from the wise. ¹³ A glad heart makes a happy face; a broken heart crushes the spirit. ¹⁴ A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while the fool feeds on trash. ¹⁵ For the despondent, every day brings trouble; for the happy heart, life is a continual feast.

INTRODUCTION

“A Soft Answer over Wrath,” addresses the importance of how we use our words. The wise both speak carefully and listen humbly to receive correction from others, whereas the fool speaks rashly and refuses to listen to others. Our words can do great harm to both ourselves and others. Alternatively, they can also accomplish tremendous good. Because our words are so powerful, they are worth careful consideration.

Additional Scripture Readings:

A Heart like Medicine. Proverbs 17:22-28.

Living as Christians. Ephesians 4:25-32.

Obedience Better than Sacrifice. 1 Samuel 15:12-23.

Praise that Pleases the Lord. Psalm 69:30-36.

An Offering that Did Not Please the Lord. 1 Samuel 13:5-14.

The Strength of Wisdom. Proverbs 24:1-7.

Two Ways Contrasted. Proverbs 15:1-15.

1. Wise and foolish talk (Proverbs 15:1-7). Proverbs 15 provides several important truths about speaking softly and lovingly. First, (vs.1) reminds us that words can either bring peace or rage. This proverb assumes that things are already heated. Imagine that this proverb addresses an argument of some type. Something has been said, and now the question is, “What do I say?” Often, our gut reaction is the wrong one. He said something harsh to me, we may think, so I am going to wreck him back. An eye for an eye! But that response will simply bring about more wrath, more anger, and more harsh words. But what if we respond with kindness? At the very least, it stops the cycle. When we respond with loving words, the anger can be cut off! We cannot be responsible for how someone responds, but we can be in control of our half of the conversation. Responding with a soft answer will never displease the Lord. What we say reveals what we take into our minds. The wise know how to use their knowledge to speak in a God-honoring way. They are filled with the Holy Spirit and are driven to speak with holiness. But the foolish do not. They take in vile and dangerous things that affect their speech. Their foolish talk is

heard by all (Matthew 15:19). Our speech is an indication of our character (Proverbs 15:7). Those who fear God, study His Word, and seek godly wisdom from like-minded people are easy to identify. Their speech reflects the wisdom that they are accustomed to receiving. Likewise, it is easy to identify those who have questionable sources guiding their attitudes, actions, and life decisions. As Jesus stated, the state of one's heart is revealed by one's words (Matthew 15:18).

2. The destruction of the foolish (Proverbs 15:8-15). The kind of information we introduce into our lives can be habit-forming. If we become accustomed to directing our lives and opinions based on certain sources or mindsets, those sources will be what we crave (vs. 14). The entertainment we consume will also inform how we live and speak. One cannot consume sin-glorifying media and not expect it to affect one's soul. It is better to acclimate our entertainment tastes to more wholesome fare. Last, our words breed life or death in someone's soul. Words can hurt (Proverbs 15:4; 18:21). Take seriously what you say to someone, for that person's soul will.

PRACTICAL POINTS

By speaking gently and wisely, we can avoid stirring up trouble for ourselves (Prov. 15:1-2).

We should always act wisely, for God sees all, even our hearts (vss. 3, 11).

Wholesome speech is life-giving, so watch how you speak (vs. 4).

Those who learn from instruction are wise (vs. 5).

Righteousness has practical blessings in this life (vs. 6).

The Lord loves the righteous but is angered by hypocritical wickedness (vss. 7-9).

If we arrogantly refuse to learn from others, we are foolish and will suffer (vss. 10-12).

The attitude of our hearts affects the way we experience our outward circumstances (vss. 13-15)

The wise will seek to grow even wiser; the foolish are content with folly.

CONCLUSION

God prioritizes the use of words. Creation became reality through God speaking

(Genesis 1:3). His written Word is truth, revealing His mind and will in the Old and New Testaments. Christ is the living Word of God in the flesh (John 1:1-14). Since God uses words, we can imagine the importance of words themselves.

Unsurprisingly, God stresses the importance of the words we use as humans created in His image. The apostle James described the tongue as small but mighty. Like the rudder of a ship, it sets our direction. It can also bring destruction, like an out-of-control fire (James. 3:1-12). Tongues can bless or curse.

Next week, the Bible makes a strong connection between wisdom and meekness, we shall see the connection in: ***'The Wisdom of the Meek' - James 3:13-18***

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