

NEIGHBORS

By Dr. Gary M. Gulan, ©1986 (Rev. 96)

Lesson #19
Proverbs 3:27-35

Introduction: Years ago everyone knew their neighbors. Neighbors would help each other and look out for each other. Today, people take part in everyday activities without ever knowing who their neighbors are. Solomon instructs his son about the value and meaning of neighbors.

1. DESCRIPTIVE MEANING OF A NEIGHBOR (What is a neighbor?)

Solomon reveals two kinds of neighbors in the book of Proverbs.

A. Proverbs 3:28,29 "**neighbor**" (Hebrew "rea' ") meaning "friend, companion, another person, or associate." "This term can extend to either close or occasional relationships. It can be used of chance acquaintances and partners, but also of closer friends. Used as friend 187xs in the Old Testament and used 19xs as neighbor in Proverbs.

("rea' " by R. Laird Harris as found in Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 2, page 853)

B. Proverbs 27:10 "**neighbor**" (Hebrew "shaken") meaning neighbor or inhabitant. This term can refer to either friendly (i.e. Ex. 3:22; Ruth 4:17) or unfriendly (Ps. 44:13, 79:4,12). Used 17xs in the Old Testament and used once in Proverbs.

("shaken" by Victor P. Hamilton as found in Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 2, page 925)

Summary note: There are two other Hebrew words used in the Old Testament but not in Proverbs for neighbor:

1. "**Neighbor**" (Hebrew " 'amit") meaning "associate, fellow or relative." Used 9xs in the Old Testament and is translated in many different ways.

2. "**Neighbor**" (Hebrew "qarob") meaning "near one and can refer to spatial proximity." Used 5xs in the Old Testament.

Who then is our neighbor? (see Luke 10:30-37)

2. DESIRABLE TRAITS OF A GOOD NEIGHBOR (How do I become a good neighbor?)

Solomon gives examples of how to be a good neighbor.

A. Proverbs 3:27 = Don't withhold good from them

B. Proverbs 3:29 = Don't devise evil against them

C. Proverbs 3:30 (25:8) = Don't strive with them

D. Proverbs 3:31 = Don't envy them

E. Proverbs 11:12 = Hold your peace with them

F. Proverbs 14:21 = Don't despise them

G. Proverbs 24:28 = Don't be a witness without a cause

H. Proverbs 25:9 = Don't reveal secrets about them

I. Proverbs 25:17 = Don't overstay your welcome with them

3. DETESTABLE TRAITS OF BAD NEIGHBORS (What is a bad neighbor?)

Solomon gives examples of how to avoid being a bad neighbor.

- A. Proverbs 6:29 = Go into your neighbor's wife
- B. Proverbs 11:9 = Be a hypocrite with your mouth
- C. Proverbs 11:12 = Be void of understanding
- D. Proverbs 12:26 = Seduce them
- E. Proverbs 16:29 = Entice them
- F. Proverbs 19:4 = Focus on money
- G. Proverbs 25:18 = Bear false witness against them
- H. Proverbs 26:19 = Deceive them
- I. Proverbs 29:5 = Flatter your neighbor

Conclusion: There are four items worth remembering about neighbors.

#1. Proverbs 14:21 = To despise your neighbor is "sin."

#2. Proverbs 11:12 = The basic problem concerning neighbors is the "heart."

#3. Proverbs 19:4; 14:20 = The wrong way to befriend your neighbor is over "money."

#4. Proverbs 12:26 = The righteous is more abundant than his neighbor. Why?

A. Proverbs 3:33 = because of blessings received.

B. Proverbs 3:34 = because of the grace received.

C. Proverbs 3:35 = because of the inherited glory.

It is good to have a righteous neighbor and good to be a righteous neighbor.