

## Proverbs 21:9, 19

Keeper or Destroyer at Home?

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### Monday, February 2, 2026 ▫ Read Proverbs 21:9, 19

*Questions from the Scripture text: Where is better to dwell (v9)? Than where? With whom? Where is it better to dwell (v19)? Than with whom?*

**What robs a house of peace and flourishing?** Proverbs 21:9–19 looks forward to the midweek sermon. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **a contentious wife robs a house of peace and flourishing.**

Proverbs 21 contains four main lessons that make up the body of this chapter: v4–8, which we discussed last time; v10–18; and v20–29. The hinges between these three sections are the fourth section: v9, 19. The middle section, especially addresses those who are harsh, stingy, and selfish. With that as the center of the chapter, the hinges then deal with a special case of these: the contentious wife. In v9, the corner of the housetop is better, implying that she has made it impossible to have peace in the home. In v19, the wilderness is better, implying that she has made it impossible to flourish in the home.

This is the opposite of what Scripture teaches about wives in other places, such as 1Pet 3, about the gentle and quiet spirit that is very precious in the sight of the Lord—the sort of heart from which biblical submission to the husband comes. Or Titus 2, where it states that the wife is to be a keeper at home, a lover of her husband and her children. A wife ought to strive to make the home a place of peace and flourishing for her husband.

In contrast to this, the contentious woman robs the home of peace and flourishing. She is combative (v9). Her heart is always against her husband, her speech is always against her husband, and her actions are always against her husband. And v19 emphasizes that this proceeds from a heart that is angry and hostile.

So there are several lessons here for the young man who is especially the object of the Book of Proverbs. One is wife selection: that you observe. If a lady is always arguing, always resisting, always grumbling, always opposing anyone, that indicates her heart. And, if you are the sort of husband, against whom v10–18 warns, you may provoke or exacerbate contentiousness in your wife.

These verses, of course, also have much to say to the young ladies. There are many things that you want to work on and develop as you prepare to be a wife someday, not only training to do tasks well, but also training to do them spiritually well, with diligence that proceeds from love and joy in the Lord. These verses establish a vital component of your training: eliminating contentiousness from your heart. The place to begin is with the Lord. He is always doing you good. If you remember Him in everything you do, you can operate with peace, gentleness, and generosity that guard against murmuring, grumbling, anger, resistance, and stubbornness. Then, operating with the Lord in this way, you can mortify contentiousness against parents or others, training to be a wife who fosters peace in the whole house, not just in a corner of a rooftop—helping him to flourish, not just by the way you do your tasks as a wife, but by the attitude of your heart towards him and your gentleness and submissiveness of interacting with him.

Much rests upon a wife being the gentle and quiet spirit, the lover of husband and children, the keeper at home, that 1Pet 3 and Titus 2 talk about. The husband is the head, and he ministers the Word, and he leads the family before God, and he establishes the spiritual tone of the household. Much rests on him. But much also rests on the wife. She has power to undo much of that. Her hope for reinforcing and helping the good is that the Lord would graciously have her heart in His hand, turning it upon what pleases Him.

When do you find your heart being contentious? How are you fighting that? What place does gentle, submissive, service have in your idea of the ideal wife?

*Sample prayer: Lord, turn our hearts toward that which pleases You. And help each of us in the particular role that we have. Make us depend upon You, delight in You, and be devoted to You. Use us to do good to those with whom You have made us to dwell. Grant that our children would neither marry, nor be, a contentious wife.*

**Suggested songs: ARP1191 “According to Your Word, O LORD” or TPH51C “God, Be Merciful to Me”**

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Summary of the transcript of the audio: the devotional presents a meditation on the moral and spiritual dynamics of family life, centered on the critical role of a wife’s character in shaping the household’s peace and flourishing. The Drawing from 1 Peter 3 and Titus 2, the devotional emphasizes that a gentle, quiet, and submissive spirit, rooted in a heart devoted to God, is essential for a wife to become a true keeper of the home and a source of peace and flourishing for her husband. It calls both young men and women to examine their hearts: men are warned against poor choice in a wife, or harsh or neglectful leadership that provokes resistance, while women are urged to cultivate a spirit of gratitude, service, and humility, beginning in their relationship with God. Ultimately, the passage reveals that the health of a household rests not only on the husband’s headship but on the wife’s willing, Spirit-led submission and love, making her a vital instrument of God’s grace in the home..