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**Select World Proverbs**

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**SELECT WORLD  
PROVERBS**

*A Way to Wisdom*

**Compiled by**

Joey Gondor Bitz

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## FOREWORD

Some truths transcend the concept of time and local culture, they become generally valid in a variety of disjoint circumstances, and in principle they belong to the entire humanity. Many of these eternal truths are entrenched in the people's proverbs. The truths provided by the proverbs are validated by time, social scrutiny, and have endured time from one epoch to another.

During the years, I have assembled a long list of proverbs from various sources, some from my personal travel experience. I use the expression *Proverbs of* to describe the location where the proverb is used, however that might be or not be the genuine place of origin for the proverb. Furthermore, it does not imply that the proverb is local to the cultural context, and it is not made use of elsewhere in the world. When I traveled to Japan I learned about a number of new proverbs that I assumed were rooted in the local culture. Later I found out that they are proverbs used in other cultures as well, and the true origin of the proverbs was hidden by the time past and historical conditions. Certain proverbs offered an amazingly reach set of answers to my confidence. They provided an experience of philosophic beauty, and unique inspirational richness difficult to come across otherwise. I have selected for this book proverbs that offer definite intellectual delight brought by the universal wisdom, and by the intrinsic beauty that they possess. Some are proverbs that originated in ancient times; others are proverbs of various geographical areas and cultures. As it is obvious, the proverbs have crossed many national boundaries and sometimes are difficult to point to their true origin. For

example moral proverbs that un-doubtedly originated in ancient China or Greece are now frequently brought up in many other parts of the world.

It is also noticeable that ancient moral philosophical traditions from China, Greece, India, or South America have provided the basis for popular proverbs that are widely used or accepted. For example the quote attributed to Confucius: *What you do not desire for yourself, do not do to others* is found in most cultures; sometimes in the original form or changed at times to satisfy the local cultural context; nevertheless always preserving the original meaning. A few times, I have included some old philosophical quotes as proverbs since those quotes have become important part of the culture, and in these settings the distinction between a quote and proverb has become blurred.

Due to the incredible diversity of the American Continent, and my limited understanding of the local traditions, I have pointed out only the some old and unique North American proverbs. All other proverbs in this book also apply to the American culture, as all other cultures have undeniably contributed to its development.

In the task of creating this book, I have tried to preserve the meaning of the original proverbs, when it was available, and I chose that instead of a strict literal translation.

I group these proverbs by geographical areas of original use, however the place is based on my subjective belief of the rightful initial place of the proverbs, and I likely will be mistaken at times. Some doubt about that matter is expected, and I here say that is well valued.

The intended audience for this proverb collection is a multitude of people that enjoy the general accepted perspective of all the humanity, and are open to new and different points of view for the events of our amazing and miraculous lives.

*I like to show gratitude to my caring wife Chanjuan, and my lovely daughters Michelle and Huimei for showing consideration for my opinions that had many time proverbs as their basis for convincing validity.*

*In memory of Maria, my wonderful grandmother!*



**Proverbs of North America**

**Proverbs of the Native North American**

*Take only what you need, and leave the land as you found it. – Arapaho*

*We will be known forever by the tracks we leave. – Dakota*

*What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset. – Blackfoot*

*All who have died are equal. – Comanche*

*Life is not separate from death, it only seems that way. – Blackfoot*

*Coyote is always out there waiting, and Coyote is always hungry. – Navajo*

*There is nothing as eloquent as a rattlesnake's tail. – Navajo*

*You can't wake a person that is pretending to be asleep. – Navajo*

*What is past and could not be prevented should not be grieved for. – Pawnee*

*With all things and in all things, we all are relatives. – Sioux*

*Old age is not as honorable as death, but most people want it. – Crow*

*It is better to have less thunder in the mouth, and more lightning in the hand. – Apache*

*Do not judge your neighbor until you walk two moons in his moccasins. – Cheyenne*

*The weakness of the enemy makes us strong. – Cherokee*

*Day and night cannot dwell together. – Duwamish*

*Force, no matter how concealed, begets resistance. – Lakota*

*Knowledge that is not used is abused. – Cree*

*There is no death; it is only a change of worlds. – Duwamish*

*Wonder often, the gift of understanding will come. – Arapaho*

*There is never a good reason for arguing. – Hopi*

*You are required to live your life from start to the end; no one else can do it for you. – Hopi*

*Every fire is small at first. – Seneca*

### **Proverbs of the Eskimo**

*Maybe they are not stars on the night sky, but rather openings in heaven where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy.*

*You do not know your friends from your enemies until the ice breaks.*

*May you have kindness in your heart, a plump woman in your furs, and seal meat in you larder.*

*May you have warmth in your igloo, oil in your lamp, and peace in your heart.*

*Summer is the season of inferior sledding.*

*Yesterday was wood; tomorrow ashes. Only today does the fire shines bright.*

*If you are often afraid, change your ways.*

*Don't let the windows of your home be so small that the light of the sun cannot enter your rooms.*

*May your charity increase as much as your wealth does.*

*The caribou feeds the wolf, but it is the wolf that makes the caribou to grow strong.*

*Those who know to play can overcome the challenges of life, and the one who can sing and laugh never brews mischief.*

*Unless you're the lead sled dog, the view is pretty*

*much the same.*

*Even the mighty eagle can not soar higher than the stars.*

*Love comes, sometimes after marriage.*

*He that shows off own knowledge proclaims his ignorance.*

*Whether you think you can or that you can't, you're right!*

### **Proverbs of the Amish**

*The man who claims to be the boss in his own home will lie about other things as well.*

*We pass our principles to our children by what we tolerate.*

*You can tell when you're on the right track. It's when you go uphill.*

*Instead of putting others in their place, place your-self in their place.*

*Experience is an unusual teacher; it is giving you the test first and later the lesson.*

*Young learn, the old understand.*

*A happy marriage is like a long conversation that seems very short.*

*Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear, and even the blind can see.*

*There is no magnitude of honesty.*

*Many things are opened by mistake, but none as frequent as the mouth.*

*It is annoying to have someone go on talking when you are busy interrupting.*



***Proverbs of South America***

**Proverbs of Argentina**

*It's not the fault of the pig, but of the one who scratches his back.*

*It's not the gay coat that makes the gentleman.*

*Fortune favors the brave.*

*It's easy to trust a cat once you put the cream out of reach.*

*He who does not honor his wife dishonors himself.*

*It takes two people to make one person angry.*

*He who knows nothing neither doubts nor fears anything.*

### Proverbs of Colombia

*Recognizing his major mistakes places a man on the road to wisdom.*

*Never promise a poor person, and never owe a rich one.*

*Who is always miserable, does not even have joy when drunk.*

*When force is unavoidable, the law becomes a joke.*

*To love, and be wise is not easy.*

*There is no better friend than a burden.*

*There is no genuine honor among thieves.*

*Teaching the youth is like engraving in stones.*

*By overcoming his passions a person overcomes his greatest enemies.*

*Better to beg forgiveness than to ask permission.*

*If there's not enough bread, cakes will do.*

*In times of need, kindness is more than ever sweet.*

### Proverbs of Mexico

*All trees are made out of wood, but pine is not mahogany.*

*Even for begging one needs capital.*

*There'll always be a dead creature for the hungry vulture.*

*A few people don't say what they think, and some others don't think before they speak.*

*Fear and hope are the parents of God. – Aztec*

*Self restrain like an opossum, hunt like a jaguar. – Mayan*

*First men were made from sticks, now they roam as apes. – Mayan*

### Proverbs of Peru

*From the tree of silence we harvest the fruit of tranquility.*

*Favor your own first, then others.*

*Fortune and olives are alike: sometimes a man has it in abundance and other times not at all.*

*When listening I have the benefit, if I speak others do.*

*Love makes copper look like gold, poverty like riches, and tears like pearls.*

*Don't try to fly like the C6ndor, mountains are high.*

*Frogs do not drink all the water from the pond in which they live. – Inca*

*Instead of giving them corn, teach them how to grow it. – Inca*

*We must spare out enemies or it will be our loss, since them and all their belongings will be ours soon. – Inca*



### Proverbs of ASIA

### **Proverbs of China**

*Great eloquence will not change wrong into right.*

*The darker the night; the brighter the stars.*

*A little help is worth more than a lot of sympathy.*

*Ability in itself is not much when denied opportunity.*

*Judge a person not by the ability to make money, but by the ability to keep it.*

*The best form of flattery is to master the art of listening.*

*Harsh words and poor reasoning never settle anything.*

*That which is beautiful is not always good. But that which is good is always beautiful.*

*Better be too skeptical than to be too trusting.*

*A wolf may lose its fangs, but not its inclination.*

*We cannot clap with only one hand.*

*One who hears flattery, but no criticism, will go astray.*

*Prevent defect and you will avoid success.*

*Do not hope to reach a destination without ever leaving the shore.*

*Men can live on hope alone, no other animal can.*

*A fool must be handled as frying a small fish, very carefully.*

*Do not set the forest on fire to drive out the wolves.*

*The tide must turn the lowest before it turns around.*

*Savings makes one independent.*

*It is better to like what you have than to have what you like.*

*The wise make their own decision, the ignorant follows public opinion.*

*Divide and share an orange, it tastes just as good.*

*Prejudice springs from ignorance.*

*A goal without a deadline is only a wish.*

*One who does not read is the same to one who cannot read.*

*We acquire more knowledge from failures than from success.*

*Without oars, a boat drifts.*

*It does not matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice.*

*To earn a living, a man must depend on his environment.*

*No journey is ever too long with good company.*

*It is better to be ignorant than to be ill taught.*

*You eggs; don't fight with rocks.*

*Judge not one who tries and fails, but the one who fails to try.*

*The one who oppresses others is always a coward.*

*One who does not know when he has enough is poor indeed.*

*Avoiding conflict is also a victory.*

*Shame is forgotten; debts are not.*

*The miracle is not to fly in the air, or to walk on the water; but to walk on the earth.*

*The swiftest horse is slower than a word once spoken.*

*The ripest fruit falls by itself.*

*Neither fortunes nor flowers last forever.*

*Slow work is sometimes the finest work.*

*To know others, know yourself first.*

*Teachers open the door; you enter by yourself.*

*Deadly as she can be, a tigress will never eat her own cubs.*

*A friend made is like a road paved; an enemy created is like a wall.*

*There is no wisdom like silence.*

*A person cannot be judged by his appearance in the same token as the sea cannot be measured with a bucket.*

*A life with love is happy; a life for love is foolish.*

*If people no longer fears death how can you threaten to kill them?*

*Scholars are invaluable to a nation, same as the main course to a banquet.*

*One should not refuse to eat just because there is a chance of getting choked.*

*A bit of fragrance always clings to the hand that gives you roses.*

*A country where flowers are priced so as to make them a luxury has yet to learn the first principles of civilization.*

*A day of sorrow is longer than a month of joy.*

*A wise man makes his own decisions; an ignorant man follows public opinion.*

*You want no one to know it? Then don't do it.*

*At first, all things appear difficult.*

*An ignorant doctor is no better than a murderer.*

*Be not disturbed at being misunderstood; be disturbed at not understanding.*

*Cheap things are not good, good things are not cheap.*

*Do not insult the crocodile until you've crossed the river.*

*Gold has its price; learning is beyond price.*

*Dogs have so many friends because they wag their tails, not their tongues.*

*A person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the man doing it.*

*If a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing well.*

*He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.*

*The best time to plant a tree was many years ago, the second best time is today.*

*If you don't climb the mountain, you can't view the plain.*

*If you suspect a man, don't employ him; and if you employ him, don't suspect him.*

*Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.*

*Learning is treasure no thief can touch.*

*Man fools himself, he prays for a long life and he fears old age.*

*No wind, no waves.*

*Slander cannot destroy an honest man, when the flood recedes the rock is there.*

*Medicine can only cure curable disease, and then not always.*

*The rich man plans for tomorrow, the poor man for today*

### ***Proverbs inspired by Chinese philosophy***

*What you do not desire for yourself, do not do to others. – Confucius*

*There is no understanding where it is no sincerity. – Confucius.*

*It is always better to do good than wrong. – Confucius*

*Repay the injury with straightness, but repay a good turn with a good turn. – Confucius*

*It is not pleasant to learn with constant perseverance and application? It is not pleasant to have friends visit from faraway places? Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no unease though men may make no note of him? – Confucius*

*Nowadays, for a person to be filial means no more than that he is able to provide his parents with food. Even dogs and horses are provided with food. If a person shows no reverence, where is the difference? – Confucius*

*To say to know when you know and to tell that you do not know when you do not; that is knowledge. – Confucius.*

*I am a fortunate man. Whenever I make a mistake, other people are sure to notice it. – Confucius*

*The further you go, the less you know. – Lao Tzu*

*A good warrior is never violent. – Lao Tzu*

*The person who is satisfied with his present is a wealthy person. – Lao Tzu*

*To understand others is to be knowledgeable. To understand yourself is to be wise. To know when you have enough is to be rich. To die but not to be forgotten – that's true long life. – Lao Tzu*

*All men are evil. – Han Fei Tzu*

*He who claims to be sure of something for which is no evidence is a fool, and he who acts on the basis of what cannot be proved is an impostor. – Han Fei Tzu*

*To feed someone and not respect him is as raising pigs. To love someone and not respect him is as keeping pets. – Mencius*

*We can see that one is without the feeling of sympathy, one is not a human. – Mencius*

*One cannot inspire confidence in people thru words alone; it must be accompanied by correct deeds. – Lao Tzu*

### **Proverbs of Tibet**

*Inconsiderate people forget after the favor is done, just as a boat is abandoned after crossing the river.*

*Can the pouring of hot water help the one who grows flowers?*

*If you don't know where you are, any road will do.*

*Naive lovers who listen to everyone will be separated by slender before long.*

*Learned people distinguish the true from the false by sensible study, foolish people run after rumor.*

*Water is like medicine, but can be deadly in excess.*

*Harsh words and anger are often springing from affection.*

*The ocean reflects the moon and the stars but does not see its own depth; it is simple to see other people's faults but difficult to see your own.*

*Just as on drawing water from a well it increases it; it will dry up with sediments if left unused.*

*Those who are blinded by the darkness of ignorance are swept away by the dark river of cravings.*

*Just as the rainwater doesn't expect anything in return for the nourishment it provides to the flowers, the sons sharing their wealth is the best of generosity.*

*The Heaven is at the bottom of patience.*

*The old man's experience is more than the young man's knowledge.*

*Don't ask a hungry man to watch your rice.*

*If it is here, it is everywhere. If it is not here, it is nowhere.*

*If the master gets drunk it is honorable; if the servant gets drunk it is a malicious disposition.*

*Better be a tiger for a day than a sheep for a thousand years.*

*Don't need to cut the tree to get the fruit.*

*The unfortunate is bitten even by a toothless dog.*

*Your character is your destiny.*

*Elders plan can be superior to the young strength.*

*If a mouth is toothless it has more space for the tongue.*

*Talk and arrows are better if straight; roads and bows are better if curved.*

*A long rope is better, a conversation if is short.*

*Thinking in advance is wise. It is foolish to be regretting after.*

*Time possess no compassion.*

*Little knowledge generates great pride, the wise are quiet. Torrents always make much noise, while the ocean seldom roars.*

*Having no debt is to be rich. No disagreement is to be happy.*

*Can never reach great peace if is get passionate about small pleasures.*

*If you practice love, even your adversary will become a friend.*

*What is directly observed might be real.*

*If the old dog is cornered, he'll show the fangs.*

*Who depends on others will likely fail; like the turtle carried by cranes that has, in the end, plunged to the ground.*

*Pride declines virtue.*

### Proverbs of India

*Even if a fool is alongside a wise man all his life, he does not recognize the truth even as a spoon does not know the taste of soup.*

*It is better to leave alone; there is no company with a fool.*

*The fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least to that extent; but the fool who thinks himself wise is called a fool indeed.*

*Mental punishment is a significant crime; however most of the time goes unpunished.*

*Attribute your faults to nature; it does not change the nature of your faults.*

*Great desire causes endless poverty.*

*The way to overcome the angry man is with gentleness, the evil man with goodness, the miser with generosity, and the liar with plain truth.*

*To the mediocre, mediocrity comes out great.*

*Giving advice to a stupid man is like giving salt to a squirrel.*

*One and one are, on occasion, eleven.*

*When the danger is in the past, God is forgotten.*

*When pumpkins are watered, weeds also get nourished.*

*The gardener had not yet dug out the radish, when the beggar holds the empty bowl in front of him.*

*The greatest hero is one who has control over his desires.*

*The wise must be respected, even when the advice they give is not suitable.*

*They who give have all things; they who withhold have nothing.*

*Truth has but one color, a lie has many.*

*Why would a man without a bow look for arrows?*

*Learn about the future by looking at the past.*

*Never strike your wife, even with a flower.*

*Take a close look at today, because yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is barely a vision.*

*Abstinence is good medicine.*

*As people go their own way, destiny goes with them.*

*By slitting the ears and cutting the tail, a dog is still a dog.*

*Can the monkey know the taste of ginger?*

*Even the devil needs a friend.*

*Giving advice to a stupid man is like giving salt to a squirrel.*

*Anger is more destructive than the sword.*

### Proverbs of Japan

*There are lots of paths to the top of the mountain, but the view is the same.*

*If one makes an offering, what does it matter whatever it's persimmons or pears?*

*Waiting for luck is similar to waiting for death.*

*Unless you enter the tiger's den you cannot take the cubs.*

*Even the street dog has his lucky days.*

*Thieves, and scholars look the same.*

*An untried friend is like an un-cracked nut.*

*Fools and scissors require careful handling.*

*When a finger points at the moon, the imbecile looks at the finger.*

*There are false truths as there are true lies.*

*Failure is the mother of success.*

*In the pursuit of pleasure, there is no difference between a woman and a man.*

*The old forget, the young don't know.*

*A true word is not beautiful, and a beautiful word is not always true.*



### Proverbs of Central Asia

**Proverbs of the Middle East**

*A thousand dogs can't catch up with a gazelle.*

*The white dogs, the black dogs are all sons of bitches.*

*A free dog is braver than a caged lion.*

*If you want to know who the bravest coward is, it is the one who first dares to kick the fallen lion.*

*If you set your house on fire, you'll warm up with it once.*

*Two pieces of wood burn higher together.*

*The different sorts of madness are innumerable.*

*Trust God, but tie your camel.*

*If not for God forgiveness, the Paradise would stay empty.*

*In prayer and in prison all people are equal.*

*The actual defects of work will only show when it is finished.*

*Success is never final, failure is never fatal. It's the courage that counts.*

*Habit is the guide of the narrow minded.*

*It is the cause, and not the death, that makes the martyr.*

*Patience heals the broken bone.*

*It takes love to give, and to take with love is also giving.*

*Peace with fear is no true peace.*

*Politicians plan things no devil can think of.*

*There is no finer complement to leadership than clemency.*

*The wet one fears no rain.*

*The Late one will bring you the latest news.*

*The fox pissed in the sea and said: This is mine!*

*Malice is the chosen weapon of the ignorant.*

*It takes love to give, and to take with love is also giving.*

*The heart of the ungrateful person is like desert sand, it swallows water but it does not grow plants.*

### Proverbs of Afghanistan

*Five fingers are brothers but not equals.*

*The appropriate answer to a fool is silence.*

*There is a path to the top of even the highest mountain.*

*A bad wound heals, but a bad word doesn't.*

*Cats don't catch mice to please God.*

*Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit.*

*That which is obvious does not need to be explained.*

*Unless God helps, what can a doctor do?*

### Proverbs of Babylon/Iraq

*Friendship in days of prosperity is servitude forever; friendship in the day of trouble is posterity for the future.*

*You shall do no evil, that way you may gain eternal life.*

*The strong live by their own wages; the weak by the wages of their children.*

*If you go and take the field of an enemy, the enemy will come and take your field.*

*Writing is the mother of eloquence and the father of artists.*

*Be gentle to your enemy, same as to an old oven.*

*Do not drive away a debtor: he will become hostile towards you.*

*A loving heart maintains a family, a hateful heart destroys it.*

*Without suburbs a city has no centre either.*

*An ass here, in another city becomes its head.*

**Proverbs of the Ottoman Empire/Turkey**

*It is not disgraceful to ask, it is worst not to know.*

*Many will point to the right road after the wheel is broken.*

*The real friend tells you the bitter truth.*

*Hope is the bread of the poor.*

*Reversing losses at whatever point is a profit.*

*Demand a task from a lazy person, and be ready to receive advice.*

*The hare was angry with the mountain, but the mountain was unaware of it.*

*A lion sleeps in the heart of every brave man.*

*Do not shorten the donkey's tail in a crowd; some will say it's too long, others that is too short.*

*He who does evil harms himself as well.*

*Don't tell your secret to your friend, he will tell it to his friend.*

*Explaining something to an ignorant person is harder than making a camel jump over a ditch.*

*Patience is bitter, but it bears sweet fruit.*

*If skill could be gained by watching, every dog would become a butcher.*

*Coffee should be black as hell, strong as death, and sweet as love.*

*A thousand friends are too few; one enemy is one too many.*

*A weapon is an enemy even to its owner.*

*Before you love, learn to run through the snow leaving no footprint.*

*Fear an ignorant man more than a lion.*

**Proverbs of Persia**

*Man goes towards his grave carrying in his hands only what he has given away.*

*Go as far as you can see, and from there you'll see further.*

*For a man to live in peace, he must be blind, deaf, and dumb.*

*If fortune turns against you, even jelly breaks your tooth.*

*Luck is fanatical about the efficient.*

*Excessive praise is like an insult.*

*Bribery makes both parties happy.*

*Doubt is the key to knowledge.*

*Forgiveness hides a pleasure that you can't get from revenge.*

*He who eats alone is Satan's brother.*

*If the Sultan demands five eggs, let his soldiers roast a thousand chickens.*

*Maturity comes from wisdom, and not only by the passing of years.*

**Proverbs of the Hebrew**

*A rich man has no need of character.*

*Admission by the defendant is worth a hundred witnesses.*

*Do not confine your children to your own learning, for they were born in another time.*

*Eat vegetables and fear no creditors, rather than eat duck and hide.*

*If a word is worth one shekel, silence is worth two.*

*Love him who tells you your faults in private.*

*Prejudice opinions are frequently upheld with great intensity.*

*Learn to say: I do not know!*

*The court is very merciful when the accused is rich.*

*The kind man provides for his cat before is sitting to dinner.*



### Proverbs of Africa

### Proverbs of Assyria/Ethiopia

*Don't catch a leopard by the tail; but if you do, don't let go.*

*A good name is better than fine perfume.*

*Pride is no substitute for a dinner.*

*When spider webs combine, they can tie up a lion.*

*A fool and water will go the way they are diverted.*

*Don't spend the evening in a house where you can't spend the night.*

*Give good advice; if people don't listen, let adversity teach them.*

*He, who conceals his disease, should not expect to be cured.*

*What one hopes for is always better than what one has.*

*Evil enters like a needle, and spreads like an oak tree.*

*The eye of the leopard is on the goat, and the eye of the goat is on the leaf.*

*After the hyena has gone, the dog barks.*

*Fifty lemons are a load for one person, but for fifty persons they are perfume.*

*He who knows a great deal does not speak much.*

*One who tries to hide along with a dog, a child, a goat, or a person with a cold, will not remain hidden for long.*

*The slimming of an elephant, and the losses of a rich man are not noticeable.*

*The first camel in the train holds everyone up, but it is the last which gets the beating.*

*It is better to be the cub of a live jackal than of a dead lion.*

*A mouse that desires to die goes to sniff the cat's nose.*

*Thorns prick lightly the man who walks slowly.*

*Dine with a stranger but put aside your love for your family.*

*An excessively modest man goes hungry at times.*

*If you offend, then ask for pardon; if offended, forgive.*

*Anticipate the good so that you may take pleasure in it.*

*Even over cold pudding, the coward says: "It will burn my mouth."*

*He, who digs too deep for a fish, may come out with a serpent.*

*Confiding a secret to an unworthy person is like carrying grain in a bag with holes in it.*

*A loose tooth will not take a break until it is pulled out.*

*The dog I bought bit me; the fire I kindled, burned me.*

*If relatives help each other, what evil can harm them?*

*Ignorance is blindness of the mind.*

*Poverty is similar to slavery.*

*Youth is beautiful, even in cattle.*

*To try and fail is not called laziness.*

*For the benefit of the flowers we water the thorns as well.*

*He who understands music understands the universe.*

*If you marry a monkey for his wealth, the money goes, and the monkey remains as is.*

*Silence is the best answer to the stupid.*

*Cats dream of mice.*

*Advise and counsel him; if he does not listen, let adversity teach him.*

*You don't show a fool a job half done.*

*God is never in a hurry, but He is always there at the proper time.*

### Proverbs of Egypt

*Self-knowledge is the foundation of true knowledge.*

*Great respect waits for the quiet person.*

*The purpose of all human life is to achieve a state of consciousness apart from bodily concerns.*

*True happiness lies in what is eternal.*

*Ignorance is slavery.*

*Report on things observed not heard.*

*The greatest bounties given to us are judgment and will.*

*Speculation is the domain of the ignorant.*

*Nothing in heaven is a slave, nothing on earth is free.*

*The way to gain reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.*

*The FOOL is obstinate, and doubts not; knowing all but his own ignorance.*

*You can create enemies by speaking the truth; however they are better than the friends obtained by flattery.*

*Man governs himself much easier in poverty than in abundance.*

*People are many and diverse, however the humanity is one.*

*Be not fooled, magic does obey the laws of nature.*

*No bother to speak is nobody is there to listen.*

*There is a difference regarding of what you want, and what you deserve.*

*Disregard what it seems absurd, and you might fail to understand.*

*Ambition is to the mind what termites are to wood.*

*In its essence, the infinity is un-knowable.*

*Some words are noisy.*

*When an idea exclusively occupies the mind, it is transformed into an actual physical matter.*

*Everything is formed by habit, even praying.*

*One who marries for love alone will have bad days but good nights.*

*Silence is more than just a lack of words.*

*Silence is the best answer to the stupid.*

*The barking of a dog does not disturb the man on a camel.*

*Listen to your convictions, even if they seem absurd to reason.*

*Know the world in yourself.*

*Peace is the fruit of activity, not of sleep.*

*Our senses serve to affirm, not to know.*

*Judge by cause; not by effect.*

*All seeds answer light, but the color is different.*

*Images are nearer reality than cold definitions.*

*By knowing one reaches belief. By doing one gains conviction.*

*When you know, you dare.*

*The seed cannot sprout upwards without sending roots into the ground.*

*Does sheep manure turn to caramel?*

*Dress up a stick and you get a doll.*

*They found no fault with the rose, so they blame that it is red!*

*The one who told you of the insult insulted you as well!*

*We let him in, he brought his donkey along.*

*Lies have short legs.*

*A house has the character of the man who lives there.*

*It is better if the catastrophe happens, better than waiting for it.*

*Pronounce the name of the dead, that way make him live again.*

## Proverbs of Ghana

*By the time the fool has learned the game, the players have dispersed.*

*Do not call the forest that gives you shelter a jungle.*

*There is no medicine for hate.*

*Hunger is felt by a slave and king alike.*

*If there were no elephant in the jungle, the buffalo would be a great animal.*

*If things are getting easier, maybe you're headed downhill.*

*No one tests the depth of the river with both feet.*

*One camel does not make fun of another camel's hump.*

*Rain wets a leopard's skin, but it does not wash out the spots.*

*When a man is coming toward you, you don't need not say: Come here!*

*A woman is a flower in a garden; her husband is the fence around it.*

*All that we do on earth, we shall account for by kneeling in heaven.*

*However kind a man is, he would never give his wife as a gift to his friends.*

*If God gives you a cup of wine and an evil-minded person kicks it over, he fills it up for you again.*

*If you do not spare a day to fix the door to your room, you will waste three years searching for your money but you will never find it.*

*If you want to speak to God, tell it to the wind.*

*In a quarter of beggars, stealing and not begging is considered a crime.*

*When the cock drinks water, it raises its head to God in thankfulness.*

*"Though I am not edible," says the vulture, "yet I nurse my eggs in the branches of a high tree because man cannot to be trusted".*

*You do not become a chief simply by sitting on a big chair.*

## **Proverbs of Nigeria**

*Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped.*

*A chick that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches.*

*You can tell a ripe corn by its look.*

*A proud heart can survive a general failure because such a failure does not prick its pride.*

*As the dog said; 'If I fall down for you and you fall down with me, it is playing.'*

*You must judge a man by the work of his hands.*

*If you don't stand for anything, you will fall for something.*

*A man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness.*

*Looking at a king's mouth one would never think he sucked his mother's breast.*

*People should not talk while they are eating, or pepper may go down the wrong way.*

*The lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did.*

*When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk.*

*It is the brutally outspoken man that earns enmity.*

*A child's fingers are not scalded by a piece of hot yam which his mother puts into his palm.*

*To do one's duty is to eat the prized fruit of honor.*

*He who is afraid of doing too much always does too little.*

*An old woman is always troubled when dry bones are mentioned.*

*It is not only the fox; even the snail arrives at its destination.*

*Without knowing well a person we must not hate him.*

*Thoughts and dreams are the foundation of our being.*

*A performing masquerader who tries too hard to outclass his colleagues may expose his anus this way.*

*Greatness and beauty do not belong to the Gods alone.*

*Our personal examples are like seeds on a windy day, they spread far and wide.*

*As the archer loves the arrow that flies, he loves as well the bow that remains constant in his hands.*

*There is no elephant that complains about the weight of its trunk. No elephant is burdened by the weight of its tusks.*

*If gold rusts, what will iron do?*

## **Proverbs of Kenya**

*He who is unable to dance says that the yard is stony.*

*Hurrying has no blessing.*

*We have not inherited this land from our ancestors; rather we have borrowed it from our children.*

*A slave has no choice.*

*How easy it is to defeat people who do not kindle fire for themselves.*

*A lion does not eat its own cubs.*

*He, who eats alone, dies alone.*

*Stolen things bring shame and misfortune.*

*He that has never traveled thinks that his mother is the only good cook in the world.*

*Even the forest has ears.*

**Proverbs of South Africa**

*The leopard that visits you is the one which kills you.*

*A person cannot dance well on one leg only.*

*Do not desire a woman with beautiful breasts if you have no money.*

*An elephant does not die of one broken rib.*

*Do not laugh at the snake because it crawls on its belly.*

*One does not follow the footprints in the water.*

*Sleep killed the mighty lion.*

*The true strength of the crocodile is the water.*

*The way to overcome the cold is to warm each other.*

*Life is when we are together; alone you are just an animal.*

*The poor man's main tool is his tongue with which he defends himself.*

*Do not try to teach the paths of the forest to an old gorilla.*

*A fig tree found on the way is enough to keep you from starving.*

*Wisdom is like a baobab tree; it is hard for an individual to embrace it.*

**Proverbs of Uganda**

*Cattle are born with ears, the horns grow later.*

*Hunger does not know a beggar from a king.*

*People get fed up even with honey.*

*Whoever comes the last drinks muddy water.*

*Heaven never dies, only people do.*

*A child does not laugh at the ugliness of its mother.*



### Proverbs of EUROPE

### Latin Proverbs

*Empty pots make the most noise.*

*They condemn what they do not understand.*

*We learn by teaching.*

*Viewed from a distance, everything is beautiful.*

*Everything unknown passes for miraculous.*

*We are slaves of the law in order that we may be able to be free.*

*To accept a favor is to sell one's freedom.*

*War is sweet to those who have never fought.*

*If others are allowed, that does not mean you are too.*

*Authority, not the truth, makes the law.*

*Celebrate the day only in the evening.*

*It is glorious to forget injustice.*

*Peace is better than the most just war.*

*He who speaks for the innocent is eloquent.*

*Knowledge has no enemies but the ignorant.*

*Don't put all your eggs in one basket.*

*No one is obliged to do the impossible.*

### Proverbs of France

*It is necessary to break the shell to have the almond.*

*A day with no wine is like a day without sunshine.*

*Hooray for the difference!*

*All flatterers live at the expense of their flatterers.*

*Don't talk about rope in the house of the hanged man.*

*When in doubt, don't do it.*

*Giving charity has impoverished no one.*

*Great love causes great sorrow.*

*Bargains can ruin you.*

*Comparison is no reason.*

### Proverbs of Germany

*What can you expect from a pig but a grunt?*

*The absent are always in the wrong.*

*No answer is also an answer.*

*Poverty is no disgrace, but it is a great inconvenience.*

*Bitter is the bread of charity.*

*He gives twice, who gives quickly.*

*The best physicians are Dr Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merry-man.*

*All are not saints that go to church.*

*After the cow is stolen they lock the barn.*

*Where no love, all faults are seen.*

*Sweep in front of your door first.*

*He who puts up with insult invites injury.*

### Proverbs of Greece

*Time is a doctor that heals all grief.*

*Idleness is a mother of want.*

*The master's eyes make the horse fat.*

*He, who becomes sheep, is eaten by the wolf.*

*It's better to tie your donkey than to go searching for it.*

*A person in a desperate situation will try the most desperate measures.*

*From a child and a crazy person you learn the truth.*

*It's the old hen that makes good broth.*

*The way of speaking honors the person.*

*Wonder is the beginning of wisdom.*

*When poverty comes in through the door, love goes out through the window.*

*When the wolf gets old, he becomes the clown of dogs.*

*God saves money, the devil spends them.*

*The right hand washes the left.*

*A straight enemy is better than a false friend.*

*Eat and drink with your relatives; do business with strangers.*

*A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.*

*He, who doesn't find a little enough, will find nothing enough. – Epicures*

*Another victory like that one and we are lost. – Pyrrhus*

*War is sweet to those who never tried it. – Pindar*

*The prosperity of a FOOL is a heavy burden to put up with. – Aeschylus*

*Milk the cow nearby, why chase the one that runs away. – Theocritus*

*It is shameful for a young man to question an old one. – Homer*

*Sons of heroes are a pestilence.*

*In an honorable enterprise there should be no delay.*

*You are looking for water in the sea.*

*We know nothing for sure: truth is hidden at the bottom at the well. – Diogenes*

*Democracy is the worst form of despotism. – Aristotle*

*Ignorance is the root and stem of every evil. – Plato*

**Proverbs of Ireland**

*A good friend is like a four leaf clover; hard to find and lucky to have.*

*A dog owns nothing, yet is seldom dissatisfied.*

*A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book.*

*A kind word never broke anyone's mouth.*

*A lie travels farther than the truth.*

*A man is incomplete until he is married, after that he is finished.*

*A silent mouth is sweet to hear.*

*A son is a son until he has a wife, a daughter is a daughter all of her life.*

*A turkey never voted for an early Christmas.*

*What butter or whiskey does not cure, it cannot be cured.*

*As the old cock crows, the young cock learns.*

*If you want praise, die. If you want blame, marry.*

*It is difficult to maintain honor, more so than to become prosperous.*

*Forgetting a debt doesn't mean it's paid.*

*Who gossips with you will gossip of you.*

*No point in keeping a dog if you do your own barking.*

*The friend that can be bought is not worth buying.*

*A diplomat must always think twice before he says nothing.*

*Even black hens lay white eggs.*

*Seclusion is better than bad company.*

*Only the rich can afford genuine compassion.*

*The quiet are guilty.*

*Watch out of the patient man's anger.*

*If you buy what you don't need you might have to sell what you do.*

*There's nothing so bad that it couldn't be worse.*

*A man loves his sweetheart the most; his wife the best, but his mother the longest.*

*A quarrel is like buttermilk: once it's out of the churn, the more you shake it, the sourer grows.*

*Better give cherries to a pig than advice to a fool.*

### Proverbs of Italy

*He who has but one child will eventually drive him mad.*

*Do not stick your finger (interfere) between husband and wife.*

*Charity begins at home.*

*It is good to trust, but not to trust is better.*

*The best is always the cheapest.*

*Promising too much means little.*

*If you want something done, then do it yourself.*

*Who lives by hope alone will die of hunger.*

*There is hazard in delay.*

*Counsel is no command.*

*He who acts too friendly does not seek your affection, but something from you.*

### Proverbs of Russia

*If you hang a melon from a poplar, you are sure to find a fool who will think the poplar is a melon tree.*

*When war is a game, how can peace be serious?*

*There are many monasteries on the road to Hell.*

*The man who keeps falcons is surely no friend of pigeons.*

*It is better for the sheep to have the wolf as enemy than as a friend.*

*When God punishes the cabbages, he also punishes the hares.*

*Robbing a church is not a pious act.*

*You don't need to teach a cow how to moo.*

*Fools complain much about good times until they have bad times to complain about.*

*Even whores become pregnant.*

*Cruelty is the child of anger and revenge.*

*Girls dream of marriage, married woman dream of love.*

*It is easier to make a baby than to make a crib.*

*When the fool wants to increase the number of his fish, he puts pikes into his carp ponds.*

*Regretting the past is like chasing after the wind.*

### Proverbs of Spain

*A smoky house, a leaky roof, and a shouting wife drive a man out of his home.*

*It is better to stay single than to marry badly.*

*Sorry the houses were the hen crows and the cock is silent.*

*It's better to put up with a bad donkey than to carry the wood by yourself.*

*Opportunity makes the thief.*

*Let the giver be silent, and let him speak who received.*

*Joke with a fool at home, and he will joke with you in the square.*

*Teach by example.*

*Learning is the eye of the mind.*

*Handsome is what handsome does.*

*A cheerful wife is the spice of life.*

*When the fool has made up his mind the market is over.*

### Proverbs of Sweden

*He who always knows best never learns.*

*If you buy what you don't need, you steal from yourself.*

*When the sea is calm, every ship has a good captain.*

*You cannot ask more of an ox than a steak.*

*One spot stains the whole dress.*

*From children, drunkards, and madmen you get to hear the truth.*

*He who stays quiet consents.*

*What is unclearly said is unclearly thought.*

*A clenched fist can neither give nor take.*

*The sun also has its spots.*

*Love me when I least deserve it, because that's when I really need it.*

*Luck never gives; it only lends.*

*A life without love is like a year without summer.*

*When it rains soup, the poor man has no spoon.*

*No one becomes a good doctor before he fills a churchyard.*

*Worry gives a small thing a big shadow.*

**Proverbs of Transylvania**

*Province of Romania*

*Blood is not water!*

*Adversity makes a man wise, not rich.*

*It is easier to forgive than to forget.*

*The one who trusts is happy; the doubter is wise.*

*Choose a wife to please yourself, not others.*

*Fools are wise as long as they are silent.*

*Fools ask questions that wise men cannot answer.*

*He is rich enough that wants nothing.*

*Hope often deludes the foolish man.*

*It never troubles a wolf the number of sheep in the herd.*

*When a wolf is mentioned he is already near you.*

*A gardener's dog neither eats cabbage, nor lets anybody else do.*

*A promise is comfort to a fool.*

*Who pardons the bad harms the trusty.*

*If you don't cherish the little, you don't deserve more.*

*Even a white lily casts a dark shadow.*

*In the dark all birds are black.*

*Patience yields a rose.*

*Don't make a goat your gardener!*

*A promise is a pleasant declaration.*

*Even after the wound is healed, the scar remains.*

*Nice words are not nourishing to a starving belly.*

*If one cannot speak well, it should not speak at all.*

*Running away can be shameful, but not when it evades annihilation.*

*Where is now the snow of last year?*

**Proverbs of United Kingdom**

*Kings have many eyes and many ears.*

*A crown is no cure for the headache.*

*If you would like to know the value of money, try to borrow some.*

*A cheerful wife is a joy of life.*

*A rolling stone gathers no moss.*

*Beauty is eloquent even when silent.*

*It is profound ignorance that inspires the dogmatic tone.*

*Misfortune is not that which can be avoided, but that which cannot.*

*A penny-weight of love is worth a pound of law.*

*Where is no trust, there is no love.*

*There is no blindness like ignorance.*

*A house well-furnished makes a woman wise.*

*A ragged colt may make a good horse.*

*A cat in gloves catches no mice.*

*An apple a day keeps the doctor away.*

*A jack of all trades is master of none.*

*Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies.*

*Beauty is only skin deep, but ugliness deep to the bone.*

*Beauty may open doors but only virtue may enter.*

*Great minds think alike, but fools seldom differ.*

*He, which lives too fast, arrives to his grave too soon.*

*You can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.*

### Other Proverbs

*You are not foolish enough if are not proud of your errors. – Romanian*

*If the fool knew how to be silent he could sit among the wise. – Czech*

*Better if your mother cries than mine. – Romanian*

*If a fool holds the cow by her horns, a clever man can milk her. – Yiddish*

*If it does not get better, depend on it, it will get worst. – Yiddish*

*After a trial, one party is naked and the other without shirt. – Serbo-Croatian*

*The ugliest life is better than the nicest death. – Yiddish*

*After the hyena passes the dog barks. – Oromo*

*Tap even a stone bridge before crossing. – Korean*

*Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worst. – Wolof*

*The higher the house, the worse the storm. – Norwegian*

*Three kind of people die poor; those who divorce, those who incur debts, and those who move around too much. – Wolof*

*Take care of your pennies and your dollars will take care of themselves. – Scottish*

*Who buys cheap pays twice. – Slovak*

*If a flea had money, it would buy its own dog. – Jamaica*

*If you follow a fool, you're a fool yourself. – Jamaica*

*When one is poor, even his ox is not willing to pull. – Romania*

*It is hard to pay for the bread that has been eaten. – Danish*

*The wolf loves the fog. – Hungarian*

*Measure three times before you cut once. – Romanian*

*A lawyer's opinion is worth nothing until paid for. – Hungarian*

*A tall tree is hated by the wind. – Malagasy*

*Don't be so much in love that you can't tell when the rain comes. – Malagasy*

*The hand suffers at work, but the mouth must eat. – Sudanese*



# Proof

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