Communication is such an important topic! Quite a bit of Proverbs is dedicated to helping us improve our communication. A word “fitly spoken,” that is, the right comment at the appropriate time, is a precious and beautiful thing. Similarly, a “wise” correction or warning given to a humble and respectful listener is like “an ornament of fine gold.” Clearly good communication is highly valuable. But achieving this requires a lot of components: the right words, the right speaker, the right time, and the right listener. We’re meant to be God’s messengers to the world, so our communication has to be right, and verse 13 has particular meaning for us. Inappropriate communication shows us up as poor messengers, who fail to properly carry God’s messages! You’ve probably heard inferior messengers boasting of “false gifts,” misrepresenting God’s Word and making promises on which they can never deliver. God’s true messages (self denial, servanthood, sacrifice) are not so easy to speak or hear, but there are lots of appealing falsehoods. The “long forbearing” and “soft tongue” of verse 15 are required of us, as we carry God’s messages to a world that is mostly uninterested in such things.

**Proverbs 25:11-15**

**A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.**

**As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.**

**As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.**

**Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.**

**By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.**

**Sperm Whales**

Sperm whales are the largest of the “toothed” whales (as opposed to the baleen whales). The largest of the sperm whales, the mature males, average around 52 feet in length, although there are several historical reports of very large male sperm whales reaching more than 80 feet in length. And they have the largest brain on earth—more than five times the size of a human brain. Sperm whales are social animals that can live for 70 years or more, so they may certainly be expected to have a reasonably high level of intelligence. Interestingly, the olfactory system in a sperm whale’s brain appears to be relatively small, suggesting that sperm whales have a poor sense of smell and/or taste. But the auditory system is very extensive, suggesting that sound is quite important in sperm whale life. We know that sperm whales produce many sounds—clicks, creaks, codas, and many others. New research is even exploring the meanings of some of these calls. But whales don’t move when producing sounds, so it’s difficult to determine which individual is making which sounds. This in turn makes it extremely challenging to construe meaning! But it turns out that sperm whales have actual conversations, and even their own dialects. They even have calls with which to identify themselves by name, family, and region. So sperm whales can identify individuals—friends, acquaintances, enemies—over a distance. Which of course, enables them to compete and cooperate as necessary. Sperm whale communication is so wonderfully clear and honest that even we humans can interpret some of it! As God’s messengers, we need to be sure that our own communication is just as clear and honest as theirs.

Amazon Prime

Think Like an Animal

Start: 6:11 (47:36 from End)

End: 12:39 (41:08 from End)