

A COLLECTION OF 100 MAASAI PROVERBS

1. Eelaenkishui nkatitin.

Life has seasons.

Maisha yana majira

La vie a des saisons.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; "Everything has its time."

2. Eisapuk eukongu enkai.

The eye of God is big (large).

jicho la Mungu ni kubwa

L'œil de Dieu est grand.

1Samuel 2:2; "No one is Holy like the Lord; There is none like Him."

3. Emunyak olayioni oinepua menye.

Maneno ya wazee yanabaraka.

The words of the elders are blessed.

Les paroles des anciens sont bénies.

Proverbs 2:6-7; "The Lord gives wisdom. From His mouth comes knowledge and understanding."

4. Ikingas ake olemaii nikitoki olengeno

We start by being foolish and we eventually become wise.

Nous commençons par être stupides et nous finissons par devenir sages.

Tunaanza kwa kuwa wajinga na hatimaye tunakuwa wenye hekima.

Ephesians 4:23-24; ".....Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind...and that you put on a new man which was created according to God."

5. Imemurut emurt elukunya

The neck cannot become the head.

Le cou ne peut pas devenir la tête.

Shingo haiwezi kuwa kichwa

John 15:5-6; 'Jesus' "I am the vine and you are the branches.....if any does not remain in me, they are like the branches that is cut out and thrown away...."

6. Imewal endunget erasha kewan

A proverb does not answer itself.

Un proverbe ne se répond pas.

Methali haijijibu yenyewe.

Mathew 7:1-5; "Beware of criticizing others; "judge not that you be not judged."

NB: It is easier to see someone else's evil than it is to see one's own.

7. Keeku nameni eriroi

Even that which is despised can triumph.

Même ce qui est méprisé peut triompher.

Hata kile kinachodharauliwa kinaweza kushinda.

Psalms 40:1-3; "He also brought me up out of horrible pit...out of the miry cry, and set my feet upon a rock."

8. Keshoroo olchata eurori kulikae

A falling tree will cause others to fall.

Un arbre qui tombe en fera tomber d'autres.

Mti unaoanguka utasababisha mingine kuanguka.

James 4:7; "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

9. Iyiolo ake eningua kake imiyiola eniloto

You know where you come from but you don't know where you are going.

Vous savez d'où vous venez mais vous ne savez pas où vous allez.

Unajua unakotoka lakini hujui uendako.

Deutronomy 1:30; "The Lord your God who goes before you, He will fight for you."

10. Medany orkimojino oboelashei

One finger does not (cannot) kill a louse.

Un doigt ne peut pas tuer un pou.

Kidole kimoja hakiwezi kuuu chawa.

Mathew 18:20; "Where two are gathered in my name..."

Mathew 28:20; "I am with you always, even to the end of time."

11. Menya enkoshoke enyamu

The stomach cannot steal and if it did, it would show itself.

Tumbo haliwezi kuiba na kama lingeiba lingejionyesha lenyewe.

L'estomac ne peut pas voler et s'il le faisait, il se montrerait.

12. Miarie orngatuny engudi

Don't fight a lion with a stick.

Ne combattez pas un lion avec un bâton.

Usipigane na simba kwa fimbo.

1Timothy 6:12; "It is the good fight of faith. If you lose your faith in God, the enemy wins."

13. Mikiar eitukiliki

You will not be punished when you think before acting.

Vous ne serez pas puni si vous réfléchissez avant d'agir.

Hutaadhibiwa ikiwa unafikiri kabla ya kutenda.

1Kings 18:21; about decision making "And Elijah came near to all the people and said, 'How long will you hesitate two opinions?'

14. Usuja imbaa anaaainkolongi

Events follow one another like days.

Les événements se succèdent comme des jours

Matukio hufuatana kama siku

Luke 14:28; "Which of you, intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count for the cost, whether he has enough to finish it....." (Building for Eternity)

15. Sidai enkiteng anaa olopeny

A cow is as good as the owner.

Une vache est aussi bonne que son propriétaire.

Ng'ombe ni mzuri kama mmiliki.

All over God's creation. (Genesis 1:1-31)

16. Ore enchipai na endaa

Happiness is as good as food.

Le bonheur est aussi bon que la nourriture.

Furaha ni nzuri kama chakula.

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." (Ecclesiastes 9:4-12) NB:

Life is a wonderful gift from the Lord....

17. Mincho enkoshoke kintaa osunji

Do not allow the belly to make you useless.

Ne laissez pas le ventre vous rendre inutile.

Usiruhusu tumbo kukufanya usiwe na maana.

"Man cannot live by bread alone..... (Luke 4:4)

18. Enkongu naipang'a engen.

Clever is the eye that has traveled

Intelligent est l'œil qui a voyagé

Janja ni jicho ambalo limesafiri

19. Ekueniyie olchata oika oloinosita enkima

A fresh firewood laughs at the one that is already burning, not knowing that the same fate will befall it.

Un bois de chauffage frais se moque de celui qui brûle déjà, sans savoir que le même sort lui arrivera.

Kuni safi hucheka ile ambayo tayari inawaka, bila kujua kwamba hatima hiyo hiyo itaipata.

NB: How could someone do persecute Jesus?

In Acts 26:14; "Saul, why you persecute me?" Paul (Saul) was to eventually face the same fate as Jesus.

20. Enkalem naitoris ilewa

A circumcision knife equates all men.

Un couteau de circoncision, c'est l'équivalent de tous les hommes

Kisu cha tohara husawashisha wanaume wote

1Corinthians 15:32; "Let's eat and drink, tomorrow we all die." (NB: Death equates all men)

21. Enkongu naipang'a engen

Experience is the best teacher or (an eye that has seen more knows better).

L'expérience est le meilleur professeur.

Uzoefu ni mwalimu bora.

(NB: The story of the prodigal son) Luke 15:11-32, and in particular verse 17-18.

22. Epaash keeya wenkishui

Life and death are not the same. (NB. They have different meanings)

La vie et la mort ne sont pas la même chose.

Maisha na kifo si sawa.

John 6:33; "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." NB: Jesus went through and suffered on our behalf. He was raised to life (1Peter 3:18)

23. Imelakua ang inchu

Home is not far away when you are alive.

La maison n'est pas loin quand on est en vie.

Nyumbani sio mbali ukiwa hai.

Hebrews 11:16; "But as it is, they desire a better country that is a heavenly one.

Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city (home) for them."

24. Iyiolo ake enigua kake imiyiola enilo

Be as familiar with observation as you are with the place you live.

Soyez aussi familier avec l'observation qu'avec l'endroit où vous vivez.

Fahamu uchunguzi kama vile unavyofahamu mahali unapoishi.

Psalms 37:23-24; "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." (verse 23)

25. Oitimmurua ake otii, meetai oidipakiene

In life the assured time of good life if today, tomorrow might be a different story.

Mathew 6:34; "Take therefore no thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow shall take thoughts for the thing of itself."

26. Eiloikino motio kima

Pans (pancakes) take shift on fire.

Psalms 27:14; 'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He shall strengthen you. (wait patiently for your turn), the Lord will come."

27. Ondatata ondataishiri

Sometimes you have, other times you don't have.

Philippians 4:19; "My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

28. Edol enkerai ilainyamoke eituedol menye

The child may see thieves before the father does.

Psalms 127:3; "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb is a reward."

And again, Proverbs 17:6; Children's children are the crown of old men, and the glory of children are their fathers.

29. Eikasha aisananisho nibikoo along karsisisho nie irakiti

It is better to be poor and live long than rich and die young.

Proverbs 10:24; "The desire of the righteous will be granted." And again Psalms 84:11; "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."

30. Ainyoo pee iton enaa enkitok nayamische?

Why do you behave like a woman whose son has just married?

Mathew 23:12; (Pride) “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

31. Engai tajapaki tooinaipuko inona

God, shield me with your wings.

(Prayer) Psalms 43:1-2.

32. Esuj erashe ng'ejuk emusana

A new idea follows an old one.

Romans 12:3; “Don’t say you do not have faith for God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

33. Imawal olbuket torono olikai

Don't reply one wrong with another.

Ephesians 4:31-32; “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.”

34. Imikinya orkikue lolikai

A person does not itch from a thorn that is not his.

This is about compassion; Luke 3:11, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who does not. If you have food share with others who don’t have.

35. Meek olekaina ilala lenyanak

The elephant does not get tired of his tusks.

(NB: Kikuyu version of this; - “**Njogu ndiremanwo ni miguongo yao**”

Despite our sinfulness, God is with us all the time. Hebrews 8:12; “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

36. Meetai osina lenkolong Nabo

There is no poverty of a single day.

Readiness; (Exodus 3:4) “God called to him... and he said, “Here I am.”

NB: Readiness for God means that we are prepared to do the smallest things or the largest things – to make a difference.

37. Meishaa elukunya nabo engeno

One head cannot contain all knowledge.

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that your progress may be evident to all. (2Timothy 4:15)

38. Meraakinoo enkare oloipangi

You cannot force water up a hill. (i.e. “it’s not possible to do the impossible”).

You cannot serve two masters (i.e. you cannot serve God and devil. You will only be able to serve one)

39. Atejo apa oledukuya mongoi mpira Enkai niarr olaisimani

The elders said that lies go up and kills a robber.

40. Ayia amu ayia nalelek

Alright! Is it so easy to say!

NB: The fear of failure; Read Isaiah 55; Fear says, “There is a lion in the way”.

41. Meetai tonyoraki maibai

There is no need for me to love and you do not reciprocate.

John 13:14-16; "Now that I your Lord have washed your feet, you should also do the same to one another."

42. Maasai.Meitemoo olowarru olkujita.

No matter how long the grass is it can't cover a Lion

Isaiah 54:17 No weapon formed against you will prevail and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servant of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me declares the Lord.

43. Enyanyuki osheta otii enigma woolotii kai

The wood (firewood) that is collected and the one preserved for future use are all the same.

(NB: 8 compare with No.19)

44. Medugoi osotwa tengalem

You cannot make friendship with a knife.

Joshua 1:9; "Be strong and of good courage." confident, courageous and determined to face the devil.

45. Edoorie enker modooni nkuta

A blind sheep might chance across rain water.

Philippians 4:19; "My God shall supply all my needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

46. Ejo orkonai "oo duo naata omom, kake kegol enkeju al"

The hyena said, "It is not only that I have luck, but my leg is strong."

Psalms 139:14; "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (About self-esteem)

47. Elelek osotua oitobiruni alang, eput enkiteng enyewa kule

It does not take as long to settle a quarrel as it takes a cow's udder to fill with milk after she has been covered.

Jeremiah 30:17; "For I will restore health to you, and heal you of your wounds."

48. Enkai tajapaki tooinaipuko inona (prayer)

God shield me with your wings.

49. Enap oloitiko isirat enelo.

A zebra takes its stripes wherever it goes.

Proverbs 27:19; "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart."

50. Eoroo keon aitalam ilchoreta lenyenak enaa osikiria omwuoi

He separates himself from his friends like a sick donkey.

1Corinthians 14:33; "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

51. Erruesh olenkaina enaimurruai

The elephant can be tripped by creeping plant.

1Samuel 17:42-52; (The story of David & Goliath).

52. Esulaa olchani otuurorori oioitashe

The withered tree will destroy the healthy tree when it falls down.

(1Corinthians 10:12-13) "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he falls."

53. Eukoshoke naitau enashe.

It is the belly which daily gives thanks.

Philippians 4:6; "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayers....giving thanks.")

54. Imeipul elejara endap enkaina

A lie cannot fill the palm.

Proverbs 20:11; "Even a child is known by his deeds."

55. Kurro milau eninang

Trouble comes to those who look for it.

John 10:2-6; "I am the good shepherd....my sheep follows me..."

56. Imesarisara nyayie, bara kino

Do not jump about, for there is no use in jumping about.

1John 5:12; "Whoever has the son has life; whoever doesn't have the son of God does not have life.

57. Inkinter emodai peisuj engeno

Foolishness first, then wisdom.

NB: Compare this with No. 21

Proverbs 8:11; "For wisdom is better than jewels, and that all you desire cannot compare with her."

58. Iyiole ake enijo kake miyiole enikijokini

You only know what you say but you don't know what you will be told.

Ecclesiastes 12:3; "The end of the matter; All has been heard. Fear God and keep His commandments, this is the whole duty of man."

59. Keidurr iltung'anak kake meidur ildonyo

Nobody can say he is settled anywhere forever: it is only the mountains which do not move from their places.

60. Meidim enkan'g'u enaimin

The eye cannot penetrate darkness.

1Samuel 16:7-13; "The Lord does not see as man sees.....He looks at the heart."

61. Medol ilala osina

The teeth do see poverty.

Proverbs 1:19; "Greedy takes away the life of the owner."

62. Meeta empur nemejo nanu eedo kidong'oe

There is no lizard that does not claim to possess the longest tail.

(NB: This is about boasting or showing off)

Mathew 5:3-11 and verse 5 "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."

63. Meeta enkiteng olopeny

The cow has no owner.

(NB: According to Maasai myth cows are gift from God to Maasai as he (Maasai exclaimed; “Ayie! Yie... Nkumok oleng – There are so many ;) “Inkishu” – Cows are sent from heaven.) Genesis 1:26-31; “All creations belong to God.”

64. Meeta orangejep erubata

The tongue has no joint.

(i.e. The tongue is flexible and can say anything. There is no control. James 3:6; “The tongue is a flame of fire.....corrupting the whole body.”

65. Meetai enkerr sampu

There is not such a thing in the world as a sheep of many colours.

(NB: Interpretation. **You are either hot or cold; you cannot be both.**)

Romans 3:9-18; (All have sinned) “There is no Jew or Gentile.”

66. Meetai oidipakine oitumurua akeetae

There is no one who has finished, there is only who is still at it.

(i.e. we are all on the race, no one has finished)

67. Meetai tonyoraki maaibai

There is no one way friendship (i.e. friendship is mutual).

68. Mekintalang’ olwuasa enabelibel

The boaster (the proud) will not cross the valley.

(i.e. God rejects the proud)

69. Memurut emurt endukuya

The neck does not go beyond the head.

(NB: Compare with No. 5)

70. Merumayu ne nkai tentakule

That which is Godly cannot be pushed away with the fore arm.

(NB: Compare with No. 42)

71. Otanapa nolaiki meturua enapita

One cane devour incredible loads of meat

72. Enjipati olalae ntare tikitau

Twenty sheep to him is just a taste.

73. Oosho!! Meuputayu emala naudo kuruu

Ooh! This man is like a leaking gourd that cannot be filled.

NB: This proverb talks about a man who had a big appetite for meat. **NB:** It is a warning not to be greedy.

74. Milo ongata miata olikitaiu entubuloi

Do not go to the plains without somebody to take the dust out of your eye.

75. Mintobir ingilani enkerai meino)

Don't make a cloth for carrying a child in before the child is born.
i.e. don't count your chicken before they are hatched.

76. Mior enkaji elikai meoro enino

Do not sweep someone else's home while yours is dirty.
(NB: Wipe your eye first before you see other people's problem. Bible verse)

77. Mitui olchata onye enkima itiinaake

You are not like firewood which is burnt, you are always there.

78. Mitum erap metii enkuoointare

A bargain cannot be held in the palm of the hand.
(i.e. Healing is a process; It takes more than a day.)

79. Mitum kinyil oloroki

You do not obtain it (or hold it) with greasy knees
NB: Reaching beyond our grasp; Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no revelation (or prophetic vision), the people cast off restraint....." i.e. There is a difference between holding on to a principle and having a vision.

80. Milo agilaa inket eigisito inmuran

Do not go gathering fruit when a dance is taking place.
(NB: **Compare this with the five foolish virgins who went to look for oil while bridegroom arrived) Mathew 25:10-13**

81. Imemurata olayioni oota menya

He who has a father is still not circumcised.
NB: Hebrews 5:14; Solid food is for the mature.
i.e. Basic teaching about Jesus; **repentance** and **baptism**, must be grasped so that you know about God and life.

82. Mee sarsar nyayie, barakino

A lion can run faster than we can, but we can run further. (This is about making proper decision.)
(NB: Psalms 119:105-106)

83. Meetai embaye nalo aa nabo

There is no arrow that goes alone.
(NB: Genesis 7:9-15) i.e. Two is company.

84. Meitang'e oltung'ani olkikuei leme olenye

A person does not itch from a thorn that is not his. (Look at Mary the mother of Jesus; John 19:25-27) She stood by the cross of Jesus, while the son is dying on the cross.

85. Meiting enkoitai musana

The daily path never ends.
NB: Psalms 6:6; "I am weary with my groaning all night....."

86. Meibung'ayu esiere embulati

It is not possible to hold a walking stick as well as the stomach.

87. Meituraa oloitiko isirat

The zebra cannot do away with its stripes.

i.e. One cannot give up one's habits that were developed in childhood.

88. Naloikino imotiok enkima

Cooking pots exchange places on the fire.

i.e. Things come at different times.

89. Ore enchipai na endaa

Happiness is as good as food.

i.e. Good company can be better than good food.

90. Ore lukera naa olaba oibor

The children are the bright moon.

i.e. Take care of the little that you have.

91. Miutaki olmang'atinta masaa

Do not show the hawk how to fly. (Or do not show a wild hog a bow.)

i.e. Do not be over-confident of yourself. Take one step at a time.

92. Meidim olenkaina enkingara

An elephant is not able to endure beating from many. (Or an elephant fears attack from several sides.)

(i.e. One man or a small group of men can attack many more.)

93. Meituku olkine ng'iro

Even a brown he-goat cannot cleanse him.

(i.e. it has gone beyond repair.)

94. Melam iyekenyi enetoikitio

Baboons (or certain animals) do not go far from the place of their birth.

i.e. A man never forgets his original home.

95. Memut elukunya nabo eng'eno

One head cannot consume all knowledge.

(i.e. There are others as wise as you, one needs advice from other people.)

96. Mme taa tumoto nagol barata

It is not acquisition that is difficult, it is retention. (Obtaining something is easier than looking after it properly.)

i.e. Take care of that which you have; a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

97. Minkar orpasho lolokai ompaka niduaki kewan

Do not repair another man's fence until you have seen your own.

(i.e. Help yourself first in order to be able to be of use to others.)

98. Noosa taakeyie emolok omikitaduariki

Eat a sweet until it becomes bitter. Or (A mouth that has eaten a good thing will eat a bad one.)

(i.e. Things change/life can change.)

99. Shorelai kishoriki enapiak

My friend, you bring me evil. Or (A constant complain can lead you to bad ways.)

(i.e. A friend can bring you evil.)

100. Ore sininye esidai oneyado olgos nepi inkonyek, nemedol entaisere

Even the ostrich, with its long neck and sharp eyes, cannot see what will happen in the future.

Même l'autruche, avec son long cou et ses yeux perçants, ne peut pas voir ce qui se passera dans le futur.

Hata mbuni, mwenye shingo ndefu na macho makali, hawezi kuona kitakachotokea wakati ujao.

NB: No one knows day or hour.....

i.e. Be prepared all the time.