

Proverbs Chapter 24 Continued

Proverbs 24:19 "Fret not thyself because of evil [men], neither be thou envious at the wicked;"

Do not become angrily excited or envious at the apparent prosperity of the wicked.

Many people do not understand the prosperity of the evil man on this earth. This Scripture is warning the righteous not to want what the evil has.

Proverbs 24:20 "For there shall be no reward to the evil [man]; the candle of the wicked shall be put out."

There is no future at all for the evil one. His only pleasure will be right here on this earth. Their pleasure is but for a short while here on this earth.

On resurrection day, there will be a great reward awaiting the righteous in heaven. When we all stand before the Lord, the righteous will be given eternal life in heaven with our Lord, but the evil ones who rejected the Lord will be thrown into the lake of fire with the devil and his demons.

This goes with the scripture we learned (in 13:9 which told us): "The one who despises the word will be in debt to it but the one who fear the commandment will be rewarded".

There is no future at all worth having for the evil of the world.

Proverbs 24:21 "My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: [and] meddle not with them that are given to change:"

Loyalty to the king is proper because he is the agent of the Lord's wisdom. That loyalty includes having no part with rebels who seek to subvert or overthrow him ("change"). Peter draws on this verse in his call to good citizenship (in 1 Peter 1:17 and 2:17).

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, as we learned in a previous lesson. It is also, an intelligent thing to have respectful fear of anyone who is in authority over you. The sentence "meddle not with them that are given to change"; tell us to not get involved with someone trying to overthrow the government.

Proverbs 24:22 "For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?"

This is a reference to the retributive power of the king and of the Lord. Overthrow of the government, can wind up with those who are involved being tried for treason and hung.

Proverbs 24:23 "These [things] also [belong] to the wise. [It is] not good to have respect of persons in judgment."

These words introduce a brief section forming an appendix of further wise sayings that finish the first group of proverbs compiled by Solomon to add to his own.

Acts 10:34 "Then Peter opened [his] mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"

James 2:1 "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with respect of persons."

You should read (all of James 2:1 thru 2:9), God is not a respecter of persons, as well. We should judge all the same with no prejudice because of wealth or prominence.

Proverbs 24:24 "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou [art] righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:"

(From the end of verse 23 to verse 25), we see that injustice is evil and destabilizes society.

There is nothing worse than an unjust judge. The people can tell when someone is playing favorites, and they don't like it. They demand justice. Fair play is not only wanted, but demanded by the people.

Proverbs 24:25 "But to them that rebuke [him] shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them."

The people want the guilty punished and the innocent to go free. The judge that does just that, without playing favorites, is respected and loved by the people and by the Lord as well.

Proverbs 24:26 "[Every man] shall kiss [his] lips that giveth a right answer."

I don't believe this literally means to kiss someone who tells the truth. It possibly means that every one shows approval of right answers.

This is saying that a just and righteous response is as desirable as this most intimate expression of friendship.

Proverbs 24:27 "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house."

This is just saying for a man to build up whatever he is doing for a living, before he takes on a family, and before he builds a house to live in. It is saying, get your living established first and then go and build a house.

Or to put it another way, first secure by diligent work and planning a good living in your fields, then build. In other words, provide a financial base so that all the necessities and contingencies are secured, then move from the tents (which were acceptable), to a house (which was desirable).

Proverbs 24:28 "Be not a witness against thy neighbor without cause; and deceive [not] with thy lips."

Gossip is spoken of badly in the Bible. I believe here, that this is speaking of spreading untruths about the neighbors. If you were called to court to testify, you would have to tell the truth about the neighbors, but just telling things to get rumors started is bad.

Avenging the evil done by one's neighbor by offering false witness against him is forbidden.

Deceiving with the lips, perhaps, means stretching the truth to harm someone.

Proverbs 24:29 "Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."

The Bible teaches, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It is not our job to get even with him. Let God fight our battles with him.

We read in 2 Chronicles 32:8 "With him [is] an arm of flesh; but with us [is] the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."

You see, the Lord fights our battles for us; we do not need to fight them ourselves.

Proverbs 24:30 "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;"

We know slothful means lazy. In this case, a person who is so lazy that he will not take care of his own garden; A person who has never gone to the trouble to accumulate any learning on how to take care of his vineyard.

Proverbs 24:31 "And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, [and] nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

He is so lazy that he has lain in the bed resting and let the whole place grow up with thorns and bushes; He has even let the fence get run down and now wild animals could come in and destroy the crops, that is, if he wasn't too lazy to put a crop in.

This year it looks like there will be no crop. The owner is too lazy to farm or run the vineyard.

Thorns also appear in his life (in 15:19), we saw.

Proverbs 24:32 "Then I saw, [and] considered [it] well: I looked upon [it, and] received instruction."

After looking over the situation, there was no question but to fully understand that the owner of this land was in plenty of trouble.

Proverbs 24:33 "[Yet] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:"

The old saying, "no work, no eat" applies here. We see a person who is a sleepyhead. They lay up in the bed and sleep the day away. Even when they are awake, they spend time idly. A person like this cannot ever quite get around to working; even though there is plenty to do everywhere he looks.

A person on a farm need not hunger. You can grow a crop. This poverty coming is a sure thing when a person is too lazy to work.

Proverbs 24:34 "So shall thy poverty come [as] one that travaileth; and thy want as an armed man."

An armed man robs because he wants what belongs to others. This person, who will not work, also wants what someone else has worked to produce. This is a very bad thing. It not only brings physical poverty, but spiritual poverty as well, and destroys ones' self-respect.

Proverbs Chapter 24 Continued Questions

1. Who are we warned not to envy in verse 19?
2. What will happen to the candle of the wicked?
3. What 2 are we to fear?
4. What is meant by "meddle not with them that are given to change"?
5. What is the beginning of wisdom?
6. What are people ordinarily tried for, who try to overthrow the government?
7. In judgment, it is not good to do what?
8. What Scripture tells us that God is not a respecter of persons?
9. What are we commanded to do in James chapter 2?
10. When a judge says the guilty are innocent, how do the people feel about the judge?

11. What two things do the people want from the judge.
12. How do the people react to an impartial judge?
13. Who do you believe verse 26 means?
14. Which should a man build first, his business or his home?
15. Be not a witness against thy neighbor _____ .
16. What does "deceive not with thy lips" mean?
17. Who fights the Christian's battles?
18. What does "slothful" mean?
19. What had happened to the field and vineyard of the slothful man?
20. After he considered the situation of the slothful man, what conclusion did he come to?
21. What was the slothful man doing instead of working?
22. What will come from this?
23. What does an armed man rob?