

Message #93**Proverbs 22:22-29**

In this first part of the sayings of the wise (22:22-24:22), there are 30 wise sayings, some things wise people are to do and some they are not to do.

WISE PEOPLE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE WISE, REFUSING TO DO WHAT IS WRONG AND STRIVING TO DO WHAT IS WISE.

SAYING #1 – Wise people do not mistreat the poor. 22:22-23

The words “rob” and “crush” are words that speak of using unjust force and even violence to take away what little the poor have. The terms “poor” and “afflicted” describe people who are very weak, lean, powerless and in total misery. The “gate” was the place where legal judicial decisions were made (Ruth 4:1; II Sam. 15:2; 29:8; Amos 5:15). **Verse 23** gives two reasons for not mistreating the poor: 1) Jehovah will defend (plead) their cause; 2) Jehovah will rob the soul, meaning He will take the life of one who does this. To hurt the needy is to open up one’s self to the judgment of Almighty God.

SAYING #2 – Wise people do not associate with the angry. 22:24-25

This proverb is designed to get a wise person to stay away from one who is very emotional and explosive. The words “anger” and “hot-tempered” describe one who is quick to anger, one whose nostrils are quick to flare into a raging and poisonous type of anger. The challenge to the wise is do not enter into any type of cause or relationship with this type of person. **Verse 25** gives two reasons: 1) You will learn his ways; 2) You will trap yourself.

SAYING #3 – Wise people do not become a debtor. 22:26-27

During O.T. times, the idea of “giving a pledge” literally striking hands, or becoming a surety was the idea of financially backing someone for their legal debts. It was a foolish thing to do because the legal backer could end up spending his entire life working for some creditor in order to pay off a debt that was not his own. During these times a creditor could legally take everything from the debtor—his home, clothes (20:16; 27:13) and even his bed (22:27).

SAYING #4 – Wise people do not tamper with divine boundaries. 22:28

The defining land boundaries were something very important to Israel. God created land (Gen. 1:9-13); God determined national boundaries of the land (Deut. 32:8); God determined tribal boundaries of Israel’s land (Num. 34). These boundaries were marked with piles of stones (Gen. 31:52).

SAYING #5 – Wise people are skilled in their business. 22:29

Here is a simple, wise and important proverb—the one who is skilled in his work is destined for great promotion. The wise men are saying that one who excels at what he does will eventually be promoted by God and will work for those important, not those obscure. Whatever your job is, strive to be the best at it and it will pay off.