

Message #101

Proverbs 24:15-22

GOD'S ATTITUDE AND TREATMENT OF PEOPLE IS DETERMINED, IN PART, BY THE PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE AND TREATMENT OF OTHERS.

There is, even with the unbeliever, a very unique examination that is constantly taking place between God and humans and that examination is the way people relate to each other. Those who do their best to treat others with honor and respect will discover that God will see that the same is given to them. Those who don't treat others favorably will discover that God will reciprocate in the same way.

TEACHING #1 – A godless person should never attempt to trap or harm a godly person.
24:15-16 – Saying #27

The Hebrew words “lie in wait” and “destroy” are words that describe a very cunning and crafty ambush that is out to bring a righteous person to waste or ruin. The idea is that the wicked person is carefully watching a righteous person in an attempt to find some weakness that may bring him to ruin. The terms “dwelling” and “resting place” would imply that this monitoring is even being done while the believer is in his own home.

In **verse 16** God makes it clear that his attempt is foolish for two main reasons:

- 1) Even if the righteous man falls, he will get up.
- 2) The wicked person will himself fall into severe judgment.

It is interesting that two different Hebrew words are used in **verse 16** to describe negative action—“fall” and “stumble.” The first word “fall,” used pertaining to the righteous man, speaks of one who falls into some calamity or perhaps even some sin. The second word “stumble,” used pertaining to the wicked man, speaks of a fall that literally implies a shaking, quivering and trembling in the knees.

TEACHING #2 – A godly person should never rejoice about the punishment of an ungodly person. **24:17-18 – Saying #28**

The words “fall” and “stumble” are the same used in **verse 16**. What is obviously happening in this verse is that God is judging the enemy of the righteous and is allowing him to suffer ferocious calamity that causes his knees to shake. The responsibility of the righteous person is not rejoicing. The words “rejoice” and “glad” describe joy that is at such an elevated level that it causes one to sing and dance. Three reasons why:

- 1) Jehovah will see it and view it as an improper response. **24:18a**
- 2) Jehovah will be displeased. **24:18b**
- 3) Jehovah will turn away His wrath. **24:18c**

TEACHING #3 – A godly person should not worry about or envy the success of the ungodly person. **24:19-20 – Saying #29**

The words “fret” and “envy” are significant Hebrew words. The word “fret” speaks of burning with anger. The word “envy” is a jealousy that also burns to the point of anger. The terms “evildoers” and “wicked” describe one who is very wicked and very unrighteous. Wise people do not spend life burning in anger and jealousy about those who are godless because it is a very foolish waste of time.

1) The godless person will not have any reward in the future.

2) His shining life will eventually be put out in the future.

TEACHING #4 – A wise person will maintain a proper attitude concerning God and His ordained leadership. **24:21-22 – Saying #30**

We get a clear glimpse as to how sacred God views His rulers—He is to be revered in a healthy, intimidated fashion and so are His leaders.

During this era in history, God’s system of government was one of ruling through a king. Not only were the children of Israel exhorted to fear God and the king, but they are also exhorted not to associate with those given to change.

The wise men are challenging the children of Israel to not only maintain a proper attitude toward God and His leaders, but also maintain a proper distance from those who are fickle, who, as Dr. Unger said, “lead away from loyalty to the Lord and the king.”

Verse 22 gives a stern warning and reason why this needs to be obeyed: sudden calamity and ruin will come to one that does not heed this instruction. The word “calamity” refers to heavy, destructive misfortunes that bring one to ruin (Gesenius, p. 36).

Both the O.T. and the N.T. make it clear that fearing God’s leaders is right and lashing out against God’s leadership is wicked and dangerous (Eccl. 8:2-5; Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:17; II Pet. 2:10; Jude 8). What God’s leaders need is prayer, not opposition (I Tim. 2:1-3).

Wisdom realizes that blessings, honor and rewards come to one who maintains proper attitudes and treatment of all people. God watches how we relate and react to others.