

The Proverbs of Solomon – Proverbs 24:11-12

We have **already** touched on many of these **proverbs** in earlier lessons, and there is **little reason to review** them. For example, we looked at **Christian envy** just a couple of weeks ago. And there have been a **couple lessons** on various aspects of **wisdom versus foolishness**. **I DID think** about a message on **house building – Verses 3 and 4** – *“Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”* We might have made application to **construction materials** and to **various rooms**. And then there are **different types** of houses as well. But so far I **haven’t felt lead** of the Lord to go in that direction.

We **could** bring up a **few points** on **verse 13**, applying **honey** in various ways. *“My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.”* Solomon’s father, David, after speaking of **God’s law**, His **testimonies, commandments** and **statutes**, said, *“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”* And then in **Psalm 119** he added, *“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”* Just in passing, have you **ever noticed** that the word **“sugar” isn’t mentioned** in God’s Word? Did you know that sugar is a **relatively recent discovery**? **Rarely** was **anything artificially sweetened** until the **16th century** when westerners discovered sugar cane in the West Indies. Of course, **honey** has been around for a **long time**, but was **rarely mixed** into cakes and smoothies. It was usually **eaten raw** – for **energy** or as a **treat**. Maybe, we will come back to the subject of honey later.

After thinking we’d look at **“rejoicing over our enemies”** in **verses 17-18** – I was struck with the lesson of **verses 11-12**. *“If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?”*

A literal interpretation.

There **once** was **a day** when the **principles** of the **Bible** were applied to **general life** and even to **general society** – including **capital punishment**. And in the **case of these verses** someone has been **accused** of a **capital crime**. **Maybe** it was **murder**, but it might have been **something else**. The words **“ready to be slain”** **literally** mean **“bending to slaughter”** – the **axe** has been raised; the **hood** has been placed over the man’s head; **the IV line** has been placed into the man’s vein. He is about to be executed.

There are several **modern arguments against capital punishment**. One of those arguments is that **sometimes an innocent** person might be **executed**. **Without a doubt** that is not only **possible**, but it has **probably occurred**. **But should** a hundred people **worthy of execution be freed** because of **one possible innocent man**? I will leave that question to those who love to debate.

But here is **Solomon’s point** – in this particular case **YOU know** this man is **innocent**. And as such you are **obligated to speak up**; force **more investigation**; create **more time** for that man. *“Forbear NOT to deliver that man.”*

Why might you **hesitate** to save him? Well, you might think of yourself as **too busy** to get involved. And besides, what is that man to you? Whether he lives or dies, your life will not be changed. **Is that so?** Or perhaps you **picture yourself** getting into **trouble** – there might be **danger** – if you interfere. You might **lose your job** because your boss is the man’s accuser. You could **earn some wrath** from the police, or from the government, or from general society. Maybe you **shouldn’t say anything** for the **sake of your family**. Or that man might consider himself to be **your enemy**. **He might hate you**; he might be a **thorn in your flesh**. Perhaps you think, **if others** have **accused him** of murder, even **though you know** he was stalking you at the time in question, you **might rid yourself**, even rid the **world, of an evil man**. By **simply holding your tongue**, and **doing nothing** you might **make the world a better place** and your **life** might become **a lot easier**. **But providence** has made you **this man’s alibi**. It is **not right** for you to **remain silent**.

It is not only not right, but it is **sin** in the **sight** of the **God who knows all things**. *“If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?”* In other words, **won’t the Lord judge you** for **perpetuating the lies** against this other person? **Borrowing** from **verse 18** – **Doesn’t the Lord see it**, and doesn’t it **displease Him**?

Might He not in fact **share with you the judgment** He intended for that other man – whatever it might be? *“Shall not (God) render to every man – to you – according to (your) works?”* And **what are your works** in this case?

I think there is a **natural** and **obvious application** of these verses.

But there is also a spiritual application, which may be even more important.

Why is this man **going to die**? Because *“the wages of sin is death.”* *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”* *“When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”* *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”* *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption”* – death. *“Behold, all souls are mine (saith the Lord); as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”*

Are you **aware** that **your neighbor is a condemned man**? Do you **realize** that the **people** with whom you work are **lost** and under the **wrath of God**? **We are surrounded by dead men dying.** **What** does **the Lord think** about us when we *“forbear to deliver them”* or at least **not try** to deliver them? *“Behold, we knew it not.”* Don’t say that; **of course you knew.** *“Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?”*

I don’t understand it, but there were and **still are Christians** who **consider** Andrew Fuller, William Carey and their friends **to be heretics**, because they **felt moved by God to evangelize the heathen.** Many in their day felt that evangelism was some sort of interference with the will of God. Yes, I **believe in the sovereignty of God**, and I believe **the Lord saves** those whom He chooses to save. **So did those men** who revived the idea of missions. **But the means** which God used in the New Testament, and the means which He still uses today, is the **testimony of the gospel.** *“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek”* – or the Hindu, animist, Muslim or American; *“for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (But) how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”*

If we forbear to speak to the lost – the **dying soul** – perhaps **saying to ourselves**, *“Behold, we don’t know whether they are elect or not”* – **doth not He** that pondereth the heart **consider it?** *“Oh, that man is my enemy, he doesn’t deserve to be saved or even deserve to hear the gospel.”* **Perhaps so**, but **you didn’t deserve** it either, and **still the Lord sent** an evangelist to you. **Solomon said**, *“shall not (the Lord) render to every man according to his works?”*

There will **never be a saint** of God who **loses his salvation** through the **neglect of his responsibilities**, but there will be **thousands** of saints who **lose their rewards** through neglect.