

**Message #100****Proverbs 24:10-14**

Merrill Unger said, “A man is no more than a crisis shows him to be.” The wise men of Israel taught the same principle—the strength of a man or lack of it is determined by crisis situations. These men knew that life presents many crisis moments that can either prove we are wise and strong or foolish and weak.

**THOSE WHO ARE WISE AND GODLY WILL NOT FAINT DURING TIMES OF CRISIS BUT WILL COURAGEOUSLY PERSEVERE AND MINISTER; AND IN THE END THEY WILL BE REWARDED.**

In this section we get three more of our 30 sayings of the wise: **24:10 - Saying #24; 24:11-12 - Saying #25; 24:13-14 – Saying #26.**

**QUESTION #1** – What constitutes weakness in God’s estimation? **24:10**

The Hebrew word “slack” is one that refers to one who slacks off, who loses courage and stops working. The Hithpael stem of the word means the action is performed by self. The word “distress” refers to time when circumstances are hostile and you are completely pressed in. Combined, we see what constitutes weakness in God’s estimation—one who in times of crisis or hostility loses courage, slacks off and stops working—this one is not strong, but is weak.

**QUESTION #2** – What constitutes strength in God’s estimation? **24:11**

Simply speaking, strength, in God’s estimation, is determined by one who helps others during the worst possible crisis situations. In this verse, two extreme crisis times are stated: 1) People who are being drawn into death; and 2) People who are ready to be slaughtered. At this time in Israel’s history (according to Proverbs), certain things could lead to literal death: evil men who would kill others to gain more (Prov. 1:15-19); certain personal sins could lead to execution (Prov. 23:13-14). Strength was determined by one who spotted those nearing execution and did something to rescue them.

**QUESTION #3** – What excuses are acceptable in God’s estimation? **24:12**

This verse makes it clear that God will not accept any excuse for not helping others. The argument that is stressed here is one of ignorance. The word “know” shows up twice in this verse and it means to see, perceive, be aware, and be acquainted. The argument that is stressed in this verse is the excuse of ignorance (i.e. “I don’t know what I can do”).

**Reason #1** - Because God, in His sovereignty, knows us internally. **24:12a**

**Reason #2** - Because God, in His sovereignty, will judge us eternally. **24:12b**

**QUESTION #4** – Where can we gain strength for crisis situations? **24:13-14**

Strength comes by taking in the Word of God and eating regular, solid meals from the Bible. The “sweet honey” imagery is feeding on the sweet teachings of Scripture (Ps. 19:9-10; 119:103; Ezek. 3:1-3). In crisis times wise people run to the Word, not from the crisis.