

Message #111**Proverbs 26:17-22**

There have always been and will always be those who love to argue, those who would rather fight an issue rather than settle an issue. These are people who love strife and conflict and God says they are fools.

A WISE PERSON WILL AVOID STRIFE AND THINGS THAT MAY CAUSE IT.

Wise people do not want to get into fights and arguments; they want peace and harmony.

SUBJECT #1 – One who rushes into a contentious situation is one who is foolish. 26:17

The word “strife” or “contention” is a key word of this section appearing in verses **17, 20, 21**. This word was used to refer to physical contention, verbal contention and legal contention. The words “passes by” refers to a person who is on one side of a stream and the strife is on the other side. If one chooses to “meddle,” he must pass over the stream and rush into the argument; he is like one who takes a dog by the ears. The word “dog” describes a fierce, barking dog. **Only a fool would rush to a barking, fierce dog and grab its ears.**

SUBJECT #2 – One who thinks deception against his neighbor is humorous is insane. 26:18-19

The word “madman” is one that refers to one who is insane, one who has gone out of his mind. For a neighbor to cast firebrands (some form of dart with burning substance on it) and arrows and things that kill at a neighbor, and says he is just joking, is one who is insane.

SUBJECT #3 – A wise person is not a whisperer for he knows he can put out contention. 26:20

The word “whisperer” refers to one who whispers, one who talks behind a person’s back to verbally discredit them. Wise people are not whisperers, they are straight-shooters.

SUBJECT #4 – A wise person will not fuel contention or strife. 26:21

The words “contention” and “strife” describe one who is quick to fight, do battle and strive, either physically or verbally. Wise people will not kindle strife; they try and smother it.

SUBJECT #5 – A wise person does not take in tale-bearing morsels. 26:22

This specific proverb was copied from Solomon’s collection (Prov. 18:8). Fools love to take in tidbits of information and gossip. They love to hear the dirt. They love to be in the know. They view gossip as a real delicacy. This person is pathetic in God’s estimation. Any who get their greatest enjoyment from gossip news is a fool.

Wise people avoid this kind of foolish behavior and will try to avoid strife.