

Message #80

Proverbs 20:21-25

GOD'S WISDOM IS APPLIED BY KEEPING A PROPER FOCUS ON THE SOVEREIGN, SELF-EXISTING GOD.

You will notice that three times in these five verses the proper noun “Jehovah” (LORD) is specifically given (22, 23, 24). You will also notice that in the other two verses—21, 25—it is implied that God monitors these things.

CONSIDERATION #1 – Wise people know hasty gain will not gain God's blessings. 20:21

An inheritance, during the days of Solomon, was very important, especially in Israel. It typically had to do with the Promised Land and possessions that a family owned, which was to be passed on to the children of the family. It was not only for their financial prosperity and security, but so that the family name and land inheritance would be carried on through various generations. What is implied here is detestable—a child was greedy for his inheritance. In the context of verse 20, he probably cursed his mother or father to get it. The word “hurriedly” or “hastily” is one that speaks of one who will do loathsome things to gain the inheritance. The point of this proverb is that God will see to it that in the future he will not be blessed.

CONSIDERATION #2 – Wise people wait for God to pay back evil. 20:22

The word “repay” is one that means to reward in the sense of retributive penalty. The idea of “wait for the LORD” is the idea of enduring the difficulty by expectantly and confidently awaiting God to deliver. This same principle is stressed by Solomon (25:21-22); Jesus Christ (Matt. 5:38-48) and Paul (Rom. 12:14, 17).

CONSIDERATION #3 – Wise people know God hates dishonest gain. 20:23

Any form of diverse judgment or dishonest activity is an abomination to God, which means to God it is totally detestable. Those who sneak around trying to get away with something are only cutting their own throats and it is just a matter of time until God settles the score.

CONSIDERATION #4 – Wise people recognize God's sovereignty over everything. 20:24

The proverb is plain—God plans the route on which all men walk and without God, man has absolutely no chance at all to understand life. Without a proper relationship with God, man just wanders aimlessly through life, not really knowing why he is here, nor really ever finding fulfillment and satisfaction. The words “man” are different: 1) refers to one strong; and 2) refers to a man generally. God controls all men—the strong and the average, the saved and the lost, the good and the bad.

CONSIDERATION #5 – Wise people know a commitment to God is very serious. 20:25

The word “snare” refers to a noose that catches an animal and causes injury. The word “rashly” comes from a Hebrew root which means to make a rash oath. The point is it is very foolish to make some rash promise to God without consideration as to whether you will keep it. One who does this is tying a noose around his own neck and will injure himself.