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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

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EVIL MEN AND WICKNESS

**Proverbs 24**

***Proverbs 24:1 "Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them."***

***Proverbs 24:2 "For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief."***

We see, that we are not to want the way or the rewards of the evil man. We discussed before that fellowship with evil brings us guilt of their sin by association. Their ways are wicked ways. Their desires are to destroy someone else and build themselves up by the hurt of others. They speak slanders and lies. Stay away from them before you learn their evil ways.

***Proverbs 24:3 "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:"***

***Proverbs 24:4 "And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches."***

A family or home is built upom faith in God. A family with God as its center is estblished and is not easy shaken. Pleasant and precious riches and are not necessarily money, but are the wealth of love, happiness, joy, and peace. The family that centers their lives on God has spiritual blessings in abundance. They may not have gold and silver in this world, but they are indeed rich.

***Proverbs 24:5 "A wise man [is] strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."***

***Proverbs 24:6 "For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors [there is] safety."***

Wisdom from God helps us in all circumstances. Wisdom (advice from God) would be especially useful in war. When the Israelites fought their wars, they won when the Lord led them in battle; but when they fought the battles in their own strength without his help, they failed and lost many lives. God must guide us in everything or we, too, will fail.

***Proverbs 24:7 "Wisdom [is] too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate."***

Wisdom is a gift from God. Wisdom and Godliness go hand in hand. A fool is so busy being foolish that he does not even pray and seek wisdom. The wise could even counsel the fool, and the fool would not realize that it was good counsel. The wise follow after God and his teaching, and the fool goes the way of the flesh.

***Proverbs 24:8 "He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person."***

A person who deviseth to do evil is a person who is planning some evil scheme to beat someone else. This evil person never tries to work and get ahead, he just figures up evil ways to trick others out of what they have worked for. In this, evil thoughts become evil deeds and show the mischievous ways of the evil one.

***Proverbs 24:9 "The thought of foolishness [is] sin: and the scorner [is] an abomination to men."***

Jesus said to desire to sin in your heart is a sin just as if you had already comitted the sin. The heart will be judged even more than the deeds of man. The rejecters of good Christian principles are themselves rejected of the righteous. Those who turn their backs on God are a terrible reproach (abomination} to the righteous.

***Proverbs 24:10 "[If] thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength [is] small."***

It is easy to talk about strength when all is well. Perhaps, if we were tested as Peter was when Jesus was crucified, we might be afraid and run away. When troubles and trials come, we need to be as Stephen and stand up for what is right. If our faith is not strong enough to stand through a few trials, I would ask, where is our faith? withstand the devil, and he will flee from you. Greater is He that is within me, than he that is in the world.

***Proverbs 24:11 "If thou forbear to deliver [them that are] drawn unto death, and [those that are] ready to be slain;"***

***Proverbs 24:12 "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?"***

We see, here, someone who is in grave danger, and it is in your power to save them. You cannot say, "I don't know about it." You see, it is no good to tell a lie to God. God looks into your heart and knows that you have the opportunity to help. If it is in your power to help and you don't help someone in desperate need, God will not hold you blameless. God knows the intents of your heart. You will receive the same type of treatment from God that you have given your fellowman.

***Proverbs 24:13 "My son, eat thou honey, because [it is] good; and the honeycomb, [which is] sweet to thy taste:"***

We see in this "honey", one of the foods promised the children of Israel as a blessing. They were to be given a land of milk and honey. We see above, that honey seems to be good for you, in that he tells us to eat honey. It tastes good, is a health food, and is a promised blessing of God to man.

***Proverbs 24:14 "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."***

Wisdom from God and knowledge (accumulated learning) go hand in hand. A wise person seeks knowledge; and having found it, lives a better life. The reward is a fuller life here, making better decisions. A person who is wise and has accumulated knowledge can set goals for himself and carry them through. They are prepared with God's help to do mighty deeds. Their expectations are not cut off, because they have worked hard to achieve those goals.

***Proverbs 24:15 "Lay not wait, O wicked [man], against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:"***

We see, here, a plotting to destroy the dwelling place of the righteous and plotting this for evil gain. God warns against this type of endeavor. A man's home is his castle. A man fights harder to protect his home than anything else he has besides his God and his family. To attack a man at home is a dangerous thing to try.

***Proverbs 24:16 "For a just [man] falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."***

This is just saying that men of God fall into problems many times, as well as the sinner. It rains on the just and the unjust. The difference in the just man is that when troubles and hardships come, he rises above them and just keeps trusting in God. The wicked gives up and starts trying to start shortcuts to get out of whatever mess he is in.

***Proverbs 24:17 "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:"***

***Proverbs 24:18 "Lest the LORD see [it], and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him."***

We are told over and over by Jesus to love our enemies and be good to those who despitefully use you. We should have love and compassion for anyone and everyone who are having problems, even if they proclaim to be our enemies. We are told also, to feed our enemies when they are hungry. We are not to get even when someone does us wrong. Vengeance is mine saith the Lord.

***Proverbs 24:19 "Fret not thyself because of evil [men], neither be thou envious at the wicked;"***

***Proverbs 24:20 "For there shall be no reward to the evil [man]; the candle of the wicked shall be put out."***

Many people do not understand the prosperity of the evil man on this earth. This Scripture is warning the righteous not to want what the evil has. There is no future at all for the evil one. His only pleasure will be right here on this earth. Their pleasure is but for a short while here on this earth. On resurrection day there will be a great reward awaiting the righteous in heaven. When we all stand before the Lord, the righteous will be given eternal life in heaven with our Lord, but the evil ones who rejected the Lord will be thrown into the lake of fire with the devil and his demons. There is no future at all worth having for the evil of the world.

***Proverbs 24:21 "My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: [and] meddle not with them that are given to change:"***

***Proverbs 24:22 "For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?"***

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, as we learned in a previous lesson. It is also, an intelligent thing to have respectful fear of anyone who is in authority over you. The sentence ("meddle not with them that are given to change") don't get involved with someone trying to overthrow the government; and for sure don't be involved in someone trying to change the Word of God. Overthrow of the government tries wind up with those who are involved being tried for treason and hung. The last few words in the Bible warn what will happen to those who change the wording of the Bible. Either one of these things could be disastrous.

***Proverbs 24:23 "These [things] also [belong] to the wise. [It is] not good to have respect of persons in judgment."***

God is not a respecter of persons. We should judge all the same with no prejudice because of wealth or prominence.

***Acts 10:34 "Then Peter opened [his] mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"***

***James 2:1 "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with respect of persons."***

***Proverbs 24:24 "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou [art] righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:"***

There is nothing worse than an unjust judge. The people can tell when someone is playing favorites, and they don't like it. They demand justice. Fair play is not only wanted, but demanded by the people.

***Proverbs 24:25 "But to them that rebuke [him] shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them."***

The people want the guilty punished and the innocent to go free. The judge that does just that, without playing favorites, is respected and loved by the people and by the Lord, as well.

***Proverbs 24:26 "[Every man] shall kiss [his] lips that giveth a right answer."***

To kiss someone who tells the truth possibly means that everyone shows approval of right answers.

***Proverbs 24:27 "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house."***

This is just saying for a man to build up whatever he is doing for a living, before he takes on a family, and before he builds a house to live in. It is saying, get your living established first and then go and build a house.

***Proverbs 24:28 "Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive [not] with thy lips."***

Gossip is spoken of badly in the Bible. This is speaking of spreading untruths about the neighbors. If you were called to court to testify, you would have to tell the truth about the neighbors, but just telling things to get rumors started is bad. Deceiving with the lips, perhaps, means stretching the truth to harm someone.

***Proverbs 24:29 "Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."***

The Bible teaches do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It is not our job to get even with him. Let God fight our battles with him.

***II Chronicles 32:8 "With him [is] an arm of flesh; but with us [is] the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."***

You see, the Lord fights our battles for us, we do not need to fight them ourselves.

***Proverbs 24:30 "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;"***

***Proverbs 24:31 "And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, [and] nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."***

We know slothful means lazy. In this case, a person who is so lazy that he will not take care of his own garden; A person who has never gone to the trouble to accumulate any learning on how to take care of his vineyard. He is so lazy that he has lain in the bed resting and let the whole place grow up with thorns and bushes; He has even let the fence get run down and now wild animals could come in and destroy the crops, that is, if wasn't to lazy to put a crop in. This year it looks like there will be no crop. The owner is too lazy to farm or run the vineyard.

***Proverbs 24:32 "Then I saw, [and] considered [it] well: I looked upon [it, and] received instruction."***

After looking over the situation, there was no question but to fully understand that the owner of this land was in plenty of trouble.

***Proverbs 24:33 "[Yet] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:" Proverbs 24:34 "So shall thy poverty come [as] one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man."***

The old saying, "no work no eat" applies here. We see a person who is a sleepyhead. They lay up in the bed and sleep the day away. Even when they are awake, they spend time idly. A person like this cannot ever quite get around to working, even though there is plenty to do everywhere he looks. A person on a farm need not hunger. You can grow a crop. This poverty coming is a sure thing when a person is too lazy to work. An armed man robs because he wants what belongs to others. This person, who will not work, also wants what someone else has worked to produce. This is a very bad thing. It not only brings physical poverty but spiritual poverty, as well, and destroys ones self-respect.

**Questions**

1. Who in particular are we not to be envious of?
2. A family is built upon\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. What is too high for a fool?
4. The wise follow after God, and a fool follows after what?
5. Who is the scorner an abomination to, in verse 9?
6. If you faint in the day of adversity thy strength is \_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. In verse 15, the wicked is warned not to do what?
8. What is meant by "a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again”?
9. Who are we warned not to envy in verse 19?
10. What is meant by "meddle not with them that are given to change"?
11. When a judge says the guilty are innocent, how do the people feel about the judge?
12. What two things do the people want from the judge.
13. Who do you believe verse 26 means?
14. Be not a witness against thy neighbor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_.
15. What does "deceive not with thy lips" mean?
16. Who fights the Christian's battles?
17. What does "slothful" mean?
18. What had happened to the field and vineyard of the slothful man?
19. After he considered the situation of the slothful man, what conclusion did he come to?
20. What was the slothful man doing instead of working?
21. What will come from this?
22. What does an armed man rob?