

Proverbs Chapter 24: Graduation day.

At the end of Chapter 24, we will have come to the end of the school year, and it is graduation day for Solomon's son, but alas not for us. You and I, well we have a summer school yet to attend. Solomon wrote many proverbs under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and God has used the friends of Hezekiah to compile them, making them available to us.

Compiler's note: All Scripture is from the NASB unless otherwise noted.

Proverbs 24:1-2: *Do not be **envious** of evil men, nor desire to be with them; ^[2] for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble.*

➤ **Solomon warns his son not to be _____ of these men who think they freely practice their lascivious lifestyle. There is a judgment day ahead for them. Asaph mentions these "fat cats"; Psalm 73:3-9: *For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness ^[4] They seem to live such a painless life; their bodies are so healthy and strong. ^[5] They aren't troubled like other people or plagued with problems like everyone else. ^[6] They wear pride like a jeweled necklace, and their clothing is woven of cruelty ^[7] These fat cats have everything their hearts could ever wish for! ^[8] They scoff and speak only evil; in their pride they seek to crush others. ^[9] They boast against the very heavens, and their words strut throughout the earth. ^[NLT]***

Compiler's Note: Asaph, although a prophet of God, speaks the question that the people of his day were asking; this is the same type of question that you and I are asking today. In verses 11-14 of Psalm 73, he records their question; *"Does God realize what is going on?" they ask. "Is the Most High even aware of what is happening?" ^[12] Look at these arrogant people—enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply. ^[13] Was it for nothing that I kept my heart pure and kept myself from doing wrong? ^[14] All I get is trouble all day long; every morning brings me pain. Read on for insight into Asaph's heart. Psalm 73:16-20: *So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! ^[17] Then one day I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I thought about the destiny of the wicked. ^[18] Truly, you put them on a slippery path and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction. ^[19] In an instant they are destroyed, swept away**

by terrors. [20] Their present life is only a dream that is gone when they awake. When you arise, O Lord, you will make them vanish from this life. In the end, Asaph repents of his envy and so should we. Psalm 73:21-26: Then I realized how bitter I had become, how pained I had been by all I had seen. [22] I was so foolish and ignorant— I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you. [23] Yet I still belong to you; you are holding my right hand. [24] You will keep on guiding me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. [25] Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. [26] My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.
[NLT]

Proverbs 24:3-4: *By wisdom, a house is built, and by understanding it is established; [4] and by knowledge, the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

➤ **Solomon is of course metaphorically speaking. He is not talking about a physical house, rather the “earthly tent” that we live in here on earth’s campus. Our dwelling places should be built on the rock of God’s Word and not upon the shifting sands of worldly wisdom; furnished with the finest of God’s _____. Listen to Paul as he instructs his spiritual son, Timothy, on building a spiritual dwelling place in 2nd Tim. 2:15: *Work hard so God can approve you. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.* [NLT] He continues in 2nd Tim. 3:16: *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right.* [NLT] When tested against the Word of God, Scripture will reveal the weakness in our foundation if it is other than Christ. Col. 3:16: *Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.* [NLT]**

Proverbs 24:5-6: *A wise man is strong, and a man of knowledge increases power. ^[6] For by wise guidance you will wage war, and an abundance of counselors there is victory.*

- I think that the Spirit of our Lord is using Solomon in advising us to seek an _____ of counselors within God's word; and not some esoteric flipping of the pages, hoping it will stop at an appropriate passage, applicable to whatever circumstances with which we find ourselves confronted. Rather, if we are to find victory in all situations, we need to store the whole _____ of His Word in our hearts, so that it is available for His Spirit to use as a personal reminder as He renews our flesh trained mind.

Proverbs 24:7: *Wisdom is too high for a fool, He does not open his mouth in the gate.*

- Countless times I have heard someone pontificate that the Scriptures cannot be understood by common folk or some similar explanation relating to why they don't make any effort to read them. It is true; the person who makes such a statement is a _____. As some of our space junkies might say; "The Scriptures are God's instructions for the carbon-based entities known as humans." To this statement, there is an element of truth. God's Word is used by His indwelling Spirit to guide and restore our carnal [flesh trained] minds, toward a godly path. Does it seem logical that He would make them so difficult or mysterious that normal "carbon-based entities" like you and me, could not understand them?

Proverbs 24:8-9: *He who plans to do evil, men will call him a schemer. ^[9] The devising of folly is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to men.*

- While it is bad to do evil, it is even worse to devise it. As our immature or un-renewed carnal minds begin to conceive an evil scheme, we need to stop and repent of it, thanking our Lord for the forgiveness already paid for in advance. If

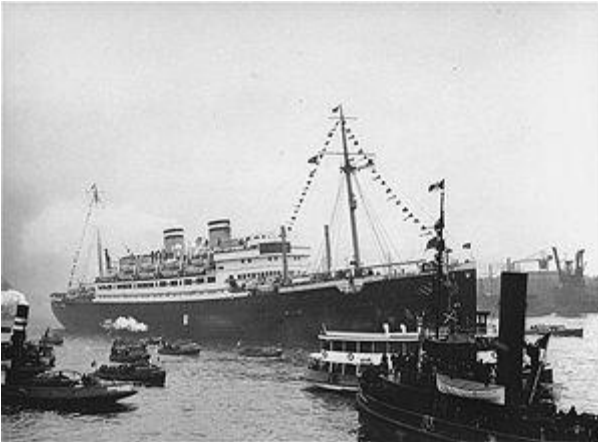
you recall, the required penalty for any sin is death [Romans 6:23], and Christ died for our sins 2,000 years ago. Those that strive to make others hate-filled, make themselves so, but keep in mind there is a difference in making someone aware of transgressions and spreading hatred. As Christians, we are all called to be "watchmen on the wall," making others aware of the dangers. Jude 1:23: *Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. There are still others to whom you need to show mercy but be careful that you aren't contaminated by their sins.* [NLT] Make _____ to do good, boast in our Lord's kindness that the _____ may hear our praise.

Compiler's note: In our society today, there are those who continue to ignite the torch of racial prejudice by seeking "tax-funded restitution" from Anglo-Americans for enslaving Negroes. If we truly examine history, then either these allegations are stated out of ignorance or are **an intentional scheme to incite racial strife**. Historical evidence is presented at the end of this study. Please check it out and verify it on your own. The adaptation was taken from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1narr3.html>

Proverbs 24:10-12: *If you are slack in the day of distress, your strength is limited. [11] Deliver those who are being taken away to death and those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back. [12] If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to the man according to his work?*

- ✓ As I read this passage and sought its application, what came to my mind is what is known as the Voyage of the damned.

The "MS St. Louis" left Germany on May 13, 1939. Its



passengers, most of them from Germany, the MS St. Louis steamed toward Havana from Hamburg, Germany, with nearly 1,000 Jews fleeing; seeking asylum from Nazi persecution. When the ship arrived, however, both Havana - and the U.S. - refused to admit them. The St. Louis sat in Havana harbor for days. Only

29 passengers were permitted to land. Then the ship was ordered to leave - maneuvering slowly and tantalizingly near the coast of Florida before finally being turned back to Europe to face the horrors of ethnic cleansing.

Complicit and yielding to political pressure were the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull along with the Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, both members of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's cabinet. Using the U.S. Coast Guard, the MS. St. Lewis was turned away. A group of academics and clergy in Canada attempted to persuade Canada's Prime Minister William Lyon, Mackenzie King, to provide sanctuary to the ship, which at the time, was only two days from Halifax, Nova Scotia. However Canadian immigration officials and cabinet minister's hostile to Jewish immigration persuaded the Prime Minister not to intervene by June 9. The ship heads back; on June 17, 1939, the MS. St. Louis docked at Antwerp. According to statistics provided by the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum, only Three hundred and sixty-five of the 620 passengers who returned to continental Europe survived the war."

So let's read Proverbs 24:10-12: This time in the NLT, **[writers' intent translation]** *If you fail under pressure, your strength is not very great. ^[11] Rescue those who are unjustly sentenced to death; don't stand back and let them die. ^[12] Don't try to avoid*

responsibility by saying you didn't know about it. **For God knows all hearts, and he sees you.** He keeps watch over your soul, and he knows you knew! And he will judge all people according to what they have done. ^[NLT]

Compiler's note: no additional comment is needed.

Proverbs 24:13-14: *My son, eat honey, for it is good, Yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste; ^[14] Know that **wisdom** is thus for your soul; If you find it, then there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off.*

➤ **Solomon is using parallelism, comparing physical food to soul food. We are encouraged to the study of _____ by considering both the pleasure and the profit of it. All men relish things that are sweet to the taste, but many have no relish for the things that are sweet to the purified soul, and it is this desire to know Him that enables us to be candidates for salvation and receive the propitiation of Christ.**

Proverbs 24:15-16: *Do not lie in **wait**, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not destroy his resting place; ^[16] For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the **wicked** stumble in time of calamity.*

➤ **This is the "see, I told you" syndrome sited by those who witness the life-changing, born again experience of someone else, and then lie in _____, almost hoping that they will fail, enabling them to continue to validate their mistaken version of truth. Within the process of sanctification, God knows men will fall many times over, but each time He will lift them back up again. I think of Peter's denial of our Lord; yet after the resurrection, Jesus restored him, not so with _____ Judas Iscariot.**

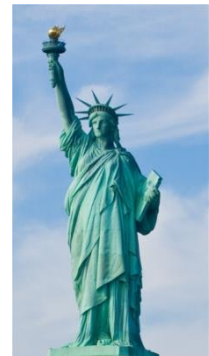
Proverbs 24:17-18: *Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; ^[18] Lest the Lord see it and be displeased, and He turn away His anger from him.*

- **Vengeance is the exclusive privilege of God. Do you recall Paul's admonition in Romans 12:19-20: *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord?* ^[20] *"But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head."* ^[NASB] If we take our own revenge against those who wrong us, we become our own God, leaving no room for our dependence on Him. God's desire is that we be like our own children who depend on parents for security. As a child, we should depend on Him for protection.**

Proverbs 24:19-20: *Do not fret because of evildoers or be envious of the wicked;* ^[20] *for there will be no future for the evil man; the **lamp** of the wicked will be put out.*

- The " _____ " pictures Jesus who is the living Word of God, His ". . . *word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path* *Psalm* ^{119:105} ^[NLT]. The real danger for us is in the gray area of our commitment to His Lordship. Jesus, speaking to the church at Laodicea through John the apostle, gave them this warning; *"I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish you were one or the other!"* ^[16] *But since you are like lukewarm water, I will spit you out of my mouth!"* ^{Rev. 3:15-16} ^[NLT] To the Church in Ephesus Jesus issued this dire warning; *Look how far you have fallen from your first love! Turn back to me again and work as you did at first. If you don't, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches.* ^{Rev. 2:5} ^[NLT]

Proverbs 24:21-22: *My son, fear the Lord and the king; do not associate with those who are given to change;* ^[22] *for their calamity will rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin that comes from both of them?*





Wow: It is hard not to be political here. I believe that all Governments were established to protect the God-given rights of all humans, and to provide all people an opportunity to make a free-will choice, who they will serve. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, "among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the consent of the governed," I am of the opinion that God created people with a free will, so that all may have an opportunity to decide for themselves', whether or not to love and serve the one true God; therefore God has established America as a lamp, a path of opportunity for those whose government has removed or not protected that right. When rebels choose to _____ that which God has ordained, we are not to associate ourselves with them.

Proverbs 24:23: *These also are sayings of the wise. To show **partiality** in **judgment** is not good.*



This perhaps is one of the most daunting tasks set before human-kind; especially for those of us who did not receive God's mind-renewing Spirit until later in life. Our minds were trained by our five senses, without the benefit of godly insight provided by His indwelling Holy Spirit. Our standard for _____ must be by the Word of God; to either side of that is to show _____.

Compiler's note: We all develop prejudices, regardless of how mundane they may seem. My wife, being a 'Pittsburghian', developed a peer pressure prejudice for the Pittsburgh Steelers, even when they lose, they are a great team, unlike those "bums" the Browns, that my Ohio born son-in-law endorses and in whom he finds no fault. **As Christians, we are called to judge impartially through Godly principles. If, as a Christian, you stand biblically against homosexuality, expect to be called a bias, prejudice homophobe.**

I just heard someone say, "Well that in itself is showing a partiality toward a Biblical interpretation." And



in a sense that is correct, which would then render the Proverb an oxymoron if we were not to first determine what is good and who sets the standard by which all things should be judged impartially. God's Word is the absolute ultimate authority and arbitrator, the centerline on the scale of right and wrong. Partiality is to move to either side of that balance point.

Anti-Christ

God's | Word

Anarchy



Proverbs 24:24-26: *He who says to the wicked, "You are righteous," Peoples will curse him, nations will abhor him; ^[25] But to those who rebuke the wicked will be a delight, and a good blessing will come upon them. ^[26] He kisses the lips who gives a right answer.*

➤ **A judge who says to the _____, "You are innocent," will be cursed by many people and denounced by the nations. We see the fulfillment of that today in our own society. Judges who let off or give light sentences to those who would rape and abuse children are readily condemned by ethical people. These judges perhaps forget that they have a Greater Judge to whom they will answer. Blessings will be showered on those who convict the guilty and be honored by God for their integrity in judgment.**

Proverbs 24:27: *Prepare your work outside, and make it ready for yourself in the field; Afterwards, then, build your house.*

➤ **I see great wisdom in this, in terms of leading to a successful marriage. God's Word says that when we are trained and functioning in our careers, allowing time for physical maturity, only then should we build our _____ and establish a family. My observation has been that too often, young people get married or co-habit before they are stable in their work environment or have a house in which to raise a family; all of this leading to financial distress, which often ends in divorce or separation.**

Proverbs 24:28: *Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your lips.*

- **Don't stir up trouble with your _____ or others, for your own amusement, or even to project a better image of yourself by being on the "better" side of the created controversy, especially if you are using a lie to do it. Again, we have plenty of negative examples of this proverb among the political candidates contending for position and power; consider the noted example of the "slavery" issue in the notes at the end of this study.**

Proverbs 24:29: **[And]** *Do not say, "Thus I shall do to him as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work."*

- **This message has been repeated several times in the collection of proverbs, so it must surely be important. We are not to look for an opportunity to get even for what someone has done to _____. Paul clarifies this for those of us in the New Testament Covenant, in Romans 12:19 we read: *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.* ^[NASB]**

Proverbs 24:30-34: *I passed by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense; ^[31] and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles, its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. ^[32] When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. ^[33] "A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest," ^[34] Then your poverty will come as a robber, And your want like an armed man.*

- **When we see a field that is filled with thorns and thistles, the barn in disrepair, with trash and discarded equipment laying around for no apparent reason, we think of the owner as lazy and as one _____ sense. Even if we are not farmers, this proverb has an application for us. If, because of laziness, we fail at good management of our daily family obligations; not only as providers and protectors but**

as a spiritual leader for our children, our homes will be in the same disarray as the husbandman's field. What a sad difference the _____ makes even in the affairs of our nation or that of worldly affairs. *Sloth and self-indulgence are the bane of all good*^{MHC}. When we see fields overgrown with thorns and thistles, and the fences are broken down, we see an emblem of the far more deplorable state of many souls. If we will open our eyes and look, we can learn this lesson that Solomon wants his son to learn, and draw a parallel to that which our heavenly Father wants us to learn; A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber.

Evidence of intentionally inflicted racial strife. Categorically I must state the enslaving of any person is wrong. The Bible mentions servitude in several ways but does not endorse it as a godly system. For this study, my purpose for including this material is that of a watchman, to warn of "Schemer's" and present evidence of intentionally inflicted racial strife in our Society. Because our president Obama chose to disparage our Bible in one of his speeches by misapplying passages to suggest that God endorses slavery, I will have to deal with this subject in a future study.

The erased history of Slavery in America: From Indentured Servitude to Racial Slavery

Adapted from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1narr3.html>

We sometimes imagine that such oppressive laws were put quickly into full force by greedy landowners. But that's not the way slavery was established in colonial America. It happened gradually -- one person at a time, one law at a time, even one colony at a time.

Virginia General Assembly declaration, 1705: All servants imported and brought into the Country. . . who were not Christians in their native Country. . . shall be accounted and be slaves. All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion . . . shall be held to be real estate. If any slave resists his Master. . . correcting such slave and shall happen to be killed in such correction. . . the master shall be free of all punishment. . . as if such accident never happened.

One of the places we have the clearest views of that "terrible transformation" is the colony of Virginia. In the early years of the colony, many Africans and poor whites -- most of the laborers came from the English working class. They stood on the same ground. Black and white women worked side-by-side in the fields. Black and white men who broke their indentured servant contract were equally punished.

Anthony Johnson was a free black man who owned property in Virginia
During the early colonial period, all were indentured servants. During their period of

indenture as servants, they were fed and housed. Afterwards, they would be given what were known as "freedom dues," which usually included a piece of land and supplies, including a gun. Black-skinned or white-skinned, they became free.

Historically, the English only enslaved non-Christians, not in particular, Africans. And the status of slave (Europeans had African slaves prior to the colonization of the Americas) was not one that was life-long. A slave could become free by converting to Christianity. The first Virginia colonists did not even think of themselves as "white" or use that word to describe themselves. They saw themselves as Christians or Englishmen, or in terms of their social class. They were nobility, gentry, artisans, or servants.

One of the few recorded histories of an African in America that we can glean from early court records is that of "Antonio the negro," as he was named in the 1625 Virginia census. He was brought to the colony in 1621. At this time, English and Colonial law did not define racial slavery; the census calls him not a slave but a "servant." Later, Antonio changed his name to Anthony Johnson, married an African American servant named Mary, and they had four children. Mary and Anthony also became free, and he soon owned land and cattle and even indentured servants of his own. By 1650, Anthony was still one of only 400 Africans in the colony among nearly 19,000 settlers. In Johnson's own county, at least 20 African men and women were free, and 13 owned their own homes.

In 1640, the year Johnson purchased his first property; three servants fled a Virginia plantation. Caught and returned to their owner, two had their servitude extended four years. However, the third, a black man named John Punch, was sentenced to "serve his said master or his assigns for the time of his natural life." He was made a slave. The first slave in the American Colonies was enslaved by a fellow Negro.

Traditionally, Englishmen believed they had a right to enslave a non-Christian or a captive taken in a just war. Africans and Indians might fit one or both of these definitions. But what if they learned English and converted to the Protestant church? Should they be released from bondage and given "freedom dues?" What if, on the other hand, status were determined not by (changeable) religious faith but by (unchangeable) skin color?

In 1670 Virginia seized Johnson's land...

This disorder that the indentured servant system had created made racial slavery to southern slaveholders much more attractive, because what were black slaves now? Well, they were a permanent dependent labor force, who could be defined as a people set apart. They were racially set apart. They were outsiders. They were strangers and in many ways throughout the world, slavery has taken root, especially where people are considered outsiders and can be put in a permanent status of slavery.

- David Blight, historian

Also, the indentured servants, especially once freed, began to pose a threat to the property-owning elite. The colonial establishment had placed restrictions on available lands, creating unrest among newly freed indentured servants. In 1676, working-class men burned down Jamestown, making indentured servitude look even less attractive to Virginia leaders. Also, servants moved on, forcing a need for costly replacements; slaves, especially ones you could identify by skin color, could not move on and become free competitors.

In 1641, Massachusetts became the first colony to legally recognize slavery. Other states, such as Virginia, followed. In 1662, Virginia decided all children born in the colony to a slave mother would be enslaved. Slavery was not only a life-long condition; now it could be passed, like skin color, from generation to generation.

In 1665, Anthony Johnson moved to Maryland and leased a 300-acre plantation, where he died five years later. But back in Virginia that same year, a jury decided the land Johnson left behind could be seized by the government because he was a "negro and by consequence an alien." In 1705 Virginia declared that "All servants imported and brought in this County... who were not Christians in their Native Country... shall be slaves. Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves ... shall be held to be real estate."

English suppliers responded to the increasing demand for slaves. In 1672, England officially got into the slave trade as the King of England chartered the Royal African Company, encouraging it to expand the British slave trade. In 1698, the English Parliament ruled that any British subject could trade in slaves. Over the first 50 years of the 18th century, the number of Africans brought to British colonies on British ships rose from 5,000 to 45,000 a year. England had passed Portugal and Spain as the number one trafficker of slaves in the world.