

TEXT — 22:1-10

1. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,
And loving favor rather than silver and gold.
2. The rich and poor meet together;
Jehovah is the maker of them all.
3. A prudent man seeth the evil, and hideth himself;
But the simple pass on, and suffer for it.
4. The reward of humility and the fear of Jeohavh
Is riches, and honor, and life.
5. Thorns and stars are in the way of the perverse:
He that keepeth his soul shall be far from them.
6. Train up a child in the way he should go,
And even when he is old he will not depart from it.
7. The rich ruleth over the poor;
And the borrower is servant to the lender.
8. He that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity;
And the rod of his wrath shall fail.
9. He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed;
For he giveth of his bread to the poor.
10. Cast out the scoffer, and contention will go out;
Yea, strife and ignominy will cease.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 22:1-10

1. Restate v. 1 in your own words.
2. What is the purpose of the statement in v. 2?
3. What does "evil" mean in v. 3?
4. What Bible characters were rewarded in keeping with
v. 4:
5. What do "thorns" and "snares" stand for in v. 5?
6. What does another proverb say about a child left to help
himself to grow up his own way instead of training him
(v. 6)?
7. If a child does not turn out right, should we question
God's promise in v. 26 or the parent's rearing?
8. Is v. 7 stating the way it is or the way it should be?
9. What is the game no one can win (v. 8)?
10. Why does v. 9 speak of one's "eye" being bountiful?
11. In Solomon's day, cast him out of what (v. 10)?

PARAPHRASE OF 22:1-10

1. If you must choose, take a good name rather than great
riches; for to be held in loving esteem is better than

- silver and gold.
2. The rich and the poor are alike before the Lord who made them all.
 3. A prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.
 4. True humility and respect for the Lord lead a man to riches, honor and long life.
 5. The rebel walks a thorny, treacherous road; the man who values his soul will stay away.
 6. Teach a child to choose the right path, and when he is older he will remain upon it.
 7. Just as the rich rules the poor, so the borrower is servant to the lender.
 8. The unjust tyrant will reap disaster and his reign of terror shall end.
 9. Happy is the generous man, the one who feeds the poor.
 10. Throw out the mocker, and you will be rid of tension, fighting and quarrels.

COMMENTS ON 22:1-10

V. 1. Eccl. 7:1 is similar, saying a good name is better than "precious oil." Those who get rich through dishonest means choose riches rather than a good reputation. If it comes down to a choice, always choose a good name ("loving favor") to great riches ("Silver and gold"). Great possessions with no friends can be so cold and empty! There are many suicides among the rich too. An average living with many friends and the favor of God proves to be the happiest, most satisfying way to live.

V. 2. Prov. 29:13 speaks similarly concerning the two classes. Does God make them rich and poor, or is He the maker of them regardless of whether they are rich or poor? Probably the latter. In society they both help each other. "Pulpit Commentary" aptly remarks: "The labor of the poor makes the wealth of the rich; the wealth of the rich enables him to employ and aid the poor...The rich should not despise the poor (Prov. 14:31; 17:5) Job 31:15); the poor should not envy the rich (Prov. 3:31).

V. 3. This very saying is repeated in Prov. 27:12. An old saying: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." A discerning

person can often foresee danger ahead, and his wisdom causes him to avoid it; but the simple, undiscerning person comes along, never realizing what is just ahead, and suffers the consequences. In the original, "prudent man" is singular while "the simple" is plural. "Hitzig" observes as a result: "Many simple ones are found for one prudent." And when something new (some fad) comes along that had dangerous involvements connected with it, many take up with it anyway, and you wonder if "Hitzig" isn't correct in his observation! A Cornish proverb: "He who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock."

V. 4. "humility" and the "fear of Jehovah" are here equated, for those who truly fear Jehovah are humble, submissive, and obedient to Him. The reward of such is threefold: riches, honor and long life. Here is the way that one can have both possessions and good reputation with life thrown in as a bonus. Abraham is a good example of all three. God "rewards" those who thus fear Him and do His will from humble hearts.

V. 5. What a contrast with v. 4! While the righteous reap riches, honor and life (v. 4), "Thorns" and "snares" await the perverse. Prov. 15:19 combines both groups: "The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns; But the path of the upright is made a highway." The wicked are "perverse (perverted from what God has intended them to be). The godly are those who keep their souls; they shall avoid the thorns and snares that come upon the ungodly. Another reason (a sensible one) for being godly rather than ungodly.

V. 6. A commandment with a promise. The commandment: train up a child in the way he should go; the promise: even when he is old he will not depart from it. Such training requires many things: knowledge, wisdom, time, patience, determination and love. There are many failures in child-rearing because of lacking one or several of the above requirements. Child-training is something that is easy to neglect or try shortcuts with, but what a shame when the future of one's entire posterity is at stake! What is really more important? Eph. 6:4 commands this type of training. Timothy had been taught the Scriptures from a child (II Tim. 3:15); as a result the great faith that had dwelt in his mother and grandmother was in him also (II Tim. 1:5). No wonder that as a young man he was well reported of by his home congregation

(Lystra) and by other Christians in the area (Acts 16:1, 2). Other passages on child rearing: Prov. 1:8; 13:1; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13, 14; 29:15, 17.

V. 7. This is the way it is in life: the rich who have made financial successes are the ones who rule in governmental circles; they have power, influence and reputation that necessarily puts them at the helm. It is likely in this verse that the second statement is explanatory of the first; that is, the borrower (the poor) is servant to the lender (the rich). The borrower is limited in the amount he can borrow by the wishes of the lender; he must pay the interest-rate asked by the lender, or there will be no borrowing; he must pay it back in the time-limit set by the lender; and if he doesn't pay it back, the lender will do all he can to collect the equivalent (or more) from the borrower.

V. 8. It is a divine principle (law) that whatever a person sows in life, that he will reap in consequences (Gal. 6:7). If one sows good seeds, he will reap good (Gal. 6:8; Prov. 11:18); if he sows bad seeds, he will reap trouble (Gal. 6:8; Job 4:8; Hos. 10:13). The acts of sin may be pleasurable (Heb. 11:25), but the consequences are not (Prov. 5:8-13). Oftentimes one finds that the rod of wrath he planned for another falls upon himself instead.

V. 9. One with a "bountiful eye" is one who sees needs, who sees what he can do to alleviate the persons involved, and who generously gives of what he has. God's promise to such a liberal giver: he "shall be blessed." Similar promises: Prov. 11:25; Luke 6:38; 14:12-14; Prov. 19:17; II Cor. 9:6.

V. 10. Sometimes a circle of people is better off with one less person if that person be a scoffer, for one such person can keep a whole group in a continual state of contention, strife and ignominy (reproach). How terrible to be that warped a person!

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 22:1-10

1. One should choose a good over riches (v. 1)?
2. What are we to learn from v. 2?
3. What point was made that in the Hebrew "prudent man" is singular while "simple" is plural (v. 3)?
4. What is the three-fold reward of humbly fearing God (v. 4)?
5. What two things are promised in v. 5 to the perverse?

6. What is the command in v. 6? What is the promise?
7. How do the rich rule over the poor (v. 7)?
8. Comment upon the harvest of sin (v. 8).
9. Enlarge upon the person with a "bountiful eye" (v. 9).
10. When is a group of people better off with one less person in it (v. 10)?

TEXT — 22:11-21

11. He that loveth pureness of heart,
For the grace of his lips the king will be his friend.
12. The eyes of Jehovah preserve him that hath knowledge;
But he overthroweth the words of the treacherous man.
13. The sluggard saith, There is a lion without;
I shall be slain in the streets.
14. The mouth of strange women is a deep pit;
He that is abhorred of Jehovah shall fall therein.
15. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;
But the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.
16. He that oppresseth the poor to increase his gain,
And he that giveth to the rich, shall only come to want.
17. Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise,
And apply thy heart unto my knowledge.
18. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee,
If they be established together upon thy lips.
19. That thy trust may be in Jehovah,
I have made them known to thee this day, even to thee.
20. Have not I written unto thee excellent things
Of counsels and knowledge,
21. To make thee know the certainty of the words of truth,
That thou mayest carry back words of truth to them
that send thee?

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 22:11-21

1. What New Testament verse talks of pureness of heart also (v. 11)?
2. What blasphemous Assyrian king did God overthrow (v. 12)?
3. Do you really think there was a lion in the street (v. 13)?
4. What does God think of one who is guilty of adultery (v. 14)?
5. What are some examples of childhood foolishness (v.

15)?

6. What two classes will end up in need (v. 16)?
7. What does it mean to "incline" one's ear (v. 17)?
8. What is the antecedent of "it" in v. 18?
9. True knowledge should lead one to trust in whom (v. 19)?
10. What kind of teachings had the Proverb writer set forth (v. 20)?
11. Who had "sent" this person (v. 21)?

PARAPHRASE OF 22:11-21

11. He who values grace and truth is the king's friend.
12. The Lord preserves the upright but ruins the plans of the wicked.
13. The lazy man is full of excuses. "I can't go to work!" he says. "If I go outside I might meet a lion in the street and be killed!"
14. A prostitute is a dangerous trap; those cursed of God are caught in it.
15. A youngster's heart is filled with rebellion, but punishment will drive it out of him.
16. He who gains by oppressing the poor or by bribing the rich shall end in poverty.
- 17-21. Listen to this wise advice; follow it closely, for it will do you good, and you can pass it on to others: Trust in the Lord. In the past, haven't I been right? Then believe what I am telling you now, and share it with others.

COMMENTS ON 22:11-21

V. 11. What a beautiful, wonderful person is portrayed by the words "loveth pureness of heart" and "the grace of his lips", meaning a person with purity abiding in his heart and who has the ability to express himself in a courteous way. Kings may not always have been virtuous people, but they admired such. Even the wicked King Herod had a high regard for John the Baptist: "Herodias set herself against him, and desired to kill him; and she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was much perplexed; and he heard him gladly" (Mark 6:19, 20). Matt 5:8 also exalts purity of heart.

V. 12. The "eyes of Jehovah" here stand for his

knowledge of the affairs upon earth and of His providential workings resulting from what He sees. He preserves those who have knowledge, who use their God-created faculties to acquire enlightenment that He gives. It pleased Him that Solomon placed such a high value upon wisdom and knowledge (I Kings 3:9, 10; 4:29-34). God lamented in Hosea's day, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee" (Hos. 4:6). When God overthrew Sennacherib (II Kings 19:35), it was an instance of His overthrowing the words of the treacherous (II Kings 18:28-35).

V. 13. The same sluggard excuse for not going to work is in Prov. 26:13. Since wisdom would include one's physical safety, it is doubtful if there was a lion in the streets. All lazy people are full of excuses for not working, for they do not want to work. Just as where there's a will to do something, there is usually a way to do it, so where there is no will to work, there is usually a handy excuse for not doing it.

V. 14. Many times in Proverbs does the father warn the son about the wicked, immoral woman (Prov. 2:16; 5:3-23; 6:24-35; 7:5-27; 23:27, 28). Notice in the passages just cited how she uses her mouth (words and kisses) to break the young man down. Her mouth is said to be a "deep pit" into which men "fall," and usually they do not get out! That God hates this sin in a terrible way, notice the strong language: "He that is abhorred of Jehovah shall fall therein." Eccl. 7:26 says, "I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets and whose hands are bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her."

V. 15. A child's actions often reflect lack of good judgment and his immaturity: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things" (I Cor. 13:11). Oh, the foolish, unwise, careless, thoughtless things that children will do! What will drive it far from him? Proper, severe punishment. Other passages teaching such punishment; Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 23:13, 14; 29:15. Many parents do not do as God commands, and that foolishness remains engrained in the natures and ways of their rebellious children.

V. 16. Proverbs shows that laziness and lack of industry can bring one to want (Prov. 6:9-11), but this verse shows that oppressing the poor to get gain and trying to bribe the rich for

one's own advantage can do the same. The man described in this verse is a man to beware of.

V. 17. The "sayings" (a new saying each verse) is noticeably interrupted here for a five verse section urging the son to listen to the good instruction that he is receiving. God has given us ears with which to listen to what others say to us; they should be used when the wise are speaking. He has given us hearts or minds that can apply what we hear to our lives. The double commandment of this verse, then, is "incline thine ear" and "apply thy heart."

V. 18. To live as v. 17 says brings a "pleasant" way to live. What we hear and apply we keep within us as knowledge, and they become proverbs or sayings upon our own lips.

V. 19. True knowledge should cause us to trust in God, who is the "First" (the cause) and the "Last" (the judge). Remember, "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7). That his son might come to trust in Jehovah was the purpose of the father's careful instruction.

V. 20. The father here refers to the quality of his instructions. Compare Prov. 4:1, 2; 8:6-8.

V. 21. As a young man grows up, he is going to be subjected to many ideas of people, some being diametrically opposed to others. It is easy for a youth in the state of immaturity to be "tossed to and fro" by such (Eph. 4:14). This is why it is so necessary that the truth that the father teaches be taught in such a way that his son is well grounded in that truth, for only as he knows the truth will he be able to detect the counterfeit. On the latter statement of the verse, if a son has been brought up to know truth, to respect it, and to tell it, when being sent by others on a responsible mission, he will be able to know what truth is, to evaluate the situation, and to bring back a true report.

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 22:11-21

1. What king in Bible days respected a pure man with good teaching (v. 11)?
2. What does "eyes of Jehovah" stand for in v. 12?
3. Why does a sluggard offer excuses (v. 13)?
4. What word in the second statement of v. 14 goes with "deep pit" in the first statement?
5. How does the strange woman use her "mouth" to the destruction of men (v. 14)?

6. Cite some instances of childhood foolishness (v. 15).
7. What will drive foolishness from a child (v. 15)?
8. According to v. 16 what are two ways to become poor?
9. "Incline thine" and "apply thy" (v. 17).
(v. 17).
10. What does it mean for wisdom to be established upon thy "lips" (v. 18)?
11. True knowledge should lead one to in Jehovah (v. 19).
12. How good should one's counsel be (v. 20)?
13. Parental teachings should be so clear that youth would not be..... to and fro (v. 21).

TEXT — 22:22-29

22. Rob not the poor, because he is poor;
Neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:
23. For Jehovah will plead their cause,
And despoil of life those that despoil them.
24. Make no friendship with a man that is given to anger;
And with a wrathful man thou shalt not go:
25. Lest thou learn his ways,
And get a snare to thy soul.
26. Be thou not one of them that strike hands,
Or of them that are sureties for debts.
27. If thou has not wherewith to pay,
Why should he take away thy bed from under thee?
28. Remove not the ancient landmark,
Which thy fathers have set.
29. Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand
before kings;
He shall stand before mean men.

STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 22:22-29

1. Why would people rob the "poor" (v. 22)?
2. What other passages besides v. 23 show God's particular care for the unfortunate?
3. Why should one become a close friend to the unfortunate (v. 23)?
4. What are other verses besides v. 25 that indicate the power of evil influence?
5. What is meant in v. 26 by "strike hands"?

6. How could one lose his "bed" (v. 27)?
7. What is meant by "landmark" (v. 28)?
8. What Bible character came to stand before the king because of diligence (v. 29)?
9. Why is meant by "mean" in v. 29?

PARAPHRASE OF 22:22-29

22,23 Don't rob the poor and sick! For the Lord is their defender. If you injure them He will punish You.

24,25. Keep away from angry, short-tempered men, lest you learn to be like them and endanger your soul.

26,27. Unless you have the extra cash on hand, don't countersign a note. Why risk everything you own? They'll even take your bed!

28. Do not move the ancient boundary marks. That is stealing.

29. Do you know a hard working man? He shall be successful and stand before kings!

COMMENTS ON 22:22-29

V. 22. Both Old and New Testaments teach us to regard the unfortunate (Exo. 23:6; Jas. 1:27). Yet they are often oppressed (Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5; "In the gate" was where legal matters were settled (their "courthouse"). Sometimes the poor have not gotten their proper treatment in courts because of the other side had the money to bribe those in charge.

V. 23. In the absence of human defense God has promised to take up in their behalf and take away from those who took away from them. Other passages on the same subject: Psa. 12:5; 35:10; 68:5; 140:12; Prov. 23:10,11. God saw that King Ahab was despoiled for the vineyard he took away from Naboth (I Kings 21:1-14).

V. 24. Of all the people in the world with which to make companions, what a poor companion an angry, wrathful man is! But some people are that way (quick-tempered, no judgment, etc.), and some make friends with them.

V. 25. Like all companions, the close ties leave their influence (I Cor. 15:33). Thus, one who had been blessed with a good spirit and a calm, cool disposition begins "flying off the handle" and going into a senseless rage when everything doesn't go just right. Why? Because he has been around just

such a man.

V. 26. Being "co-signer" for another's debts is warned against several times in Proverbs (6:1,2; 11:15; 17:18; 20:16).

V. 27. How do you know at the time of obligating yourself whether you will be able at the time of need to put up the necessary money? You may have to get along without things that are necessary to your own life (like a "bed").

V. 28. Prov. 23:10 also contains this prohibition. The original law behind this saying is in Deut. 19:14: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance which thou shall inherit, in the land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it." It was one of the twelve special curses to be pronounced from Mt. Ebal: "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark. And all the people shall say, "Amen" (Deut. 27:17). This would be like removing steel stakes or buried rocks of surveyings today. It was even worse then because the official description of a property line is recorded at the courthouse today while in Bible days the landmark was all there was.

V. 29. A person diligent in business is one who is ambitious, industrious, and aggressive. They are men of application, and they will be numbered among the great and the known. Their lifetimes will be spent in major, not minor, concerns. Josph tended to every business assigned to him (Gen. 39:1-6,21-23), and he stood before the Pharaoh (gen. 41:39-44). David was diligent in caring for his father's sheep. In this he deveoped both skill and bravery in protecting them against ferocious animals, and this (together with his great faith in God) had much to do with his fighting and killing Goliath (I Sam. 17:32-37). This led to his relationship with King Saul and the army (I Sam. 18:2,5). Daniel was diligent in business (Dan. 6:4,5), and he was an important man in the administration of the following kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. The word "mean" in our verse means "insignificant." Paul used the same word in referring to his native city Tarsus (Acts 21:39).

TEST QUESTIONS OVER 22:22-29

1. What law has God issued concerning the unfortunate (v. 22)?
2. What does "in the gate" mean in v. 22?
3. What has God said concerning those who oppress the

- unfortunate (v. 23)?
4. What will happen to a person who makes an angry man his buddy (vs. 24,25)?
 5. What does Proverbs warn about being surety for another's debts (v. 26)?
 6. Why was it even more serious then to remove the ancient landmarks than to remove surveyor items now (v. 28)?
 7. What does "mean" mean in v. 29?
 8. Cite Bible characters who were "diligent in business" and who stood before kings as a result (v. 29).

NOTICEABLE GROUPINGS IN CHAPTER 22

"Rich"--

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, And loving favor rather than silver and gold" (v. 1).

"The reward of humility and the fear of Jehovah Is riches, and honor, and life" (v. 4).

"Poor"--

"The rich and the poor meet together: Jehovah is the maker of them all" (v. 2).

"The rich ruleth over the poor" (v. 7).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; For he giveth of his bread to the poor" (v. 9).

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his gain...shall come only to want" (v. 16).

"Rob not the poor because he is poor" (v. 22).

"Jehovah"--

"Jehovah is the maker of them all" (v. 2).

"The reward of...the fear of Jehovah Is riches, and honor, and life" (v. 4).

"The eyes of Jehovah preserve him that hath knowledge; But he overthroweth the words of the treacherous man" (v. 12).

"The mouth of strange women is a deep pit; He that is abhorred of Jehovah shall fall therein" (v. 14).

"That thy trust may be in Jehovah, I have made them known to thee this day" (v. 19).

"Jehovah will plead their cause, And despoil of life those that despoil them" (v. 23).

CHAPTER 22

"Kings"--

"He that loveth pureness of heart, For the grace of his lips the king will be his friend" (v. 11).

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings" (v. 29).

"Wisdom"--

"A prudent man seeth the evil, and hideth himself" (v. 3).

"Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, And apply thy heart unto my knowledge" (v. 17).

"Fools"--

"The simple pass on, and suffer for it" (v. 3).

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; But the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (v. 15).

"Punishment"--

"Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse" (v. 5).

"He that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity" (v. 8).

"Jehovah...overthroweth the words of the treacherous man" (v. 12).

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his gain, And he that giveth to the rich, shall come only to want" (v. 16).

"Jehovah will plead their cause, and Despoil of life those that despoil them" (v. 23).

"Reward"--

"The reward of humility and the fear of Jehovah Is riches, and honor, and life" (v. 4).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed" (v. 9).

"He that loveth pureness of heart, For the grace of his lips the king will be his friend" (v. 11).

"The eyes of Jehovah preserve him that hath knowledge" (v. 12).

"Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings" (v. 29).

"Children"--

"Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it" (v. 6).

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; But the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (v. 15).

PONDERING THE PROVERBS

MARRIAGE IS A GOOD STATE

There is too much levity concerning this subject of marriage. Of course, we cannot avoid some of the humorous things that happen and that are told, but the tone of things needs to be much more serious than it usually is when certain passages from the Bible on this subject are read or quoted. Here is a great passage that has experienced entirely too much humor: "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord" (18:22). Listening to levity-loving preaching read this to the emphasis that a wife is merely a "thing" leaves much to be desired when the author has no such thought in mind. The word "thing" is even in italics, which forbids any such meaning or emphasis. A wife is no more a "thing" than a husband is. If the woman is a "thing," a man is a bigger "thing", for she came from man. What that verse is saying is that the person who finds a wife is finding something good or is getting into a good state of life. The latter part of that passage shows that God is pleased when people marry, provided of course they do not marry contrary to His will.

As people have married, so does their marriage usually go. If they have run off to get married, it usually isn't too long until one of them is running away from the other. If they have taken the Lord into their home, they have found His blessing abiding upon their home.

Yes, marriage is good. Ask the person who is properly married. He or she would not think of becoming unmarried at all. Even those who break away from a mate are soon found trying to make another home. Marriage is not the only state in which to live, but is a mighty good one.