

Which Side Are You On?

Proverbs 3:32-35

Verse 31 begins this section with the admonition to not envy the one who is seen as an "oppressor," the ones that are in power and have money and use both to take advantage of others. We are to "choose none of his ways" – and then the next 4 verses are given to describe what his ways are and where they will lead, as well as giving the alternative to the oppressor's way. We can look at it as choosing sides – there's the wrong side (the side of the oppressor, the side of the wicked) and there's the right side (the side of the righteous). The question is which "ways" will we follow?

I. THE WRONG SIDE (OR THE WRONG WAY)

The "oppressor" of verse 31 is viewed in these four verses in the following way:

A. *Vs. 32a – Abomination to the Lord*

1. "Froward" – perverse, one who has turned aside – "to turn away, to depart, to go back" (GHCLOT) was then, and always has been, an abomination to God. He considers it to be perverse.

Proverbs 8:13

¹³ The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Psalms 18:26

²⁶ With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.

2. "Abomination" – to loath or abhor something – "a disgusting thing" (BDB)

Proverbs 11:20

²⁰ They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.

Proverbs 17:15

¹⁵ He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.

Luke 16:15

¹⁵ And he said unto them, **Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.**

B. Vs. 33a – Cursed of the Lord

1. This doesn't mean that the wicked oppressor won't ever have anything good happen to him. The Bible indicates that's just not the case. What it does mean though, is that there is no spiritual blessing there; there is no blessing on the house as to the family lineage – the whole of the dwelling is under the curse of the Lord unless they change their ways.
2. The "curse" (definition of which is seen in the opposite word "blessing") is not just "upon" the house but is seen as being "in" it – as being a resident of the house.

Proverbs 21:12

¹² The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth

the wicked for their wickedness.

Deuteronomy 7:26

²⁶ Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

Psalms 37:22

²² For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

Malachi 2:2

² If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

C. Vs. 34a – Scorned (make a mock at, make fun of) by the Lord

1. The "scorner" is one who makes the things of the Lord the point of his ridicule and jokes, the one who is looking for admiration because of it; he's the ever-present cynic that feels the need to mock God.
2. The first word of this verse shows how serious God takes being mocked – "Surely" – there is no doubt that God will mock those that mock Him.

Proverbs 1:22–33

²² How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scornors delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Galatians 6:7

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

D. Vs. 35b – Shame (dishonor) from the Lord

1. The oppressor, the wicked man, the one who makes a mockery of God and righteousness shall be "shamed" – will be dishonored, will lose their standing and right to anything the Lord has to offer to the wise, to His children.

Isaiah 65:13–14

¹³ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

¹⁴ Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.

2. It says that the shame "shall be the promotion of fools" (defined for us in Ps. 14:1 as the one who says there is no God) – being shamed by the Lord is what the fool has earned, what he deserves, what he will be "promoted" to in the end.
3. A clear analogy, a clear application that can be drawn in this verse, is that the final shame for the fool is going to be eternal separation from the Lord in a place called Hell.

Daniel 12:2–3

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

II. THE RIGHT SIDE (OR THE RIGHT WAY)

The "wise" man is seen in these verses as one that:

A. Vs. 32b – Knows the secret of the Lord

1. The word for "secret" (סֹדֶר) is properly "a couch, cushion, on which person recline" (GHCLOT). It has the idea of "sitting together for the purpose of private communication and conversation (K&D).

In this context, it is speaking of something that is hidden to others – here, specifically, it is speaking of something that is opposite of the wicked living in abomination to the Lord; something they cannot enjoy – namely, that sweet fellowship we have as a friend of God, as a righteous person.

2. Secondly to that, comparing other times the word "secret" is used, we can see that it also refers to the fact that the believer, the righteous, can understand the Scriptures but the lost cannot.

1 Corinthians 2:11-16

¹¹ For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

¹³ Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing

spiritual things with spiritual.

¹⁴ But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

¹⁵ But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

¹⁶ For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

B. Vs. 33b – Blessed by the Lord

1. As the curse of the Lord is upon the wicked, so is the blessing of the Lord upon the righteous.
2. It says the "habitation of the just" shall be blessed."
 - a) Keep in mind, the Book of Proverbs, as a general rule, is not necessarily a "spiritual" book; that is, not everything in it has a spiritual application.
 - b) Such is the case here, as to the right interpretation – literally, the dwelling place, the home, of the righteous, will be blessed of the Lord.
 - c) It's not saying that we will have everything we want, but it does mean that what we have will be sufficient for us to know that God is blessing us, and that what we have will be all we need.

2 Samuel 6:11

¹¹ And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obedom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed

Obededom, and all his household.

Psalm 91:9-12

⁹ Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

¹⁰ There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

¹² They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

C. Vs. 34b – Grace given by the Lord

1. One comparison here is between the "scorner" and the "lowly" – the scorner defies God, mocks Him, says He doesn't exist; the lowly realizes he is in need of a Savior, and relies on the Lord.
2. Because the lowly (the humble one) realizes he is in need, then grace will be given – not necessarily saving grace (although that's a clear application) but it's speaking of unmerited favor given to the lowly, preferential treatment, so to speak, because of his standing with the Lord .

James 4:6-7

⁶ But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

D. Vs. 35a – Glory from the Lord

1. Interestingly, the positive aspect is first in this verse – I believe that's because of the importance of this verse.
2. Again, the non-spiritual seen here is that the wise will "inherit" – will be given – "glory" – honor, preference by the Lord over all others (especially the "fool").
3. A clear application of the "glory" spoken of, comparing Scripture with Scripture, is heaven for the believer. The "wise" are those that believe in the Person of Wisdom (Christ) and trust Him for the eternal destination.

Psalm 73:24

²⁴ Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

2 Corinthians 5:1

¹ For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

1 Peter 1:3–5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Conclusion: Back to the title of this lesson – "Which side are you on?" If you're on the wrong side, when it's all said and done, you are an enemy of God and will ultimately receive His damnation in hell for eternity.

If on the right side, ultimately, we'll be rewarded in glory – in heaven. Before we get there, however, we have His blessings, His honor, His favor, and His friendship – what more could we want?!!!