

HOW TO HANDLE YOUR PROBLEMS PROVERBS 24:10



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BACKGROUND

Chapter 24 in the Book of Proverbs is housed within the second section titled the “sayings of the wise” (see Introduction). This chapter consists of several independent proverbs addressing various subjects—the wicked (1-2, 8, 15-22), wisdom (3-7, 13, 23-26), foolishness (9), adversity (10), good deeds (11-12), preparation (27), deception (28-29) and the sluggard (30-34). In this message we will examine verse 10 dealing with adversity.

THE OBSERVATION—THE DAY OF ADVERSITY WILL COME TO EVERYONE

The writer said, “If thou faint in the day of adversity.” Here he is making an assumption that adversity will eventually come our way. No one is immune to adversity—from the smallest to the greatest; from the poorest to the richest: from the youngest to the oldest. I have said for years, “You are in a trial, just got out of a trial or getting ready to go into a trial.”

THE REVELATION—THE TRUE TEST OF ONE’S STRENGTH IS ADVERSITY

The word strength represents one’s ability to cope with troubling situations. This verse makes it clear that if a person faints in the day of trouble their capacity to deal with the situation is very limited. Adversity is a true test of one’s spiritual stamina and strength. The word faint means “to be weak or feeble.” Feebleness in the day of adversity is an indication that the individual is not deeply rooted in the Lord. Psalm 1:3 let us know that the one who is planted by the river of God, is able to stand strong in season (the good times) and out of season (the times of adversity).

THE PREPARATION—IT IS THE WISE PERSON WHO PREPARES FOR THE DAY OF ADVERSITY

Embedded within the Observation and Revelation of the first two points is a nugget of wisdom. The one who prepares for the day of adversity, will be able to stand tall when it comes. The commentators in the Pulpit Commentary wrote:

Strength is wanted for the day of adversity. This will be a time of assault, strain, pressure. The soul will then be besieged, buffeted, and in danger of being crushed. Therefore there is need of sufficient strength, not only for prosperous times, but for this harder occasion. The lighthouse must not only be strong enough to stand in calm weather; it should be able to resist the battering rams of the tempest. The ship must be built for the storm. The army that can look smart in a review is useless if it goes to pieces on the field of battle. The model navy is an extravagant ornament if it will not serve us in action. The lamp is useless if it goes out in the hour of darkness. Religion is for the time of trial and temptation. The spiritual life needs to be strong enough to hold on through terror, temptation, and trouble; or it is a delusion.