

## **No Victory Against God No Victory Without God**

***“There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the Lord.”***

Proverbs 21:30 NASB

This single verse spells the inevitable ruin of every demonic and fleshly assault against God. It crushes every weapon formed against the Lord and it frustrates every scheme contemplated against the Almighty. At the same time, it speaks unparalleled comfort to God’s people.

Proverbs 21:30 does not mean to deny the obvious fact that in the creation there is opposition against God. From shortly after the beginning of time there has existed *wisdom understanding* and *counsel* adamantly opposed to God. This we shall examine shortly. For now, it is important to clarify what the verse before us does mean. Stating it plainly, Proverbs 21:30 teaches that opposition of any kind toward God will never succeed. This is captured in the ESV and NIV translations,

***“No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the Lord.”*** (ESV)

***“There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord.”*** (NIV)

Note the three words the Holy Spirit chose to describe the opposition, *wisdom, understanding* and *counsel*. This selection is significant. Generally these three words are used by the Bible and specifically in the book of Proverbs to speak positively of God’s wisdom, understanding and counsel. In essence these words are used to convey God’s greatness. But in Proverbs 21:30 each of these words is given a negative sense describing opposition to God.

### **Wisdom<sup>1</sup>**

*Wisdom* in this case pertains to the philosophies of the world and demonic doctrines that oppose the truth of God’s Word. However, the Hebrew word for *wisdom* when used in a good sense, which is the wisdom that comes from God that the believer gleans from the study of Scripture, is not merely limited to academics. It also encompasses skill in the living out of that which is learned. Therefore, there is no reason when it comes to the negative use of the word in Proverbs 21:30 to limit its meaning to merely the academics of worldly philosophies and demonic doctrines. For the implementation of these philosophies and doctrines is often very skillful and even seem at times to be successful from a temporal perspective.

### **Understanding**

The Hebrew word translated *understanding* pertains to intellect and discernment. Often the schemes of the wicked are cleverly thought out containing intricate details that confound the unsuspecting and naïve. The Bible warns of the strategies of the devil (Eph. 6:11).

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<sup>1</sup> References for Hebrew words; Strong’s definitions; Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon; Theological Workbook of the Old Testament and Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words.

## Counsel

The word *counsel* in Proverbs 21:30 is the word for *advice*. This is the guidance offered by the wicked. It speaks to the diabolical recommendations of demonic and worldly wisdom to guide the lives and conduct of others.

## The Ruin of the Enemy

Scripture is replete with examples of evil's *wisdom understanding* and *counsel* used **unsuccessfully** to wage war against God. It could be rightly stated that Scripture chronicles a long and unsuccessful war against God. Both behind the scenes and in broad daylight the Bible provides us a divine look at the spiritual battle that surrounds us and its inevitable end. Here are a few examples:

### *Early days of creation*

On the sixth day of creation everything was very good (Genesis 1:31). But shortly after the seventh day a long diabolical war was waged against God. Isaiah 14:13-14 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 apply to earthly kings who opposed God but they also speak to the devil's fall which resulted from his opposition to God. Shortly after the completion of the creation Satan became prideful and exalted himself. Consequently, he lost his position in heaven as the anointed cherub. This loss of position is often referred to as Satan's fall.

After Satan's fall he cunningly deceived Eve into sinning against God. She was instrumental in leading Adam to sin against God (Genesis 3:1-6). This was man's fall. Then in Genesis 3:15 God disclosed His predetermined plan (Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28) to bring the savior into the world through the seed of the woman. The seed who is Jesus would eventually bring the devil to ruin as conveyed by the phrase "***He shall bruise you on the head.***" Since then both devils and humanity together have been employing their *wisdom understanding* and *counsel* against God and His plan to bring His seed, Jesus Who will destroy the devil and judge sin. Cain, who was of the evil one (1 Jn. 3:12) killed his brother Abel, who was a man of faith (Gn. 4:1-10; Heb. 11:4). The godly line of Seth, Adam's third Son, intermarried with the ungodly line of Cain (Gen. 6:1-2). The wickedness of men expanded upon the earth and God brought the flood sparing Noah, a preacher of righteousness (2 Pt. 2:5) and his family (Gen. 6:3-8:22).

### *Post flood*

Immediately following the flood there was division in Noah's family (Gen. 9:20-27). We may not fully understand the sinister details of all that transpired on that day but it cannot be denied that the promised seed of Genesis 3:15 would have to be a descendant of one of the three sons of Noah, thus they become the target of the enemy. Shortly after leaving the ark division occurred. The division resulted in the descendants of Ham (Canaan) being cursed. The people of Canaan would eventually be the great antagonists against God's nation Israel through whom God would accomplish His plan to bring Christ, the promised seed of Genesis 3:15.

Genesis 11 records the united plan of humanity as it in its *wisdom understanding* and *counsel* erected the tower of Babel to reach into heaven (Compare to Gen. 11:4 to Is. 14:13-14 to see Satan's footprint in the tower of Babel event). Ironically, Scripture informs us God ***descended*** to foil their endeavor (Gen. 11:5).

The book of Job chronicles the life of a righteous man who suffered under God's sovereign hand and God once again frustrated the devil's attempt to demean God (Job 1:9-10; 2:5).

### ***The Jews***

Abraham became the father of the Jewish nation and once it was evident God would bring the promised seed into the world through the use of Abraham's seed (Genesis 12:3) the devil relentlessly poured havoc on this nation starting with Abraham and Sarah and their own sin (Gen. 16).

If there was ever a concise picture painted of this war it would have to be that one conveyed to John by way of a sign (Rev. 12:3) he saw in heaven,

***“And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.”***

Revelation 12:4 NASB

The sign portrays Satan's fall from heaven (see early days of creation above). Satan is the dragon (Rev. 20:2) and when he fell he took with him a third of the angelic hosts of heaven who became the demons. Then the sign depicts the hideous nature of the long war against God. The devil, ***“stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour the child.”*** The woman represents the nation of Israel. Her child to whom she is about to give birth is Jesus. Jesus is the promised seed from Abraham, who, as previously mentioned was the father of the Jewish nation. Jesus is also the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15 who will crush the serpent's (Satan) head.

Accounts of this war against God and its failures are documented all through the Old Testament and into the New. More details than those given above regarding the employment of worldly devilish *wisdom understanding* and *counsel* against God are too numerous to communicate in this brief writing. For the most part, there was not a representative of God including the nation of Israel who was not in some way affected either through personal sin or assault by an enemy or both. And this warfare will continue right up to the end of the millennial reign of Christ (Rev. 20:7-10). Nevertheless, the historical and prophetic biblical records of the warfare provide evidence of the validity of Proverbs 21:30. The biblical record shows time after time that how ever wise, intellectual and consultative opposition to God may be it will not avail against the Lord. The seed came and He is coming again and He will crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15; Psalm 91:11-13; Rev. 20:10)).

### **The Comfort of the Believer**

The fact that no opposition to God will ever succeed as described in Proverbs 21:30 is a great source of comfort to the people of God. God's wisdom understanding and counsel come to us in His written Word. Therefore, since nothing can succeed against God the truths of Scripture will not fail. No worldly assault will succeed against God's truth. God Himself says,

***“So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”***

Isaiah 55:11 NASB

Not only will God’s truth prevail but God Himself will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

***“For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.’”***

1 Corinthians 1:19 NASB

At times it may temporarily appear that the enemy is prevailing but this is merely appearance as God in His sovereignty often uses His enemies along with their plans to bring about His purpose (See Genesis 50:20 with context and Acts 2:22-24; 4:27-28) so that in the end truth triumphs. According to Jesus, the entire creation would pass away before the smallest detail of God’s Word could fail (Mt. 5:18).

Beloved, when evil calls you to throw in your lot with it in order that you might have one purse (Pr. 1:14). Do not heed its call to success. Its offers of pleasure are limited they cannot and will not succeed. They will not prevail against the Lord. ***“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.”*** (Galatians 6:7-9)

When in the midst of contending for the faith the next time you suffer loss dear Christian and the devil tempts your flesh to despair, see inscribed on the back of the shield of faith Proverbs 21:30. Then humbly praise the Lord knowing that the loss you sense is but the devil’s temporal propaganda for there is no success against the Lord. What evil means for evil God means for good and He will work all things together for your good (Gen. 50:20 and Romans 8:28) and to His glory (Phil. 2:10-11).

Furthermore, in the midst of victories when contending for the faith and the devil tempts your flesh to pride know the sister verse of Proverbs 21:30, verse 31,

***“The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But victory belongs to the Lord.”***

Between these two verses Proverbs 21:30 and 31 we are taught that there is no success against the Lord and there is no success without the Lord.

Dear Christian may the powerful truth of Proverbs 21:30 be your battle cry as you contend earnestly for the faith.

***“There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the Lord.”***

Pastor David Martin