

26-0201a Transcript

26-0201a - When Human Wisdom Meets Divine Will, Tom Freed

Bible Readers: John Nousek and Roger Raines

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When Human Wisdom Meets Divine Will

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 0:36): John Nousek Proverbs 21:30-31: (0:04) Well, good morning. We have God's Word. He says in Proverbs chapter 21, last two (0:15) verses, I'll read to you now. There is no wisdom and no understanding and no (0:22) counsel against the Lord. The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but (0:32) victory	Continued: belongs to the Lord. Amen. (0:36) 2nd Reading (0:41 - 0:59): Roger Raines Job 42:2: (0:41) Good morning. I'll be reading from the book of (0:44) Job chapter 42 verse 2. I know that you can do all things and that no purpose of (0:55) yours can be thwarted. You conclude this reading. (0:59)
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Transcript (0:04 - 27:34), Preacher: Tom Freed

(1:04) Good morning. Good to see everybody. It's my turn to (1:08) preach at our rotation.

My sermon is when human wisdom meets divine will. (1:17) Well, imagine the most brilliant minds in history gathered in a war room. Philosophers, (1:24) strategists, scientists, politicians, all plotting against the purposes of God.

(1:32) You can imagine some of the people that would be there. Alexander the Great, the (1:38) Napoleon, Plato, Einstein, Thomas Jefferson. You can think of plenty others.

They draw (1:49) blueprints, run simulations, craft arguments, rally armies, and have the (1:55) greatest technology the world can offer. Yet Proverbs 21 30 stands like a (2:01) mountain. There is no wisdom, no understanding, no counsel against the Lord.

(2:07) So even if you had the greatest people on earth together, they couldn't challenge (2:13) God. They couldn't even come close. This verse sits near the end of Proverbs 21, a (2:21) chapter full of contrasts.

Righteous versus wicked, diligence versus laziness, pride (2:29) versus humility. The verses 30 through 31 form a powerful capstone. Human (2:38) preparation meets divine victory.

Verse 30 declares the impossibility of (2:45) opposition succeeding. Verse 31 reminds us that even the best preparations, (2:53) the horse for battle, yields victory only to the Lord. It's not discouragement (3:01) against wisdom, after all Proverbs extols it, but a warning against wisdom (3:09) that defies God.

You can have wisdom, there's nothing wrong with it. The (3:15) problem is wisdom that goes

against God, that goes against God's Word. As we dig (3:22) into this verse over the next several pages, we'll explore its meaning, (3:28) biblical illustrations, historical echoes, and personal applications.

Have you ever (3:36) found yourself relying on your own plans only to see them crumble? I know I've (3:43) done this plenty of times. You know, gone my own way, didn't think God's way was (3:49) right, or it was taking too long. It always blew up in my face, and still does.

(3:58) This verse invites us to surrender to the one whose plans are perfect and (4:02) unthwartable. As Isaiah 55 reminds us, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so (4:12) are your ways higher than my ways, and your thoughts higher than my thoughts. (4:19) Let's now delve deeper into this truth.

We'll look at the three-fold human (4:26) arsenal that fails. Proverbs 21 30 lists three pillars people lean on to oppose (4:33) God. The first pillar is wisdom.

In Hebrew, chokmah. Practical skill, shrewdness, and the (4:45) ability to devise successful plans. Think of the cunning politician or crafty (4:51) businessman who always seems one step ahead.

Maybe like, you know, Donald Trump (4:57) or, you know, Bill Gates. Somebody like that. The second is understanding.

The Hebrew, (5:08) tuvuna. Insight, discernment, and the ability to see through complexities and (5:15) predict outcomes. This is the intellect who analyzes trends and concludes God (5:21) cannot exist, or his ways are outdated.

How many brilliant people nowadays think (5:29) that God's ways are outdated? That was 2,000 years ago the Bible was written. You (5:35) can't expect us to believe that now. You can't expect us to go off of that.

But the (5:40) people are so brilliant they conclude that God cannot exist. There's plenty of (5:44) people who think their way into that belief. The third pillar is counsel, or etzah in Hebrew.

(5:57) Advice, strategy, and deliberate planning. Often collective, as in councils of war or (6:04) boardrooms of rebellion. Together these three cover the spectrum of human (6:10) intellect.

Practical skill, perceptive understanding, and strategic plotting. (6:20) The verse doesn't deny their existence or value. It denies their effectiveness (6:25) against the Lord.

Well, it's great to have all these things. It can help you in life (6:32) have understanding, counsel, and wisdom. As long as it doesn't go against God's (6:37) wisdom, against God's plans, it'll always fail.

Why? God's sovereignty crushes every (6:48) opposition. As Job confessed after his trials, I know that you can do all things, and that (6:56) no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42.2. Job was a smart guy.

He was a faithful (7:05) follower of God, and he questioned God. He had probably reason to because he didn't believe he (7:12) sinned. But when God confronted him, he had to admit that God was right.

He couldn't see the (7:20) big picture, but now we can. We can look back and see why God did all that he did to Job. (7:28) We live in an age obsessed with these three things.

Self-help gurus promise success through (7:35) better strategies. Skeptics mock faith with enlightened analysis. Cultures redefine truth (7:45) through expert panels.

We can see how many things are out there that push these things, (7:52) that push worldly wisdom. You know, on YouTube there's plenty of them, or on the Internet, (7:58) Instagram, wherever you want to look. All these self-help people, these people that, you know, (8:05) push all these ideas against God, and in the end they always fail.

We need to look for Christian (8:14) guidance, not worldly guidance. Proverbs 21:30 humbles every idol of the mind. No scheme can (8:24) outsmart God.

Pharaoh's clever oppression of Israel overturned by ten plagues. The tower of (8:35) Babel's unified ingenuity scattered in confusion. Assyria's boastful conquest plans turned into (8:45) God's tool, then judged.

Shall the axe boast over him who wields it? Isaiah 10:15. You know, (8:56) all the nations, all the leaders were put in place by God. The nations are just tools in his (9:03) hand that he can wield. You know, it says that God sets up nations, that he sets up leaders, and he (9:11) uses them however he will.

If a nation doesn't follow his word, he'll destroy them. We have to (9:20) be careful. We shouldn't boast.

No nation should boast, because God has lifted them up. We can see (9:28) in the end, human opposition is ultimate folly. Just like Psalm 108:12 says, give us help from (9:40) trouble, for the help of man is useless.

That's a psalm from David, and he realized that human (9:48) help is useless. Especially if you oppose God, you're going to lose. Look at the biblical proof.

(9:59) Opposition meets divine overturn. Old Testament examples abound. 1 Samuel 13.

King Saul (10:11) impatiently offered an unlawful sacrifice to hold his army together, bypassing God's timing (10:18) through Samuel. His self-reliance fixed, tossed him the throne, and God raised David in his place. (10:28) No counsel prevails against the Lord.

Balaam, the hired seer, tried to curse Israel for profit. (10:39) God turned every oracle into a blessing, Numbers 22-24. Even pagan insight bowed to Yahweh.

(10:49) Jonah fled God's call to Nineveh, convinced he knew better. God used a storm and a fish to redirect him (10:58) toward mercy. God's compassionate plan overruled human resistance.

You remember Jonah knew Nineveh (11:09) was Israel's enemy and could possibly destroy them. He didn't want to help them out. He didn't want (11:17) to help Israel's enemies out.

But God knew better. God's merciful and compassionate. He gave them a chance (11:25) to repent and they did repent.

Like us sometimes, we don't want to do certain things. I know I a lot of times don't. (11:35) But just like with Jonah where he used a fish to redirect them, God uses, you know, clever ways to redirect us (11:43) sometimes.

I know he's guided me in clever ways plenty of times, getting me back on the right path. (11:53) New Testament echoes shine even brighter in Christ. The ultimate triumph of God's will over every human plot.

(12:04) Look at the Pharisees, the religious leaders in the Gospels. Their wisdom was vast, experts in the law. (12:13) Plotting to trap Jesus with taxes, adultery questions, false witnesses.

It's one of my favorite parts of the Bible. (12:24) Especially reading about Jesus and how when he was confronted he always had the perfect answer. (12:30) He always knew exactly what to say and basically humiliated the Pharisees and Sadducees to the point (12:40) where they didn't question him anymore.

Every plan of theirs failed. Jesus' insight pierced their hypocrisy. (12:51) And their ultimate scheme, the crucifixion, backfired gloriously.

So we could see when all their plans failed, (13:02) they had the ultimate plan to just do away with him and kill him. And even that backfired. (13:10) What they intended for evil became the means of salvation.

Just as Jesus told his brothers centuries earlier, (13:21) As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring about that many people shall be kept alive. (13:32) Genesis 50, 20. Even the evil plot, even his own death was still meant for good.

Acts 4, 27-28 reveals this truth. (13:47) Herod, Pilate, Gentiles, and Israel were gathered together to do what your hand and your purpose predestined to take place. (13:58) So we can see that even the crucifixion was predestined.

God planned that so we could have salvation, that he could die for our sins. (14:10) Jesus laid down his own life on his own. They just couldn't take it from him if he chose to not die.

(14:21) He could have called down 12 legions of angels. So we could see that God had planned this out. (14:30) And Jesus went along with it.

What Satan and his followers thought was the ultimate victory fulfilled ancient prophecy. (14:40) He will crush your head and he will strike his heels. Genesis 3, 15.

The cross crushed the serpent's head. (14:52) It was painful for Jesus to go through what he had to go through. There's probably no worse death or no worse humiliation.

(15:00) Plus he was separated from God. But that pales in comparison to the victory he won by going to the cross and raising on the third day. (15:13) Physically it was painful, but spiritually he crushed Satan in the ultimate victory.

(15:22) Through Jesus' death we have salvation. But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

(15:31) The chastisement of our peace was upon him. And by his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53, 5.

(15:40) We can see that what they thought was their ultimate victory was really God and the Christian's ultimate victory.

(15:49) Because we're healed by his stripes. We're able to have salvation. If he didn't go to the cross, we wouldn't have that opportunity.

(15:58) And that healing power didn't stop at the cross. It dramatically invaded even the heart of Tarsus. (16:10) Consider Saul of Tarsus, who schemed to destroy the church.

Damascus Road turned the prosecutor, the persecutor, into an apostle. (16:22) Even Revelation's final rebellion, the beast, the false prophet, and United Nations ends in defeat. (16:32) Cast into the lake of fire, no counsel prevails.

These aren't random stories. They're divine object lessons. (16:44) Alignment with God brings blessings.

Opposition brings downfall. No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel succeeds against the Lord. (16:56) You can see that as a Christian in everyday life.

I'm sure you've seen it too. (17:03) Anytime you've gone with your own plans, it usually fails. Let's look at why human opposition always fails.

(17:13) The nature of God's sovereignty. Why can't cleverness prevail? Because God is sovereign in four unbreakable ways. (17:28) The first way is he is omniscient.

He knows every thought before it forms. (17:34) Psalm 139, 1-4, 1 Corinthians 3, 19-20. The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.

(17:47) The second is he is omnipotent. No plan can overcome him. Proverbs 19-21.

(17:56) Many are the plans in a man's heart. But it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. (18:06) Third is he is immutable.

His purposes do not change with human schemes. Isaiah 46-10. (18:18) My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.

(18:25) Fourth, he is a turner of hearts. Even kings' hearts are like streams in his hands. Proverbs 21-1.

(18:36) There is no way to challenge that. Somebody that knows everything can do anything just with his word. (18:44) Douglas Wilson captures it well.

God cannot be gained. Every sin assumes it can outmaneuver God. (18:56) Get away with it.

Hide it. Justify it. But Proverbs 21-30 exposes the self-deception.

(19:05) There is no counsel against the Lord. This applies to the unbeliever plotting life without God. (19:18) The believer tempted to compromise, thinking God won't mind this once.

(19:25) I'm sure we've all done that. I know I've done that countless times. (19:30) God will forgive me this one time.

But I've probably done that thousands of times. (19:39) Nations are ideologies that mock biblical truth. Believing science, politics, or culture can redefine reality.

(19:53) Like Dale Tackett has said, they follow the truth in science until it leads to Christianity. (20:02) Once they follow that path and see it leads to Christianity, they immediately stop and say, (20:09) You know what? I'm just going to believe this lie, even though it's outrageous. (20:15) The result? Frustration, futility, and eventual judgment unless they repent.

(20:26) For the child of God, this verse is not terrifying. It's liberating. (20:33) When enemies scheme against the church as in Acts 4-5, their plans fail.

(20:40) When personal trials seem overwhelming, no counsel against the Lord means your suffering is not ultimate. (20:50) His good purpose prevails. (20:53) Romans 8-28, and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him.

(21:00) Who have been called according to His purpose. (21:04) That's one of the greatest verses. Everything, if you're a Christian, works out for your good.

(21:11) God makes sure of that. (21:14) In spiritual warfare, the gates of hell shall not prevail. (21:19) Matthew 16-18, think of the cross, the ultimate human counsel against God.

(21:28) Pharisees, Romans, Judas, all conspired. (21:32) Yet it fulfilled prophecy and became redemption's greatest victory. (21:37) When you face opposition at work, in family, in culture, rest in this.

(21:45) Your wisdom cannot undo God's plan for you. (21:49) I'm sure at work especially, there's always something that comes up. (21:56) You know, with family sometimes too.

(22:00) There's always some issue, some issue with a co-worker, somebody trying to maybe get over on you. (22:05) Maybe your boss is coming down hard on you. (22:08) But we have to have assurance that God's plan, they cannot stop God's plans.

(22:17) Prepare the horse. Pray, work faithfully, obey. (22:23) But trust the victory to Him.

(22:26) The battle belongs to the Lord. (22:28) Proverbs 21-31. (22:34) Ironically, even believers can fall into opposing God unintentionally.

(22:40) By relying on our own wisdom instead of His. (22:44) We plan with our prayer. (22:47) I'll handle it my way.

(22:50) Y'all remember Frank Sinatra's famous song. (22:54) While he likes that, I did it my way. (22:58) So, a lot of people do it their own way.

(23:04) And it may bring some pleasure, but in the end, they ultimately lose. (23:13) We lean on worldly understanding. (23:17) Everyone does it.

It's fine. (23:21) We take bad counsel from culture rather than scripture. (23:25) Look at the culture nowadays.

(23:28) If you take counsel from the culture, you're doomed. (23:34) The culture is headed straight to hell. (23:37) We need to change the culture back to a Christian culture.

(23:44) James 4-13-15 warns against saying, (23:48) Today or tomorrow we will go without saying if the Lord wills. (23:54) So don't make plans ahead of time without the Lord. (23:57) Don't say, Oh, next month I'm going to do this, I'm going to do that.

(24:01) We don't know what the future is going to behold. (24:03) Make sure you say if it's the Lord's will. (24:11) The antidote? (24:13) Trust in the Lord with all your heart.

(24:16) And do not lean on your own understanding. (24:18) Proverbs 3-5. (24:21) Seek His counsel first.

(24:23) Psalm 1-1-2. (24:25) Humble yourself under His hands. (24:28) 1 Peter 5-6.

(24:31) This week before any big decision, (24:33) Pause. (24:35) Ask the Lord if you will. (24:39) Let the Lord establish your steps.

(24:42) Proverbs 16-9. (24:45) But put the Lord first. (24:48) Sometimes when I have big decisions, (24:51) I pray a lot.

(24:52) I'll even, I guess you could say cast lots. (24:54) I know that, I think Scott mentioned that too. (24:58) Where I'll put, you know, different decisions in like a hat or something (25:01) and pray about it and pick one.

(25:04) You know, I don't know if that completely works, (25:07) but it seems to. (25:09) It's hard to know always what God wants, (25:11) but you've got to pray about it. (25:14) A lot of times follow, you know, all your heart, (25:16) what God puts on your heart.

(25:19) But definitely pray and follow God's will and His word the best you can (25:25) when making decisions. (25:30) Proverbs 21-30 is a throne room declaration. (25:34) God reigns unchallenged.

(25:36) If you're fighting God today through unbelief, rebellion, or secret sin, (25:42) surrender. (25:44) No scheme succeeds against Him, (25:48) but His mercy triumphs over judgment for those who turn. (25:53) What's that saying? (25:54) If you can't beat Him, join Him.

(25:56) How would you oppose a God that you cannot beat? (26:04) How would you go against God when He is merciful, He's loving, (26:08) He offers us so many great things? (26:11) Opposing Him just leads to pain, suffering, and eternal hell. (26:18) If you're weary from opposition, take heart. (26:22) No wisdom against the Lord, Lord, means your enemy's plans are vapor.

(26:28) If you're tempted to trust self, repent. (26:31) Lean wholly on the Lord. (26:36) As we wrap up, let's hold on to the promise in Proverbs 21-30.

(26:41) There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord. (26:49) We can plan, we can prepare, we can give our best, (26:54) but ultimately the battle and the breakthrough are in His hands. (27:00) He's the one that gives the victory.

(27:04) So let's go this week resting in that. (27:07) Surrender your plans to Him and watch Him work. (27:12) If the Spirit convicts you whether to trust Christ for salvation (27:18) or to realign your life, come forward.

(27:22) Pray where you are or talk with someone at your service. (27:27) No counsel prevails against

the Lord. (27:31) He wins, and in Him so do we.