

## THE GIFTS OF WISDOM

Bible Background – JOB 1; 42; PROVERBS 8

Printed Text – PROVERBS 8:8-14, 17-21

**8** <sup>8</sup>My advice is wholesome. There is nothing devious or crooked in it.

<sup>9</sup>My words are plain to anyone with understanding, clear to those with knowledge.

<sup>10</sup>Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than pure gold.

<sup>11</sup>For wisdom is far more valuable than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with it.

<sup>12</sup>“I, Wisdom, live together with good judgment. I know where to discover knowledge and discernment.

<sup>13</sup>All who fear the LORD will hate evil. Therefore, I hate pride and arrogance, corruption and perverse speech.

<sup>14</sup>Common sense and success belong to me. Insight and strength are mine.

<sup>17</sup>“I love all who love me. Those who search will surely find me.

<sup>18</sup>I have riches and honor, as well as enduring health and justice.

<sup>19</sup>My gifts are better than gold, even the purest gold, my wages better than sterling silver!

<sup>20</sup>I walk in righteousness, in paths of justice.

<sup>21</sup>Those who love me inherit wealth. I will fill their treasuries.

-----New Living Translation

### Lesson Introduction

According to *Merriam-Webster*, “a proverb is a pithy saying or maxim that contains a wise thought.” A proverb is short, easy to remember, and useful for passing along a bit of advice or general truth. As we continue in our study of Proverbs, let us be mindful that proverbs (small “p”) can come from many sources, but we must concern ourselves with those words of wisdom that emanate from the one true God. The knowledge found in these pages are truth and are more valuable than gold, silver, and jewels.

**Background:** Wisdom is first personified in Proverbs 3:15-18. Chapters 8 and 9 pick up on this personification, picturing wisdom as a woman—a woman who speaks, witnesses her existence before all humanity, and offers wealth and prosperity to all who find her. Lady Wisdom helps us better understand God by taking one of His attributes and giving it personality and consciousness. Thus, we can better comprehend how wisdom is integrated into our everyday lives.

The proverbs in Proverbs 3 through 9 warn the youth against temptations such as violent crimes (1:10-19; 4:14-19); rash pledges (6:1-5); laziness (6:6-11); deceit (6:12-15); and sexual impurity (2:16-19; 5:3-20; 6:23-35; 7:4-27; 9:13-18). Temptations may seem easy to avoid, but they can creep in when we are caught off guard and cause us to fall into sin.

-----*Precepts for Living*, the UMI Annual Commentary 2019-2020, p. 498-499.

## **The Pursuit of Wisdom**

**Proverbs 8:8-14):** Wisdom has worth that surpasses all riches and material wealth. The wealth of this world is temporary but wisdom is eternal. It is affirmed in these verses that wise instruction is steeped in righteousness and there is no evil or perversion associated with it. Not only that, but there is nothing material in this world that you could possibly want that can even compare to the worth and value of wise instruction. In fact, wisdom dwells with good, sound judgment and discernment. So when we look to godly wisdom, we are able to pass through challenging times with the insight and skill to still honor God in the process.

Verse 13 reminds us of what we were told in Chapter 1: all who fear the Lord will hate evil. To follow wisdom's path is to hate evil and to move at every opportunity to see to it that right prevails. Evil is described as pride and arrogance and perverse and corrupt speech. These are the very qualities that stand in the way and prevent one from receiving wise instruction.

◆ *When we are tempted, what can we do to resist?*

## **The Promise of Wisdom**

**Proverbs 8:17-21:** The word promises that if you seek wisdom you will surely find it (v. 17). That truth is repeated in James 1:5, "If anyone lacks wisdom let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not; and it shall be given him." Although, gaining wisdom is not about material gain, there is a link. King Solomon is an example. He asked God for wisdom and received it. But God also blessed him with great wealth, knowing that with great wealth, power and wisdom he would use all 3 righteously in ruling God's people.

Jesus, likewise, though He did not have material wealth, had the power of the Kingdom of Heaven. He used this power to heal the sick, cast out demons, confront oppression and care for those in need. Let Jesus be our example. We must trust that if we use godly wisdom, we too can serve others and find solutions for many of the injustices and challenges that plague our communities. We also know that God can allow us to prosper through the wisdom that He makes available to us, but we must use it for His glory.

## **Conclusion**

Lady Wisdom boldly positions herself where she can expect to attract a large audience. She affirms her integrity by stressing truth and the righteousness of her words. She proclaims that her rewards are far more valuable than gold, silver, and jewels. We serve an extravagantly wise and loving God. Wisdom's rewards and the rewards for living a life of godly wisdom are eternal.

**Sources:**

*Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation, Carol Stream, Illinois.

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Ogbonnaya, A. O. (Ed.). (2019). Wisdom. *Precepts for Living*, 22(Summer Quarter), 496–503. The Urban Ministries, Inc. Annual Commentary 2019-2020.

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**Lesson for Next Week – June 28, 2020**

**Wisdom's Feast**

Bible Background ♦ PROVERBS 9

Printed Text ♦ PROVERBS 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

Devotional Reading ♦ PSALM 119:97-104