



VALUE WISDOM
PROVERBS 2:1-11

“The Blessings of Wisdom”
Adult Church School
Monday, June 23, 2020



Proverbs 2:1-11

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,
² turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—
³ indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,
⁴ and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,
⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.
⁷ He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,
⁸ for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.
⁹ Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.
¹⁰ For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
¹¹ Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.



The Proverbs of Solomon

- Proverbs means “*to be like*”
- **Proverbs** is a book of comparisons between common, concrete images and life’s most profound truths.
- The sum of **Solomon’s** wisdom sayings is personified in the life of **Jesus Christ**.
- **Proverbs** was compiled by **Solomon** and other authors approximately 971 to 656 B.C.
- In **Proverbs**, the Sage or wise teacher gives wise counsel concerning the difficult issues of life.
- **Proverbs** contains moral and ethical elements stressing upright living which flow out of a *right relationship with God*.
- The recurring promise of **Proverbs** is that generally the wise (the righteous who obey God) live longer, prosper, experience joy and the goodness of God while fools suffer shame and death.
- **Proverbs** are simple, moral statements that highlight and teach fundamental realities about life. The proverbs are not promises. There are no guarantees.

Group Chat

- What lessons, stories, or wise sayings from your parents, family, or community did you choose to live by as an adult and try to pass down to your children?



The Teacher's (Sage) Argument

- **Chapter 2** is a persuasive instruction delivered by a sage (teacher) in a wisdom school to the youths of Judah, probably in the early Persian period.
- If the **youth** will listen to the teachings of the wise and search diligently for **wisdom** as a valued treasure, they will come to possess the essential basis for success, *“the fear of the Lord”*.
- Possessing *the “fear of the Lord”* will allow the possibility of the most coveted of all the knowledge, the understanding of the *character* and *activity* of **God**.
- *“The fear of the Lord”* is the acknowledgement that God is the creator and sustainer of all life and the true giver of wisdom.



Major Theme

Wisdom, a gift from God is to be coveted and pursued like a valued treasure (silver)

Wisdom is not available to rational inquiry and human observations.

Wisdom is a divine gift bestowed on a selected few who fear God.

The Gift of Wisdom

- The **gift of wisdom** provides the necessary basis for the pursuit of *discipline* and its *shaping of human character*.
- *Though it is a “gift”, wisdom comes only to those who search for it as a greatly valued treasure.*
- **Wisdom** *is the gift of God (2:6-8) and not the object of human striving.*
- *God gives wisdom only to those who have developed in their character the “fear of the Lord”.*



The Gift of Wisdom

- The *one pursuing* the teachings of the wise is not left alone to grope blindly along the way in impenetrable darkness in the pursuit of life and well being.
- **God** through the *gift of wisdom* pilots the student's course of life and providentially *protect* him/her from misfortune and the danger of becoming lost.
- The term "*path*" or "*road*" is used metaphorically to express not only the course of the life of the wise person but also that of the evil person.
- The **teacher** stresses that turning toward the lifestyle of the evil ones is a matter of choosing to turn from the "*paths of uprightness*" to follow the "*ways of darkness*."





Blessings of Wisdom

- The gift of wisdom provides those within whom it dwells the ability to understand and then practice in life **righteousness** and **justice** and to practice **equity** or **fairness** in their behavior.

Righteousness and justice are often synonyms in wisdom literature and refer to the moral order of creation and society that sustains life through divine governance as well as to the ethical character of the sage.

Equity refers to fair treatment of others without deference to their social position and in accordance with the dictates of custom, law.

Fair treatment takes on a more specific character in the administration of justice, whether in the household by the senior male and female or in the courts by judges and governors.

Discretion or prudence is the ability to judge in a reasoned fashion both the facts and the situation to reach a fair and just decision.

Blessings of Wisdom

- The ability to protect the student from entrapment by the “STRANGE WOMAN”.
- The “*strange woman*” is the metaphorical depiction of sexual promiscuity, foolish behavior, and cultural seduction.
- The “*strange woman*” forsakes the partner of her youth and forgets her sacred covenant (marriage contract).
- Adultery in **Proverbs** is many things including ethical misdeed, faithlessness to the marriage partner, a violation of divine norm, and a sin against God.
- **Adultery** diminished the solidarity of the family. Solidarity recognizes the worth and needs of the household above those of the individual.



Blessings of Wisdom (2:20-22)

The promise that *the upright will inhabit the land*, whereas the wicked will be uprooted.

- Israelite and Jewish *land* was owned by individual family households who transmitted this precious commodity through the laws of heredity.
- This became a crucial debate when the returning exiles laid claim to the land their ancestors had owned prior to being taken into Babylonian captivity.
- This claim was based on the belief that the land of Israel was a divine gift to Israel's ancestors (Gen. 17:1-8).
- Israel would possess and continue to inhabit this land as long as its people were faithful to the covenant with God (Deut. 1:8).
- Should Israel violate the covenant it faced the threat of being removed through conquest and exile (Deut. 28:36).

CONCLUSION

- The violation of the *marriage covenant* and expulsion from the *household land* will result in catastrophe for the family.
- Continued land ownership and the inheritance of the land are contingent on the embodiment of the **virtues of wisdom and righteousness**.