

# THE WISDOM OF GOD

BIBLE TEXT : Proverbs 1:1-33; 2:1-22.

LESSON 275 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28).

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

**Proverbs 1:1-33** <sup>1</sup> The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

<sup>2</sup> To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

<sup>3</sup> To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

<sup>4</sup> To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

<sup>5</sup> A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

<sup>6</sup> To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

<sup>8</sup> My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

<sup>9</sup> For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

<sup>10</sup> My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

<sup>11</sup> If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

<sup>12</sup> Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

<sup>13</sup> We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

<sup>14</sup> Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

<sup>15</sup> My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **Solomon's Choice**

Solomon, the son of David, was a very wise man. After his father's death, Solomon became king over the Children of Israel. At that time the Lord appeared to Solomon and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon realized that to be king over such a great people was a big responsibility. Solomon asked God to give him "an understanding heart" to judge the people (I Kings 3:9). God was pleased with Solomon's choice and granted his request for an understanding heart. Besides wisdom, God gave Solomon honour and riches, as well as long life. God wanted Solomon to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord (I Kings 3:13, 14).

#### **Wisdom from God**

God blessed Solomon and made him wiser than all men (I Kings 4:31). Many people heard about Solomon's wisdom. They went to visit him to hear the words he spoke (I Kings 4:34). We have learned about the Queen of Sheba who went to Solomon to have her hard questions answered (Lesson 259).

Solomon made use of the wisdom that God gave him. He wrote "a thousand and five" songs and he spoke three thousand proverbs (I Kings 4:32). They were given that people might profit by the wisdom that God gave to Solomon, although Solomon himself did not continue to live according to the proverbs he spoke.

#### **A Proverb**

A proverb is a brief saying which teaches a lesson. It is usually a short sentence, which tells a whole story. It does not need other sentences to explain the meaning. Jesus often spoke in parables, which also teach a lesson. They were made up of many sentences, but the moral or lesson of the whole parable could be called a proverb.

There are other proverbs besides those of Solomon. They are sometimes called mottoes, adages, maxims, and old sayings. They are often quoted and have been proved to be true. These proverbs of men, although they have influenced many people to do good, do not cause them to seek God and His salvation. The Book of Proverbs is more than a collection of wise sayings, because the proverbs in the Bible are inspired of God and are valuable to us for our spiritual welfare. Some of Solomon's proverbs are referred to and quoted in the New Testament. (See Romans 2:6; Hebrews 12:5, 6; I Peter 4:8.) Many of them are well known and are in common use today by men who know little else of the Bible.

Solomon did not write the proverbs to gain a reputation as a

from their path:

<sup>16</sup> For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

<sup>17</sup> Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

<sup>18</sup> And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

<sup>19</sup> So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

<sup>20</sup> Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

<sup>21</sup> She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

<sup>22</sup> How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

<sup>23</sup> Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

<sup>24</sup> Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

<sup>25</sup> But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

<sup>26</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

<sup>27</sup> When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

<sup>28</sup> Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

<sup>29</sup> For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

<sup>30</sup> They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be

writer or to gain a name for himself. He wrote them for the benefit and use of all people, not only for the Children of Israel over whom he was king. There are none of Solomon's proverbs but that can be used by us today as well as by the Children of Israel. It has been said that in the Book of Proverbs there is not one sentence, which would not be as suitable for all people as for the Children of Israel.

### **Their Value**

The proverbs will help one to form the right idea of knowledge and instruction, aiding one to act and to speak wisely. They will help a person to distinguish good from bad, serving as a guard against making mistakes. They will help one to order his conversation aright, guiding one in the practices of justice and judgment.

All who will, may profit from these writings of Solomon. They are clear and plain that all may understand them. They are beneficial to those who have a desire to learn and who realize their need of being taught. A well known author, who in his youth memorized several chapters of the Book of Proverbs, later considered them to be the most precious and most important part of all his education.

Although Solomon's proverbs are often addressed to his son, they were for the children of other people as well as for his own. Many of the proverbs are given as if to youth, because that is a learning age, when impressions are made, when one can readily grasp the thought and can remember well. Youth is also a time of inexperience when one must be guided by rules.

### **To Fear God**

Solomon gave two rules by which one can gain wisdom. Solomon did not advise one to read many books and to go to school for many years. Those things are not possible for everyone, but the rules given by Solomon are available to all people. Solomon said that to fear God is the beginning of knowledge. When one fears God, he shows reverence to God and God's Word by pleasing and serving God.

Those who call themselves atheists pretend to be scholars and admirers of wisdom, but they are enemies and strangers to true wisdom because they have no desire for God's favour and no dread of His wrath. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

### **To Honour One's Parents**

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." When a child takes heed to and keeps the words of his parents, he is honouring them. In the fifth commandment we are told to honour our father and our mother (Exodus 20:12). To honour one's parents is to have respect for them and to obey them. Solomon took for granted that parents – both the father and the mother – would teach the children and would use due authority to give them rules for the children's own good. Solomon inferred that parents not only should give their children some rules but that they should also teach the children.

A reward is promised to those who honour their parents and who keep their teachings. "They shall be an ornament of grace" in God's sight, which is of more value than worldly wisdom and wealth. Paul wrote about this to the Ephesians. He said:

filled with their own devices.

<sup>32</sup> For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

<sup>33</sup> But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

**Proverbs 2:1-22** <sup>1</sup> My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

<sup>2</sup> So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

<sup>3</sup> Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding;

<sup>4</sup> If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

<sup>5</sup> Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

<sup>7</sup> He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

<sup>8</sup> He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

<sup>9</sup> Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

<sup>10</sup> When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

<sup>11</sup> Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

<sup>12</sup> To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things;

<sup>13</sup> Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

<sup>14</sup> Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be well with thee, . . . And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1-4).

### Bad Companions

Solomon warns against those who would influence others to do wrong. Gradually one can be drawn into evil ways. Evil companions may be the first step on the downward way. The Bible states that "evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Corinthians 15:33); and "he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father" (Proverbs 28:7). Jehu, the son of a Prophet, said to Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD" (II Chronicles 19:2). Who are your best friends? Can you say with the Psalmist, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Psalm 119:63)?

The first step downward may be in response to the invitation of evildoers when they say, "Come with us." Next, they would have you to be a partner with them so that you would share in their deeds and their wages. The example of a cruel and greedy robber is given. When one is drawn into sin he is robbed of all things that are spiritually good. The way of the wicked is displeasing to God and harmful to men. Solomon said, "Refrain thy foot from their path." It leads downward to destruction. Have you ever gone down a steep hill? You found that it was easier to run than to walk; but the farther you went, the faster you went -- until it seemed that you could not stop. Faster and faster you went until you knew that unless something stopped you, you would be hurt. So it is with those on the downward road. They do not mean to walk very far, but soon find themselves going farther and faster than they had intended. Unless they cry out to God for help, they will fall into destruction.

The warning has been given. Will you be like a bird who walks into the trap because he is greedy for the bait, even though the net is in plain sight?

### Your Choice

Just as Solomon had a choice to make, so has each one of us. The Lord is faithful to call all people to follow Him. We can choose to have the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). Some people have only a little understanding of spiritual things and they prefer to be without any more spiritual knowledge -- they "love simplicity." Some people scoff at sacred things and they ridicule those who trust God -- they "delight in their scorning." Others do not want to be told about God and righteous living. They "hate knowledge."

They choose to live without God, but He still is reproving them and warning them to turn from their evil ways. Their conscience tells them that they are not acting wisely. God has called them, but they do not listen to His voice. God has called them, but they do not listen to His voice. God has stretched out His helping hand to them, but they refuse to take hold. The Prophet Isaiah said, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while

<sup>15</sup> Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

<sup>16</sup> To deliver thee from the strange woman, *even* from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words;

<sup>17</sup> Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

<sup>18</sup> For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

<sup>19</sup> None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

<sup>20</sup> That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.

<sup>21</sup> For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

<sup>22</sup> But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

he is near" (Isaiah 55:6). Solomon also taught that there will be a time when a person will call upon the Lord, and God will not answer. Those who have refused to listen to God's voice will call in the time of trouble, and God will refuse to listen to them. They refuse to have the fear of God, but they will have other fears (Proverbs 1:26). Their fright will turn to distress and anguish. They will seek and not find God. They will call upon God, but He will not answer. Have you taken heed to the call of God and chosen to have the fear of God in your heart?

### **Destruction or Safety**

Why not be wise and turn to God while He is still answering prayer? Your Sunday School teacher will help you to pray and to seek God, to repent and ask God to instruct you according to His knowledge.

Those who plan to continue in their evil ways will find that sin causes death. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). The Lord cried out to the Children of Israel. "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11).

Those who hearken to the call of God and who are obedient to Him will live in safety and happiness. The Lord is a shield to those who walk uprightly. These words of Solomon are like those of his father. David said, "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalm 18:2). The Lord will keep and preserve His people but they must obey and trust God. Paul said: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). (Read in Ephesians 6:13-17 about the different parts of the armour, which include the "shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.")

In the Bible we read: "if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). This wisdom that God gives is quite different from the education that one receives from the world. One should go to school and learn to develop skills, as that can help one have experience and knowledge to enjoy a fuller life and to earn a living, if the Lord tarries. If you did not learn to read, how could you study your Bible? But to have learning and knowledge are not enough; one also needs the Lord and His wisdom.

Job asked the question: "Where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" (Job 28:12). Job also gave the answer, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28). The Children of Israel were told to obey, to keep, and to do the commandments of the Lord. "For this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" (Deuteronomy 4:6). Many people have a knowledge of that which is right, but to have wisdom is to do that which is good and right. (Read James 3:13-18, which tells about worldly and heavenly wisdom.)

## **A Treasure**

Solomon encouraged people to seek for godly wisdom as one would seek for hidden treasure. Many people are willing to live alone, working hard and long, in dangerous places, to seek for worldly treasures. They often deny themselves the proper food, comfort, and rest. The man in a parable that Jesus told sold all he had in order to buy one pearl of great price (Matthew 13:46). How hard are we seeking for and working for the things of God?

In the Psalms, David, too, wrote about the fear of the Lord. He said: "What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose" (Psalm 25:12); and "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Psalm 31:19).

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Who was Solomon?
2. How did he become so wise?
3. Why did Solomon write proverbs?
4. What is a proverb?
5. What is the beginning of wisdom?
6. Why should a child obey his parents?
7. How do sinners try to entice a person?
8. How should we seek for godly wisdom?
9. What does God do for those who fear Him?
10. What will happen to those who do not fear God?