

## GOD'S WISDOM

*When Solomon became king, God gave him exceptional wisdom and understanding as well as a heart as vast as the sandy beach by the sea. Solomon's wisdom surpassed that of the people from the east and all the wisdom of Egypt as stated in 1Kings 5: 9, 10. Two books in the Bible, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, famously display Solomon's gift of wisdom and how such a precious gift affected his life.*

**1 Kings 5:9-10** God gave Solomon exceptional wisdom and understanding, as well as a heart as vast as the sandy beach by the sea. 10 Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of the people from the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. CJB (1 Kings 4:29, 30 in the KJV)

*Wisdom, discussed as something highly valuable, is referenced in virtually every book of the Bible.*

**Strong's Hebrew #2451** predominates, and is defined as *chokmah* from 2449 wisdom (in a good sense) – skillful, wisdom, wisely, wit.

**Strong's Greek #4678** is defined as *Sophia* from 4680 wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual) – wisdom.

*The Oxford Complete Word Finder defines wisdom as experience and knowledge judiciously working together having the power to apply them critically or practically in decision making. The American College Dictionary defines wisdom as understanding of what is true, right or lasting; as common sense, good judgment.*

*Despite the wide referencing of wisdom in Scripture, it is within the Book of Proverbs where the most extensive focus on living life with wisdom is presented (Mishle Shelomoh in Hebrew, also named Sepher Hokhmah, the Book of Wisdom in rabbinical writings). King Solomon requested wisdom (an understanding heart) from God which was given. Solomon used poetry, parables, pithy questions, short stories and wise maximums to skillfully contrive priceless time-proven instruction to live an enjoyable and righteous life.*

*At this point, it is interesting to note the humility and pure heart of young Solomon in having been chosen by God for this high office to fill the considerable shoes of his father, David. Here in these verses below Solomon is speaking to God who is asking this young man what he wanted to help him administer to his new royal position.*

**1Kings 3:6-9, 13-14** Solomon said, You showed your servant David my father much grace, as he lived before you honestly and righteously, having an upright heart with you. You preserved this great grace for him by giving him a son to sit on his throne, as is the case today. 7 So now, Adonai my God, you have made your servant king in the place of David my father; but I am a mere child – I don't know how to lead! 8 Moreover your servant is among your people, whom you chose, a great people so numerous that they cannot be counted. 9 Therefore, give your servant an understanding heart able to administer justice to your people, so that I can discern between good and bad – for who is equal to judging this great people of yours? 13 I am also giving you what you didn't ask for, riches and honor greater than that of any other king

throughout your life. 14 More than that, if you will live according to my ways, obeying my laws and commandments like your father David, I will give you a long life.

*What a wonderful start! The word “if” is used by God giving Solomon potentially beyond sky’s-the-limit gifts of splendor if he would follow God’s priceless gift of wisdom now defined.*

*The origin of wisdom:*

**Proverbs 8:22-30a** Adonai made me as the beginning of His way, the first of His ancient works. 23 I was appointed before the world, before the start, before the earth’s beginnings. 24 When I was brought forth, there were no ocean depths, no springs brimming with water. 25 I was brought forth before the hills, before the mountains had settled in place; 26 He had not yet made the earth, the fields, or even the earth’s first grains of dust. 27 When He established the heavens, I was there. When He drew the horizon’s circle on the deep, 28 when He set the skies above in place, when the fountains of the deep poured forth, 29 when He prescribed boundaries for the sea, so that its water would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, 30 I was with Him as someone He could trust.

**Proverbs 2:1-7a** My son, if you will receive my words and store my commands inside you, 2 paying attention to wisdom inclining your mind toward understanding — 3 yes, if you will call for insight and raise you voice for discernment, 4 if you seek it as you would silver and search for it as for hidden treasure — then you will understand the fear of Adonai and find knowledge of God. 6 For Adonai gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding. 7a He stores up common sense for the upright.

**Proverbs 7:2-5, 25-27** Obey my commands and live; guard my teaching like the pupil of your eye .3 Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister”; call understanding your kinswoman; 5 so that they can keep you from unknown women, from loose women with their seductive talk. 25 Don’t let your heart turn to her ways; don’t let your heart turn to her ways; don’t stray onto her paths. 26 For many are those she has struck down dead, numerous those she has killed. 27 Her house is the way to Sh’ol; it leads down to the halls of death.

*Wisdom is described in feminine pronouns because of ancient writing traditions that gave understanding, virtue and intuition to women, noted in the detailed description in Proverbs 7. Foolishness, the opposite of wisdom is also described in feminine pronouns: the seductive woman spiritually murdered the lust filled young man who succumbed, like an ox led to slaughter. His father David was led to the murder of Uriah because of his lust for Bathsheba, Solomon’s mother. Certainly if Solomon knew about this affair, could he have possibly avoided such a trap later in his own life?*

*Below is a sampling from dozens of verses extolling the value of God’s wisdom:*

**Proverbs 8:11b** Nothing you want can compare with wisdom

**Proverbs 9:9-10** Give to a wise man, and he grows still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will learn still more. 10 The fear of Adonai is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of holy ones is understanding.

**Proverbs 8:34-36** How happy the person who listens to wisdom, who watches daily at my gates and walks outside my doors. 35 For he who finds me finds life and obtains the favor of Adonai. 36 But he who misses me harms himself; all who hate me love death.

*“As the key word in Proverbs is wisdom, which gives one the ability to live life skillfully amid an ungodly world, the key word, vanity, in Ecclesiastes describes the futile emptiness of trying to be happy apart from God.” This introduction from Thomas Nelson KJV describes Solomon who becomes the wisest, richest, most influential King in Israel’s history. Solomon comes to look at life “under the sun,” from his human perspective, declaring it all to be empty. Everything! Despite power, popularity, prestige or pleasure—nothing can fill the God-shaped void in man’s life except God Himself. But once seen from God’s perspective, life takes on meaning and purpose, which caused Solomon to exclaim, “Eat...drink...rejoice...do good...live joyfully...fear God...keep his commandments!”*

*In Ecclesiastes the key word is vanity because Solomon, once so humble, devout and righteous, had shockingly broken his covenant with God worshipping idolatrously as described below in 1Kings 11:1-10. This turn had shockingly happened despite the Lord twice personally speaking to Solomon warning him of such danger and the consequence.*

**1Kings 11:1-10** King Solomon loved many foreign women besides the daughter of Pharaoh. There were woman from the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites — 2) nations about which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, “You are not to go among them or they among you, because they will turn your hearts away toward their gods.” But Solomon was deeply attached to them by his love. 3 He had 700 wives, all princesses, and 300 concubines; and his wives turned his heart away. 4 For when Solomon became old, his wives turned his heart away toward other gods; so that he was not wholehearted with the Lord as his God, as David his father had been. 5 For Solomon followed Ashtoret the goddess of the Zidonians and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 Thus Solomon did what was evil in the Lord’s view and did not fully follow the Lord, as David his father had done. 7 Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab on the hill in front of Jerusalem and another for Molech the abomination of the people of Amon. 8 This is what he did for all his foreign wives, who then offered and sacrificed to their gods. 9 So the Lord grew angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice 10 and given him orders concerning this matter that he should not follow other gods but he didn’t obey the Lord’s orders.

*These verses below document Solomon’s unparalleled worldly attainment of splendor, his world recognition through his idolatry, his immersion into the world, without God’s spirit in him, his life pursuits had all become meaningless.*

**Eccl 2:9-11** So I was great, surpassing all who preceded me in Jerusalem; my wisdom, too, stayed with me. 10 I denied my eyes nothing they wanted. I withheld no pleasure from myself;

for I took pleasure in all my work, and this was my reward for all my work. 11 Then I looked at all that my hands had accomplished and at the work I had toiled at; and I saw that it was all meaningless and feeding on wind, and that there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

**Eccl 2:12-13** So I decided to look more carefully at wisdom, stupidity and foolishness; for what can the man who succeeds the king do, except what has already been done? 13) I saw that wisdom is more useful than foolishness as light is more useful than darkness.

*Here below, Solomon speaks of man's knowledge and skills that mankind often labels as acquiring wisdom during his lifetime, which all perishes; this is a stark comparison to God's wisdom founded in truth which leads to eternity with God.*

**Eccl 2:21-26** Here is a man whose work is done with wisdom, knowledge and skill; yet he has to leave it to someone who has put no work into it. This is not only pointless, but a great evil. 22 For what does a man get from all his efforts and ambitions permeating the work he does under the sun? 23 This one of pain, and his work is full of stress; even at night his mind gets no rest. This too is pointless. 24 So there is nothing better for a man to do than eat, drink and let himself enjoy the good that results from his work. I also realized that this is from God's hand. 25 For who will eat and who will enjoy except me? 26 For to the man who is good from God's viewpoint, He gives wisdom, knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the task of collecting and accumulating things to leave to him who is good from God's viewpoint. This too is pointless and feeding on wind.

*Solomon defines man's wisdom and speaks of human, earthly-centered knowledge that can produce works done with accumulated skill but not crediting or fearing God. Such human sourced wisdom, in essence humanism, centers on the mind and offers no eternal future. There is no instruction on how to establish a spiritually centered life which would ultimately lead to salvation. There is no future beyond a perishable end. Solomon in his boredom, restlessness and frustration realized a universal truth: everything man creates in life separate from God's influence, perishes and becomes part of the futility of futilities. Such a contrast to the mindset of the earlier Solomon who had embraced God's wisdom which was created morally pure and eternally functioning through God's Holy Spirit; producing the gifts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and goodness. Through this knowledge believers will reverently choose to obey and devote their lives to God paving the straight and narrow road to eternal life.*

*Summary: The Book of Proverbs centers on the necessity of living a righteous life shaped by following God-given wisdom, God's first creation. One's life experiences are incorporated with an appreciation of who God is combined with our obedience to His Plan of Salvation leading believers into God's kingdom. Solomon's kingdom had become spiritually desolate after breaking God's covenant. Finally Solomon sees God's perspective and how life takes on meaning and purpose and causes Solomon to exclaim, "Eat...drink...rejoice...do good...live joyfully...fear God and keep His commandments!"*

*How many of us either have heard, or actually said something to the effect, "If I ever won a multimillion dollar lottery, all my problems would be over with no more pressures. I could have anything, do anything or want anything because I could just buy everything. A huge worldwide*

*industry set in motion thousands of years ago flourishes on this premise: the chance of winning alot, by wagering little. Gambling! Huge casinos, sports betting and horseracing all center on the lure of instant gratification. Solomon, perhaps the richest man ever to live becomes the greatest witness debunking the premise of wealth as the ultimate life solving gratifier. God used Solomon to demonstrate that life without His Holy Spirit within us produces nothing of significant value apart from a relationship with Him. Here is the final conclusion, now that you have heard everything: fear God, and keep His commandments.*

**Proverb to ponder:**

**Prov 4: 5-8** gain wisdom, gain insight; don't forget or turn from the words I am saying. 6 Don't abandon [wisdom]; then she will preserve you; love her, and she will protect you. 7 The beginning of wisdom is: get wisdom! And along with all your getting, get insight! 8 Cherish her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will bring you honor;

Scriptures CJB unless otherwise noted\*

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