

Another Monday morning has arrived, and we are still on planet Earth -- still anticipating His glorious return for His own! So, here is our Devotional for today. God bless each of you as you read and pray, and seek His will for this day.

WISDOM – A GIFT FROM GOD ... TO BE USED!

A Devotional prepared by Dr. Robert L. Morris

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“My son, if your heart is wise, My heart will indeed rejoice.

My innermost being will cheer when your lips say what is right.

Proverbs 23:15, 16; HCSB

It is extremely vital that in studying both Testaments of the Bible, one retains a careful distinction between the concept of the intellect as it is in the Greek mind on the one hand, and in the Hebrew mind on the other hand. In the Greek mind the ethical dynamic of a life philosophy rested in the intellect. That is, if a person could achieve perfect or even greater knowledge he could live a very good life, and even be pleasing to the deities, which, of course were not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In other words, for the Greek mind, knowledge was virtue. However, in the Hebrew mind the concept of wisdom, חָכְמָה (ḥākēmāh), is focused on the human will being in subjection to the divine will, particularly in practical matters of one's lifestyle.

Therefore, wisdom in the Hebrew Old Testament, was not theoretical, but intensely practical. It was based on the revealed principles of right and wrong as life is lived out day by day. This is what is basic in such great documents as the Ten Commandments, as well as the passages of Divine instruction given to the people of Israel. Wisdom in the Hebrew mind is not a matter of intellect. It is viewing life from God's perspective. In its final essence, wisdom is one's life-expression according to the instructions stated by God in His Word.

Throughout the Book of Proverbs, the word “wisdom” is used to identify a key thought. The Hebrew word is חָכְמָה (ḥākēmāh) meaning “wisdom” from the verb חָכַם (ḥākam) meaning “to make wise.” In the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Volume 1, Hebrew scholars R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke note the basic concept inhering in this verb focuses on “a manner of thinking and attitude concerning life's experiences...including matters of general interest and basic morality.” (Vol 1, p 282)

Philosophers have spent a great amount of time and intellectual energy trying to define wisdom. I am not a philosopher by academic training, but through my personal research, reading, and reasoning, offer a rather simple definition of wisdom in the Christian context. Wisdom is the God-given ability to discern what is true or right, by utilizing knowledge and understanding of truth, common sense, and insight related to and gleaned from God's Word under the instructional aid of the Holy Spirit, and applying the result to life's experiences through sensible decisions and judgments. In the text verses listed above, Proverbs 23:15, 16, we have the evidence of wisdom residing in one's inner being ... mind and emotions, and then flowing outwardly through speaking the truth.

Please recall that throughout the Book of Proverbs, the key to individual Proverbs is in the meaning of the word wisdom as defined above. The following are 22 key Proverbs that by their content, speak to the practicality of wisdom in our everyday lives. In some, one finds doctrinal truth vital to our faith. Remember: Wisdom is the ability to apply truth to one's daily life experiences!

Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy. (Proverbs 12:20)

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight. (Proverbs 12:22)

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25)

In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and his children will have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death. (Proverbs 14:26, 27)

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3)

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but He loves him who follows righteousness. (Proverbs 15:9)

The preparations of the heart in man belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. (Proverbs 16:1)

A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps. (Proverbs 16:9)

How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver. (Proverbs 16:16)

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. (Proverbs 18:10)
A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
(Proverbs 18:24)

Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days. (Proverbs 19:20)
The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.
(Proverbs 20:7)

He who follows righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness and honor. (Proverbs 21:21)
Through wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled
with all precious and pleasant riches.
(Proverbs 24:3, 4)

Iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.
(Proverbs 27:17)

Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but such as keep the law contend with them. (Proverbs 28:4)
When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; but the righteous will see their fall. (Proverbs
29:16)

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint, but happy is he who keeps the law. (Proverbs
29:18)

An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression.
(Proverbs 29:22)

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. (Proverbs 30:5)
Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of
the fruit of her hands. And let her own works praise her in the gates. (Proverbs 31:30, 31)

In 1925 Kate B. Wilkinson wrote the lyrics, and A. Cyril Barham-Gould the musical score for a challenging
hymn, not sung frequently enough! I trust it will seal this Devotional study to your heart.

MAY THE MIND OF CHRIST, MY SAVIOR

1. May the mind of Christ my Savior, live in me from day to day,
By His love and pow'r controlling all I do and say.
2. May the Word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph only thro' His pow'r.
3. May the peace of God my Father rule my life in ev'rything,
That I may be calm to comfort sick and sorrowing.
4. May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self-abasing – this is victory.
5. May I run the race before me, strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus as I onward go.
6. May His beauty rest upon me as I seek the lost to win;
And may they forget the channel, seeing only Him.