



DO YOU SEEK WISDOM?

King Solomon did. He wrote,

I applied my heart to know, To search and seek out wisdom and the reason of things, To know the wickedness of folly, Even of foolishness and madness.

Ecclesiastes 7:25

Because he sought out wisdom and learned it, he was able, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to write a book of wisdom called "Proverbs." As may be inferred from the modified logo with today's words, we will begin a series of studies on various aspects of wisdom. Paul gives us the advice,

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

Ephesians 5:15

And Solomon gives us a good reason for gaining wisdom.

The wise shall inherit glory, But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Proverbs 3:35

And, finally, James tells us how to obtain it.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

James 1:5

So, this week, and for a number of weeks to come, we shall gain from Solomon, of whom it is said,

God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. . . . He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five.

I Kings 4:29-30 & 32

We begin at the first chapter of Proverbs. Here he writes,

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

- *To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding,*
- *To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;*
- *To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,*
- *To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.*

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:1-7

This introduces us to the subject.

- *To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding,*

The purpose is to know wisdom (חכמה). Wisdom is not knowledge, it is the ability to apply knowledge to what we do. We won't know anything without (מִן־סֵדֶר) instruction. Our schools today are (hopefully) instructing our children but are they helping them to obtain the wisdom to use it? Solomon clarifies this by saying we need to use discernment in the words of instruction we receive. This is even more true today as so much of what we are taught and told is rubbish. We need to separate (the meaning of the word understanding (בִּינָה)) what is good and to be used and what is not.

- *To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;*

When we learn how to use the education we receive wisely, the result will be as Solomon notes above - righteousness, justice, and equality. This is certainly needed in the world today! For lack of space, we will close today with,

- *To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.*

Hopefully, and prayerfully, as we go through these words each week, we will learn to understand the proverbs and the words of the wise.

Wayne

