

March 6, 2022

"Wisdom's Origin"
Lesson 1 of Unit

Proverbs 8:22-35

Intro

Genuine wisdom is not a human invention. It is not open to endless innovations and modifications. It has its origins in God Himself.

About half the books in the Bible mention wisdom, and there are several that discuss wisdom extensively. The most well-known of these wisdom books is Proverbs, the collection of wise sayings of Solomon and a few others. To understand wisdom from a Biblical perspective, we should keep these three things in mind.

First, true wisdom cannot be divorced from faith in God. Wisdom depends on being able to discern good from evil, which is an issue of morality. One cannot truly discern these things apart from a knowledge of and faith in God.

Second, wisdom and knowledge aren't the same things. Knowledge is the acquiring of facts and information. A person could know everything about a subject, but still live in a foolish manner. Gaining knowledge doesn't automatically qualify one as wise.

Third, based on # 2, wisdom is the just and righteous use of knowledge. It is imperative to know God's standards so that we can follow them. Knowing God's will and then doing it makes one wise.

In today's passage, Solomon refers to wisdom as "her". This is merely a poetic device called personification, which is giving an inanimate thing human qualities.

Read Proverbs 8:22-35

1. vs. 22-23: Wisdom has been around from the beginning

 "...the first of His works", "from the beginning, before the world began"

 Our wisdom is the result of years

 Trial and error, chance discovery, applied study

 God had wisdom from the beginning

 No one gave it to Him, nor did He acquire more over time, like us

 Wisdom is part of His nature

2. vs. 24: Before God created nature, wisdom was there

 "When there were no oceans", "When there were no springs"

 How these things came to be amazes us; we can't fully understand it

 God had wisdom from the beginning

 He spoke these things into being

 His thought of what they would be like was already perfect before speaking

3. vs. 25-26: The thought of wisdom's presence from before time continues in these verses
Here, the mountains, the hills, the earth and the fields are noted
Again, all of these came from God's creativity
Again, wisdom was present with God before these things were created
All natural elements are ancient to us
All of them had a creation point, a beginning point, from God
If wisdom was present before all these ancient things, then wisdom is eternal
It existed before all the natural elements that we see around us
Wisdom, like God, is uncreated; it existed always, as a part of God's nature
4. vs. 27: The key phrase here is "I was there"
God's wisdom was present when He put the heavens into place
God's wisdom was present when He made the horizon
The horizon is the point where the ocean meets the sky (the heavens)
Where we see the horizon is about 12 miles from where we stand
We see a part of God's creation of the heavens and the horizon
God sees the whole thing, all the time
Wisdom was there in the creation of all things
5. vs. 28: This verse deals with God's creation of water / water systems
Here are the creative acts of God from day 2 of creations (see Gen. 1:6-8)
The underlying thought continues that wisdom "was there" when God created
We know more now about geology and meteorology than in Solomon's day
They knew that God created a world that kept things in balance
An equilibrium between clouds above and "fountains of the deep"
This verse again accents the wisdom of God
He knows how to fine-tune everything for the benefit of the earth and its people
6. vs. 29: Here, God is in the third day of creation (Gen. 1:9-10)
Land is created, separated from the waters
God is creating a place for life forms that need land as their habitat
Wisdom was there to see this as part of God's nature
7. vs. 30-31: Here wisdom is personified as working with God in creation
This seems to suggest the presence of the Spirit and the Son at creation
The Spirit is seen at creation in Gen. 1:2
The Son is acknowledged as creator in Col.1:16 and John 1:1-3
8. vs. 32-33: In these two verses, wisdom talks directly to the reader
Her plea is that people will listen to her and do what she says
We never become wise by listening to ourselves or mankind in general
True wisdom comes from God, and only to those who listen to him
What is the value of a wise teacher is one doesn't listen to what he says??

9. vs. 34: Wisdom promises a blessing to those who listen to her, but with an important note
One must be “watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway”
This speaks of seeking wisdom, of going to where wisdom is to be found
This seeking for wisdom happens “daily”
Various people came to hear the wisdom of Solomon
We have the wisdom of God in Scripture
We are counseled to seek that wisdom daily

10. vs. 35: Two blessings are pronounced on those who seek and find wisdom
First, that one will “find life”
Wisdom is called “a tree of life” in Prov. 3:18
This sounds like an allusion to the tree in the garden of Eden
Our spiritual life is found in seeking God and His wisdom
Finding life could also mean to find happiness, fulfillment, or satisfaction with life
The more we are aligned with God’s wisdom, the more fulfilling our lives are

Second, the one who finds wisdom “receives favor from the Lord”
This is more like walking in God’s wisdom aligns you with His will
When we follow in His way, He is pleased with our lives
However, this does not mean we find salvation by our actions
We can do nothing to earn our salvation apart from our confession/baptism
We are advised to seek wisdom so our lives will be lived better
We will be in harmony with God’s will and ways

Application: God’s creation is filled with beauty and complexity. He is not just a skilled Creator (he is that too); He is also a wise creator. All that He made was perfect at creation. As Paul reminds us in Romans 1 that creation is a reflection of the Creator. It speaks of Him and for Him.

In Acts 17, Paul spoke to the Greeks, who were interested in hearing every teacher and philosopher. But many thought Paul was inadequate as He preached the gospel only, “Christ crucified”. They thought him foolish, but Paul says that “The foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom.” We have been given God’s wisdom through His Word, and are called to seek it and follow it daily.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for Your wisdom in the Scriptures, and in creation. We are blessed to have both. Help us daily in our desire to seek Your wisdom and to follow it, as we seek to please You with lives submitted to Your will. In Jesus’ name, Amen.