30 Sayings for Wisdom - Part 3

11/06/16

Proverbs 3:13-18

*Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. ...*

This is the third installment of a three part series on 30 sayings for Wisdom from the mind of Solomon. This is not all of what Solomon shared with us, and it is a small part of the wisdom found in Proverbs. But it is a portion of Solomon’s wisdom that was presented as 30 sayings that are to bring us counsel and knowledge, to teach us to be honest and speak the truth. In other words, they are thoughts that Solomon believed to be important to our development as Children of God while walking this earth.

These sayings represent numbers 21 through 30, so I am ending in the correct chronological order. These ideas will need to be pondered and considered and meditated upon. Their wisdom must be steeped in our minds, hearts, and consciousness in order to draw to us their fullest significance.

Knowledge feeds our wisdom so that the more we learn the wiser we can become and better decisions we can make. For instance, at the end of the service when I shared the first of these 30 sayings, one of our church members approached me and shared something he heard a rabbi say about the verse related to spare the rod and spoil the child. The Rabbi explained that the word that we translate as ‘rod’ today comes from the Hebrew word *shebet*, which was a stick use by shepherds to fight off prey and gently guide the wandering sheep. It was not used to beat them.

The word ‘rod’ would be more accurately translated as ‘accountability’. Solomon’s point was that we hold our children accountable for their actions and choices. We are to guide our children, protect them, and not relieve them of their accountability for how they behave and treat others. Read this way, Proverbs 23:13-14 would read: Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you create a culture of accountability he will not die. Create accountability and save his soul from death.”

Knowledge is being aware of something, and having information. Knowledge is about facts and ideas that we acquire through study, research, investigation, observation, and experience. Wisdom is the ability to discern and judge which aspects of the knowledge that we have obtained are true, right, lasting, and applicable to our life. Our knowledge impacts our wisdom; the more we know, the wiser we can become.

Now on to Solomon’s final ten ideas in this set of thirty.

#21 Proverbs (24:5) *A wise man has great power. A man who has knowledge increases his strength*.

#22 (24:7) *Wisdom is too lofty for fools. Among leaders at the city gate, they have nothing to say*. Or, as another translation offers: *Wise conversation is way over the head of fools; in a serious discussion they haven't a clue*.

#23 (24:8) *A person who plans evil will get a reputation as a troublemaker. The schemes of a fool are sinful; everyone detests a mocker.*

#24 (24:10) *If you give up when trouble comes, it shows that you are weak.*

#25 (24:11-12) *Rescue those who are unjustly sentenced to die; save them as they stagger to their death. Don’t excuse yourself by saying, “Look, we didn’t know.” For God understands all hearts, and he sees you. He who guards your soul knows you knew. He will repay all people as their actions deserve.*

#26 (24:13-14) *My child, eat honey, for it is good, and the honeycomb is sweet to the taste. In the same way, wisdom is sweet to your soul. If you find it, you will have a bright future, and your hopes will not be cut short*.

#27 (24:15-16) *Do not lurk like a thief near the house of the righteous, do not plunder their dwelling place. The godly may trip seven times, but they will get up again. But one disaster is enough to overthrow the wicked*.

#28 (24:17-18) *Don’t rejoice when your enemies fall; don’t be happy when they stumble. 18 For the LORD will be displeased with you and will turn his anger away from them.*

#29 (24:19-20) Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the wicked; for the evildoer has no future hope, and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out.

#30 (24:21-22) My children, respect the Lord and the king. Don't join those people who refuse to obey them; for disaster will hit them suddenly. Who knows what punishment will come from the LORD and the king?

Solomon says that wisdom – the ability to discern and judge the knowledge we have available to us – is too lofty for fools. It’s not that fools are necessarily bad or evil or less deserving than wise people; it’s just that they don’t reason well. They don’t have good judgment and are incapable of making sound decisions.

It’s the evil ones who are the sinners – the ones who are really off the track of Spirit-led life. They are the trouble makers, the ones who mock others, and the ones who lurk in the darkness plotting and waiting to ambush people those who are trying to follow God.

But Solomon says that the righteous, the ones who are loyal to the Christ, can fall seven times and get back up to continue in God’s Light. But the wicked will faint from weakness in times of challenge.

Solomon says we should take nourishment from honey for the body and wisdom for nourishment to the soul. The sweetness that our souls derive from wisdom allows us not to fret and worry about evil doers; their lamps will be snuffed out. Through wisdom we see that they have no impact or effect on us, and we cannot be led astray by their influence.

Through the sweetness of wisdom our hearts are made kind and empathetic: we do not celebrate when our enemies fall; we are not joyful to see them stumble or get hurt. For we know that it only through the Grace of God that our hearts are open to the Christ and have a true lamp to follow. We understand that God loves the foolish as well as the wise, the evil doers as well as those who take the hand of Christ for strength and guidance.

We are all capable of being unwise and foolish. There are still times when I must catch myself from doing or saying the foolish things my ego leads me towards.

Solomon’s final thought in this section is to fear the Lord and king, which we know means to have respect for God, to revere Him, have faith in Him, submit to His Will, and love and worship Him with all of our heart, strength, mind, and soul.

He says to first love God and His laws, then the king – or government – the laws of the land. He advises us not to be swayed by those who refuse to obey those laws because decisive consequences await those who do.

The Wisdom of Solomon is the wisdom of eternity, because it is Spirit, the creative life-giving breath of God that whispers the words of wisdom into every heart. This has been the case over time eternity and ever will be. Every answer that we seek comes from Christ, the individualized essence of our Creator and Source within us.

My prayer is that we can believe, and never stop believing , 1 Kings 3:12 -  *Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you*. Inherent within us is a wise and discerning mind, because we are created as a unique, capable, and beloved Child of God.

I pray that we will use our Divine Wisdom to serve others and help God create Peace, Civility, Unity, Joy and Love throughout all of Creation.

Let us pray…