

Wisdom Literature – Lesson 4

The Ministry of the Word (Prov. Pt. 2)

July 20, 2025

Review:

- **PROVERBS:** “Short sentences drawn from long experience.” — **Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote**
- **WISDOM:** “A moral rather than an intellectual quality. To be ‘foolish’ is to be godless (Psalm 14:1). True wisdom is a gift from God to those who ask for it (Job 28:12–28; Proverbs 3:13–18; Romans 1:22; 16:27; 1 Corinthians 1:17–21; 2:6–8; James 1:5).” — **Easton’s Bible Dictionary**
- **PRACTICAL:** Proverbs’ “function in Scripture is to put godliness into working clothes.” — **Derek Kidner, Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary**
- **PRINCIPLES NOT PROMISES:** “The particular blessings, rewards, and opportunities mentioned in Proverbs are likely to follow if one chooses the wise courses of action outlined in the poetic, figurative language of the book. But nowhere does Proverbs teach automatic success.” **Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth**

Proverbs 3:5-6 ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Galatians 5:16 ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

The way to read the book of Proverbs is to slow down and prayerfully think it through, one proverb at a time. Consider what each instruction reveals of God’s nature by what he values and instructs. Then consider what each proverb reveals about human frailty and need by the instruction we require. Such careful reflection will reveal much about the grace humanity requires, which God will ultimately provide in Christ. — **ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible**

Wisdom in the ‘information age’

“We’re living in the ‘information age,’ but we certainly aren’t living in the ‘age of wisdom.’ Many people who are wizards with their computers seem to be amateurs when it comes to making a success out of their lives. Computers can store data and obey signals, but they can’t give us the ability to use that knowledge wisely. What’s needed today is wisdom. — **Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Skillful, “Be” Commentary Series**

“Rather than providing us with information to be downloaded, the Bible holds out for us an invitation to join an ancient, well-traveled, and sacred quest to know God, the world we live in, and our place in it. Not abstractly, but intimately and experientially.” — **Peter Enns, How the Bible Actually Works**

Wisdom for the ages

Proverbs 21:30-31 ³⁰ No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD. ³¹ The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

Creation

Proverbs 3:19-20 ¹⁹ The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; ²⁰ by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.

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

The Fall of Man

Genesis 3:6-7 ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Proverbs 14:5 ⁵ A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies.

Proverbs 22:22 ²² Do not rob the poor, because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate

The Law of God

Proverbs 1:7 ⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Psalms 51:4 ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight

Grace

Proverbs 1:8-9 ⁸ Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, ⁹ for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

Romans 5:8 ⁸ God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God's sovereignty

Proverbs 16:1-4 ¹ The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. ² All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit. ³ Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established. ⁴ The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.

Proverbs 16:9 ⁹ The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.

Daniel 4:34-35 for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; ³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?"

Our savior and the cross

Proverbs 22:15 ¹⁵ Folly is bound up in the heart of a child

Psalms 51:5 ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalms 14:1 ¹ The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

Jeremiah 17:9 ⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Romans 3:23-25 ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

Ephesians 2:1-2 ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience

From Creation to re-Creation

Proverbs 8:22-36 ²² "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. ²³ Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. ²⁴ When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. ²⁵ Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, ²⁶ before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. ²⁷ When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, ²⁸ when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, ²⁹ when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, ³⁰ then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, ³¹ rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man. ³² "And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways. ³³ Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. ³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. ³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD, ³⁶ but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death."

Proverbs 13:14 ¹⁴ The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death.

1 Corinthians 1:24 ²⁴ Yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God

Colossians 2:3 ³ In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

"To fear the Lord means to live as if God exists and is who he says he is. It is to walk through life bowing to his kingship and remembering his gracious redemption. To fear the Lord means to yield to his will and seek to walk in his ways as our gracious deliverer." — Dane C. Ortlund, In the Lord I Take Refuge