



THE PURSUIT OF WISDOM 2:1-22

In this chapter the father instructs his son about putting forth an effort to attain wisdom [verses 1-5], he informs him of the source of wisdom [verses 6-8], and the benefits of wisdom [verses 9-22]. In this chapter *Solomon* speaks to those who would desire heavenly wisdom

I. RULES FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF WISDOM [verses 1-5]

I. The Conditions For Attaining Wisdom:

☞ *“if thou wilt receive my words”* [verse 1]. To *“receive”* is *“to get or obtain, to accept and to embrace”* Where there is heavenly wisdom, there must be an **obtaining**, an **accepting**, and an **embracing** of the Word of God. THERE MUST BE A SPIRITUAL RECEPTIVITY [Acts 2:41; 17:11; I Thessalonians 2:13]. This spiritual receptivity requires a heart that is **believing**, **humble**, **tender**, **contrite**, and **obedient**. The word *“receive”* implies a **friendly**, **warm**, **courteous** reception of the Word of God.

☞ *“and hide my commandments with thee”* [verse 1]. Not only must the Word of God be **received** into the heart and mind, it must be **hidden**. To *“hide”* the commandments of God is *“to stow them away for future use”* To *“hide”* is *“to keep”* [Psalm 119:11; Luke 2:19, 51].

☞ *“So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom”* [verse 2]. The phrase *“incline thine ear”* means *“to bend, or to lean in order to hear”* and implies an **eagerness** to hear.

☞ *“and apply thine heart to understanding”* [verse 2]. The phrase *“apply thine heart”* conveys the idea of *“using or employing the heart”* It speaks of attentive and diligent effort. In this case *“to understanding”* (spiritual insight). *Solomon* speaks of putting forth an effort to obtain *“understanding”* [3:13; 4:1, 5, 7; 5:1], and he speaks of the **value** of such [16:16], and the **benefits** of *“understanding”* [10:23; 11:12; 13:15; 15:14, 21; 16:22; 17:27].

☞ *“if thou criest after knowledge”* [verse 3]. *“Knowledge”* is *“certainty, and clear comprehension”* This *“knowledge”* is of great value [8:10], and is to be cried after, implying **earnest desire**.

☞ *“and liftest up thy voice for understanding”* [verse 3]. This speaks of fervency in prayer.

☞ *“If thou seekest her as silver”* [verse 4]. The pronoun *“her”* refers back to *“understanding”* and such is to be **sought** earnestly as one would seek for silver. To *“seek”* is a higher degree of asking and implies **earnestness**, **desire**, and **realization** of need.

☞ *“and searchest for her as for hid treasures”* [verse 4]. This is a higher degree of seeking, and implies **pains**, **resolution**, and **perseverance**.

STEPS IN MAN'S SEARCH FOR WISDOM

searchest as for hid treasures
seekest as silver
lifest up thy voice
criest after
apply thine heart
incline thine ear
hide my commandments
receive my words

There are eight verbs used to describe the effort of the child of God, with each being a higher degree of the preceding. The objects of these activities are “*words*” “*commandments*” “*wisdom*” “*understanding*” and “*knowledge*” There must be a **hearing** with the ear, a **applying** with the heart, a **requesting** with the mouth, and a diligent **searching**.

2. The Promise Concerning The Conditions-The word “*if*” occurs three times [verses 1, 3, 4], stating conditions, the conditions are described by the eight verbs, followed by the word “*Then*” [verse 5], which introduces the result of the conditions met. The result is twofold:

☞ “*Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord*” The result of meeting the conditions [verses 1-4] is **insight**, **perception**, and **appreciation** concerning reverence for God.

☞ “*and find the knowledge of God*” The result of meeting the conditions [verses 1-4] is **certainty** and clear **comprehension** concerning the Person of God.

II. THE SOURCE OF WISDOM [verses 6-8]

The opening “*For*” [verse 6] gives the reason for what is stated in verse 5. Those who follow the directions of verses 1-4 will not be disappointed, for

1. God Has Wisdom To Bestow-“*For the LORD giveth wisdom* (He has promised to give it to those who seek it), *out of His mouth (Word) cometh knowledge and understanding*” [verse 6]. GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF HEAVENLY WISDOM, AND HE USES HIS WORD TO BESTOW IT!

2. God Has Treasures Of Wisdom-“*He layeth up* (on purpose and with a purpose) *sound* (that which is **solid**, that which is **true**, that which is **substantial** and **satisfactory**) *wisdom for the righteous*” [verse 7]. The “*righteous*” has reference to those who follow the directions of verses 1-4.

3. God Is The Protector Of The Righteous—"He is a buckler (shield) to them that walk uprightly (the same as the righteous). He keepeth (guards) the paths of judgment (instruction in discernment). He guards these paths so that His people can walk in them), and preserveth (maintains) "the way of His saints" [verses 7-8].

Verse 9 is the second result besides verse 5 to the antecedent "if" [verses 1, 3, 4]. If the directions of verses 1-4 are followed, and because of what is stated in verses 6-8 one can possess insight into "righteousness" (that which is good), "judgment" (discernment), "equity" (fairness). It is added for emphasis "yea, every good path"

III. THE BENEFITS OF WISDOM [verses 10-22]

When wisdom takes residence in the heart and when knowledge is pleasing to the soul, then discretion (carefulness) and understanding become a keeping principle.

1. There Is A Keeping From The Way Of The Evil Man [verses 12-15]. Seven characteristics of the evil man are stated:

☞ "speaketh froward things" [verse 12]. Frowardness is to "be unwilling to comply with what is right, that which is perverse and disobedient" Solomon has much to say about the "froward" [3:32; 4:24; 11:20; 16:28; 21:8; 22:5].

☞ "Who leave the paths of uprightness" [verse 13]. "Uprightness" is honesty and integrity. To leave "the paths of uprightness" means that one has an unsteady walk [10:9], and lacks understanding [15:21], and is in danger [28:18].

☞ "to walk in the ways of darkness" [verse 13]. They leave the paths of honesty and integrity in order to walk in the ways of evil and ignorance.

☞ "Who rejoice to do evil" [verse 14]. They take pleasure in committing sin.

☞ "and delight in the frowardness of the wicked" [verse 14]. They not only take pleasure in committing sin themselves, but find delight in seeing others sin.

☞ "Whose ways are crooked" [verse 15]. The word "crooked" speaks of that which "deviates from a straight line, that which is twisted and deformed"

☞ "and they froward in their paths" [verse 15]. They are perverse, disobedient, and unwilling to comply with that which is right.

2. There Is A Keeping From The Strange Woman [verses 16-19]. The "strange woman" has reference to the adulteress, or harlot. Solomon often warns against such [5:3-20; 6:24; 7:5-23; 22:14; 23:27]. WISDOM IN THE HEART WILL DELIVER AND RESTRAIN FROM

HER! She flatters with her tongue [verse 16], she forsakes the guidance of her youth [verse 17], she is false to her God [verse 17], and her ways are fatal [verses 18-19].

3. There Is Preservation In Duty [verses 20]. What is said here goes back to verse 11 *“Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee.....that thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous”* The wisdom that gives discretion not only keeps one from evil, but enables one to walk in righteousness. As a result God blesses the *“upright”* [verse 21], but judgment awaits the wicked [verse 22].

We are reminded in this chapter that there is wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and discretion to be had, and the source of such is the Lord [Job 28:12, 20, 23; James 1:5]. In order to attain this wisdom effort is required, but such effort will not be in vain, and the attainment of wisdom will be worthwhile, for it will protect one from evil and provide enablement to walk in right paths.
