

Bible Recall: POINTS IN PROVERBS

PROVERBS 8 – Wisdom as a Master Craftsman

Our title stems from Proverbs 8:30:

“Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him.”

Juxtaposed to the path of *folly* and its *verge of total ruin* (Prov. 5-7), chapter 8 turns our attention to the value of wisdom and its positive benefits in building up our lives. Rather than the woman of folly, wisdom is personified as a *woman of understanding* who cries out to all.

WHERE, TO WHOM, AND WITH WHAT DOES WISDOM CALL (Prov. 8:1-11)?

1. **Where (8:1-3)?** As a herald, wisdom stands *everywhere* beckoning *everyone* to come and hear (Prov. 8:1-5). She is on the hills, at the crossroads, at the city gates, and before the doors (cf. Prov. 1:20, 21). In like fashion, God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:3, 4; Rom. 16:26; Mk. 16:15, 16). Yet He never overrides man’s free will. He calls, *but man must listen*. He gives, *but man must reach out and take*. He saves, *but man must obey*.
2. **To whom (8:4, 5)?** Wisdom calls out to everyone, including the simple ones (the naïve and gullible) as well as fools (those with little restraint and are stubborn). God is longsuffering toward us (2 Pet. 3:9).
3. **With what (8:6-11)?** Wisdom calls out “excellent things,” “right things,” and “truth.” It calls out with the message of *righteousness*. There is nothing crooked or perverse in the call of wisdom. There is nothing deceitful in her. There are no cunning ploys, no *bait and switch* schemes, only plain instruction that is better than the rare and expensive materials found in this life such as silver, choice gold, and rubies.

THE BENEFITS OF WISDOM AS A MASTER CRAFTSMAN (Prov. 8:12-21).

Where sin breaks down and destroys, wisdom builds up and preserves. This section shows us some benefits that wisdom builds in us.

1. **Wisdom builds up the power of discernment (8:12-16).** God desires that we have the ability to discern between evil and good (cf. Heb. 5:12-14).

“The _____ of the LORD [is] to hate _____; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate” (Prov. 8:13).

Being able to correctly judge something as *right* or *wrong* is not a sign of weakness, but strength. It is not from ignorance but from sound wisdom. Wisdom gives each person the ability to rule and decree correctly the justice of kings! Wisdom enables us to see evil for what it really is.

- a. "Pride" and "arrogance" are not the kind of *confidence* we are to aspire to have. "
 - b. "The evil way" is not the road that we are to travel on.
 - c. "The perverse mouth" expresses the kind of words we are not to utter (cf. Eph. 4:29; Jas. 1:26; 3:2). These things work against the wisdom that is from above. They are enemies of the truth (Jas. 3:13-18).
2. **Wisdom builds up enduring riches (8:17-21).** Enduring riches are not riches of silver and gold. Those things can be with us today and gone tomorrow.

"Will you set your _____ on that which is _____? For _____ certainly make themselves _____; They _____ away like an _____ [toward] heaven" (Prov. 23:5).

Those who live for the main purpose of finding "fine gold" will not live in follow the "fine" way. Rather, they will pierce themselves through with many sorrows and regrets (1 Tim. 6:9-10). Righteousness is the key element in which to strike it rich. When we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we will not only have the things we physically need in this life but also possess the enduring riches of eternal life when this life ends (see Matt. 6:19, 20).

THE COMPANION OF THE CREATOR (Prov. 8:22-31)

Wisdom is personified as the master craftsman who worked as God's companion in the creation. This text boldly affirms that the universe-project, including the earth and everything in it, is not a product of *time, chance, and random processes*, but rather of conscientious thought, carefully planned design, and purposed will. "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things [is] God" (Heb. 3:4). This should underscore the following considerations in our minds.

- If God possesses wisdom, who is the man to disregard it (8:22)?
- If wisdom existed before the earth was created, who is the man to live on earth ignoring it (8:23-29)?
- If God works with wisdom, who is the man to work without it (8:30)?
- If wisdom rejoices in the sons of men, how can any man find lasting joy without it (8:31)?

WISDOM'S EXHORTATION—WATCH AND WAIT (Prov. 8:32-36).

Here describes the blessed man of Scripture. As wisdom calls men to listen, so it promises them blessings when they keep her ways. The blessed listener *watches* daily at her gates and *waits* for her doors to be opened (8:34). *Watching and waiting* could characterize a wife/mother who is waiting and looking for her husband or son to return home from war. Or perhaps it is the way a shipwrecked person watches and waits to be rescued from a barren island.

It is in that spirit one looks to be with and serve the Lord. We are to anticipate His return every day. The heavenly-minded scholar is earnest for heaven's schoolroom to open! He stands at the post of her doors. His ear hinges on every word that falls from her lips (cf. 8:6, 7).

Watching and waiting is to characterize the disciples of Christ. Jesus taught this principle by a culmination of parables.

- **The Faithful/evil servant (Matt. 24:45-51)**, are you *watching for the Lord*?
- **Ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)**, are you *waiting for their Lord*?
- **The Talents (Matt. 25:14-30)**, are you *working for the Lord*?
- **The Sheep/goats (Matt. 25:31-46)**, are you *watching over those who are the Lord's*?

Conclusion:

Let us view the Lord the way the blessed student views wisdom in Proverbs 8:32-36. Let us search for Him with our whole being, "For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD; But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death" (Prov. 8:35-36).

—Steven J. Wallace