

# The Proverbs

## Lesson 2

### *Proverbs 2 & 3*

The first chapter ended with Solomon's challenge to his son to listen to his sayings and live securely with no fear of the dread of evil. In chapter 2, Solomon continues to challenge his son to receive his sayings so they will help him discern how to worship the LORD and discover the knowledge of God.

#### ***The Value of Solomon's Sayings***

**Proverbs 2:1** My son, if you will receive my sayings, and treasure my commandments within you, <sup>2</sup> make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup> for if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding; <sup>4</sup> if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; <sup>5</sup> then you will discern the fear of the LORD, and discover the knowledge of God.<sup>16</sup>

As Solomon continues to train his son in wisdom and understanding, he asks his son to cry out and lift his voice to the LORD. It is important to seek the two in the same way that men seek silver and hidden treasures. Think of the miners during the great gold rush in America. The hard working men diligently dug the soil with picks and shovels and washed the dirt in slurries eagerly hoping to see a few flakes of gold in the bottom of the pans, hidden treasures in the soil. They worked feverishly to find the treasure, spending every cent they had looking for more gold, never finding enough, never leaving the squalor of their deplorable living conditions, anxiously longing for the next flakes of gold. Solomon longs for his son to seek the wisdom and understanding of the LORD with the same vigor that men seek hidden treasures. It is the beginning of the fear of the LORD, that which the fools despise.

#### ***The Source of Solomon's Sayings***

**Proverbs 2:6** For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding. <sup>7</sup> He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; *He is* a shield to those who walk in integrity, <sup>8</sup> guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Samuel 2:9 " He keeps the feet of His godly ones, But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness; For not by might shall a man prevail.  
Psalm 66:8 Bless our God, O peoples, And sound His praise abroad, <sup>9</sup> Who keeps us in life, And does not allow our feet to slip.

The hidden treasures found in the LORD are beyond imagination. However, only the upright, meaning the righteous, will find His hidden treasures. What is “sound wisdom”? Think of it as being the essentials of true life in God’s will.

The LORD protects those who “walk in integrity” (truthfulness) as a shield protects a warrior. He guards the path of those who walk “in justice” (fairness) as a security officer protects the businessman in his travels. He protects those who have walked “in integrity” and “the paths of justice” by preserving what they have acquired from Him just as a vault stores and protects the owner’s treasures. Solomon probably learned these truths from his father’s Psalm 66:8-9.

### ***The Result of Solomon’s Sayings***

**Proverbs 2:9** Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity *and* every good course. **10** For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; **11** discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you, **12** to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; **13** from those who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; **14** who delight in doing evil, and rejoice in the perversity of evil; **15** whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways; **16** to deliver you from the strange woman, from the adulteress who flatters with her words; **18** **17** that leaves the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God; **18** for her house sinks down to death, and her tracks *lead* to the dead; **19** none who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life. **20** So you will walk in the way of good men, and keep to the paths of the righteous. **21** For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; **22** but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be uprooted from it.

Once Solomon’s son seeks and finds wisdom and understanding, he will discern righteousness, justice and equity, that is, what is morally decent, what is morally fair and what is morally impartial. For that to happen, Solomon explains that wisdom and understanding must enter the heart of his son. It does no good just to know about wisdom and understanding in the mind; it must be felt and embraced in the heart. True heart wisdom and understanding from the LORD will protect Solomon’s son from the perverse man who operates in the darkness pursuing evil. For some reason, the dark evil world usually includes the lure of the sexual sins of prostitution and adultery. Both occupations rob a youth of life and lead the young woman to death in most cases. Her occupation lures young men into her web, jeopardizing the young man’s marriage, family, livelihood and most importantly, his relationship with the LORD. He will allow only those who have acquired within their hearts His wisdom and understanding to live in His holy presence and all others will be barred from that glorious place. As Solomon says, “Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you.”<sup>19</sup> Verse 22 uses the word wicked; a better translation is the word hypocrite. With that insight, Solomon expands the group beyond our understanding from those blatantly involved in evil to include those who are seemingly religious upright members of society but are secretly involved in evil practices. Hypocrites!

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<sup>18</sup> Proverbs 2:11 Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,

<sup>19</sup> Proverbs 2:11-12

## **Remember the Teachings of Solomon**

**Proverbs 3:1** My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments;  
**2** For length of days and years of life, and peace they will add to you.

Something can be said about the virtues of a lifetime of clean living, both physical and spiritual. Solomon is promising his young son that his days and years will be filled with peace. Evil doers do not live in peace. Adulterers do not live in peace. Hypocrites do not live in peace. A man who gains true wisdom and understanding from the LORD will live in peace in the midst of the storms as well as in times of peace.

### **Kindness and Truth**

**Proverbs 3:3** Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.<sup>20</sup> **4** So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.<sup>21</sup>

Part of living in peace stems from the employment of kindness and truth; these two must be constant companions. We must keep them in view as if they hang from the neck. They must also be within the hidden places of the heart; therefore, we must see them as well as feel them from deep within. Others will see our conduct and determine our motives as to whether we are sincere and righteous. Although religion is generally rejected and repelled in most of the world, the truly Godly person is usually valued.

### **Trust in the Lord**

**Proverbs 3:5** 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 your paths straight. **7** Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil. **8** It will be healing to your body, and refreshment to your bones.<sup>22</sup>

When the way becomes blurry, trust in the LORD, not only with outward action but also from deep within the heart. The LORD created all intelligent life and for those who trust in Him, He promises to provide true wisdom and understanding. Those qualities come only from the Lord. Humans are not clever enough or strong enough to permanently protect anyone from the evil in this world. Worship of the LORD will dispense with the evil. According to Proverbs 8:13, when we truly worship the LORD, we hate evil and the pride, arrogance and perversion that accompany it.

The word body in verse 8 is actually the word navel. Through the navel, life is given to the unborn child. From the mother to the child, blood and nourishment flow through the navel. The child cannot grow within the mother without the umbilical cord attached at the navel; without it, no human could ever be born to this world. So it is with the LORD; He is the healing that brings true life into the soul like the navel brings physical life from the mother.

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<sup>20</sup> *Colossians 3:9* Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him <sup>11</sup> *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. <sup>12</sup> And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

<sup>21</sup> *Luke 2:52* And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

<sup>22</sup> *Proverbs 8:13* "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverted mouth, I hate.

Human bones are interesting; they have cavities and pores that contain fluid. Without the fluid, the bones are brittle and easily broken but with the fluid, they are strong and flexible. A dry bone found on the ground can easily be broken but if it is soaked in oil for a few minutes, extreme force is needed to break it. So it is with the Lord; He is like a good dose of refreshing fluid in old bones.

### **Honor the Lord**

**Proverbs 3:9** Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce;<sup>23</sup> <sup>10</sup> so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.<sup>24</sup>

Worship includes honoring the LORD with offerings from what He has given. Worship and offerings go together; they can never be separated; one without the other voids both. The offering was required as a part of worship in Deuteronomy 26. The last book of the Old Testament pleads with those who trust the LORD to give to Him from the first fruits and see how He will bless them.<sup>25</sup> Jesus, in the Gospel of Luke instructs the people to give to Him by giving to others who do not have the means to repay.<sup>26</sup> When you honor the LORD with an offering, He will provide a vast abundance in your storehouse, providing for all your needs both physical, mental and spiritual.

### **Accept Discipline and Reproof**

**Proverbs 3:11** My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD, Or loathe His reproof,<sup>27</sup> <sup>12</sup> For whom the LORD loves He reproves, Even as a father, the son in whom he delights.

Most people despise correction and chastisement and hate the dispenser of discipline and reproof. The reproof of the LORD is the procedure by which He teaches His own and molds them into His will. From reproof comes the LORD's blessing of wisdom and understanding.

### **Blessings of Wisdom and Understanding**

**Proverbs 3:13** How blessed is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding. <sup>14</sup> For its profit is better than the profit of silver, and its gain than fine gold. <sup>15</sup> She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her.<sup>28</sup> <sup>16</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Deuteronomy 26:2 that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you shall bring in from your land that the LORD your God gives you, and you shall put *it* in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name.

<sup>24</sup> Malachi 3:10 " Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

<sup>25</sup> Luke 14:13 "But when you give a reception, invite *the* poor, *the* crippled, *the* lame, *the* blind,<sup>14</sup> and you will be blessed, since they do not have *the means* to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

<sup>26</sup> Deuteronomy 28:8 "The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

<sup>27</sup> Malachi 3:10

<sup>28</sup> Luke 14:13-14

<sup>29</sup> Psalm 94:12 Blessed is the man whom Thou dost chasten, O LORD, And dost teach out of Thy law;

<sup>30</sup> Hebrews 12:5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, " MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; "FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."

<sup>31</sup> Revelation 3:19 " Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent.

<sup>32</sup> Job 28:12 "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?<sup>13</sup>" Man does not know its value, Nor is it found in the land of the living. <sup>14</sup> "The deep says, 'It is not in me'; And the sea says, 'It is not with me.'<sup>15</sup>" Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it, Nor can silver be weighed as its price. <sup>16</sup> "It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, In precious onyx, or sapphire. <sup>17</sup>" Gold or glass cannot equal it, Nor can it be exchanged for articles of fine gold. <sup>18</sup> "Coral and crystal are not to be mentioned; And the acquisition of wisdom is above *that of pearls*.

Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.<sup>29</sup> <sup>17</sup> Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. <sup>18</sup> She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who hold her fast.

Verse 13 refers to the advice given in Proverbs 2:4 "... if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures...." Solomon uses feminine pronouns when referring to wisdom and understanding as if both are inseparable. She is superior to any craved object here on earth. In her right hand, she holds the truths that prolong the righteous man's life. In her left hand, she holds for the righteous man a special profit. Both are gifts; both come from the LORD; he who receives the gift from the right hand is guaranteed the gift from the left. She gives the peace that passes all understanding and provides entrance to the tree of life. The blessing of wisdom and understanding when hung around the neck and embedded in the heart bring about wisdom and understanding which preserves and comforts in life, triumphs over death and seals immortal glory with the LORD forever.

### **Wisdom Founded the Earth**

**Proverbs 3:19** The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens.<sup>30</sup> <sup>20</sup> By His knowledge the deeps were broken up, and the skies drip with dew.

When did wisdom and understanding begin? Never! She has always been part of the LORD. She was involved before, during and after creation. The LORD used her to break up the deep recesses of the earth and cause the springs to burst forth at His appointed time to form the seas and the land. The wisest men will acknowledge that all these properties of creation belong to the actions of the LORD, but the foolish believe they occur through natural causes.

### **Security in Wisdom and Discretion**

**Proverbs 3:21** My son, let them not depart from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion, <sup>22</sup> So they will be life to your soul, And adornment to your neck. <sup>23</sup> Then you will walk in your way securely, and your foot will not stumble.<sup>31</sup>

Solomon calls for his son to remember that the LORD is the creator of all things and He is the One who gave the son life. The LORD is the author of all and He has selected certain things for those who seek His wisdom and understanding. Those certain things will secure the way of the son and bring life to his soul.

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<sup>29</sup> **Proverbs 8:12** "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge *and* discretion. <sup>13</sup> "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, And the perverted mouth, I hate. <sup>14</sup> " Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine. <sup>15</sup> "By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. <sup>16</sup> "By me princes rule, and nobles, All who judge rightly. <sup>17</sup> "I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me. <sup>18</sup> " Riches and honor are with me, Enduring wealth and righteousness. <sup>19</sup> "My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, And my yield than choicest silver. <sup>20</sup> "I walk in the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, <sup>21</sup> To endow those who love me with wealth, That I may fill their treasures.

<sup>31</sup> **1 Timothy 4:8** for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life to come*.

<sup>30</sup> **Colossians 1:16** For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things have been created by Him and for Him.

<sup>31</sup> **Proverbs 10:9** He who walks in integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will be found out.

<sup>32</sup> **Psalm 91:11** For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To guard you in all your ways. <sup>12</sup> They will bear you up in their hands, Lest you strike your foot against a stone.

## No Fear

**Proverbs 3:24** When you lie down, you will not be afraid; When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. <sup>25</sup> Do not be afraid of sudden fear, nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; <sup>26</sup> For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Because we have the wisdom and understanding of the LORD's protection, we should fear nothing. When our trust is in Him, He gives us confidence, even in the darkest nights and the deepest valleys. Our feet will not be caught even when things look bleak. Destruction may come. Death may call. Nevertheless, the LORD is watching over those who belong to Him. As Paul says,

**Romans 14:7** For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; <sup>8</sup> for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup> For to this end Christ died and lived *again*, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

## Give

**Proverbs 3:27** Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.<sup>32</sup> <sup>28</sup> Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give *it*," When you have it with you.<sup>33</sup> <sup>29</sup> Do not devise harm against your neighbor, while he lives in security beside you.<sup>34</sup>

To whom is good due? In this passage, Solomon is speaking of the poor neighbor. When a person blessed by the LORD has the means to provide for someone in need, he should never withhold the good and proper things from him or her. The LORD is the judge in this case and He will give wisdom and understanding to know what is good and when to give.

## Contention

**Proverbs 3:30** Do not contend with a man without cause, if he has done you no harm.

Those who belong to the LORD should never quarrel with their neighbor, threaten to sue in a court of law or otherwise purposely cause wrong.

## Envy

**Proverbs 3:31** Do not envy a man of violence, and do not choose any of his ways.<sup>35</sup>

Wealth, prestige, honor, importance, status, esteem, and respect are all enticing to those who fail to be seen as such by others. The Godly person should not look upon the violent man with any of these qualities. He should not be a model for anyone.

<sup>32</sup> **Romans 13:7** Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

**Galatians 6:10** So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

<sup>33</sup> **Leviticus 19:13** <sup>1</sup> You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning.

**Deuteronomy 24:15** <sup>15</sup> You shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets, for he is poor and sets his heart on it; so that he may not cry against you to the LORD and it become sin in you.

<sup>34</sup> **Romans 12:18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

<sup>35</sup> **Proverbs 24:1** Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them;

**Psalm 37:1** Do not fret because of evildoers, Be not envious toward wrongdoers.

**Psalm 73:3** For I was envious of the arrogant, As I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

## Abomination

**Proverbs 3:32** For the crooked *man* is an abomination to the LORD; But He is intimate with the upright.<sup>36</sup>

An abomination is a stench in the nostrils of the LORD. The word crooked should be the word perverse. A perverse man is an abomination to the Lord. He will never know the secrets of the LORD found in His wisdom and understanding. The word intimate here means secret. The LORD will give to the righteous man all of His secrets.

## Curse of the LORD

**Proverbs 3:33** The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous.<sup>37</sup> <sup>34</sup> Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted.<sup>38</sup>

No Godly man will live in a house full of wickedness; the LORD curses that house. No wicked man will live in the house of the righteous; the LORD blesses that house. The wicked and the righteous cannot live in harmony together. In addition, although the LORD will scorn the scoffers, grace will flow to the afflicted. The LORD truly resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

## Honor Dishonor

**Proverbs 3:35** The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.<sup>39</sup>

When we learn the secrets of the LORD, the wisdom and understanding that come from Him through worship will provide great inheritance. If Solomon's son will listen to his teachings, they will lead him to be part of the family of God as a child of God. How does that happen? By listening to the voice of wisdom from the LORD.

<sup>36</sup> Psalm 25:14 The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant.

<sup>37</sup> Psalm 37:22 For those blessed by Him will inherit the land; But those cursed by Him will be cut off.

<sup>38</sup> Zechariah 5:4 "I will make it go forth," declares the LORD of hosts, "and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones."

<sup>39</sup> Malachi 2:2 "If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them *already*, because you are not taking *it* to heart."

<sup>40</sup> James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, " GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

<sup>41</sup> 1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

<sup>42</sup> Isaiah 32:6 For a fool speaks nonsense, And his heart inclines toward wickedness, To practice ungodliness and to speak error against the LORD, To keep the hungry person unsatisfied And to withhold drink from the thirsty.