

Proverbs

Part One

Chapters 1 - 9

Summary of Bible Studies in Proverbs
undertaken at Allander Evangelical Church

Autumn 2024

INTRODUCTION TO A STUDY OF PROVERBS

Preface

Before we look closely at the Book of Proverbs it is worth reminding ourselves of the nature and significance of Scripture. It could be true to say that it came into being by chance. It is equally true that it is Divinely ordained and is, in its totality, the Word of God.

That concept is intriguing. The characteristic of Christianity is that it has no artefacts, no relics, no tangible items other than the Bible. And, the physical existence of that is the product of human effort as people recorded, edited, compiled, copied, printed, produced the volumes we now have access to and use it as essential in our Christian walk.

What is interesting is that God has not bequeathed anything to the church other than His Word. That Word was divinely expressed, none more so than when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, but its recording was done by human endeavour "*in divers manners*" and endorsed by God as His final and definitive word. Its existence is a miracle of grace.

Its origin is in the purpose of God, and shows the progression of God's fulfilling that purpose across the ages, especially after the Fall and attempted devilish thwarting of that purpose. As people lived in their natural situations they became aware of divine intervention at various times and in varied contexts of the existence and desired intervention of God; and responded accordingly. These incidents happened over time and many of them were recorded (or remembered and repeated orally) and eventually, through the work of compilers, editors, copyists, etc were all gathered together in one volume: The Holy Bible.

That Bible, brought into being by the overarching work of Providence is our Bible. It is God-endorsed and must be accepted, as it stands, in its entirety.

Looking at the 'finished product' we see that it is in three distinct sections under the general categories of Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament Four Gospels Rest of New Testament

God the father God the Son God the Holy Spirit



When we look at the Old Testament there are three distinct genres – or types of literature: the History books which span the life of the nation and record all its experiences; The Poetry which comprises various collections of human expression; and the Prophecy which contains

God's clear messages (largely of warning laced with promise) about the people's godless behaviour.

Proverbs belongs to the Poetry section which is characterised by words not originating from God but are the perceptions and understanding of God by various circumstances and events. Although human expressions, they are clearly endorsed by God and have an importance for us in our understanding of the kind of life that God wants us to live.

They have a purpose, as we shall see next week.

Prologue: Chapter 1: 1-7

The Book of Proverbs begins with a prologue which explains what the purpose of the book is intended to be. However obtained (Solomon and others' experience and understanding of God and His ways) it is intended to help others. As the late Dominic Smart once defined it: It is "*knowing where to put your feet in the dance of life*".

It has four main features each spelt out in these texts.

1. Knowing. With the situation of humanity alienated from God, knowledge and awareness of the world and how to live is limited because, since the Fall, "*the god of this world has blinded the eyes of those who believe not*". Even believers "*walk according to the course of this world*". In contrast God has a complete worldview of reality based on His omnipotence and providence. In its simplest form that is the gospel: in its full version it is "*the whole counsel of*" almighty God who knows all things from the beginning to the end. And it is not only factual, theoretical, 'dry', 'academic' truth but insight and wisdom and understanding.
2. Receiving. That that truth exists is one thing, but it has to be received and absorbed and internalised so that it becomes guidance and practice in "*righteousness, justice and equity*". We have to believe it. In New Testament terms Christ is made unto us wisdom. And, it is 'Christ in you' that is the hope of glory.
3. Giving. Reflecting the character of a redemptive God, it is to be given and shared so that others may benefit from it. It is offered to the simple, the inadequate, "*wretched men*" who cannot do what they know they should", - "*children of wrath*". It is also available to the inexperienced youth who need it if they are to reach maturity. Preaching the gospel is that sharing. Teaching is the follow-up until Christ is formed in you.
4. Learning. The truth – and all its implications – has to be learned thoroughly, not as rote learning with semi-automatic, superficial, reactions but internalised so that it

becomes a spontaneously motivated feature of behaviour. For that to happen there is a need to hear, listen, and 'inwardly digest' so that it becomes a 'spiritually natural' aspect of a Christian's behaviour.

While that is true of God's people throughout Scripture it also applies to all believers today.

Going back to Genesis we see a perfect world with humanity (Adam and Eve) housed in a garden where they were abundantly provided for and were 'naturally' in communion with God. Aware of Him they were at peace, experienced plenty, and knew exactly how to live life.

The tempter, God's rival, however seduced them by offering them more – the ability to "know good and evil" - by an action that spoiled their existence and robbed them of spontaneity. They became sinners and we, their descendants, are sinners also.

The outcome of that was to 'exclude' God and to become 'godless', benighted souls without knowing what to do. The spontaneous actions which followed e.g. Cain killing Abel, were an inevitable outcome of that disobedience and depravity. The result was a world where its inhabitants simply did not know what to do or "*where to put their feet in the dance of life*". How to live is/was a mystery

It was into that fallen, darkened, world that the redemptive God, in His love and mercy, sent His Son so that "*Light entered into the world*". And, "*the entrance of Thy word brings light*". There was now a "*way for man to rise to that sublime*

abode".

Faith comes by hearing, and in responding by faith to that truth the believer is born again and experiences '*Christ in you*'. And that Christ is made unto us wisdom, etc. The truth sets us free and guides us on the path of life. "*Thy word is a Lamp to my feet and a light to my way*". It enables a Christian testimony and a declaration of who and what God is. It is the ground for being "*prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within us*".

But, there is a choice. It is not automatic. We need to "*seek those things that are from above*". As Paul says in Philippians, we need to "*work out your own salvation (by having 'this mind in you') for it is Christ that works within you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*".

The remaining chapters of the introduction to Proverbs (1 – 9) set out what that wisdom is and the rest of the book (10 – 31) give examples of it in practice.

But it is based on choice, as we shall see next week and beyond.

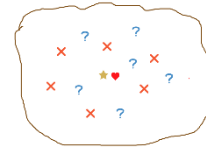
ADD DIAGRAMS?

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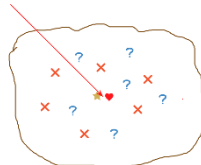
Eden with its ideal life



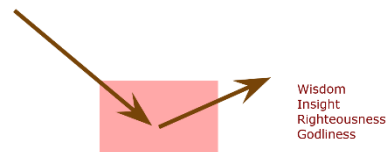
The Fall, with sinful acts and some uncertainties



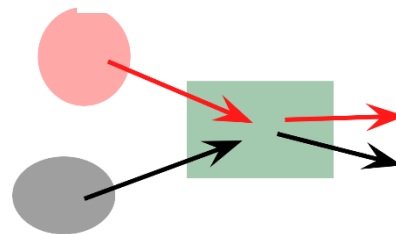
God injecting Light



Receiving 'wisdom' and letting it live through us



Outworking - choosing between God's word and Satan's temptation



Chapter 1: 8 – 33

Having, in the earlier verses of this chapter, established the nature of wisdom (the fear of God) and made clear its purpose – God imparting his superior knowledge and insight to enable believers to live a successful holy life in this present evil age – these verses begin the process of implementing that wisdom. It could be described as an App, a superior programme that enables its possessors to function more effectively.

It is what happens when someone becomes a Christian. Christ comes in to “*dwell in their hearts by faith*” with a new life that has forgiven past sins and in its resurrection power provides the enabling to live a Christian life. Paul expressed it in memorable terms in Galatians as “*The life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave His life for me*” -

That Wisdom is available and has to be received by faith and installed so that it can operate effectively. How does that start?

Verses 8 and 9 provide the key: transition. The truth in the form of sound advice is passed on, in this instance, from father and mother to son. We learn from testimony of the truth operating in other believers. Scripture says: *provoke one another ...* Christian maturity is learned from others' modelling that life and our following their example. It could be said that example is more important – certainly often more effective – than exhortation. It is our responsibility to testify and to learn from such sharing.

When we look at the content of such transmitted teaching the first focus is on abstention. The believer is surrounded by sinners and by sin. And the nature of both is to entice away from God's wisdom to the depravity of sinful actions motivated by greed and ending in destruction. That tendency to sin is not only endemic in others but is found in the believer's old nature. Paul cried out, *O wretched man that I am*'. The believer is told not only to *"not love the world"* but also to *'abstain from every appearance of sin'*. We are all aware of the *'sin that so easily besets us'*.

It is at this point that Wisdom steps up to the plate and cries out. Gospel 'preaching', whether public or private, is that. It is proclaiming the message of salvation. It is the offer, from outside this 'world' of the message of God's love and grace.

But sadly, few take heed. That is what the Lord Jesus found: *"light came into the world but men loved darkness rather than light"*. Natural tendency is to reject God and any 'wisdom' that comes through Him. It is true of the ungodly and the heathen. It can also be true of the believer. Both Isaiah and the Lord Jesus cried out: *"Who has believed our report"*. And Hebrews warns, *"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"* Such rejection has serious consequences. For those who reject – or even procrastinate – time may run out. It was Jesus who said of the self-righteous, *"I never knew you!"* Despite the claims they made of having served him. And the NT is full of serious warnings to those who waste opportunities and *'neglect'* salvation.

It emphasises the fact that human endeavour, as well as God's working, are needed to assimilate this Wisdom. The seed needs to grow. Wisdom makes it possible – and necessary – to *"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God at work in you"*. Peter says, *"Add to your faith"* and Paul says, *"make every effort"* How we respond and use that 'wisdom App' is critical.

Consequence is spelled out in the last few verses when it is clear that those who refuse will be *"destroyed by their own complacency"* while *"all who listen will live in peace, untroubled by fear of harm"*. How true Isaiah's promise, *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee"*.

But, wisdom has much more to offer as we shall see next week in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

Following on from the warnings of Chapter 1 about being enticed towards evil and refusing to heed the word of instruction and the help that comes from God, this chapter enlarges on the benefits and value of (God's) wisdom.

What becomes clear is that, while wisdom comes from God, it is complete and comprehensive but its reception and use is something that is incumbent on the recipient. As Ava pointed out, the first four verses are full of action words – actions that need to be

undertaken to comprehend and be able to use this wisdom. Growth in grace does not happen automatically: it requires human response and action. *“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found”* is an essential.

The result depends on an “if”. Compliance means that God will grant understanding and knowledge. *“The soul that seeks me surely will find me”*. And Peter expressed, *“Lord, to whom shall we go: you have the words of eternal life”*. It is what is exhorted in so many places in the NT with exhortations like, *“If you be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above”*.

The effect of such diligent seeking is not only finding but also internalising the mind of God within us so that it becomes an almost spontaneous part of us. It is what the NT speaks of as *“walking in the Spirit”*.

Chapter 2 (B)

At this point it was decided to reflect further and to review the process of receiving wisdom.

As ‘natural’ fallen beings we do not have the Light until we receive the Lord Jesus as our Saviour. That means recognising our sinfulness (born out of ignorance), repenting of it, acknowledging that Jesus dies to pay for those sins and asking Him for forgiveness and to enter into our heart. In reality, although He is welcomed in fully He in practice only occupies a small section, with Satan claiming possession of what used to be his. This means in practice that a new believer often lives like an unbeliever in many aspects of life.

That brings attention to the second aspect of the process, namely, the use and growth of that new life until *“this earthly part of me glows with Thy fire divine”*. That depends on use.

The early verses of Chapter 2 emphasise the need to seek the wisdom that God gives. It does not happen automatically. Yes, the whole is there but it is often in embryonic, condensed form and needs to develop until we come to the fullness, hence the need to *“take time to be holy”*. As a result of that seeking God responds with understanding and wisdom that equips the soul for a life *“worthy of the vocation wherewith you were called”*. The new wisdom becomes ‘internalised’ so that, with frequent and consistent use, it becomes spontaneous and spiritually natural.

At this stage we were encouraged to share ways by which we have learned to seek God and to practise it. Among the very helpful responses were reference to the value of advice given and the existence of aids such as Scripture verses (often learned in childhood) and mottoes and the words of hymns as a constant reminder. Another example was to apply oneself to practice (such as reading Scripture or even undertaking a Quiet Time), not just gloss over it as a ritual to *“tick the box”*. Prompting by others was also seen as relevant and led to blessed experiences.

It also resulted in being safeguarded and enabled to resist temptation and waywardness.

That is something we will look at in greater detail next week.

At this point there was a period of sharing which included mention of the need to seek and also examples of that principle in operation in different spheres.

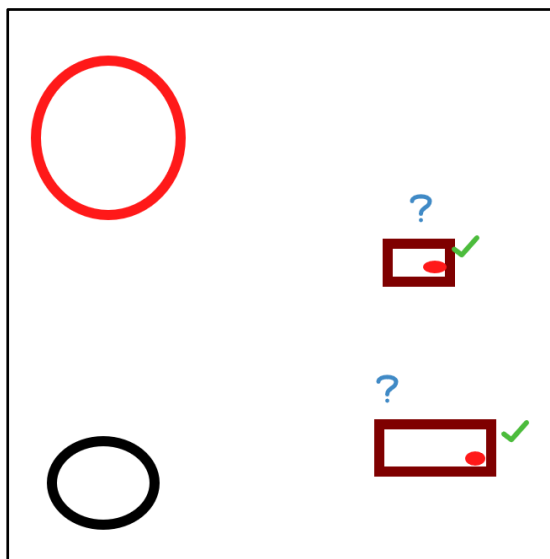
That leads to being protected from the works of evil men and the allurements of the *“adulterous woman”* and the sin of *“forsaking me, the fountain of life, hewing out broken cisterns”* and engaging in idolatry.

Some diagrams used to illustrate the giving and operation of Wisdom

Because of the Fall mankind is without God (even though the wrong act was to seek 'the knowledge of good and evil'. As such, in the world, there is confusion as to how to live.

However, God, *who so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son* offers wisdom. That gospel truth which is received by the believer in faith. They are born again and have new life.

That source of life is not the only one in operation. While alive in



the body the old life, governed by

Satan, exists and makes claims. The default position lies with it. To allow the wisdom of God to operate requires the understanding of the mind (wisdom) and a deliberate act of the will to ensure that we "seek those things which are above".

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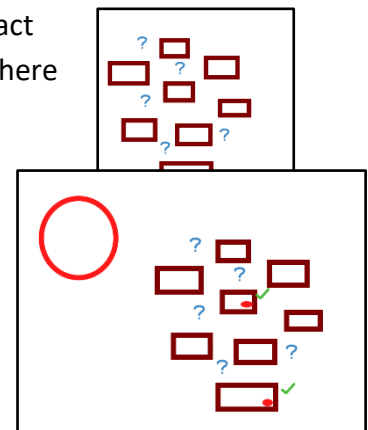
In looking at the latter part of Chapter 2 with its outline of what wisdom, duly

received and practised, offers there is clear evidence of a dimension of protection, echoing the truth of "The Lord is my Shepherd".

Wisdom protects from evil and the constant temptation to engage in unrighteousness. Natural instinct is to follow evil. Paul could cry out: "O wretched man that I am". Even Christians are prone to wander and to fall.

However, wisdom also protects from "the adulterous woman". While, no doubt, there was ample reason for Solomon to broach this topic it is a theme that is very relevant throughout the OT, particularly the Prophets where the nation – the devoted people of God – are guilty of forsaking God and following other idols or alternatives. That kind of compromise is both anathema and a severe grief to God. Here wisdom assures protection from falling into this trap.

While deliberately following the ways of evil man can be clearly defined the features of apostasy are less clear – but equally damaging. To be unfaithful to one's partner may be caused by a degree of disaffection it can also be fired by an element of attraction.



Its application to current situations is striking. What was in the OT wisdom in the sense of acquired knowledge by the time we come to the New Testament it has been clarified as more than words and information but an embodiment in the Person of Christ who, according to 1 Corinthians *"is made unto us wisdom"*. The wisdom that God imparts to the believer is Christ Himself who not only bore our sins on the Tree (and died to pay the cost) but is alive and now lives in us. Paul says, *"I live, yet not I, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me"*. So that he could encourage the Colossians by saying, *"Christ in you the hope of glory"*. It is real protection.

Chapter 3

This chapter opens with a further exhortation to listen to and cherish the wisdom that comes through witnessing transmission from reliable sources. It is learned from the testimony of others.

Its secret is in that well-known and cherished verse: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths"*. That is the crux. The risen life of Jesus has to be applied and lived out. We have to make room for Him by denying ourselves, even becoming living sacrifices so that being renewed we can taste the good and perfect acceptable will of God and, as JB Philips paraphrased it at one time, *"see things from God's point of view"*. Put succinctly, the gospel in Romans proclaims that the Jesus who died instead of us will also live instead of us. While the former is something we gladly accept the latter involves a struggle with the mind and the will; but needs to be applied *"with all your heart"* and certainly not entail leaning to our own understanding.

Following that way brings with it healing and wealth in the sense of wellbeing. Its application will entail a measure of discipline and correction administered for our good. It will express itself in generosity and care for others (*by love serve one another*) and results in peace.

Such a God-given commodity is to be cherished and appreciated as we shall see in the next chapter.

Chapters 3 and 4

On this occasion we continued with chapter 3 before taking up chapter 4. Its emphasis has been on an obligation to *"work out your own salvation"*. It echoes the command to *"seek first the Kingdom of God"* and the whole life commitment. Wisdom (God's gift) is to be received initially and then worked out.

That working out is not without its challenges. Some of these relate to priorities for the effort to *'grow in grace'* at the expense of other demands. But God is no man's debtor and

whoever loses gains a reward from God. It also entails discipline and correction, but indicators of love and positive concern.

It is cause to rejoice in the availability and possession of such wisdom. Put one way it is a tree of life. It is the plus of the gospel. Far from neglecting it there is an exhortation to continue practice not only for one's own benefit but also in relation to helping others and avoiding evil.

One factor implicit in these instructions is the existence of alternatives. Originally it was only darkness of natural behaviour. Then, when God shone His wisdom into the world and people believed it and practised its outworking there appeared '*a more excellent way*'. And, there is no doubt that God approves the good but will denounce the bad.

Chapter 4 continues this exhortational advice to follow the good way. Spoken as father to son (The mind speculates about what David advised Solomon about and now Solomon his own son with the very different outcomes in each case depicting that sincerity and integrity are far more important than professional perfection which has little substance.)

The advice is simply "*Get wisdom*". Regardless of what it may cost. The Lord Jesus had warned that '*keeping*' this life would actually end in '*losing*' it while '*losing*' it for Christ's sake will mean '*finding*' it. Following on from chapter 2's emphasis, it needs to be internalised so that it is a natural expression of the heart – the whole being – and central to everything. The previous generation had found it effective, especially in enabling right actions and reaping benefits of spiritual wellbeing from its application.

If that effectiveness was sometimes at a cost then there could be a temptation to choose what appeared to be an easy way. But there is advice to avoid the way of the evil man for they are bent on wickedness. In contrast, the way of the righteous starts with a promise at the break of day only to develop into something brighter and greater while the way of the wicked ends in darkness. That emphasises the importance of a clear testimony as a witness to that "*more excellent way*".

So, it is important to 'pay attention'. As they become internalised and spontaneous they lead to effective witness. They are actions which now come from a (dedicated heart. In practice, they eschew evil and deviance and walk in straight paths with a godly boldness based on intelligence derived from its wisdom and its working out.

Such informed, intelligent, behaviour is based on understanding. It is not a matter of blind obedience to actions or ritual but the spiritually natural expression of a Spirit-filled life. That is what Paul prayed for for the Ephesians and which Peter referred to when he advised the oppressed believers to "be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within you". The godly believer should be bold and walk a straight and confident path because they understand what the will of the Lord is.

That does not mean that temptation and neglect disappear, as we shall see in the next few chapters.

Chapter 5

In the course of encouraging a positive response to good counsel and the sharing of practical wisdom attention is suddenly diverted to the potential danger and continuing presence of unfaithfulness because of immorality.

What would have been – and still is – an accurate picture of human deviant behaviour and its pitfalls and disastrous effects can be taken to represent a vital spiritual lesson. The immoral woman of chapter 5 represents a strong temptation drawing away from godly living and posing an immense danger; more so because she seems oblivious to the effect she has and is totally irresponsible. That is in total contrast to the positive nature of God's grace and benevolence.

For some unknown reason a man is tempted to be attracted to her; and in so doing is in danger of forfeiting his life and being filled with remorse for not attending more positively to sound advice and helpful instruction. His is a life wasted.

Rather, he should enjoy his present blessing with his own life and appreciate all the joy and pleasure that such a relationship offers. In natural life such unfaithfulness can often be related to disaffection or some other lack of fulfilment. That can be true of spiritual allegiances also and so be guilty of *"forsaking me the fountain of life and hewing out broken cisterns that can hold no water"*. What a challenge for the believer. How many Christians fail to appreciate and fully enjoy all that is in Christ and the Christian faith? Inevitably there seems to be a minimalist attitude with restrictive caps or controls on Christian activity and functioning. The consequence is looking favourably at alluring alternatives. But, the hymn says: *"The dearest idol I have known, whatever that idol be. Help me to tear it from its throne; and worship only Thee."* It is so easy for a genuine, legitimate, alternative with strong similarities to the real thing, to become an alluring idol and cause a deviation.

In a challenging way the chapter speaks of a God who watches over every action of the human being. It is a reminder of the importance of the fact that "the fear of God (that awareness of Him and all that He stands for and is able to do)

The theme continues in Chapters 6 and 7. In Chapter 6, which is all about discipline, there is a warning against lusting after the immoral woman which comes after a section extolling the value of sound advice based on wisdom.

Chapter 7 describes a pathetic situation where a 'wisdom-less' man deviates toward the unthinkable and is totally beguiled by a temptress who offers great delights. Yet the unfortunate lad is unaware that he has fallen into a trap and is in danger of being dealt a fatal blow.

These are serious warnings. However, the antidote is to pay attention to the advice and wisdom that constitutes wisdom from God. Well could the Psalmist say *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path”* and *“Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee”*.

But, encouraged by such verses we have in the NT there is the obligation to practise discipline and to know that, for example, *“Greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world”* For Christ is Victor and is the one who can answer that taught prayer that included, *“Lead us not into temptation”*.

How that works out we shall see next week.

Chapter 8

The general picture so far is that Wisdom is intended to enable those who accept it to pursue a blessed life. As a result of the Fall, mankind simply does not know what to do, *“where to put your feet in the dance of life”* as Dominic Smart once put it.

God has given Wisdom (not just words but The Word, Jesus Christ) for that very purpose. It has to be **received** and then **used**. The provision is from God: the responsibility rests with the user. Unfortunately it is not automatic nor easy for there are alternatives floating around each with its own temptation to deviate from the Goal.

Looking back on the previous 7 chapters leaves us with a somewhat dismal picture. The temptations and allurements are very strong. Sadly, the performance is weak as depicted by the lazy person and lack of discipline, in spite of the advice and counsel of others.

And so, in true redemptive fashion God steps in and Wisdom is seen as a sentinel at the crossroads making its passionate plea calling the simple and the foolish to learn and benefit. It calls on the simple to come in and both espouse and use wisdom as its means of living a godly life.

Wisdom has much to offer. It speaks noble and true words. It eschews falsehood and ‘crooked words’ but offers instruction and direction which is invaluable for the pilgrim.

Wisdom has credentials. It encapsulates the fear of God in all that it does. As such it shies away from any evil way or practice. It has knowledge, insight and understanding that provides the key to how to live. It has already been put to practice for kings and rulers have exercised it in their governance. When found it proves to be of immeasurable worth commitment to it brings abundant benefit and reward.

It is not something new for it was present and involved in creation and exists from eternity to eternity. All it now requires is disciplined application. Failure to do so will be disastrous. Wisdom, truly, exercises the words of Paul in Corinthians: *“Behold, I show you a more excellent way”*.

More next week.

Chapter 9

Against the background of a pilgrimage made possible by the provision of Wisdom from God to *“know where to put your feet in the dance of life”* this chapter introduces us to two ladies and what they represent if choices are to be made between them.

In the first picture, Wisdom sits high on the hill and extends a welcome to the simple to come in and feast with her in her home. It is a home in which she has prepared good things to eat, it is plentiful and rewarding, enough to satisfy all who would come.

In stark contrast Folly is equally inviting (and alluring) but there is no evidence that she has any sustenance, has not provided anything but ‘stolen water’ and ‘secreted bread’. Her coffer are bare. She is only interested in cosmetic attraction but no substance or anything that will satisfy regardless of how appealing it might appear.

The one who responds to it will soon realise that it has been a fatal choice while the one who responds to Wisdom – and all it offers – will be abundantly satisfied.

This picture carries a significant challenge to the Christian pilgrim. Choice is crucial for the consequences are so significantly different. The right choice needs to be informed by an awareness of the substance in each source. And not only the substance (or lack of it) but also its potential and fullness. Romans reminds us that the God who *“gave us his Son will also, with him, freely give us all things”* And Corinthians declares the *“eye has not seen or ear heard the things that God has prepared for those who love Him”*.

With that kind of knowledge, Joshua (in another context) challenged the people to *“Choose you this day whom you will serve”* and added, *“As for me I will serve the Lord”*.

In the middle of the chapter there is a set of statements that seem to be out of place, yet they represent an important principle summed up in the word of Jesus, *“To him who has will be given ... and from him who doesn't have will (that nothing) be taken away”*. Peter says, *“Add to your faith, etc.”* Spiritual growth requires desire to motivate the right choices which will never come to those who refuse, ignore or despise. Christian maturity is found from feeding on the Living Bread found in Wisdom's house.

Review Chapters 1 – 9

The final meeting of this session, led by Manuel, took the form of reviewing the significant teaching of this first section of the Book of Proverbs. Many people took part and shared the highlights for them from these chapters.

Following an introduction and recap of the purpose of Proverbs – to provide the wherewithal for holy living in a godless world – we were reminded of the key words and concepts in the introduction to the book. Words like wisdom, knowledge, understanding, insight and instruction not only dominated this first part but permeated the whole section because of the significance and relevance of such elements, not only in OT times but also in current Christian living.

The Christian life is generated, informed and enabled by that wisdom which comes from God. God, and his omniscience and omnipotence is that wisdom. In NT times and since it is embodied in Christ Jesus in whom dwells all the fulness of God and who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

It has to be received by faith and allowed to develop in each believer. It is essentially transmitted through testimony. It involves choices: listening to advice and counsel from others who have experienced its value and effectiveness or succumbing to the ever-present allurements of alternatives which only lead to destruction.

Accepting it means reorienting the path of life. But, wisdom means more than knowing: it involves action and outworking in practice.

It is walking in the fear of God: obeying his word, seeking to please him and avoiding that which brings him grief.

In an era of despair, discouragement and fear we were reminded of James' words: *If a man lack wisdom, let him ask of God .. who gives liberally.*

23.11.2023