

Lesson 99: The Book of Proverbs

Scripture: The **fear** of the LORD is the beginning of **wisdom**, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Life is Dangerous, God is Everlasting Love.

That is Proverbs in a nutshell. The word “proverb” means general truth or piece of advice. But some of the proverbs are pure promises! They are the ones that teach us who God is, what He is like, and how much He wants to have a close relationship with His created ones. The book of Proverbs teaches us that life is full of tough decisions and situations, but that God wants to be there with you through them.

Imagine a terrible storm—lightning cracks across the sky, thunder shakes the earth, and the wind howls like a wild beast. The rain falls so hard you can barely see your hands in front of you. Now imagine being out in that storm all alone, without shelter, no map, and no safe place to go. How would you feel? Probably scared, right? Lost. Exposed.

But now, imagine something different. Imagine you’re in the same storm, but this time, someone strong, kind, brave and wise is walking with you—someone who knows the way to safety. This person carries a light that cuts through the dark, and they lead you through the storm like a shelter where you are completely safe. You’re still aware of how powerful the storm is, but you’re not afraid anymore because you know you’re protected.

The Bible tells us that there **really is** someone like that who can protect us from the fiercest storm. His name is YHWH, and is also known as God, LORD, Creator and Father. He created the entire universe, and is not afraid of anything, He is mighty, fierce, powerful **AND** loving. People who know Him closely are not scared of Him like you’d fear a bully or a monster. But they **DO** have what the Proverbs (and the whole Bible) calls the **Fear of the LORD**, which is knowing how powerful, holy, and good He is so that you always want to be close to Him, and would hate to have anything come between Him and you.

The book of Proverbs tells us that true wisdom – God’s Wisdom – can’t come to us without the Fear of the LORD. Instead, those who **don’t** have the Fear of the LORD have the opposite of wisdom – foolishness. Whereas the Fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, **selfishness** (which is essentially the opposite of the Fear of the LORD) **is the beginning of foolishness**.

God gives wisdom to those who delight in the **Fear of the LORD**, and seek it and treasure it. But it is more than just wanting to be close to God. The sad fact is sin has separated people from God. Adam sinned, so did **all** of his children for all time. Sin is what separates us from God, the Strong Tower. It’s not just the bad things we do—

it’s the brokenness inside all of us that makes us want to go our own way instead of God’s way. The Bible says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Because of sin, we’re like people stuck in a storm with no map, no shelter, and no way to reach God on our own.

But Proverbs also teaches us about God’s grace; it will be extended to those who are humble (not be prideful or selfish) before him (Prov. 3:34); recognizing that their sin is what caused a separation from God. That promise was fulfilled when Jesus came to earth. God didn’t leave us out in the storm. He sent His Son, Jesus, who embodies wisdom and love (1 Cor. 1: 24-30), to rescue us. Jesus lived a perfect life, always close to the Father, always delighting in the Fear of the LORD. Then, Jesus did something amazing: He gave His life for us. When He died on the cross, He took the punishment for our sin. And when He rose from the dead three days later, He proved His power over death is available to all who call on His Name as Savior and Lord. Jesus made a way for us to be close to God again; **repent of our sin and confess Jesus as LORD**. It’s so amazing it can make us tremble at God’s tremendous Grace and Love in a reverent loving fear of Him.

When you have the fear of the Lord, you gain wisdom (James 3:13-18). You don’t just know things—you know how to live in a way that draws you close to God and others. And when you live that way, you start to notice something amazing: your life becomes like a light in the storm. People see your kindness, your patience, and your love, and they start to wonder, *Where does that light come from?* That’s when you get to tell them about Jesus and how He rescued you and gave you this treasure of wisdom. That’s your **testimony**—your story of how God changed your life. And that’s a super treasure that can be shared with others.

Life is dangerous, filled with many crossroads, that require wisdom and insight to make the right decisions. Wise people are smart enough to be fearful of the dangers and toils in the world, and desire to grow in the loving Fear of the LORD. In the Book of Proverbs, God promises that He wants to give that wisdom to those who put their hope in Him, and draw close to Him.

Searching for treasure in the storm

Wisdom is a treasure, and like the saying goes, “it takes money to make money”, the treasure of wisdom leads to life’s greatest Treasures:

- **Being in Relationship** with God and others
- Your **story and testimony** of God’s transforming power that comes out of a life of **being in relationship with Him and others: Glory to God in our thoughts, actions and deeds**.