

I. What is Wisdom?

A. Toward a definition: “The reasoned search for specific ways to ensure personal well-being in everyday life, to make sense of the extreme adversity and vexing anomalies, and to transmit this hard-earned knowledge so that successive generations will embody it – wisdom – is universal.” (Crenshaw, p. 3)

1. Involves personal effort expended to acquiring it: *Proverbs 2:1-5*

- My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, 2 making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; 3 yes, if you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, 4 if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures; 5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

2. It is also the gift of God: *Prov. 2:6-8*

- For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; 7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, 8 guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his saints.

3. Wisdom begins with fear of the Lord: *Prov 9:10; Sir 1:14*

- The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. (Prov 9: 10)
- With him who fears the LORD it will go well at the end on the day of his death he will be blessed. (Sir 1:14)
- Prudence and humility are essential to the fear of the Lord:
 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bone (Prov 3:5-8)

4. What does Wisdom do?

- Wisdom keeps the Law: (Deut. 4:5-6)
 - Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. 6 Keep them and do them; for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in

the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'
(Ex. 4:5-6)

- Wisdom is essential to leadership: *Deuteronomy 34:9*
 - And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him; so the people of Israel obeyed him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. 10 And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.

5. Wisdom's goal is a good life: Prov 3:1-3

- My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; 2 for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare will they give you. 3 Let not loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them about your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.
- And Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and were happy. And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. [And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree all the days of Solomon

6. Where do we find Wisdom in the Scriptures?

- Job, Psalms, Wisdom of Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Torah.