

Survey of the Bible part 96 Wise Sayings from Wise One's

By way of recap, we've seen how Solomon has compiled the wise sayings of a number of wise men, including himself, and it was his particular proverbs we saw last time as they are contained in chapters 10-22.

The third and fourth sections of Proverbs contain the wise sayings of different people and we find these sections from chapters 22-24. And it will be these sections that we'll look at today.

Now the reason that people make the distinction between the actual words of Solomon up to this point, and the words of other wise people, being introduced into this section, is because of what we see in verse 17 of chapter 22.

Proverbs 22:17 ¹⁷ Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your mind to my knowledge;

And so, it is as though Solomon has finished up what he believed were the words God would have him share and now he makes the segue into the words of others that would certainly not exclude his input, but these words would have emanated from others as he compiles them and maybe tweaks them as the Spirit of God gives him utterance.

And so, he reminds his readers to incline their ears to hear the words that God would have them hear. By the way, the word incline in the Hebrew carries with it the idea of bending down as if to draw close to the one speaking as if to make sure you hear every word.

But again, so as not to confuse the issue as to why these words are so important regarding wisdom we must always go back to the bedrock of wisdom as found in the Proverbs.

Where does true wisdom come from and to what end to we gain it?

^{NAU} **Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

The entire book of Proverbs must be seen in this context, otherwise it just becomes another book with wise sayings that only apply to this life. And in this next section of Proverbs Solomon reminds us of this.

Proverbs 22:18-19 ¹⁸ For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, That they may be ready on your lips. ¹⁹ So that your trust may be in the LORD, I have taught you today, even you.

And so, this wisdom of God is meant to be within us so that they may be ready on our lips.

By the way, where in the N.T. do we have a similar saying regarding being ready to have God's words on our lips?

1 Peter 3:15 ¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

Peter tells us to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts as Solomon tells us to keep this word from God within us. It is no coincidence that Jesus is called the Word who is in us.

But then Peter says to always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account of the hope that is in you, even as Solomon says to have these words ready on our lips as we trust the Lord.

And so, again we see that the reason for these wise sayings is ultimately to equip us to be disciples who can testify to the life that we have in Christ both in word and in deed.

Proverbs 23:26-28 ²⁶ Give me your heart, my son, And let your eyes delight in my ways. ²⁷ For a harlot is a deep pit And an adulterous woman is a narrow well. ²⁸ Surely she lurks as a robber, And increases the faithless among men.

Now we can take a passage like this and conclude that Solomon is giving us a wise word about morals and ethics. Harlotry and adultery are certainly things that we as God's people should avoid.

As Solomon tells us here in this passage harlotry and adultery lurks as a robber which is instructive of being robbed of our character before a holy God.

But we must keep in mind the setting in which Solomon is writing. The nation of Israel is at its pinnacle during the reign of Solomon. There is no other nation or king like Israel and Solomon respectively.

But Solomon and Israel are not in their position because they are so good, but rather because of the promise of God to redeem a people for Himself.

But what was the warning from God to this people regarding harlotry long before Solomon came onto the scene?

Exodus 34:14-16 ¹⁴ -- for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God-- ¹⁵ otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, ¹⁶ and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons *also* to play the harlot with their gods.

Leviticus 20:6-7 ⁶ 'As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. ⁷ 'You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.

Yes, it is wise not to entertain harlots or adulterous affairs, but the bigger picture that Solomon is painting is that Israel must never consider any other God but the One true God, and by extension to the Israel of God today, the church, we must never entertain the wisdom of this world in favor of the wisdom from God as it relates to who our Messiah is and what He has done in redeeming a people for Himself.

We could take verse 26 as a direct statement from our heavenly Father.

Proverbs 23:26 ²⁶ Give me your heart, my son, And let your eyes delight in my ways.

Whoring after other gods by the church is something that God warns against, just as He warned Israel, and yet both have done so and we see the culmination of this warning to the church being worked out in history as the great apostasy begins to come to fruition.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 ^{NAU} Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ² that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter

as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³ *Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,* ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

The important question here is what is apostasy?

It's a defection, a revolt against the truth.

So, is it possible for the world-at-large to apostosize?

No. Why?

Apostasy assumes you were in the truth before you rejected the truth. So the apostasy, by default, must be taking place within the camp that holds the truth.

And what camp would that be when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians?

^{NAU} **1 Timothy 4:1** But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

This falling away or departing from the faith assumes that these people at one point professed the faith. And of course there has been many people from the time of Paul to this present day who have done this.

But the point that Paul makes to the Thessalonians is that this apostasy will be headed up by Satan himself who will influence the church, as he did with Eve, to not trust God at His word and pursue a path without God's truth.

And so, when Paul says, "the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God", he is speaking about someone who is in the church, which is what the designation "temple of God" means.

The temple of God was always where the people of God met with the Lord. You and I in Christ are referred to as a holy temple.

Ephesians 2:19-22 ¹⁹ So then *you* are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and *are of God's household*, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, ²¹ in whom *the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord*, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

There is nothing more intimate than to be in the midst of this temple with God. But there will be a pseudo-temple, a false church within the church, or true people of God, where the man of lawlessness, that is the one who opposes God's truth will set himself up as God Himself, which is to take God's place within the church.

Some say that this is the Roman Catholic church with the pope who sits in the place of Christ. And though it is true that Rome has apostasized from the faith, they no longer represent the true church and haven't for hundreds of years despite the press they get from the media as being the true representation of Christianity.

In the end, when Satan is released to deceive the nations, he will be the one responsible for dismantling the church to the degree that he and his representatives will deny Christ and yet we know that in the end not even he can accomplish such a task. And Paul points this out to the Thessalonians as well.

^{NAU} **2 Thessalonians 2:8** Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

Here Paul is referring to the last day, the great day of God's wrath, the same day that the saints will be resurrected to be with the Lord forever, the same day Jesus spoke of in John 6.

John 6:39-40 ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

By the way, Martha understood this regarding her brother Lazarus when Jesus confronted her about the resurrection.

John 11:24 ²⁴ Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

This last day is also characterized by the last trumpet when Christ finally returns for His people, of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

But the thing that God says is that there will be a general denial of the truth as the apostasy within the church seems to win out over the truth.

When we see this, and we are seeing signs of it today, look for the Lord who saves and who will win in the end as he slays with the breath of His mouth the final affront of those who come against Him.

Solomon warned against this almost three thousand years ago and the Lord promises to put this rebellion against Him to an end one day. And today we see the birth pangs of this apostasy of the church all around us.

The church has become drunk with the wisdom of this world as many quarters of the church staggers to walk in the paths of people like Charles Darwin, Immanuel Kant and the rest of the philosophers of this age. Oh, wait a minute, Solomon spoke of these folks as well.

Proverbs 23:30-35 ³⁰ Those who linger long over wine, Those who go to taste mixed wine. ³¹ Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down smoothly; ³² At the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper. ³³ Your eyes will see strange things And your mind will utter perverse things. ³⁴ And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. ³⁵ "They struck me, *but* I did not become ill; They beat me, *but* I did not know *it*. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink."

Is Solomon warning the wayward person not to find his solace in the bottom of a bottle? Probably, but the real wisdom here that he shares has nothing to do with being a drunkard. The real issue here, like the harlotry he alludes to, is still related to the group he is

addressing; Israel, as a nation, who is inclined to dull their senses with the world's wisdom and whore after other gods.

Those who linger over wine are those who won't stop drinking. Those in the body of Christ who have drunk deep of the philosophy of men have abandoned the truth of God in favor of a temporary high that only satisfies in this world.

Proverbs 23:31 ³¹ Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down smoothly;

There is something enticing about the world and its ways, especially when you conclude, as did Eve, has God really said?

In other words, do I really have to approach this life as if I'm accountable to the creator? Do I really have to align myself with the One who said obey and live, disobey me and die?

Or do I, like Eve, listen to the one who said, you will surely not die.

Eve became drunk on the enticement of a lie about a fruit that seemed good for food, a delight to the eyes, and desirable to make *one* wise,

But Solomon says that this kind of wisdom will bite you in the end.

Proverbs 23:32-33 ³² At the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper. ³³ Your eyes will see strange things And your mind will utter perverse things.

Can too much alcohol do this to people? Yes, but Solomon has bigger things to point out to Israel and by extension, to the church today. The lie in the garden is making a come-back among the people of God today, because many in the church are drinking deeply of the poison of this world, and though they may be in the party mode of thinking their celebration apart from God's word is going to save them, in the end it will bite them like a serpent.

And that serpent is the same one Eve dealt with, and I might add, unsuccessfully.

When the fear of the Lord is not before the eyes of His people, they fear nothing and no one, because they have replaced the one true God with themselves and ultimately God will be pushed out of

His temple with complete lawlessness, which is to say complete disregard for the word of God.

But, in reality, God is not pushed out of His temple, because the only temple that will stand is the temple of God in which He resides by His Spirit, His people.

Yes, the outward temple, the outward manifestation with its steeples and buildings may seem to have excluded God, but nothing, not even the gates of hell can stop the true church from going forward with the truth of who God is and what He has done in sending His Son to purchase a people for Himself.

Proverbs 23:33-34 ³³ Your eyes will see strange things And your mind will utter perverse things. ³⁴ And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast.

The eyes of those who drink of the world's ways cannot see straight. And their minds are not thinking after the thoughts of Christ. What they call wisdom is utter foolishness as they do things that are consistent with that wisdom; lying down in the middle of the sea or on to of a mast.

Proverbs 23:35 ³⁵ "They struck me, *but* I did not become ill; They beat me, *but* I did not know *it*. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink."

When you have bought a lie nothing of the truth seems to phase you. Like the drunk who has no idea of how he has been abused in his stupor, and who, when he finally comes to, decides the solution to his problem is to have another drink, the one in the church who does not seek the wisdom of the Lord, will not acknowledge the truth whether they're beat over the head with it or not.

And in the final analysis their solution is more of the world. "I will seek another drink."

I'll end with this.

1 Corinthians 1:20-21 ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

1 John 2:16-17 ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

1 John 5:4-5 ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?