

The Pathway to Eternal Wisdom

[Part 6]

Proverbs 3:1 [King James] *“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:”*

The Hebrew word translated “law” is “*torah*” fundamentally means “*direction*” and the Hebrew word translated “*commandments*” is “*mitzvah*” which can apply to human or divine commands, and comes from a root word meaning “*to put in order*”. Including the word “*heart*”, Hebrew “*lêb*” indicates that this should be central to our whole life, thoughts and actions.

Whereas **chapter 2** of Proverbs emphasised the moral stability which grows with Godly Wisdom, **chapter 3** particularly promises peace of mind.

This is the result of ongoing godliness, three aspects of this mark the main divisions of this chapter.

Glad commitment [verses 1-10] – we will see in this section a childlike trust [verses 5-6] that is rooted in sound teaching, [verses 1-4] and expressed by bold obedience [verse 9].

Proverbs 3:2 [King James] *“For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.”*

The Hebrew word translated “*length*” and “*long*” is “*ôrek*” meaning to make long, from root meaning deferred, to tarry or drawn out, for ever.

When we meditate on this we can see this is how to get more out of every day of our life. This is the wish of most human beings!

Hebrew word translated “*life*” is “*chay*” from a root meaning to be refreshed or revived.

Hebrew word translated “*peace*” is “*shâlôm*” meaning wellbeing, happy and prosperity as well as safe and at rest mentally.

Hebrew word translated “*add*” is “*yâcaph*” meaning augmented, prolonged, increase by giving and receiving more.

What more could we ever ask for in our physical life here on earth!

Proverbs 3:3 [King James] *“Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:”*

“*Mercy*” Hebrew “*cheched*” meaning favour, pity and loving kindness.

“*Truth*” Hebrew “*emeth*” meaning established, certainty from a root word meaning trust and stability.

These are major characteristics of the Creator God’s faithfulness to His promises.

Also characteristics that we should be seeking through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

“*Forsake*” – Hebrew “*âzab*” meaning to loosen, relinquish, leave, fail to apply or refuse.

Hence “*bind*” Hebrew “*qashar*” meaning to tie together and make stronger and “*write*” Hebrew “*kâthab*” meaning to record, subscribe and engrave.

“*Table*” Hebrew “*lûach*” meaning a polished stone or table on which we have engraved these two words ‘Mercy’ and ‘Truth’.

“Heart” Hebrew “*lêb*” the driving force of our existence.

These are principles we should meditate on, act on, and glory in as they increase in our lives.

Proverbs 3:4 [King James] *“So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.”*

“So” Hebrew “*kên*” meaning surely and therefore, we will “find” Hebrew “*mâtsâ*” meaning will come forth or be present.

“Favour” Hebrew “*chên*” meaning kindness and graciousness and the root of the word “*chanan*” is to receive this kindness as an inferior to the person who extends it to us, God or humans in authority.

“Understanding” Hebrew “*sêkel*” meaning success through applying discretion and prudence from the intelligence derived from the Holy Spirit working in our human spirit. [**Job 32:8**]

Proverbs 3:5 [King James] *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”*

“Trust” Hebrew “*batach*” to be confident and sure to the point of careless surrender and being preserved.

“Lean” Hebrew “*shâan*” to support one’s self, this is **not** what God wants us to do but to trust Him with every aspect of our lives.

“Understanding” Hebrew “*bîyaâh*” discernment, intelligence, that is our own viewpoint which is so limited compared to that of God, our Creator and Sustainer.

Proverbs 3:6 [King James] *“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

“Acknowledge” Hebrew “*yâda*” a root word meaning to know, being aware of and having fellowship with and receiving care and instruction from God.

“Direct” Hebrew “*yâshar*” to make straight or even.

This promise from God offers more than guidance, also includes to bring us to our appointed goal. [**Job 14:15; Ephesians 2:10**]

Example of God doing this is Cyrus, **Isaiah 45:13** and also **Isaiah 40:3-5** referring ultimately to the work of John the Baptist. [**Matthew 3:3**]

Hebrews 12:12-13 [NIV] *“Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees! ‘Make level paths for your feet,’ so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.”*

In the context of discipline God is not only a disciplining parent but also a demanding coach who pushes us to our limits and requires our lives to be disciplined. Although we may **not** feel strong enough to push on to victory, we will be able to accomplish the goal that God has set us as we follow our High Priest and Saviour, Jesus the Christ, and draw on the strength of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

We then can use our growing strength to help and to encourage others around us who are weak and struggling.

In all this the Christian Bible is central to the progress we make in life towards the Kingdom of God our ultimate goal.

Proverbs 3:7 [King James] *“Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.”*

The personal cost of “*acknowledging God*” is now illustrated.

Not wise [2451] in our own eyes. It is natural because of built-in human pride, influenced by Satan, that we feel we know what is best for ourselves.

We could say it is in our genes, as a result of the decision Eve took. [**Genesis 3:3-6**]

God has to repeatedly remind us of this weakness that all humans have. [**Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 14:12; Proverbs 16:25**]

Jesus Christ introduced Himself as the way of life we should be following, **not** our own way. [**John 14:6**]

“*Fear*” Hebrew “*yârê*” meaning dread and reverence of our Creator God.

Realising that our present and future life are totally in His hands. [**Job 14:1, 5, 14-15; Psalms 90:10-12**]

That there will be a time of judgement. [**2 Corinthians 5:10-12; Romans 14:10-12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Ecclesiastes 11:9**]

As a result of this knowledge we should “*depart*” Hebrew “*sûwr*” meaning to remove, turn away from, be without “*evil*” [7451].

Proverbs 3:8 [NIV] “*This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.*”

The result of applying what is presented to us in **v7**.

“*Health*” Hebrew “*riphuwth*” medicine or cure.

Proverbs 3:8 [Living Bible] “*... then you will be given renewed health and vitality.*”

Remember that what is being discussed is our mental and spiritual life, **not** our physical body!

Proverbs 3:9-10 [NIV] “*Honour the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*”

Part of our worship and reverence of our Creator God involves giving of our substance, time and money.

This teaching is presented in agricultural terms of that day. [**Proverbs 11:25; Exodus 23:19; Deuteronomy 18:4**]

“*Firstfruits*” refers to giving to God the first and best portion of the harvest. [**Deuteronomy 26:9-10**]

Applied to today’s society we are to give to God the first part of our income, which will demonstrate that God **not** possessions has first place in our lives, and that all our resources belong to Him. [**Deuteronomy 10:14; Haggai 2:8**]

As a result of this attitude of mind God will bless us.

Proverbs 3:11-12 [King James] “*My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*”

The childlike trust of **verses 1-10** now progress into a more mature relationship of a person being moulded by God into a child who will be acceptable in His created family, the Kingdom of God.

“*Despise*” Hebrew “*mâac*” meaning spurn, abhor, refuse, reject.

“Chastening” Hebrew “*môwcêrâh*” meaning a course correction, **not** a punishment.

“Weary” Hebrew “*qûwts*” meaning to sever ourselves from something, to abhor or loathe being vexed by it.

“Correction” Hebrew “*towkêchâh*” meaning reasoning with rebuke and reproof all part of a teaching situation.

In the end to justify and convict. [**Isaiah 1:18-20**]

This correction from our Creator God shows just how much He loves us, as a potential child in His created family. [**Hebrews 12:5-13**]

Proverbs 3:13 [NIV] “*Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding,*”

“Happy” Hebrew “*esher*” meaning blessed.

Human thinking puts gain at the heart of being blessed, but in God’s Word the Christian Bible, happiness is the product of many different situations in life.

Happiness at the birth of a child. [**Genesis 30:13**]

Happiness is being God’s chosen people. [**Deuteronomy 33:29**]

Happiness is being disciplined by God. [**Job 5:17; Psalms 94:12**]

Happiness is where a family that has God as its head. [**Psalms 127:1-5**]

Happiness is to fear God and follow His directives. [**Psalms 128:1-2**]

Happiness is whose hope is in the Creator God. [**Psalms 146:5**]

Happiness is embracing God’s wisdom. [**Proverbs 3:18**]

Happiness is being kind to those in need. [**Proverbs 14:21**]

Happiness is to trust in the Creator God. [**Proverbs 16:20**]

Happiness is keeping the laws of love that God has given us. [**Proverbs 29:18**]

Happiness and blessed are same word in Greek – “*makariōs*”.

Happiness is serving other people. [**John 13:3-17**]

Happiness is preaching the gospel message. [**Acts 26:2**]

Happiness is having a clear conscience. [**Romans 14:22-23**]

Happiness is having patience endurance. [**James 5:11**]

Happiness is suffering for holding on to Christian principles. [**1 Peter 3:14**]

Happiness is being insulted for being a Christian. [**1 Peter 4:14**]

Happiness is in the giving **not** the receiving. [**Acts 20:35**]

Happiness will be the second coming of Jesus Christ. [**Titus 2:13**]

Happiness is when a nation has honest leadership. [**Ecclesiastes 10:16-17, Living Bible**]

Happiness is **not** following the advice of evil men. [**Psalms 1:1**]

Happiness is having our sins forgiven by God. [**Psalms 32:1**]

Happiness is being kind to the poor. [**Psalms 41:1**]

Happiness is being called to live in God's presence. [**Psalms 65:4**]

Happiness is singing praises to the Creator God. [**Psalms 84:4**]

Happiness is following God's direction. [**Psalms 84:5**]

Happiness is being just and righteous. [**Psalms 106:3**]

Happiness is seeking to know God. [**Psalms 119:2**]

Happiness is holding the Creator God in awe and fear. [**Psalms 128:1**]

Our righteousness will bring happiness to our children. [**Proverbs 20:7**]

Blessed are all who wait for God to act in their lives. [**Isaiah 30:18**]

Blessed are all who have faith in Jesus Christ without seeing Him in the flesh. [**John 20:29**]

Blessed are all who die having had faith in Jesus Christ and followed Him. [**Revelation 14:13**]

Blessed are all who are part of the first resurrection. [**Revelation 20:6**]

Every one of the above scriptures are well worth meditating on and experiencing in our own life.

Proverbs 3:14-18 [NIV] *“for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honour. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.”*

We now have a list of all the wonderful benefits of embracing Godly Wisdom, and applying it to life.

“*Pleasantness*” – Hebrew “*noam*” meaning delight, splendour or grace and beauty, everything that is agreeable.

“*Peace*” – Hebrew “*shalom*” everything that is good for our wellbeing.

“*Tree*” – Hebrew “*êts*” indicates firmness of wood, from root word meaning to fasten.

“*Life*” – Hebrew “*chay*” meaning a living thing, from root word meaning to revive, or keep alive, give promised life, restore to life.

What we are being told is that to embrace Godly Wisdom is to fasten our lives onto the promise of the gift of eternal life from our Creator God.

Proverbs 3:19-20 [King James] *“The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.”*

The perfect, functional physical creation was God applying His wisdom [2451], understanding [995] and knowledge [1847].

Wisdom is the guiding principle of God in His physical creation, and remains so in the government of the universe whether cataclysmic events [the reference “*the depths are broken up*” could be flood of **Genesis 7:11**] or in the regular moistening of the earth on which life depends, the dew and rain.

Quiet Integrity –

Proverbs 3:21-26 [NIV] *“My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble; when you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.”*

What is the difference between “*sound judgement*” and “*discernment*”?

“*Discernment*” – Hebrew “*mezimmâh*” meaning a thought-out purposeful plan, an ability to think about and make correct choices, a God-given natural ability in some people.

“*Sound judgement*” – Hebrew “*tushyâh*” meaning sound, that is God-given, wisdom, an ability to substantiate a correct decision, with righteousness and equity.

All this becomes clear that Godly Wisdom means walking with the Creator God throughout our lives, allowing Him to teach us.

A promised serenity in our physical lives from the applying of good management based on God’s sound principles.

At a deeper level from the realisation of God’s personal care.

Proverbs 3:27-28 [NIV] *“Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbour, ‘Come back later; I’ll give it tomorrow’, when you now have it with you.”*

These verses bring out the injustice of delayed payment. [**Leviticus 19:13**]

Delaying to do good is inconsiderate and unfair, whether it is repaying a loan, paying wages or fulfilling a promise.

Withholding destroys trust between people. We need to be eager and prompt to do good to others as we would like to have good done to us.

Proverbs 3:29-30 [NIV] *“Do not plot harm against your neighbour, who lives trustfully near you. Do not accuse a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm.”*

The neighbourly qualities which Proverbs urges on us, add up to nothing less than love towards our neighbour, although the word itself is not prominent.

The wise person is notably a person of peace, not to start strife or to spread it. [**Proverbs 25:8-9**]

James 3:17 [NIV] *“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.”*

Peace-loving and consideration are part of Godly Wisdom.

1 Corinthians 12:8 [NIV] *“To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,”*

Wisdom is one of the gifts of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

False accusations against other people is **not** showing the love that underlines Proverbs but is expressing the nature of Satan. [**John 8:44; Revelation 12:10**]

Proverbs 3:31 [NIV] *“Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways,”*

“Violent” – Hebrew “*châmâc*” meaning false, wrong, unjust, unrighteous, oppressor using violence.

“Choose” – Hebrew “*bâchar*” meaning try, select, join [any of their ways of doing things.]

“Envy” – Hebrew “*qânâ*” meaning to be provoked to jealousy.

Proverbs 3:32 [NIV] “*for the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence.*”

“Detests” – Hebrew “*tôêbâh*” meaning disgusting, abomination, abhorrent.

“Perverse” – Hebrew “*lûwz*” meaning to turn aside and become united with, wrapped up with, obstinate.

“Confidence” – Hebrew “*côwd*” meaning intimate confidence, close deliberation, counsel.

The overriding reason against envy of the violent person is that we must choose between two extremes, being abhorrent in God’s eyes or being in His intimate friendship.

Proverbs 3:33 [King James] “*The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.*”

“House” – Hebrew “*bayith*” family, or home of the wicked.

“Habitation” – Hebrew “*nâvâh*” a dwelling place with the sense of satisfaction and lovely, used in conjunction of the Temple of God, and permanent dwelling place.

The family of the wicked is under a curse while the family and dwelling place of those justified by God is one of tranquil permanence.

Proverbs 3:34 [NIV] “*He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.*”

“Mocks” – Hebrew “*lûwts*” to make a mouth, have in derision, scornful. [**James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5-6**]

Human pride is an abomination to the Creator God. It was pride that turned Lucifer [a light bringer] into Satan an enemy of God. [**Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17**]

Proverbs 3:35 [NIV] “*The wise inherit honour, but fools he holds up to shame.*”

Godly Wisdom will in the end bring to those who learn and use it, honour.

Those who ignore Godly Wisdom will in the end be shown to be the fools they are.