

Title: An Interlude on Wisdom

Number: 0622Job28:1-28(28)

Text: 28.1-28

Central Idea: Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find

Date: June 26, 2022

{Read Text / Prayer}

1 “Surely there is a mine for silver And a place where they refine gold. 2 “Iron is taken from the dust, And copper is smelted from rock. 3 “Man puts an end to darkness, And to the farthest limit he searches out The rock in gloom and deep shadow. 4 “He sinks a shaft far from habitation, Forgotten by the foot; They hang and swing to and fro far from men. 5 “The earth, from it comes food, And underneath it is turned up as fire. 6 “Its rocks are the source of sapphires, And its dust contains gold. 7 “The path no bird of prey knows, Nor has the falcon’s eye caught sight of it. 8 “The proud beasts have not trodden it, Nor has the fierce lion passed over it. 9 “He puts his hand on the flint; He overturns the mountains at the base. 10 “He hews out channels through the rocks, And his eye sees anything precious. 11 “He dams up the streams from flowing, And what is hidden he brings out to the light. 12 “But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?

[i] Patrick Brandt

G. uses various people in our lives at various times. For me, as a new Xn, a key person G. used was a man named Patrick Brandt. Patrick owned t/nearby Xn bookstore, Carpenter’s Village, in Tempe, AZ. He was also a Xn counselor. When I was about 20 yo I made an appt. w/him to talk about some things I was struggling with.

He ended up becoming a key influence in my life. It was Patrick who intro. me to t/ministry of JM (whom G. used to instill w/i me a desire to preach) // encouraged me to go to college when I had no plans to do so. In t/mid-80s I ended up at what is now AZ Xn Univ. w/my studies leading me toward an academic pastoral ministry w/i t/local CH.

I lost touch w/Patrick over t/yrns and was saddened to recently learn that he had been stricken w/Alzheimer's disease and passed away.

If you asked Patrick how you could pray for him he'd always reply, "Pray for wisdom." Patrick was big on living in t/light of G's wisdom. Worthy prayer.

[ii] What is Wisdom?

Many defs. Spurgeon: "Wisdom is the right use of knowledge."

For simplicity sake: Wisdom is practical truth.

In that sense, it differs from mere knowl.

2+2 = 4 may be true, but it's not wisdom.

BOP is a book of wisdom / practical truth. ==>

Prov. 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Provs like this are pract. truths / aphorisms that we can refer to.

[iii] Book of Proverbs contains a single chapter that is especially devoted to wisdom — chapter 8

There that wisdom is personified (wisdom speaks / takes on a voice).

Selected verses from that chapt. ==>

1 Does not wisdom call, And understanding lift up her voice?

10-11 10 “Take my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold. 11 “For wisdom is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her.

13 “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.

15 “By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice.

17-19 17 “I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me. 18 “Riches and honor are with me, Enduring wealth and righteousness. 19 “My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, And my yield better than choicest silver.

22-23 22 “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. 23 “From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.

30-35 30 Then I was beside Him, as a master workman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, 31 Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And having my delight in the sons of men. 32 “Now therefore, O sons, listen to me, For blessed are they who keep my ways. 33 “Heed instruction and be wise, And do not neglect it. 34 “Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts. 35 “For he who finds me finds life And obtains favor from the LORD.

11 *“For wisdom is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her.*

18 *“Riches and honor are with me, Enduring wealth and righteousness. 19 “My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, And my yield better than choicest silver.*

13a *“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil . . .*

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find.

What we see in Job 28 . . . (Job = wisdom literature).

[iv] This is a pivotal chapter

Cycles of speeches between Job & t/3 friends have come to an end.

Chapt. 27 = Job's Defense Rests: A Vow of Innocence

Chapter 28 is different. Speaker assumed to be Job. But there are no protests, no accusations, complaints.

Quiet in t/midst of t/storm / eye of hurricane. It's all about wisdom.

I call it an Interlude — an interlude on wisdom.

Serves as a bridge between t/speeches in chapt 4–27 & Job's final words in 29–31 (31 concludes: "the words of Job are ended").

"The wisdom chapter is distinct from anything in the Book of Job. Commentators discuss whether these are Job's words or those of the author/ editor(s) of the book or some combination of those. As with the rest of the book, it seems best to credit the substance of the speeches to the speakers named but believe that the Holy Spirit worked through an inspired author to turn the whole into the magnificent literary masterpiece that has come down to us."

[Robert L. Alden]

[v] I think Job is still speaking

He's responding, in part, to Zophar ==>

11:5-6a 5 "But would that God might speak, And open His lips against you, 6a And show you the secrets of wisdom!

Here in chapter 28 God shows Job's friends t/secrets of wisdom.

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find.

[vi] Here's what we see in chapter 28

I. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Effort (1–11)

II. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Created Order (12-14, 20-22)

III. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Wealth (28:15–19)

You can work hard // can search everywhere // can possess great wealth—none of that will gain t/greatest treasure in t/world: Wisdom.

Where can you find it? Question repeated 2x in this chapter ==>
12 . . . where can wisdom be found? . . .

That's t/last point & you will have to wait to get there.
T/answer is reserved for t/end of chapter 28.

Verses 1-11 ==>

I. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Effort (1–11)

What do we see in these 11 verses? ==>

A. The Hard Work of Miners to Gain Earthly Treasure (1-11)

1. I read that this is the only mention of mining activity in t/Bible

a. Paints a tremendous picture—one of great effort

1 “Surely there is a mine for silver And a place where they refine gold.

2. First word “Surely” = emphatic (“Certainly”)

Certainly what? Certainly there is a “place” — saw that word in 27:21,23. Speaking of t/wicked who is removed from his place & men who mock him from his place.

Now, Job takes that same word ==>

1 **“Surely there is a mine for silver And a place where they refine gold.** 2 **“Iron is taken from the dust, And copper is smelted from rock.**

3. Four metals of various value: Gold, Silver, Copper, Iron

These were all valuable but took effort to get.

Didn't just pick them up off t/surface of t/ground.

4. Look at the effort men will go to get these treasures (3-4)

3 **“Man puts an end to darkness, [using torches to bring light] and to the farthest limit he searches out the rock in gloom and deep shadow.** 4 **“He sinks a shaft far from habitation, forgotten by the foot; They hang and swing to and fro far from men.**

a. You can see the picture [^] . . .

Miners operate at t/boundary between earth & underworld // light & darkness // life & death. T/depths to which men will go to get metals... Dangerous, Dark, Difficult. Why in antiquity slave labor often used.

b. Even today it's a dangerous job . . .

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), while mining employs around 1% of the global labour force, it generates 8% of fatal accidents. . . . China has the world's largest mining industry, producing up to three billion tonnes of coal each year. But while the country accounts for 40% of global coal output, it is responsible for 80% of mining deaths around the world each year. [bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-11533349]

The deadliest U.S. mining disaster took place at the Monongah Mine in WV. On the afternoon of Dec. 6, 1907, the residents of Monongah felt / heard a blast from the direction of mines # 6 & 8. Nearly all of the workers in the 2 mines were killed, from the force of the explosion, which was either from coal dust or methane gas—or both (or the toxic gases which followed). What ignited the explosion remains unknown, but it was fed with blasting powder in the mine. The most likely cause was an electrical spark, or an inadvertent ignition from a carbide lamp worn by the miners. Only 5 survived. In all, 362 men lost their lives to the explosions (which are the most frequent cause of mining deaths).

[historycollection.com/10-stomach-dropping-american-mining-disasters-from-history/2/]

Worst mining disaster in history was in 1942 in Liaoning, China. Over 1,500 men died after an underground gas explosion.

More recently, On October 13, 2010, the last of a group of Chilean miners were rescued after 69 days trapped nearly ½ mile underground. Was the longest underground survival in history.

After the mine collapse, 33 men were able to make their way to an underground emergency shelter area, where they discovered just several days' worth of food rations.

According to History.com ==>

“As their situation grew more desperate over the next 17 days, the miners, uncertain if anyone would find them, considered suicide and cannibalism. Then, on August 22, a drill sent by rescuers broke through to the area where the miners were located, and the men sent back up a note saying, “We are fine in the refuge, the 33.”

Food, water, letters, medicine and other supplies were soon delivered to the miners via a narrow bore hole. Video cameras were also sent down, making it possible for rescuers to see the men and the hot, humid space in which they were entombed. As engineering and mining experts from around the world collaborated on the long, complex process of devising a way to bring the 33 men up to the surface, the miners maintained a system of jobs and routines in order to keep up morale.

Rescuers eventually drilled and reinforced an escape shaft wide enough to extract the men, one by one. . . . On October 12, the first of the miners was raised to the surface in a narrow, 13-foot-tall capsule painted white, blue and red, the colors of the Chilean flag. The approximately 2,000-foot ascent to the surface in the capsule took around 15 minutes for each man.

Millions of people around the globe watched the rescue on live TV. Less than 24 hours after the operation began, all 33 of the miners, who ranged in age from 19 to 63, had been safely rescued. Almost all the men were in good health, and each of them sported dark glasses to protect their eyes after being in a dimly lit space for so long.”

[history.com/this-day-in-history/chilean-miners-are-rescued-after-69-days-underground]

Dark, Difficult, & very dangerous.

5. Verse 5 we see this contrast between up/down—what happens on earth compared to what happens below

5 “The earth [up], from it comes food [lit. “bread”], And underneath [down] it is turned up as fire.

What does this “fire” refer to? Bible Background Commentary on OT: “In ancient mines rock was broken up by a process called fire-setting in which the rock was heated by large fires and then doused with cold water mixed with vinegar (believed to enhance the cold).” [Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Job 28:1–5]

6. Why all this effort?

6 “Its rocks are the source of sapphires, and its dust contains gold. Risk vs. reward sort of thing. Gold and precious stones . . .

7. Parenthetical statement in vv. 7&8 —you have birds & beasts

7 “The path no bird of prey knows, nor has the falcon’s eye caught sight of it.

(1) Falcons — known for their keen eyesight

(2) Have what are called “proud beasts” — land animals

8 “The proud beasts have not trodden it, nor has the fierce lion passed over it.

8. Back to the miners and their hard work in verses 9-11

9 “He [miner] puts his hand on the flint; he overturns the mountains at the base.

This isn’t the use of explosives (unknown at that time). “Flint” is better translated “flinty rock” while overturning “mountains” is a hyperbole for t/violence suffered by t/underground rock / dirt.

a. Word “overturns” is also used of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19

Brutal work! A rampage undertaken by men to do that which isn't natural: busting through rock/earth to go where no eye has seen, no foot tread.

10 “He hews out channels through the rocks, And his eye sees anything precious.

Careful scrutiny.

11 “He dams up the streams from flowing, And what is hidden he brings out to the light.

b. That's what it's all about . . .

All this labor—to bring to light, to carefully look for anything of value that can found.

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find

But ==>

I. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Effort (1–11)

Another lesson is that men will risk life & limb overturning tons of earth to gain something temporal. They are oblivious to t/unsurpassing value of what? Wisdom.

13a “Man does not know its value . . .

c. Like Jesus' warning in Luke 12 . . .

Luke 12:15 Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.”

(1) Remember the parable that follows . . .

A rich man was blessed w/more wealth. He ran out of space in his warehouse. So, he reasoned, “I will build bigger. There I’ll store my possessions. I’m good for life so I’ll party on.”[Bartolucci paraphrase]

Luke 12:20–21 20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’ 21 “So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

Here are miners working hard to gain riches, yet they neglect the greatest wealth of all: biblical wisdom.

I. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Effort (1–11)

Second ==>

II. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Created Order (12-14, 20-22)

A. Key Question: Where Can Wisdom and Understanding be Found? (12, 20)

12 “But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?

20 “Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding?

II. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Created Order (12-14, 20-22)

B. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Land of the Living (13b-14, 21)

13b . . . Nor is it found in the land of the living. 14 “The deep says, ‘It is not in me’; and the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’

21 “Thus it is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the sky. [those creatures w/the best vantage point]

C. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Land of the Dead (22)

22 “Abaddon [destruction] and Death say, ‘With our ears we have heard a report of it.’

Here you have t/personification of the sea and t/deep, which draws a parallel to t/depths that men go to in vv. 1-11.

Living, dead, t/deep, t/sea. Even death & destruction . . . they’ve heard of wisdom, but don’t have it.

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find

I. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Effort (1–11)

II. Wisdom Cannot be Found in the Created Order (12-14, 20-22)

What about money? Can it buy wisdom?

III. Wisdom Cannot be Found by Great Wealth (28:15–19)

15 “Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it, Nor can silver be weighed as its price. 16 “It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir [place known for fine gold, 22:24], In precious onyx, or sapphire. ==>

17 **“Gold or glass cannot equal it, Nor can it be exchanged for articles of fine gold. 18 “Coral and crystal are not to be mentioned; And the acquisition of wisdom is above that of pearls. 19 “The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, Nor can it be valued in pure gold. 15a and 19b form an inclusio (“pure gold” / “pure gold”)**

In these vv, Job mentions gold 5 times, silver 1x, & names 7 diff. precious stones; yet none of these treasures indiv., nor all of them collectively, can purchase wisdom.

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find . . . but where? . . .

Here’s t/punch line / answer ==>

IV. Wisdom Can Only be Found in a Great God (28:23–28)

Here’s the set up. Job first establishes God’s sovereignty, something he knew quite intimately. After all, it was God who ordained his suffering. And it’s God who stands in sovereign relationship to all things, even His wisdom

A. Job Establishes God’s Greatness Over Everything (23-27)

1. God’s Omniscience and Omnipresence (23-24)

23 **“God understands its way [way of wisdom], and He knows its place. 24 “For He looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.**

2. God’s Creative Power in verse 25

25 **“When He imparted weight to the wind And meted out the waters by measure,** Cf. Gen 1 . . .

3. God's Providence in verse 26

26 When He set a limit for the rain and a course for the thunderbolt,

a. Listen - there's no such thing as "natural law"

(1) Everything subsists in God

Not Deists! It is by t/will of G. that all things function as they do.
It is in X that all things hold tog. (Col. 1:17).

God is t/ontological ground for all truth, wisdom included.
Apart from t/revelation of G. in t/Bible we are just left w/opinions.

IV. Wisdom Can Only be Found in a Great God (28:23–28)

He is omnipresent (He sees what land animals, people, birds cannot).
God determined t/elements; the weight of the wind, t/boundaries of water, the decree (i.e., limit) for the rain.
He is sovereign over each bolt of lightning.

3. Verse 27: Note the four verbs used . . .

27 Then [when/when vv. 25/26] He saw it and declared it; He established it and also searched it out.

B. The Key Question Answered (28)

1. What was the question?

12 "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"

20 "Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding?"

2. Here's the Answer:

28 “And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.’ ”

IOW - Wisdom, an attribute of G., was given to man at creation.

G. ordained that man share in t/wisdom of which only He is t/source.

28 “And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.’ ”

a. What is wisdom?

To fear Adonai. What is understanding? To depart from evil.

b. We have “Wisdom” and we have “Understanding”

(1) Wisdom (*Chokmah*) & Understanding (*Binah*)

(a) Often used together in the Proverbs

4:5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! . . .

7:4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” And call understanding your intimate friend;

16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.

c. What's the difference?

(1) Wisdom = practical truth

(a) Here equated with “the fear of the Lord” (*Adonai*, only here in Job) Fear of the LORD / Lord / God — same thing.

(b) “Fear of the Lord” (talked about this back in week 1)

(c) Two perspectives . . .

i. For the believer:

“Reverential awe that results in worship and humble obedience fueled by love.” Powerful awesomeness than leaves the worshiper changed.

ii. For the unbeliever:

“Foreboding terror” (at least, it should be).

Depends on which side of G. you’re on. Do you know Him thru JC?

“Reverential awe that results in worship and humble obedience fueled by love.”

If you don’t, then it ought to be a “foreboding terror”

(d) Remember Genesis 20?

In Gen. chapt. 20, we find Abraham in t/land of t/Philistines. He is sees that t/depravity around him & lies about his wife, thinking to himself, as recorded in v. 11 of Gen. 20 ==>

‘there is no fear of God in this place’

Deut 25:17, t/wicked Amalekites are said to have no ‘fear of God’.

i. Sounds like our western culture

No fear of God. Most recent Gallup pole shows that belief in t/existence of God is at an all-time low in America: 81%

Nearly 20% claim to be atheists/agnostics.

No wonder we live in a culture of death & moral confusion!

Problem w/believing in God is that you don't get to be t/boss.
God, through His Word, sets t/standards of what is right/wrong;
good/evil; sin / righteousness / judgment / heaven / hell.

Take that away & nothing is foundationally, absolutely wrong.
Why a biblically-grounded Xn worldview is essential!!!

ii. SCOTUS and Roe v. Wade

Psalm 2 1 Why are the nations [Heb. *goyim* - people] in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth take
their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD
and against His Anointed, saying, 3 “Let us tear their fetters apart And
cast away their cords from us!”

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. 5 Then
He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury . . .
[the fear of God they should have now]

Christological prophecy ==>

6 “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy
mountain.” 7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to
Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 ‘Ask of Me, and
I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends
of the earth as Your possession. 9 ‘You shall break them with a rod of
iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ”

=====>

10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. 11 Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Eccl 12:13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.

(2) Understanding (*Binah*)

(a) Definition: “Careful Discernment”

Understanding is equated w/discernment in Prov. 2:3.

i. One theological dictionary has this to say about discernment

The sound judgment which makes possible the distinguishing of good from evil, and the recognition of God’s right ways for his people. It is necessary for the understanding of spiritual realities and, on a practical level, for right government and the avoidance of life’s pitfalls. Discernment is given by God, through his Holy Spirit. It is received through God’s word and through the insight of a renewed mind. Discerning believers seek to grow in their understanding and knowledge of God’s truth. [Martin H. Manser, Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies (London: Martin Manser, 2009)]

d. Both of these words go together

To be wise is 2 have understanding; to have understanding is 2 B wise
Pro. 8:1 Does not wisdom call, And understanding lift up her voice?

It’s discernment esp. as it relates to forsaking sin.

Single word “wisdom” brings both ideas together.

It’s to love that which He loves and hate that which He hates.

d. Again we are brought back to Job the man . . .

28 “And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.’ ”

Job 1:8 The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” (repeated in 2:3)

Wisdom is the Greatest Treasure You Can Find

RC Sproul ==>

“How precious and valuable authentic wisdom is, and how few there are who find it. We say sometimes that experience is the best teacher, but that’s not the best source of wisdom. The best source of wisdom is the mind of God, and the Wisdom Literature is given to us that we might live, that we might know how to endure and respond to the exigencies that occur in our human existence. This world is a vale of tears, and pain and suffering come to every life. When they come, do we act like fools or do we search for the wisdom of God?” [RC Sproul,

What is Biblical Wisdom]

To have wisdom is to value Christ above all else.

Esp. true in t/scandal which is our culture today.

“You will never find Jesus so precious as when the world is one vast howling wilderness. Then He is like a rose blooming in the midst of the desolation, a rock rising above the storm.” [Robert Murray McCheyne]

Matt. 13:44-46 44 “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, 46 and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Jesus is the pearl / treasure. In Him “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col. 2:3).

Will you give all you value for Him?

Esau sold his birthright for a pot of stew.

Many in t/world, even those who might profess X, trade Him away, selling Him like Judas. Not for 30 pieces of silver, but for selfish reasons.

Some sell Him out in favor of sleeping w/a boyfriend or girlfriend. Maybe some other unlawful relationship . . .

Three pernicious Fs: Fame / Fortune / Fornication.

Christ is valued above all or He’s not valued at all.

This is a trade no genuine believer would make.