

Proverbs 8

Proverbs 8:1-36 NKJV

Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice?  
She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way,  
where the paths meet. She cries out by the gates, at the entry of  
the city, At the entrance of the doors: "To you, O men, I call, And  
my voice is to the sons of men. O you simple ones, understand  
prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart. Listen, for  
I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips  
will come right things; For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness  
is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with  
righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them. They are  
all plain to him who understands, And right to those who find  
knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver, And  
knowledge rather than choice gold; For wisdom is better than  
rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared  
with her. "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge  
and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and  
arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.  
Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have  
strength. By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. By me  
princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth. I love those  
who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.  
Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and  
righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold,  
And my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the way of  
righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, That I may  
cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their  
treasuries. "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His  
way, Before His works of old. I have been established from  
everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth; While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth, Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men. "Now therefore, listen to me, my children, For blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD; But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death."

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

The UCG reading plan states: "Chapter 8 is the second appeal of wisdom in the prologue, following Proverbs 1:20-33, in the form of a hymn extolling its value and importance. Recall that the adulteress was "loud" and "outside, at times in the open square, lurking in every corner" (Proverbs 7:12) to waylay the simple. Wisdom is also to be found crying out all over town and wherever people might be found. But what she speaks is right (verses 8-9). And what she offers is priceless blessings far greater than any physical possessions or pleasures (verses 10-11, 18-21; compare Proverbs 3:14-15). She may seem undignified in hawking her wares everywhere, so to speak, but the point is that wisdom is not restricted to the higher echelons of society. She is available for

everyone who will love her and seek her. Of course, wisdom is also vital for rulers. It is wisdom, skill in how to live and behave, that enables proper governance (Proverbs 8:15-16). Solomon understood this when He asked God for wisdom to rightly govern the nation of Israel.

We must not only love what God loves but also hate what He hates (verse 13).

God Himself made use of His own wisdom in creation (Proverbs 8:22-31; compare Proverbs 3:19-20). The personification of wisdom here has led some to believe that the preincarnate Jesus Christ is the One speaking as Wisdom in these verses. However, we must consider that Wisdom here speaks of having been “brought forth” before anything else (verses 24-25)—and this is not true of God the Word who always existed. Again, we must understand in this passage a personification of a quality that is not in actuality a person. While there are some parallels here with Jesus Christ, who served as the agent of God in creation and was the embodiment of divine wisdom, we should not make the mistake of equating Him with Woman Wisdom.

Still others see a parallel between the personification of wisdom and the Egyptian concept of Maat, though this is unlikely. The *NIV Archaeological Study Bible* explains: “In ancient Egypt Maat was the abstract principle of truth, order, justice and harmony—as well as the name of a goddess who personified those virtues. Kings were enjoined to practice Maat in order to ensure a long reign.... Scholars naturally wonder to what degree the Egyptian concept of Maat influenced Israelite thinking on justice and order in society. Specifically, the feminine personification of Wisdom in Proverbs 8 has been suggested to have been derived from the Egyptian goddess Maat.... It is difficult to posit a direct line of influence

from Egypt to Israel on the subjects of order, justice or Maat. Both Israel and Egypt understood that justice and harmony are necessary for life to function smoothly. But Wisdom, in Proverbs 8, is a personification—not a goddess. She exemplifies the order and justice God has built into creation. Lady Wisdom appears elsewhere in Proverbs; for example in Proverbs 1:20-33 she calls upon people to heed her teachings and so to find life. The embodiment of wisdom as a lady who invites people to follow her is a distinctively Israelite idea, with no analogy in Egyptian teaching” (“Maat and Lady Wisdom,” sidebar on Proverbs 8, p. 971).

Wisdom’s direct appeal here ends with the assurance of life and blessings to those who find and heed her—and death to those who reject her (verses 32-36).” [END]

Verse 12 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “Prudence is defined, wisdom applied to practice; so wherever true wisdom is, it will lead to action, and its activity will be always in reference to the accomplishment of the best ends by the use of the most appropriate means.” [END]

Verse 13 – The “Fear of the Lord” is a big topic worth deep consideration. Here we are told that “hating evil” and “fear of the Lord” go hand in hand. We can’t have a proper relationship with God without hating what God hates (evil). We must examine and hone where we allow evil in our lives, and then with God’s help, actively pursue a shift in mindset toward those things.

Verse 18 – While exercising wisdom may come with physical blessings resulting out of wise decisions, the author has the greater spiritual blessings as the main focus. As we seek and

exercise wisdom, we are guaranteed to gain spiritual wealth, righteousness and treasures in heaven. Which is far better than anything physical we may obtain.

Verse 36 – God’s wisdom is meant to help us have a good life, therefore to go against God’s wisdom, is bad for us.