

Proverbs 22-08-03b

We're ready now to pick up our study in the book of Proverbs. We have done a quick review of the introduction and purpose of the book, as Proverbs itself tells us. To know wisdom and instruction ought to really resonate if you have absorbed the meaning of those terms, to give us practical skill, moral insight, and self-control to put those into practice, all of that is in that verse two.

And to perceive the words of perception. If you really want a good translation that connects the verb and the object together, to perceive perceptive words, because not all words that seem perceptive are, not all summaries, not all distillations, not all sound bites really express truth, and to be able to see through and past and into the reality with what in the past has been described as divine viewpoint, to see things from God's perspective, with God's understanding, God's ability to separate wheat from chaff, to tell apart the true and the false, to just finish up that being the be-nah, to perceive words of perception, this is to distinguish what is true and what is false, what is good and what is bad, what is wholesome and what is pernicious. That's from Kylan Dalich.

Those guys, whatever else you want to say about the Germans in the late 1800s, they knew their Hebrew. They knew it inside out, up and down. I think the failure in Germany that you see in the decades following that was not a lack of insight into the scriptures.

It did not turn into Chokmah, and it did not turn into Musar in the hearts and minds of the German congregations in the pews. This is what we must avoid, is not just hearing the word, but having it get inside and change us. Nothing else can change us.

Nothing else can shift those heavy blocks of foundation that experience that long held patterns, deeply rutted roads in our soul. There is no human ingenuity. There is no support group.

There's no books of poetry or other literature that can move that stuff around and make us different and better. You think about the voice in the wilderness, make the way of the Lord straight, let the valleys be exalted and every hill and valley be made low. You can't do that.

I'm watching him work on Keatonville Hill over there, and it's one little piece of road. And human beings like ants have been working on roads and highways for decades and decades and decades. And we've just done this tiny little bit.

God's word has the ability, supernaturally so, to actually get inside and break the rocks in pieces, to move the mountains that need to be cast into the sea, to fill in the valleys that we often sink into and get depressed and discouraged and distracted and subjective and caught up in ourselves instead of this outward looking application of Chokmah and Musar. That's what these samples from the word of God will do. To perceive the words of

understanding.

And these words that are allegedly perceptive, are they really? If a Democrat speaks, if a Republican speaks, if the president speaks, if the secretary of this or the director of that comes out with something, they're giving medical advice, they're giving political advice, they're giving economic advice, they're giving a pitch. You've got commentators and talking heads on both sides, conservative and liberal, and they are shaping the narrative. They are describing and attempting to pitch what's going on in terms of their perspective.

Are they right? Are they wrong? Should I agree? Should I disagree? How can I know? I'm at such a distance and it's just too hard. No, the word of God will give us an instinctive, natural ability to sift and to identify truth. When we hear it, we will know it is true because the word of God is alive and the Holy Spirit of God is alive and we will have a living testimony, a living witness, a living power inside of us that transcends all of the noise and lets us see what is real and substantial, what is false and insubstantial.

It's just such a wonderful thing. What a great blessing that God hasn't just left us here to drift and be tossed about by every wind of social media and news reporting from this outlet and that person's face. So, verse three, to receive the instruction of wisdom.

This is to receive Musar. We just saw what Musar is up above, right? The moral self-government, the moral restraint, the self-control to receive it. Verse two said, we can know these things.

Verse three says, we can receive it. We can lay hold of it. Lakakh here, to receive, means to grasp.

This is the difference between lambano in Greek, to receive, and paralambano, to haul it alongside, to hug it close. Jesus said, when I go away, I will come again to receive you to myself. Well, how close is that reception? Well, you got to look and see.

Is it lambano or paralambano? Here, to take this self-control, I'm not going to let my mind run amok. I'm not going to get over-invested. I'm not going to get overheated.

I'm not going to let my emotions take control. I'm not going to get angry. I'm not going to start yelling at the TV or shaking my fist at this party or that spokesperson.

I've got, I have received. It has been imputed to me. It's on the inside of me now.

I've got it and I possess it. This is what lakakh means, to receive self-control from shakal. This is hashkel.

It means to perceive the, to receive the instruction of wisdom. And you think, well, isn't this going to be chokmah again? Wisdom. That's how it was translated up above.

But wisdom in verse three is a different word than verse two. And so we need a different translation. So we are going to receive the musar, the moral self-government.

And by moral, I have the power to do what is right from a different kind of wisdom. You can scratch out wisdom and put prudent insight. The Hebrew word here is hashkel, H-A-S-H-K-E-L, hashkel.

And this is, because you have insight, you don't just see inside a thing, but now you can consider, you can weigh and you can analyze what you have seen on the inside, and this gives you prudence. Oh, you know, this is light and it's labeled Christmas decoration. I bet this is made out of thin glass.

So now that I know the inside contents, I'm going to handle with care. I'm not going to throw this across the garage. I'm going to take it with two hands and set it carefully in a safe place where it won't get knocked over and break.

Have you ever been anxiously anticipating something and you get it and you open the box and it is broken? My mom got a jar of Prego or something the other day that Walmart sent and they put it in a container and all it had was one of these little pieces of paper that looks like extruded steel. You know, it's supposed to kind of pad something. It was totally inadequate.

This needed thick bubble wrap. It had thin sort of shredded paper, you know, a sheet that just has those little slits in it to expand. Completely inadequate.

So she reaches in to get one of the two jars and comes back with a cut on her finger and a handful of spaghetti sauce. To know what is inside, if the shippers had known what was inside and it handled it with the care that they should have, it would not have gotten broken, right? That's what this implies. To receive the kind of self-constraint that keeps you knowledgeable of what's inside and knowing what to do because of what's inside.

So practical. Such a valuable gift from God. You can't get this at your local Five and Dime.

You cannot get it in school. You can't get it from people talking on their radio program or their blog or their segment on some TV channel. You can't get it from there.

It only comes from God. It is supernatural. It is powerful.

It changes us so that we have these things. We're not built to contain this kind of wisdom. We're not built to operate it.

But in his supernatural power, God gives it and we are blessed by it. So to receive the moral self-government, the self-control of prudent insight, prudent consideration, wisdom, and then three things. We have three things as a result.

Siddhic, righteousness, which is translated in your New King James, justice. But this is Siddhic and righteousness has kind of lost its ability to compel our thinking. Think of it as rightness, being right.

Because of having this ability and this insight, you can be right. You can be really right. You can be right in the way you act, right in the way you think, right in what you choose to say or don't say.

You can be right. And when God looks at you, he says, you know, you're doing what's right. It is morally right.

It is spiritually right. It is in practice. And with its effect on other people, it's right.

That's what righteousness really is. It pleases God because it's right. It's the right thing to do.

Right thing to be. Right thing to say. Right thing to think.

Right way to act. Right time to do or not do, to be or not be. Siddhic.

The second one is Mishpat, which is M'shafat, Shafat is a judge. So this is rightness. This is justness.

It is judgment, but judging rightly. There's no point, you know, there have been some crazy court decisions down through history, especially when it comes from a single judge, crazy sentencing, crazy opinions rendered. It's not just any old judge having the, it's not the authority of judgment.

It is right judgment. It is justness. That sorting of what's going to happen and why is just, it's fair.

It is pleasing in God's sight because it's not just morally right. It's not just rightness, but it's fair. It's, it is an expression of justness.

And then finally you have May Shreem is the third thing here. And it's translated equity. Modern society has spoiled the term equity for me.

I don't want to hear about equity unless it is how much value I have in my home. What is my equity? But the way it's used now, it's like, well, this is doing whatever you have to do so that everybody is socialistically equal. Some people need to be lifted high because they started very low and that's going to be equity.

And so it is the unequal and unfair treatment of some people on the basis of some criterion by other people who seem to be self-appointed to the task. It's just, it's just so really annoying and screwed up. So equity is not a good translation if you're asking me.

This word is used to describe things that are, that are pleasingly proper. Pleasingly proper. It's use of things that are upright, vertical, plum, or things that are horizontal and flat and, and square.

It's use of things that are smooth instead of rough. It has the idea that something has been constructed, something has been built. You are observing something and because of its properness, because it is plum, square, level, smooth, it's, it's pleasing.

It is pleasingly proper. It's the best translation I can, I can give you of this. And so then in verse four, to give, this is Nathan, the prophet's name, Natan, to give, Benjamin Netanyahu, Benjamin, gift of the Lord, Netanyahu, Natan, to give.

So the presence of this proverbial wisdom, this divinely inspired truth will give, it will transfer, it will enable us to possess something. What is that something? It says to give prudence to the simple. This word is often used of nefarious people who are wily, who are subtle.

Remember the serpent was more subtle. He was, he was more, it's cleverness. It is, it is shrewdness, shrewd.

You're sharp. You've got something figured out and you get there firstest with the mostest. You knew that the train wasn't actually going to pull up right here.

I remember standing in Dallas one time in one of these domestic tram travel things, DART, Dallas area rapid transit. They've got these little buses with the electric on top and the wheels on the bottom with tracks. And I was waiting on one because I had to go to the West End and everybody had congregated.

But my window overlooked this track and I knew that these things typically pull up to a different place. So I went to a different little shelter and a different little bench and it was me and like two other people. And there was this huge gaggle, which I don't like standing in gaggles anyway.

And so my shrewdness enabled me to stand where the train was actually going to pull up at this time of day. And I was able to come in and had my pick of seats. It's shrewdness.

It's knowing when and how to be and do. And there is benefit in it. There's satisfaction in it.

And it's a calculated, pre-planned kind of action. You know how to look ahead and be prepared. You could look at this as foresight, shrewdness, preparedness.

Wouldn't you love to know how much toilet paper to lay in before there's a toilet paper shortage? Wouldn't you know, I don't want to lay in batteries because there's going to be such a huge glut of batteries. These things are going to sit on the shelf and go bad. I laid

in my emergency food and it got all moldy because we never used it.

Shrewdness. God will give us the insight and the knowledge of when to act in advance and when we don't need to. Sometimes it is go to the aunt thou sluggard.

Sometimes it is take no thought. Well, how do I know which it is? Do I go to the aunt thou sluggard or do I sufficient unto the day and give us this day our daily bread and take no thought for the morrow, the lilies toil not in either of these? Which is it? This is what I need to know. Shrewdness.

When to plan ahead and how to do so. So wily to be wily, to be clever, to be shrewd, be exactly in the right place at the right time for maximum benefit. And it will give it to those who are inexperienced.

This is the word that translated simple. It means you don't have any experience in this. Wouldn't you love for somebody to give you an investment tip and you hundredfold your investment and you really had no knowledge.

You're just relying on the wisdom of somebody else. I am, listen, I will tell you flat out, I am simple when it comes to, you know, investment stocks, bonds, money market, uh, do this, pull it out of there, buy this, sell that. I'm not interested in it.

And therefore I am simple. I am the worst simpleton in the world. And it isn't that I'm dumb.

It's that I'm disinterested. I don't, I just don't have any enthusiasm for it. And if I got into it, I'm pretty sure I would just bankrupt myself in very short order.

So I just stay away. But if I needed it suddenly, if I needed wisdom in that area, wouldn't it be great if I had a trusted friend who was a financial advisor and I actually do know people who, when it comes time to make some sort of financial decision, they will provide the simple with a shrewd and clever insight. That's what these Proverbs do.

They give shrewdness and cleverness to people who totally lack it in this particular area. Naive, inexperienced, no, no clue. I don't need a clue because I know somebody who has a clue and they'll, they'll share that clue.

Now I look like I'm smart and clever and I'm really not. To give shrewdness to the naive and to the young man, this is a A, B, B, A thing. So you have to the naive and then you have to the young man, knowledge, da'at.

This goes back to the verb we had in verse two, to know. If for some reason you haven't been able to come to know. You're not far enough along this, this, you think about young believers, those who have only recently kind of caught fire in terms of their enthusiasm to learn the word of God.

And because you're young, you can't help being young. When you're in your early to mid twenties, you can't help not being 50 and having all of the hard knocks, university diplomas that, that people get from decades of doing it wrong and figuring out eventually how to do it right. To the youth, it's not his fault that he's young.

And because he is young, not having some of the wisdom that pertains to later life, you know, uh, what do they say? Uh, something like youth is wasted on the young. I forget what it is. Love like youth or, I don't know, something like, oh, I forget.

Youth is wasted on the young. You know, you've got the ability, but you don't have the knowledge. By the time you have the knowledge, you don't have the youth.

Um, something like that. To the young man, knowledge and mizmah, M-I-Z-M-A-H is the, uh, word that's translated discretion, discretion's pretty good, but what is discretion? The, the word actually has the idea of quiet purpose. Youth is characterized by impulse, by rushing in ill-prepared.

You got a lot of energy, but you don't necessarily have the wherewithal to guide it, to restrain it, some of these other limiting, uh, uh, Musar affects the self-control to not, you know, over-energize and over-commit and under-prepare and under-think and the rest of it, it's a characteristic of youth. And so what this will do is give knowledge and quiet purpose. I'm going to do this in a restrained, elegant, and beautiful fashion.

This is going to turn out well because I've got nuance, I've got just the right weight, um, you think about playing a musical instrument, some music, you get into some of Beethoven's things and you need to be banging that piano for all it's worth, you get into a nocturne or the moonlight sonata, and you need a light touch, you need restraint, you need to go slow, uh, you don't want to listen to me play the moonlight sonata because I'm trying to hit all the notes and see if a piano is in tune, and I played about three times faster than it is written just because you hit all the white and black notes with that piece of music, and I will hear in those fourths and fifths and thirds, I will hear as something as maybe the note is in tune with itself, but it's beating against one of its near neighbors. Well, you'll hear that when you play that particular, it's a beautiful, great test piece if a piano is in tune or not, but I have to play it fast because I haven't got all day to, you know, moonlight sonata, the first movement, if you play that thing like Beethoven wrote it, you'll be there, you know, 40 minutes, so maybe not that long. Discretion and quiet purpose.

You'll know just how much weight, you'll know just how far to enter, how, how much to do and what not to do. So that is, if you're simple and inexperienced, you're going to get what you need, you'll have experience that is not innate and natural to you. If you are young, it will give you this knowledge and ability to use that knowledge with discretion, with quiet purpose.

So verse five, a wise one. This is the hearing and it says increase learning. The word increase here is Yosef, Joseph.

Remember when he was, when he was born, his mother, Rachel named him Joseph because she was expecting more children. God will increase and see the O-E-N fix there. It means increasing Yosef from Yassaf and it's a wise man will, will heed.

This is shamar in the sense of not just listening, but heeding, take note and will be increasing. This is a, this is a gerund form. This is an ongoing, he will be increasing, receiving.

It says learning, but this is, this is Lakak again. This is what was translated above to receive. He will be increasing in receiving.

Receiving what? Receiving all kinds of good things. Your, your capacity to learn and grow will be increasing, will be Josephing all the time. Heeding these things expands our capacity and we will be enriched and more enriched as time passes.

To do what in verse six? Actually, I should finish verse five. It says a man of understanding will attain wise counsel. This is someone who is intelligent.

This goes back to being, remember to, to perceive words of perception was being, well, this is the perceptive one. It's from the very same word here that we saw up in verse two, to perceive the words of perception. Well, the perceptive one will acquire.

It says attain. This word is used for purchasing, for gaining possession of, for acquiring a thing. You acquire it and now it's yours.

You possess it. So a perceptive one will, later on, we have exhortations, you know, buy from me. This word is often used for purchasing, for buying.

Buy from me what you need, acquire, purchase, spend what you have to spend to get this. A perceptive one will acquire, purchase if necessary, spend what is necessary to get. Then it says wise counsel.

This is good advice. This is direction and guidance from somebody who knows. So that finishes verse five and brings us to verse six.

To understand a proverb and an enigma. To understand a proverb and an enigma. To understand a proverb, this is mashal.

This is what we have here. The second word enigma or a riddle. This is the verb.

Well, the root is the verb li, L-Y, and it's, it's, this noun, this riddle is a hapaksagamanan. The root of it, li here, is mostly found in Proverbs, but the meaning is, is hard to figure out because it's only used in Proverbs and you have to kind of glean it from context. But

the root means to scoff, to be arrogant, to boast, to mock, to ridicule.

And so it has been Everett Fox says this means the scornful man or the cynic. I will tell you my impression from doing the word study on this, which is somewhat limited because it's occurs so rarely. This is when you talk about scornfulness and cynicism and mocking and ridiculing, we have a word for this.

It's called sarcasm. Sarcasm. When is someone being sarcastic and what is the meaning of that sarcasm? When someone is being cynical, when they are sort of being dismissive and bitterly hateful toward a thing, you think about some of the recent presidents we've had on both sides and their opponents, the attitudes, the cartoons, the vindictive, personally geared, spiteful statements that are made, the vilification, just naked hatred for the guy and everything he stands for.

It's okay to disagree with policies, to disagree with personal behavior, to disagree with language, to disagree with politics, to disagree with positions. Okay, fine. But to allow ourselves to descend into sinful attitudes is you've basically granted your enemy the power to dupe you into evil.

If you really dislike somebody and their whole mode, manner and method, okay, fine. But you are the fool if when you think about them, the thought of them and that personage drives you into evil and cluster chain sins, attitude sins, sins of the tongue, even overt sins. I'm going to go post something.

I'm going to retweet something. I'm going to repost this cartoon. I'm going to penalize this person.

I'm going to make them pay reputation wise because I just hate their guts. I hate everything about them. I hate what they stand for.

And I'm going to spread the word about the nefarious character and nature of this individual. You've just let that person beat you. You've let that person defeat you.

You have let that person be a tool of Satan to knock you off your stride, off the narrow road, nowhere near the straight gate. If you really dislike them that much, the best thing you can do is make sure they don't knock you out. If they're the enemy, be prudent, be wise, be restrained, be engaged in rightness and justness and self-control and don't let yourself get, you know, there used to be some cartoon the girls watched and these dogs are trying to do something, but just about the time they're about to make an important decision, somebody yells squirrel and they all look off to one side and they completely forget what they were about.

Well, you can say certain names of certain prominent individuals in this country and the same thing happens to believers. And that's a shame that should not happen. We shouldn't be so polarized by social issues and politics and such that we completely lose

our grip on who we are and why we're here, that we've just handed the enemy a cheap win.

It's the fool's mate in chess. You moved your pawn and you got checkmated and the game didn't even start yet. Shame on us.

Well, that's what this, to understand a proverb and a sarcasm. There is proverbs that will lift you up, these mishals with all of their value. And then there are these sarcastic, bitter, boastful, arrogant observations that have the opposite effect.

They undermine, they eat, they corrode, they blind. It's like pepper juice in your eyes. You've got to know the difference.

Is this wisdom to chase this person down and beat him over the head even long after they're out of office or when they are no longer responsible for their actions or being manipulated by others? Do you really want to just keep, you know, beating that horse expired hours ago? To know the difference between a proverb and a bitter sarcasm. That's what this is. It's not an enigma.

It's the kind of stuff you hear all day long, every day in our country, in the realm of politics. The words of the wise and their dark sayings, this is so interesting, the dark sayings, these are found elsewhere in Scripture. This occurs about 17 times in Scripture.

It's translated riddle nine times, dark sayings three times, hard question, dark sentence. It's really an interesting word. But we are told elsewhere that these riddles, in fact, I think you have a good text note in your New King James, Numbers 12, 8. God says, I speak to Moses face to face, plainly, not in dark sayings.

It's this word. Wouldn't it be great if God just spoke to us? We didn't have to crack a parable or understand, I was idly working on something the other day where one of the earliest proverbs is over in 1 Samuel where after Samuel says you're going to be the king and the spirit comes on him and he joins the prophets and starts prophesying and he's kind of doing the dying cockroach and people say, is Saul also among the prophets? And this became a proverb in Israel. But a man says before that, and who is their father? And I thought, I'm sure that was a witty thing in Hebrew in the day.

Is Saul also among the prophets? And another guy pipes up and says, and who is their father? And this became a proverb, is Saul also among the prophets? What does that mean? Who is their father? By the way, if you got any insight on that or if I figured it out in the past and forgot, let me know. I haven't cracked it yet. I don't know what he's talking about.

Who is their father? I don't get it. But wouldn't it be great if things like that didn't come up and God would speak plainly and what he says in scripture isn't a dark saying to us. That's our benefit.

That's what Proverbs does for us. They are not dark sayings. The next episode here in your text note in the New King James is Psalm 78, verse 2. I will open my mouth in a parable.

I will utter dark sayings of old. Wisdom that used to be understood and was lost. I'm going to re-communicate.

Used to love the name of the radio program, Back to the Bible, the Back to the Bible broadcast. Let's get back to the Bible. We've gone off on tangents.

Let's get back to the Bible. I will utter the wisdom that has lately become inscrutable, but it used to be understood. I will utter these dark sayings of old.

They've been known since ancient times. We used to understand them and they've been forgotten. People tout this now in terms of survivalism.

I saw something where here's a homemade refrigerator and it's a bucket and a couple of cinder blocks. Here's a homemade washing machine and there's PVC pipes and a crank. Here's how to make your own this and here's how to solve all of these problems that are addressed by technology.

But you can do it yourself. Recover the wisdom of the ancients. These weeds that are out in the pasture, they're actually medicinal.

They've got some vitamin value. You can use this when you run out of your medicine. Ancient Americans used to use these things and it has been lost.

You get this book and a guy says, here's all of these lost pieces of wisdom that might benefit you now. That's what Psalm 78 is talking about. I will open my mouth in a parable.

I will utter these dark sayings. I will recover this lost wisdom for you. Wow.

I like that and I don't even have to buy the book. It's right here in my lap. Then final Daniel 8, 23 in the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise having fierce features who understands dark sayings and the new King James, it says sinister schemes.

It's the very same thing we've got right here. He's going to pull up some old wisdom. He's going to understand some of this knowledge that's been lost and that's how he's going to prevail.

Fascinating. Well, I've succeeded in running myself out of time before I got to the, to the good part here in verse eight. But, uh, the exhortation here in verse seven, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Our starting place has to be the spiritual. Don't try to figure out circumstantial decisions. What should I prioritize? What should I do? Where should I work? Where should I live? Should I accept this? Should I pursue that? Should I get more instruction? Should I go to school? Should I stay out of school? Uh, should I stay or should I go? Should I emphasize or deemphasize? Should I reorder my priorities? People, anybody can do this on a human basis.

Proverbs says, I'm going to give you the tools to do this on a spiritual basis. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of this wisdom. Start with love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.

Any decision, however mundane, looking at something on Amazon, do I buy it or do I not buy it? Well, the Lord certainly can't be implicated in this. Oh yes, he can. Pay attention.

Every dollar we have is a stewardship. Every physical need or physical desire that we are fulfilling is part of our stewardship of our time and our opportunity, and it has roots in our spiritual life, every single thing. There is nothing that doesn't relate to our spiritual life.

I dare you to name something that doesn't have spiritual implications. You can't do it because there's no such thing for a believer. We are body of Christ.

We're indwelt and filled with the Holy Spirit. We have access to the word of God and his knowledge. Everything counts.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in every decision, every purchase, every investment, every activity, taking every thought captive for Christ, Paul says, what do you have that you did not receive? Are you a servant who says the master of delays is coming? I'm not really worried about his presence, present or future. So I'll just make some decisions on my own. I'll decide what I'm going to do with the food for the servants.

I'll decide what I'm going to do with this time or with this opportunity or with this possession. Everything is a stewardship. Every minute of the day, every dollar in the bank, every piece of credit.

Everything. What do we watch? How long do we watch it? What do we think about? How long do we think about it? Who do we talk to? How long do we talk? All of it has to begin with the fear of the Lord. You cannot name, I dare you to try to name anything that should not and does not properly start with the fear of the Lord.

That's the beginning of wisdom. Fools don't think about it. They give it light and short shrift.

Nah, I'm not going to think about who I am and why I'm here. I would rather revel in the moment. I'd rather be distracted.

I'd rather be stimulated. I'd rather enjoy the, the adrenaline rush of the moment. If you're not paying attention to wisdom, if you're not paying attention to this instruction, this opportunity, you're a fool.

That's what that verse says. So this sets us up to hear the counsel that comes from the elders, the mother and father, the beginning in verse eight. And we'll see that next time.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for this collection of distilled wisdom of condensed and compacted, uh, inspired truth. We pray that as we reflect on it, as we think about how our lives should be led in its light, that your Holy spirit will lead us and guide us, convict us, uh, rebuke, correct, and instruct us so that we can make the most of the time that remains to us in this life, which is by all accounts and by any measure, uh, short and getting shorter, we ask it in Jesus name.

Amen.