

Proverbs 2:6-11

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/prov/prov-2/proverbs-26-10/>

God is the source of wisdom, the arbiter of wisdom, the giver of wisdom and the gifts that accompany it.

There are a few things Solomon is trying to convey in these verses. The first is that *the Lord gives wisdom*. *Wisdom* comes from God. It is not a specific action or a human trait; it is a supernatural gift. A perspective that comes from *the Lord*.

If we are to properly apply wisdom, we must know and acknowledge that God is the source of wisdom. We can only steward it well by acknowledging the truth of where it comes from. We must listen to God to obtain wisdom—from *His mouth come knowledge and understanding*. There is no other way to encounter true wisdom other than encountering God.

To accept and engage with reality begins by comprehending that it is *God* who *gives*. He is the source. The provider. The creator. The Book of Proverbs is not about how we can be god; it is about how only God is God and we can participate in His goodness and His *wisdom* by trusting, listening to, and worshipping Him through a life of obedience to His ways.

Solomon is conveying that wisdom is in our best interest. *Wisdom* is called upon because it is the true source of success and security. God (the source of *wisdom* and *understanding*/perspective) *stores up sound wisdom for the upright*. The *upright* are those who stand in alignment with God, who put their hope and trust in Him and the instruction He provides. For those willing to align with God, there is “*sound wisdom*.” The Hebrew word for *sound wisdom* is “*tuwshiyah*,” which is often translated “*success*.” So, God grants “*success*” for the *upright*—those who align with God are given the key to winning at life. True winning. The world’s definition of winning at life is actually a path to losing. Similarly, the world claims the path to true success is actually a path to failure. Such is the nature of wickedness—it perverts; it claims what is good is bad, and what is bad it calls good.

God is the source and the path to our own best self-interest. And the way to connect with God is through accepting and applying *wisdom*, His perspective. For our part, if we are *upright*, we open ourselves up to the clear path for success. Not only this, *God is a shield to those who walk in integrity*. *Integrity* means all parts work together according to their design. When we walk according to how God designs us, we *walk in integrity*. This taps us into God, who is the source of both success and security. God, through bestowing wisdom upon us, will protect and prosper our lives. Of course we will need to adopt God’s perspective about success in order to recognize it when it comes.

God protects *those who walk in integrity* by *guarding the paths of justice*. *Justice* includes the idea of harmony—harmony of things working together according to their design. In this case, including the harmony between who God made us to be and who we become. This creates *integrity*, since we are living according to our design. He makes clear the right way and protects

us from intrusions which would otherwise derail us. Through this process, *He preserves the way of His godly ones*. God shows us the path to our own best self-interest. He protects the path. And He instructs us on how to walk on the path.

How do *paths* work? They are not about one single step, but a paved way for all steps; an avenue; a long corridor that guides and protects us (and leads us to a destination). The Hebrew word for *paths* here is “*orach*,” which means “way” or “manner.” Just a few words later in verse 8, the word translated *way* is the Hebrew “*derek*,” which means “journey” or “direction”. So, the Lord guards the “footpath” of *justice* and also protects the “journey” of *His godly ones*. Those who walk in His ways will gain His protection (although His protection does not always look like how we might prefer it to look, as expressed in passages such as Hebrews 11).

In verse 9, there is a third Hebrew word for what is often translated *path*—here translated as *course*. *Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course*. This word means “trench” or “track”—the Hebrew is “*ma’gal*.” So verse 9 is talking about smaller, more specific “pathways.” Circumstances or seasons, for example. The smaller paths only make sense in the context of the broader ones.

Paths have boundaries. The essential boundaries in life include *righteousness*, *equity*, and *justice*. Submitting to God, trusting Him, and remaining receptive and faithful to Him illuminates the way. It shows us the path. Not so that we can make one decision, but so that we can better discern all of our choices to make the best decisions, always. Wisdom shapes our entire way of thinking and perceiving. The great gift of God’s wisdom is not prescriptive; telling us one right answer. Rather, wisdom allows us to *discern* between all choices and decisions. It ushers us into the path, or lifestyle, of wisdom.

All tyrants claim they are advancing *righteousness*, *equity* and *justice*. Of course tyrants lie about this. They do not advance harmony between people (*righteousness*). They use envy to pit people against one another, the opposite of *equity* and *righteousness*. And they do not seek *justice*, which is aligning people with principles that best advance the entire community. Rather, tyrants seek to enrich their supporters at the expense of their enemies. It is self-seeking wickedness advanced in the name of wisdom. But true wisdom is available for all who are willing to pursue, see, and embrace it.

This pursuit of wisdom is the path toward our own interest, the way that is best for us. *For wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul*. *Pleasant*, as in delightful. It leads to success and security for our *soul*, our lives. When we walk in wisdom, we know what is right, and good, and can rejoice in our pursuit of what is right and good. Wisdom is the path of accepting reality and walking according to the parameters set in place by God.

By seeing and adopting God’s perspective, we have allowed *wisdom to enter our heart*. The deep knowledge of truth, and the willingness to see reality becomes *pleasant* to our *soul*. When we learn to walk in wisdom, we learn to embrace reality, and see it as something delightful. This comes from God, but to gain the full benefit we must allow it to enter into our hearts and transform how we think, perceive, and behave in this world. Walking in reality is something we must learn; it is an acquired taste, but in time becomes delicious to our palate.

When Solomon says that *discretion* will *guard* and *understanding* will *watch over you*, he is not forgetting that these two attributes only come into a person's life through God's initiation and our acceptance. *Wisdom* itself is the crossroad between God's truth and our choices. We hear, receive, understand, embrace and practice. This is the path, the journey of wisdom.

The bottom line is that wisdom requires deliberate intentionality. It doesn't "just happen." All wisdom is readily available. God puts it at our fingertips. But we have to listen, pursue, see through God's eyes, and adapt to see God's ways rather than our ways. As we do this, and act upon the insights of wisdom, we become wise and in doing so we find fulfillment of our purpose.

Biblical Text

**For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.**

**7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,**

**8 Guarding the paths of justice,
And He preserves the way of His godly ones.**

**9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice
And equity and every good course.**

**10 For wisdom will enter your heart
And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;**

**11 Discretion will watch over you,
Understanding will guard you,**