

Proverbs 8:22:31

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/prov/prov-8/proverbs-822-31/>

Lady Wisdom turns her speech toward the origins of wisdom and its intimate connection to Eternity.

As Lady Wisdom continues her speech, she makes some incredible statements as to how long wisdom has been around, where wisdom comes from, and the everlasting effects it has on reality. She begins with, “*The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old*” (vs 22).

This is suggesting that God *possessed* wisdom prior to the creation. Wisdom was not something He created; it is something that stems from His very character. He *possessed* wisdom at the very *beginning*. *Before His works of old* suggests that wisdom was His before He separated waters or made animals or humans. Wisdom was created as a precursor to observable reality.

Since God created humans in His image, this would infer that each human has a seed of wisdom inside of them to know what is actually real and true (Genesis 1:26). This is confirmed by scripture, which says that deep down humans know what is right (Romans 2:14). What is known of God can be seen in creation, meaning that there is a creative design that resonates within (Romans 1:19-20). Our problem is that we also have our flesh that desires to seek its own way. When we find the way of wisdom, we realign with God’s original (good) creative design for us.

To further drive home that wisdom was with God in the beginning, Lady Wisdom says, “*From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth*” (vs 23). There is a zooming-in progression here. *Everlasting* suggests that wisdom has been around forever (beyond time). This again confirms that wisdom emanates from the character and essence of God.

The beginning suggests wisdom was there when time was conceived and the clocks started; the creation of the world and reality as we know it. *The earliest times of the earth* suggests the opening chapters of Earth’s existence. Wisdom has been around, not just before it all, but through it all. The Bible opens with “In the beginning God...” Lady Wisdom asserts that she was with God in that beginning.

“*When there were no depths I was brought forth*” (vs 24). The word for *depths* is the same word for deep (“tehom” in Hebrew) that we find in Genesis 1:2—“The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.” So if Genesis 1:2 is the foundation from which creation occurs, wisdom says she was *brought forth* before that.

Wisdom predates the elements that make up the creation story. Interestingly, the word for “*brought forth*” is the Hebrew word “hul” and it means “twist or twirl; dance.” The next phrase, “*When there were no springs abounding with water* (I was brought forth),” is another claim in the same vein. Before the waters were separated; before there were waters to separate, wisdom

was dancing. So, wisdom was dancing before the world was made; she was moving and shaking, active before the Genesis account even begins. A pretty incredible claim.

Lady Wisdom is showing that she predates reality as we know it. Not only that, she was a part of reality coming into being; she is woven into the fabric of existence. “*Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth* (“dancing”—vs 25).” Here Wisdom is *brought forth*. Combining this with Wisdom’s other claims, it is inferred that Wisdom was built in to the creation. This aligns with other scriptures that claim that God is evident in all creation, for all willing to see (Psalm 19; Romans 1:19-20).

If the way of Wisdom is so woven into our very existence, it is foolishness to choose any other way. “*While He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world*” Wisdom was present with God (vs 26). So much of Proverbs is about convincing the young men to align with the truth of reality, to think and act and be according to the truth of God’s way.

Wisdom is not just one of the world’s many philosophies, it is how the world was made. Just as God established the physical universe, with physical laws of cause-effect, so God established the spiritual and moral universe. We can observe physical cause-effect and establish concepts like “gravity” which is merely an observation of cause-effect—a description of what we can observe. God also created cause-effect in the moral world. We can ignore either to our great peril.

Wisdom continues in its adamant assertion of its validity and importance, claiming “*When He established the heavens, I was there.*” So wisdom predates the beginning of the creation story. She was also there during the creation story: “*When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep*” (vs 27). The phrase *face of the deep* refers to the oceans. That God *inscribed a circle* upon *the face of the deep* infers that the earth was created as a globe. How does the water on the earth not drain to the South Pole? It is because God *inscribed a circle* upon it. Wisdom was there, with God, prior to God’s creative acts.

Wisdom was also present prior to the time “*When He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed*” (vs 28). These verses talk about reality as a *fixed* accomplishment. Wisdom was there for the process of building reality. And now, reality is built—it is what it is. We cannot change it; we can only decide whether or not to align with it. To align with the true, created reality is to seek “justice” (alignment with reality). This is also called “righteousness.” The earth is the way it is because it conforms to God’s design. Wisdom was there before the wonder of God’s creation.

So, when she talks about the *skies* being made *firm* and the *springs* becoming *fixed*, Lady Wisdom is alluding to this established reality. Also, she says, “*When He set for the sea its boundary so that water would not transgress His command*” (vs 29). This is another reference to the *boundaries* of reality. Wisdom is baked into those boundaries. The *sea* cannot violate the confines of reality. However, humans can, because God gave humans the ability to choose. And when we are choosing to live apart from the reality of God’s created order, we suffer the consequences. The Bible calls the act of choosing to live in separation from God’s created order “sin.” And “sin” leads to a consequence of “death” (Romans 6:23).

Lady Wisdom was intimately involved in creating reality. It was present “*When He marked out the foundations of the earth*” (vs 29). Imagine a skilled contractor building a house. Wisdom is the skill. The ability, the source—if you will, of what foundations the builder sets and why: “*Then (during the establishment of the created order) I was beside Him, as a master workman*” (vs 30). Wisdom is not just witnessing creation; she is involved.

Lady Wisdom caps off this account of her involvement with creation: “*And I was daily His delight*” (vs 30). What an awesome revelation! Wisdom is not just a witness to creation nor just a contributor either. Wisdom is also the *joy* of creation, “*Rejoicing always before Him*” (vs 30).

The emotion of reality aligns with the practical goodness of creation, “*Rejoicing in the world, His earth, and having my delight in the sons of men*” (vs 31). Wisdom is the heart of creation. The joy and effectiveness of living. It was before creation, in creation, and now, incredibly, *in the sons of men*—when we choose her ways.

We have a chance to participate in this amazing dance. To be a part of the beauty of all creation and eternity beyond. The wisdom that guides the path of all things is an option available to us. The joy that goes *before* God is also available to *the sons of men*. How absurd to choose anything else!

Biblical Text

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.**

²⁴ **When there were no depths I was brought forth,
When there were no springs abounding with water.**

²⁵ **Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills I was brought forth;**

²⁶ **While He had not yet made the earth and the fields,
Nor the first dust of the world.**

²⁷ **When He established the heavens, I was there,
When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,**

²⁸ **When He made firm the skies above,
When the springs of the deep became fixed,**

²⁹ **When He set for the sea its boundary
So that the water would not transgress His command,
When He marked out the foundations of the earth;**

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.**