

**Introduction:** It is impossible for the human mind to know everything about God and His ways; and, it is impossible for human language to fully describe God and His ways. However, the Spirit-inspired Bible helps all those with eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts open to understand to know God and His ways more than anything people have ever developed to know God. \*\*\* God's Word uses literature, poetry and art to perfection to help people to rise above their limited minds and languages to know God by experiencing His Presence with them. Some areas in which God excels in communication are: comparisons or similes; metaphoric word pictures; comparing and contrasting; repetition, and much more. Especially appropriate to today's narrative poetry passage is how God humanizes abstract concepts. \*\*\* A good example of this for people in the United States is the gift from France to the United States in 1886 that expresses the human desire for liberty in a statue of a woman: Lady Liberty. She is modeled after a Roman goddess. In her right hand she lifts a torch above her head. Her left hand holds tablets inscribed with July 4, 1776 in Roman numerals. And, as a tribute to the Emancipation Proclamation issued twenty three years earlier, there is a broken shackle with a chain at her feet. \*\*\* Certain songs also use this type of symbolism. When someone brings joy to a little girl she may sing 'You Are My Sunshine'. An early Bruce Springsteen song about the dangers lurking on the streets of any large American city including New York is called 'Jungleland'. \*\*\* Turning now to the final one hundred twelve lines of the long narrative poetry that is the nine chapter introduction to Proverbs describing God's Wisdom, we meet 'Lady Wisdom'. The Holy Spirit chose to picture wisdom as a woman. To summarize the thirty line extract from this passage we heard earlier, we learn four important truths about God's Wisdom. It is available to all people on earth: good, bad, etc.; it exhorts all people to right living; it has the greatest value of all that God created; and, it is 'almost' eternal.

### ***The person of God's wisdom***

Let's now look at the details of our passage.

#### **I. Lady Wisdom's call. (Proverbs 8:1-10)**

A. She comes from the heights to the city gates and calls all people, including the simple and foolish. (Verses 1-5)

1. Will not she, Wisdom, call and understanding give her voice? (Verse 1)

**Wisdom:** God uses two rhetorical questions to which He expects us to answer 'Yes!' Notice that wisdom is portrayed as a woman.

**Understanding:** In addition to wisdom calling, understanding gives her voice. This is a device known as parallelism. Both lines express the same idea. So understanding is part of wisdom. Both will call out and give their voice on behalf of God's wisdom.

2. At the head of the heights, by the place of the paths, she has stood; at the side of the gates, at the opening of the city, from the entrance of the door, she cries aloud. (Verses 2-3)

**City gates:** There are three similar images to describe the place where people go in and out of the city: gate, opening, and door.

**Stand:** Lady Wisdom has stood in the highest place where human paths go (close to God), but she hangs out where many people gather to live – in a city.

**Cry out:** From the entry, Lady Wisdom cries out to summon people.

3. To you men, I will call, and my voice (is) to the sons of men; simple ones, you all must understand (shrewd) prudence, arrogant fools, you all must understand (in the) heart. (Verses 4-5)

**Universal call:** Wisdom begins by calling men (people) of all generations. Then she gets specific by calling immature and naïve people, and people who stubbornly keep making wrong choices. Many would assume that Lady Wisdom, and maybe even The Covenant God, would have no use for stubborn and immature people. But, God, in His grace, welcomes any who heed Wisdom's call.

B. She speaks what is noble, upright, true and righteous, and concludes that her instructions and knowledge exceed silver and gold in value. (Verses 6-10)

1. You all must hear because noble things I will speak and the opening of my lips (will be) uprightness; because, truth my mouth will utter. (Verses 6-7a)

**Good triad:** First, she will say what is princely and excellent; then, through the lips of her mouth, will come what is straight and upright; and thirdly, her mouth will utter truth on which she has meditated.

2. Abomination to my lips (is) wickedness. (Verse 7b)

**Repulsed by evil:** Lady Wisdom declares that evil wickedness and violence are so repulsive to her, that they are unspeakable for her – an abomination. This is good!

3. All the words of my mouth are righteous. (Verse 8a)

**Righteous words:** Her righteous words arise from her strong sense of justice.

4. Nothing in them (her words) is twisted or crooked. (Verse 8b)

**NOT crooked:** Because she is straight and upright there is nothing in her that is in any way distorted, twisted or crooked. Again, this is goodness in what she is not.

5. All (her words) are straight to the one who lives by the gift of understanding; and, upright to those finding knowledge. (Verse 9)

**Straight and upright:** This is another example of parallelism. The two clauses in this sentence reinforce one another.

We could say: Those given understanding and those finding knowledge will be both straight and upright.

**Bottom line:** Everything up to here gives a good description of the 'person' who represents God's wisdom.

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6. You all must take my instruction, not silver; and, knowledge over choice gold. (*Verse 10*)

**Command:** Many people consider silver to be valuable and gold to be of the greatest worth. But, all must heed Lady Wisdom when she declares instruction involving chastening discipline and knowledge (that she gives from God) is of greater value than what people consider to be of greatest value.

## II. Wisdom is from the beginning and is contained in the eternal Son of God. (*Proverbs 8:22-26;*

*Colossians 2:1-3; 3:14-17; 4:2-6*)

A. THE Triune Covenant God possessed Lady Wisdom from before the beginning of the earth. (*Proverbs 8:22-26*)

1. Yahweh possessed me in the beginning of His way, from before His works of antiquity. (*Verse 22*)

**Possess:** The Covenant God possessed Lady Wisdom in the very beginning of His works of the creation of the physical universe which follows all His ways of being and doing.

2. From eternity I was poured out, from the first, from the beginning of the earth. (*Verses 23*)

**Language:** Three different words are all used to make the point that wisdom came from God from the earliest of times, before the physical universe was created.

**Consecrated:** Poured out refers to anointing with oil. So wisdom is eternally consecrated by God.

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3. When no depths, I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding in water. (*Verse 24*)

**Brought forth:** Brought forth can refer to the pain a mother feels as she writhes in pain in childbirth.

**Before 'shaping' creation:** The earth was still formless and void. This was before the seas were controlled and land brought forth. God brought forth wisdom early on the second day (Genesis 1:2-8).

### **Wisdom was brought forth before the creation of the world**

4. Before that the mountains had been sunk down, before the hills, I was brought forth. (*Verse 25*)

**Mountains:** The second couplet about creation describes events of the third day (Genesis 1:9-13).

**Brought forth:** The last words of these four lines of poetry repeat the beginning words of the first line.

### **Wisdom was brought forth before the creation of the world**

5. Even as He had not made the land nor the fields, nor the first of the dust of the world. (*Verse 26*)

**Almost eternal:** All ten lines of poetry restate, using multiple word pictures of God's acts of creation, the basic truth that wisdom is almost eternal. Lady Wisdom may have come forth from God before the instant in time when all matter came into being and was shaped by God.

B. All the treasures of wisdom are in Jesus Christ, including peace and redemption. (*Colossians 2:1-3; 3:15-16; 4:5-6*)

1. Paul prays for people in churches in two cities of Asia Minor (present day western Turkey) that they may be comforted in their hearts to know by experience the mystery of God and The Father and The Messiah in whom are being hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (*Colossians 2:1-3*)

**Treasures:** Learning more and more about the mystery of The Messiah leads to the accumulation of spiritual treasures of the greatest value.

**Wisdom:** Wisdom and the knowledge of God, and the things of God, are two of these great treasures.

2. You all must be letting the peace of God be ruling your hearts, you all must be thankful, you all must be letting The Word of God be dwelling in you all abundantly in all wisdom. (*Colossians 3:15-16*)

**Peace:** Hearts with God's peace, thanksgiving, and God's Word abundantly indwelling them will have the wisdom of God IN Messiah-Christ

3. You all must walk (live) in wisdom toward outsiders, redeeming the season, your speech in grace, having been seasoned with salt, in order to know how to answer each one. (*Colossians 4:5-6*)

**Wise to outsiders:** Wisdom towards those who are not yet IN Messiah-Christ by grace through faith can lead to their redemption. All who are IN Messiah-Christ must intimately know Lady Wisdom.

**Note well:** Wisdom is IN Jesus Christ and, therefore, is NOT His equal. Wisdom is only part of all He IS, including also peace and redemption – and much more!

### **The person of God's wisdom**

**Conclusion:** God's wisdom is portrayed as a woman from on high who dwells at the city gates and is calling out to all people (good and bad, simple and foolish) with straight, true and righteous words, and giving instruction of exceeding value.

Moreover, she was brought forth before the creation of the physical world. And, most importantly, one thousand years later God revealed that all of her treasures are in Jesus Christ, including peace and redemption.

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