

Made Wise
Psalm 119:97-104
January 5, 2025

Wisdom, we think of David's son Solomon who was granted great wisdom from God. Nations and rulers came to him to hear him speak, to get a little bit of his wisdom. Some came because they couldn't believe what they had heard. One of them was the Queen of Sheba must have been born in Missouri as she wanted to see for herself what was said about Solomon. Here is what she said: *1Kings 10:6b-10,13 "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel forever, He has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness." Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.*

And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

Solomon is known as the wisest man that ever lived. I know we have some who are pretty smart today, like Elon Musk and yet compared to the wisdom of Solomon, I don't think they would compare.

Even though we consider Solomon the wisest man, we know a man who is even wiser. This man is the one whom we have been celebrating over the last few weeks and in fact every day. We know Him as Jesus, the Christ. Yes, His wisdom is unequalled and yes, many come from all over the world to sit at His feet to learn from Him. In fact, He is the reason you are here today, to hear, to learn too marvel at God who came to be one of you, to come to take on your sin and suffer for you in order that you may have life in His name.

Wisdom, we think of Solomon but when we think of Jesus, we know Solomon, with all he had was never as wise and never could be our Savior, nor the Savior of anyone for salvation is not found in anyone except the one born of a virgin, Jesus. As

Luke wrote in the book of Acts: *4:2 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*"

The section of Psalm 119 we have for today is one about wisdom or understanding. The Psalmist points out wisdom in the law, the Word of the Lord. He points out how the commandments makes him wiser than even his enemies. It even makes him wiser than his teachers. With that comment, we are taken to Jesus in the temple when He was asking questions of those supposed to be the wisest in the Word of God. I guess we shouldn't be too surprised, as Jesus is the Word made flesh. He is the Word that was used in the beginning to create all things.

As we look at these 8 verses of Psalm 119, the longest Psalm in the Bible, we see how wisdom is prominent. It tells of wisdom and where it comes from. It points out that the Word of God, especially the commandments are what makes one wise.

To many, maybe to most, the Ten Commandments are thought of as restrictions to people's lives. We were taught that there is only one that has anything positive about it and that is the commandment to honor your father and mothers as in the explanation to Luther's Small Catechism is written a verse from Paul's letter to the *Ephesians 6:2 "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise).*

The 4th commandment has this promise. A wise promise as honoring parents and others in authority is honoring not only the ones who gave us a physical birth, but the one who has given us spiritual birth through the water and the Word in our baptisms.

Yes, we should obey our parents, not that by doing so we earn something from God but just as this has a promise associated with it, the others, even though they don't have a promise connected to them, we need to understand them to have wisdom when it comes to the why of Ten Commandments?

I know many and maybe even you have thought of the Ten Commandments as restrictions on life. We so many times look at them as negative, taking the "shall not" as something that is keeping us from what is out there. We know of the first shall not, the one given to Adam and Eve in the garden: *Genesis 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

It was a shall not that, if they had obeyed that, “shall not”, would have made their lives better, easier, with no sin in their lives. What if there were no sin in your lives? What would life be like? It would be perfect.

Yes, to obey the Ten Commandments would be wise, very wise. Not that your life would somehow be lacking but would be full, filled to the brim with good. We see it in this Psalm as the Psalmist writes that the Words of the Lord are sweet, sweeter than honey so that he hates every false way which would be the way of breaking the commandments.

Yes, we are sinners, sinners as Psalm 51:5 says *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* From the time the egg and the sperm came together to begin our formation, sin was there. For it is not only breaking the Ten Commandments where we are declared sinners but because Adam and Eve ate from that tree, all of their offspring would be conceived sinful, not that the act of our parents was sinful for they were under the command of God to be fruitful and fill the earth.

Yes, we too were conceived sinful. Some would say that is not fair and we had no say in that but since then, yes, we have a say and so we are without excuse. We sin and even though we should know how to not sin, we hate the fact that we sin. We hate it, not only because we continue to sin but we hate it because it was our sin that caused Jesus to be nailed to the cross, to suffer and die so that we could have the promise of eternal life.

We might say it is not fair that we were trained by sin from conception but compared to Jesus who was not conceived in sin as Mary was a virgin. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and not by man. His dealing with sin was really not fair, for He was not conceived in sin nor did He ever sin, yet His blood was shed so that we could have our sins forgiven and then be given eternal life in His name.

The Psalmist looks to the Lord and His law as something He loved very much for without it, he would be lost. He saw the commandments as having made him wise, wiser than his enemies, wiser than his teachers, wiser than even the aged.

Today we have so much to give us knowledge. We are moving into the age of A.I. that will seek to put that knowledge to work, to make one wise and yet even though it will put knowledge to work, is the wisdom of A.I. going to usurp the wisdom we find in the Word of God?

A.I. can be used for much good but like all of God's creation, of God's supplying the many great things He supplies us with, it can be used by the devil and sinful man to try to destroy our relationship to our Lord.

We know the devil is a liar. He only lies. He quoted scripture to Jesus who had just returned from His 40 days in the wilderness and was hungry and tried by what He went through out there among the wild beasts. The devil tried to use the Word against Jesus, but Jesus being the Word made flesh picked up on the lies and pointed the correct understanding of the Word Satan was changing in the most subtle of ways.

Jesus knew the scriptures as He was taught it and knew it. He knew them and was able to see where the devil as a little off when it came to what the Word of God said.

Do you see how the Psalmist could say the words we have today? We don't know what he was dealing with but he makes the point that the Word of God was sufficient to deal with what he was dealing with.

The Psalmist has some history with the Word and with the people he had to deal with, otherwise how would he know, know for sure that it made him wiser than his enemies, his teachers and even those who had been around or a long time?

As we read through this Psalm, did you get the impression that the Word of God had something going for it? Yes, the Word has something going for it for it has power to make one wise to salvation.

You may have heard that Bible described as Biblical Instructions Before Leaving Earth. Yes, there is all sorts of instruction for life and for the life to come but to say that is all there is, is to highly under estimate what it is.

The Bible, the Word of God is more than instructive, it has power. You can have all the instruction books in the world but there is no power in them. They are just words that instruct to do or to use to deal with an item or process so that what you are using will be used for what and in the way it was intended.

In and of itself those instructions have no power but the Bible does. Through the water and the Word, faith is instilled in the child who before that, is at odds with God.

No one can create life. Not only can God create life but He can create eternal life, life beyond the life each of us now lives physically, which one day will have a new body when our life is enjoined to that new glorified body.

We think of this as Good News as the Word tells of some not so good news and that is that we are sinners who deserve to be punished by eternity in hell. Eat of it and you will die is how the Lord put it to Adam and Eve. He said that before the taking of the fruit and eating it and yet in His mercy, He gave them a promise, the promise of a cure for their deaths, life through a Son, born of a Virgin.

The Psalmist says he is wiser than many because of his knowledge of the commandments and use of them in his life in dealing with all those in his life, enemies, teachers and even the aged. Did he leave many out? Probably not many as if a person has this kind of wisdom to deal with these groups of people, then he has wisdom to deal with the rest.

If it is good for the goose, it is good for the gander is how the saying goes. If the Psalmist is the goose, then what about you? Is the love of the law, the Word of God good for you too. Yes, it is. In fact, not only is it good but the correct interpretation of that Word will serve you well as the times ahead will be filled with enemies of the Word, of teachers who will teach contrary to the Word and its true meaning and even those who have an advanced age but have never even tasted the sweet milk of God's Word and look to their years as a trump card when it comes to the Word of God as something that is too old to be of much value.

You have been brought up differently. You have sat at the feet of Jesus and heard the Word, the commands of God, many of you since birth and yes, even as John the Baptist in the womb of your mother. As no matter how much you know of God's Word, you can be made even wiser as you delve into it and the Holy Spirit does His work on you.

Made wise, yes the Word of the Lord does that for us, may we oblige by searching it daily.