

Message #30

Job 28:1-28

Steven Lawson said that when William McKinley took the oath of office as president of the United States, he placed his hand upon these words in the Bible: “Give me now wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people” (II Chron. 1:10). President McKinley had advanced to the highest office in the land, but he was also very much aware of his need for the wisdom of God.

On Sundays, it is my habit to get to my office very early in the morning. Most Sundays I arrive here around 6 A.M. Usually, I am able to make the 8.2 mile drive from my house to the church without seeing another vehicle. That is except during hunting season. When it is hunting season, there are quite a few cars on the road. Many people will get up very early Sunday morning to go hunting or to go to work to earn double time, but the percentage is very small of those who will get up early to get to the first service at church. Most people don't see the need for the wisdom of God.

We live in a world that has many problems. It is a world that is driven by satanic philosophies, objectives and goals that are anti-God. Even with those who think gaining wisdom is a good thing, they do not know where to find it. If you were to ask most people, where can you find wisdom, many would suggest that you go to some Ivy league university out east—such as Princeton, Harvard or Yale. However, very few would say you need to go to church where the Scriptures are carefully taught to hear and learn the Word of God.

From a biblical standpoint, some of the richest people financially are foolish mentally and spiritually. Most wealthy people who have great sums of money do not have a great passion for the wisdom of God. Most people with lots of money do not fear God, they do not turn from evil, but in fact actually use their money to support and promote it.

In Job 28, Job contrasts man's search for riches versus man's search for wisdom. Man will make any necessary sacrifice if he thinks he can strike it rich, but even if he does, it doesn't mean he is wise.

WISDOM IS NOT EVER FOUND BY HUMAN EFFORT OR ACHIEVEMENT, IT IS FOUND BY FEARING GOD AND BY TURNING AWAY FROM EVIL .

Job's friends were obviously wealthy, but they were also foolish. They had had been saying many foolish things about Job that were not true. They were not after the wisdom of God; they wanted to set forth their foolish viewpoints.

They obviously knew much about making money, but they did not know much about the wisdom of God, so in this text Job discusses that point. There are three main topics that he addresses in this chapter:

TOPIC #1 – Where and how man discovers wealth. 28:1-11

These verses are a fascinating study of mining in Job's day. There are many minerals named in this chapter which were mined, and the description of the mining process is graphically and accurately given in these verses.

Dr. McGee said that he thought there was still great wealth in the earth that man knew nothing about. There are two main wealth themes that are developed in these verses:

Wealth Theme #1 - The source of earthly wealth. 28:1-2

There are mines that produce silver. Fact is silver is typically found in some vein or mine. There are also places to find gold. Gold can be found near the surface of the earth or deep in the earth. Gold must be refined and the process includes a thorough washing. Iron may be found in dust and copper may be found in rocks. If one plays in the dirt long enough, one can strike it rich.

Wealth Theme #2 - The search for earthly wealth. 28:3-11

Now it is very clear from these verses that man will risk almost everything, including his own life to try to strike it rich. Men will use their technical skills to go deep into the earth to try to find wealth.

Here is a remarkable description of a miner in Job's day going into the earth to look for wealth. According to **verse 3**, man must go deep into the earth where it is dark and he must go to places and put an end to the darkness to see if it contains wealth. He must use some artificial means of light to put an end to darkness. Men are not afraid to go into deep darkness if they think they can strike it rich. But there is a deep eternal darkness that men had better fear.

In order to look deep into the earth, according to **verse 4**, he puts a shaft as far into the earth as he can and then uses rope to hang and swing and lower himself deep into the shaft. This wealth is found far from the sight of man, but that does not stop man. Man will go deep into the earth to find it. He will risk his own life to get rich. He dangles a rope into caves and shafts and swings back and forth, shining his light on rock formations in order to hopefully strike it rich. He is out of the sight of man. This is why miners are loners. They go into places all alone just to try and find wealth. In the search for wealth Job describes mining activity:

Mining Activity #1 - What miners typically discover. 28:5-8

Once these men get underground, Job describes what miners typically find (28:5-8):

(Mining Discovery #1) - They find places that are all turned up. 28:5

Underground miners get a look at the bottom side of the earth. It doesn't look all nice and vegetated. When you are underground, you don't see beautiful flowers and plants.

What miners see is that under the earth it is all turned up like some fire has gone through it. You have dark caves and desolate areas.

(Mining Discovery #2) - They find riches in the underground rocks. **28:6**

Miners realize that underground in the rocks is where you find riches.

(Mining Discovery #3) - They find places no bird or animal has ever seen. **28:7-8**

Men have a unique superiority to any bird or animal. No bird or animal can figure out how to go deep into the earth and mine for rich minerals. The falcon was a bird known for its keen eyesight. It can spot prey “from lofty heights.” But no falcon has the ability to even see riches that are deep in the earth. However, men can. Men can go underground and discover and see things no bird or animal has ever discovered or seen.

Mining Activity #2 - What miners typically do. **28:9-11**

Once these men get underground, Job describes mining procedures:

(Mining Procedure #1) - They chip away at the base of the rocks. **28:9**

The words “put his hand on the flint” refers to aggressively attacking the ground and carving out tunnels.

(Mining Procedure #2) - They make channels and dig through the rocks. **28:10**

The Hebrew “channels” describes a canal, which was typically dug around water.

(Mining Procedure #3) - They dam up underground streams. **28:11**

Man will risk all and work hard to strike it rich. He will go places no one else has ever been, he will do things in those places no one else has done, if he thinks it will make him rich. And many do become rich.

Now of course Job is going to make a point and that is you can put all of this effort and energy into trying to make it rich and never gain the wisdom of God.

In fact, Solomon said that this same kind of mining effort should be put into gaining the wisdom of God (Prov. 2:4). It is obvious that Job’s friends spent much time in the mining world trying to get financially rich, but they were spiritually bankrupt.

TOPIC #2 – Why man does not find wisdom. **28:12-22**

Man can probe deep into the earth and now can explore outer space and still not find the wisdom of God. Wisdom, as one commentator said, is “beyond the distant frontiers.”

Many men go after wealth and find some, but very few go after wisdom and find it. Why is that? Job gives three simple reasons:

Reason #1 - Because man does not know the value of wisdom. **28:13a**

One reason why man does not find the wisdom of God is because he does not realize the value of it. To prove our point, all we have to do is look at most churches. Most people who go to church are not going so they can learn the Word of God and gain the wisdom of God. Most people are going because of habit, entertainment or involvement.

I do not believe that generally speaking, a church that is truly after an understanding of the 66 books of God's Word will ever be a mega-church. Most people, even those who profess to be Christians, do not see the value of wisdom.

Reason #2 - Because man does not know where to look for wisdom. **28:13b-14**

You cannot find wisdom in the land of the living, nor deep in the sea. In other words, no human in and of himself can get to some place and get the wisdom of God.

Reason #3 - Because man does not know he cannot buy wisdom. **28:15-19**

It costs billions of dollars to bring a few rocks back from the moon. What exactly did we glean from all of that?

You cannot buy God's wisdom with silver or gold (**28:15**). You cannot buy or exchange onyx or sapphire or anything made with gold for God's wisdom (**28:16-18**). You cannot make some deal with God out of coral or crystal or pearls or topaz so that He will give you His wisdom (**28:19-20**).

TOPIC #3 – Where man can find wisdom . **28:20-28**

Where then can man find wisdom? Carefully notice from **verse 22**, Abaddon and Death recognize the value of the wisdom of God. People who are in eternity recognize the need for God's wisdom. They have an awareness that such a thing does truly exist on earth.

The answer is found in verse 23—it must come from God ! God is the only One who can give His wisdom.

God's eyes see everything on earth (**28:24**). He determines the limits of everything and He is the One who gives wisdom. His wisdom is in creation. According to **verses 25-27**, God's wisdom is seen in four forces man will never control nor fully understand:

- 1) Wind—sometimes it refreshes, sometimes it destroys.
- 2) Waters—sometimes they are calm and sometimes they are devastating.
- 3) Rain—God determines when it rains, where it rains and how much it rains.
- 4) Thunder—Thunder roars and lightning zigzags through the sky and God controls its course.

Who will He give His wisdom to? **Notice verse 28—to the one who fears Him and departs from evil.**

By the way, the noun “Lord” in **verse 28** is Adonai and it is the only place in Job where this noun is used. There must be a fear and reverence that God is owner and master and Lord of everything. God has ultimate authority and power over all things.

You can work hard all your life and accumulate great sums of money. You may earn yourself a mansion on this earth and be very foolish in God’s sight. He will only grant His wisdom to one who fears Him and turns away from evil, and Job had that kind of wisdom.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1) Most people will make any sacrifice to get money. They will sacrifice family, friends, church and God.
- 2) Few people will actually find the wisdom of God because it isn’t the majority who fear God and turn from evil.
- 3) God is the only One who can give wisdom.
- 4) Let us be people who pursue a grasp of the wisdom of God.