

From Job 28. THE PERSONAL ACQUISITION OF REVEALED WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING
PART 1: THE TERMS DEFINED v.28.

#1. "And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding'".

#2. The immediate generalization: Obedience to revealed truth is the sum total of wisdom and understanding: the Lord's point of view. This requires a peculiar and supernatural language manifold. We have to have a valid means of knowing these spiritual truths. In consequence, a naturalistic epistemology (way of knowing such as science) is superseded.

#3. It is wisdom to "fear God". Therefore, wisdom puts immediate accountability on the nature of personal thought, speech and behavior. A remarkable form of self-governance emerges from this fear which overrules human impulse. Thought, speech and behavior are then scaled up to the eternal reality.

#4. It is understanding to "depart from evil". In other words, men in the temporal setting are not competent of, nor permitted to, establishing their own human based value structure.

#5. When those philosophical, moral or political systems are generated and instituted there is an immediate spiritual effect. *Revealed truth is scaled down to the human level.* "Evil" has a specific range of tangibility affecting every particle of life. To depart from it is to discredit its powers of persuasion and to displace its godless ambitions.

#6. The Word of God has to be severely edited to accommodate to the social norms of the day. Believers and churches are, at all times, to be belligerent toward any estrangement from the fear of God and any embrace of human based value systems. This is an absolute.

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PART 2: CONSPICUOUS COMPARISON v.1-11.

#1. People pursue that which, they believe, is in their best interest. The pursuit represents *a value judgment*. It affirms the thought of a hierarchy of importance. Job 28 presents two very different categories, each of which vie for the priority position. Temporal, material wealth is one and the other is the pursuit of revealed truth. They are not bilateral. One will usurp the other.

#2. There are *measures of intensity* that afford the search for either material security or that for spiritual wisdom and understanding:

- a) It is a purposeful search v.1;
- b) It is labor intensive v.2;
- c) There is the determination to overcome obstacles v.3;

- d) One must be undaunted in spite of discomfort, danger and risk v.4;
- e) One must remain focused v.5;
- f) There is the character of the pathfinder v.7, 8;
- g) The requirements of persistence, patience, prevailing motivation, unshakeable courage, intelligence, exploration, knowledge v.9, 10;
- h) One must be indefatigable; never give up v.11.

#3. Job observes that people exclusively driven to the accumulation of material wealth think that no quest for that outcome is too extreme. He also marks well that revealed wisdom and understanding are of greater value than "the gold of Ophir"... "precious onyx or sapphire" v.16.

#4. This text affirms that the higher range of human potential is to be achieved at the spiritual level of wisdom and understanding. To pursue that purpose is to prove that one agrees with the word of God. Life is not truly grounded in the flesh, nature nor the material. #5. How we handle materiality, all of it, is proof of what we believe and what we do not.

Job 28. THE PERSONAL ACQUISITION OF REVEALED WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING PART 3: EXISTENTIALISM.

#1. Without controversy, if the capture of revealed wisdom (meaning) and understanding is superior to the acquisition of material wealth, then the efforts to achieve that purpose should, at least, exceed those relative to materiality. "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" v.12.

#2. The problem: "Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living" v.13. Men do not know where wisdom is and what it looks like because they only listen to themselves.

#3. People have put themselves in position as the sole arbiters of what is useful and meaningful. Money talks. Practicality walks. The significance of revelation is lost. If revealed wisdom and understanding *have no "value,"* then EXISTENTIALISM is the cause.

#4. Existentialism is a philosophy rooted in human rationalization of material existence and rooted in one's relation to one's self (psychology).

#5. Its origins are attributed to the 1940's, but it was practiced much earlier. "The deep says, 'It is not in me'; And the sea says, 'It is not in me'" v.14.

#6. But since the word of God is not recognized, then people must create exclusive rationalizations of the temporal/material realm. And so they do. An empty quest.

#7. Believers and the churches are not immune to this vain philosophy. Thought, speech and behavior prove what one thinks is of "value". The "progressive" churches have without doubt turned to existentialism. Strange that some claiming to be believers forget that wisdom and understanding is not "found in the land of the living".

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PART 4: THE SENSE OF REMOTENESS.

#1. "Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding?" v.20. Revealed truth is often perceived as remote from human experience. In other words, it seems of little utility and without determinant advantage in this world. This is an intended effect.

#2. The Word of God on its own and obedience to it are remote from human experience. However, revealed wisdom and understanding are not remote from God. And therein one finds their power.

#3. How is it that wisdom and understanding are more valuable than "fine gold" and "silver" (v.15) and are beyond the value of "onyx or sapphire" v.16? How do they transcend the material wealth of "glass", "coral", "crystal" or "topaz" v.17-19?

#4. The answer is that revealed wisdom and understanding put us in contact with the greater spiritual reality of the Lord.

#5. "Thus it is hidden from the eyes of all living..." v.21. Faith is the only path to its acquisition. Once acquired then the treasures of wisdom and understanding carry the believer beyond its sense of remoteness to everyday life.

#6. Once the churches took the liberty of categorizing the Bible as "history," then, the sense of remoteness from the present was cemented in place.

#7. The churches are not the source of wisdom and understanding. But they are intended to be their beneficiary. And now revealed wisdom and understanding, without question, have been "hidden" from the churches. They do not even ask, "Where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"

From Job 28. THE PERSONAL ACQUISITION OF REVEALED WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING. PART 5: THE PRE-EXPERIENTIAL.

#1. "Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding"? v.20. One of the important factors of revealed wisdom and understanding is that they are *pre-experiential*. The truth of revelation is everywhere and always, presented in Scripture, to be read in that light.

#2. Therefore, one's thought, speech and behavior are predetermined by the Word of God before the experience, of whatever kind, presents itself. To do that we have to learn it.

#3. To have pre-existing revealed wisdom and understanding counteracts the effect of human lived experience upon faith in God and the Word of God.

#4. "God understands its way, and He knows its place. For He looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens" v.23, 24. Having wisdom and understanding from the Lord keeps us from *blundering into experience and history unprepared*. That is a dangerous affair. Indeed, exercising revealed wisdom and experience will preclude certain kinds of unhelpful experience. Younger believers stand to benefit greatly by accepting pre-experiential wisdom and experience.

#5. As it is, today, we believe that human lived experience is the prerequisite for reading the Bible. That premise is the precursor of much avoidable tragedy. Trust in God before experience? "Then He saw it and declared it; He established it and also searched it out" v.27.