

WISDOM FOR RIGHTEOUS LIVING





“So teach us to
number our days,
that we may gain
a heart of wisdom.”

(Psalm 90:12)



We tend to think that being wise implies having vast knowledge in a certain field of science, philosophy, etc.

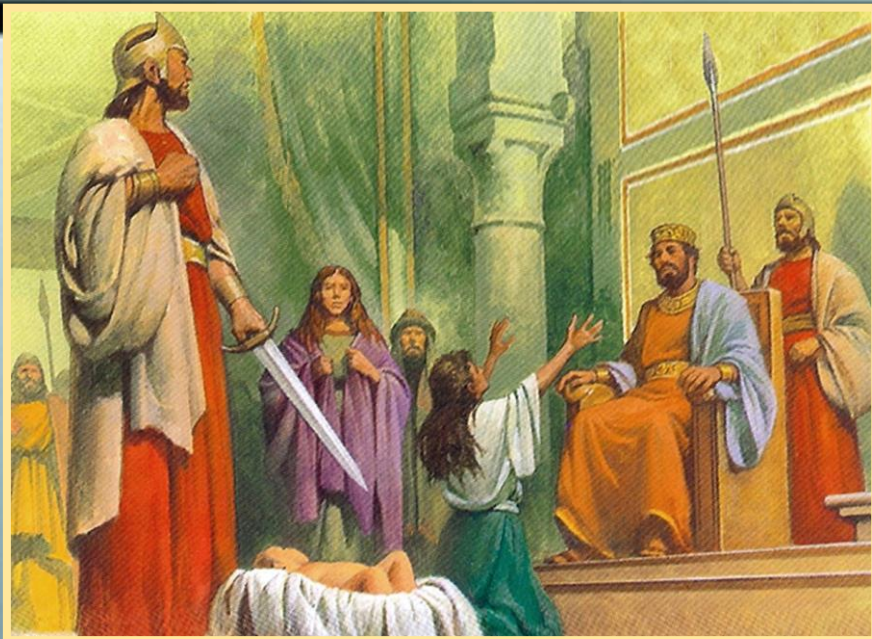
We call the person who has this knowledge “wise”, but wisdom goes beyond that. It involves correctly applying all the knowledge acquired (whether a little or a lot).

What is the biblical concept of wisdom?

How to learn that wisdom?

How can we apply it in our daily life?

What benefits do we get from acting in accordance with biblical wisdom?



▶ The wisdom of the commandments (Psalm 119).

▶ The origin of wisdom (Psalm 90).

▶ Wisdom in trials (Psalms 95, 81 and 105).

▶ Practical wisdom:

▶ The path to evil (Psalm 141).

▶ The blessings of doing good (Psalms 1, 112 and 128).

THE WISDOM OF THE COMMANDMENTS

"Thy word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11)



The main theme of Psalm 119 is God's commandments as expressed in His Word.

As in many other places in the Bible, in this psalm life is compared to a path that each person travels. This path can lead you to eternal life, or eternal damnation. How to choose the right path?



The Word illuminates the right path (Ps. 119:105); cleanses it (Ps. 119:9); guide our steps (Ps. 119:133); and prevents us from the dangers of the evil way (Ps. 119:101).

Living according to the Word necessarily implies keeping the divine commandments (Ps. 119:4). We do not have the capacity to do so, but we are assured that, by meditating on them with the help of God, we will be able to acquire more and more wisdom to keep them and be protected by them (Ps. 119:5-6).

Keeping the commandments is not just an external attitude, it implies a disposition of the mind and heart (Ps. 119:7, 148).



THE ORIGIN OF WISDOM

"So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)

We live for a short period of time that, compared to the Creator's eternity, is but a breath (Ps. 90:2, 4, 9).

In this short time, we live in sin, under the wrath of God (Ps. 90:8-11). But God extends his grace to us, and satisfies us with his mercy (Ps. 90:13-14).



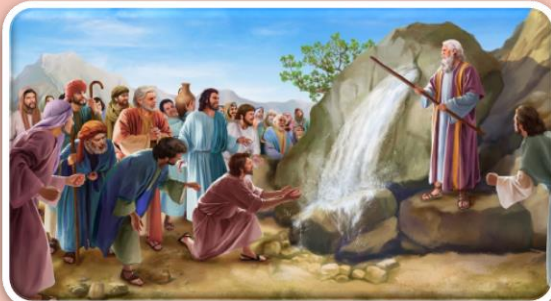
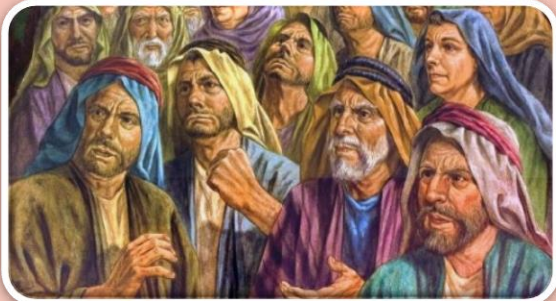
When we allow ourselves to be taught by God, we learn to “number our days.” In this way, we acquire true wisdom, and are transformed into the image of our Creator, whom we learn to fear and revere (Ps. 90:12, 16; 111:10).

Acquired wisdom leads us first to repent and then to do the works God wants us to do (Ps. 90:3, 17).

WISDOM IN THE TRIALS

"You called in trouble, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder; I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah." (Psalm 81:7)

FACE TRIAL WITHOUT WISDOM



At Meribah, Israel tested God: "because they put the Lord to the test, saying, Is the Lord then among us or not?" (Ex. 17:7). However, from God's point of view, it was He who tested Israel (Ps. 81:7).

Israel did not pass the test, but stubbornly remained in its rebellion, for which it had to be punished (Ps. 95:8-11). Despite everything, God gave them the water they asked for (Ex. 17:5-6).

But, if they had been wise, they would have passed the test. Then, God could have done great wonders with them (Ps. 81:13-16).

FACE TRIAL WITH WISDOM



Joseph was imprisoned in irons, mistreated and afflicted. But he had made a wise decision: to serve God no matter the circumstances (Ps. 105:16-18; Gen. 39:7-9).

Once he passed the test, God exalted him (Ps. 105:19-21). His wisdom was so evident that Pharaoh commissioned him to teach his elders the wisdom with which God had endowed him (Ps. 105:22). Through Joseph, God gave life to the entire family of Israel (Ps. 105:23).



PRACTICAL WISDOM

THE ROAD TO EVIL

*"Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works With men who work iniquity:
And do not let me eat of their delicacies" (Psalm 141:4)*

Psalm 141 is a prayer to ask God to deliver us from internal and external temptations (Ps. 141:1-3, 9-10). In our own strength, we cannot overcome temptation, because our very hearts desire sin. We need to pray continually to be able to resist temptation.

Psalm 141:4 and 1:1 show us the process of temptation:

1) The heart leans towards evil

"Do not let my heart be inclined toward an evil thing."

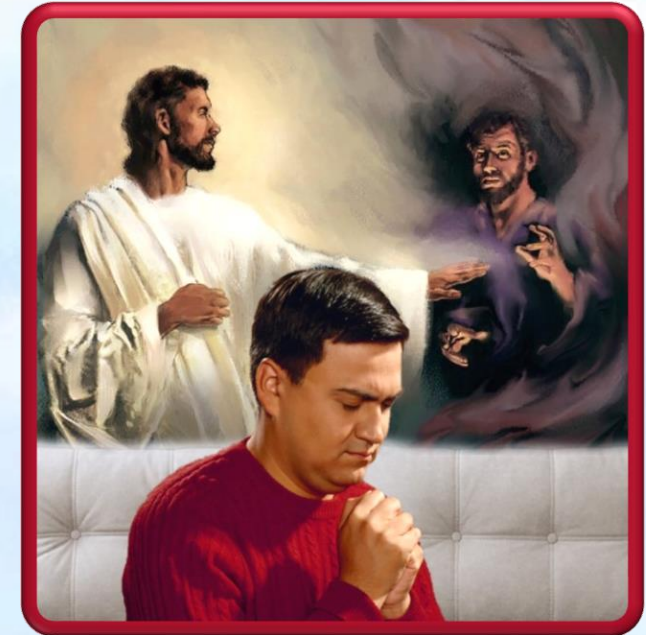
"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked."

2) The person commits sin

"to do ungodly works with those who do iniquity"
"nor was he in the way of sinners"

3) He delights in evil

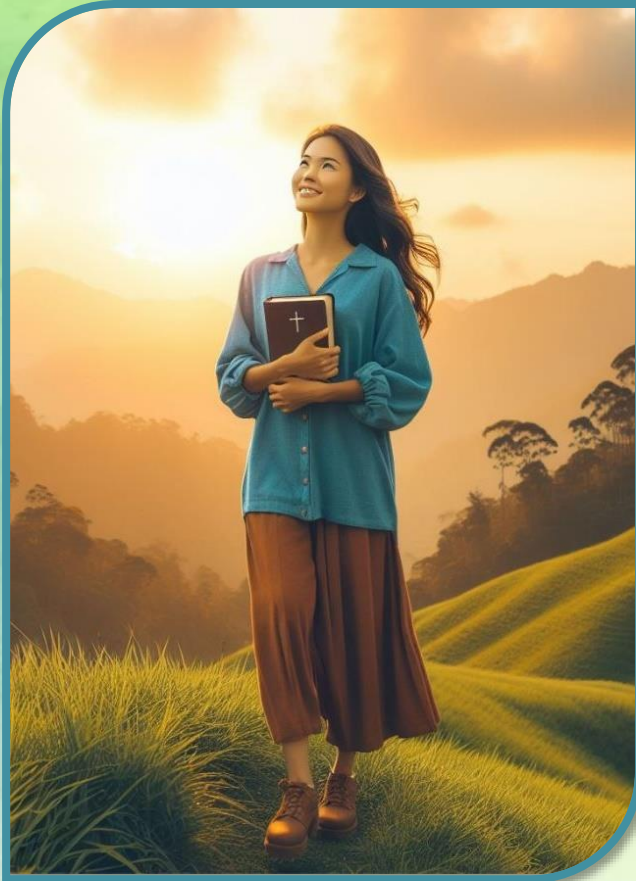
"and let me not eat of your delicious delicacies"
"He has not even sat in the chair of scorners."



The psalms describe the progressive, seductive and cunning character of temptation. Only total dependence on the Lord can guarantee victory (Ps. 141:8-10). However, the final victory over sin is still in the future (Ps. 1:5-6).

THE BLESSINGS OF DOING GOOD

"Behold, thus shall the man be blessed" (Psalm 128:4)



The main function of wisdom is to conduct ourselves in a right way, in accordance with the will of God. What blessings will we receive by acting like this?

We will be blessed
(Ps. 1:1; 112:1;
128:1)

Our works will
prosper (Ps. 1:3;
128:2)

Our descendants will
be powerful
(Ps. 112:2; 128:3)

We will receive
good things and
riches
(Ps. 112:3)

We will walk in the
light of God
(Ps. 112:4)

We will govern
our affairs well
(Ps. 112:5)

We will not slip, and
we will be
remembered
(Ps. 112:6)

We will not fear
bad news
(Ps. 112:7)

We will defeat our
enemies (Ps. 112:8)

We will be
exalted in glory
(Ps. 112:9)

The current conflict between good and evil sometimes prevents us from enjoying all of these blessings, or from only being able to enjoy them partially. However, the time will come when we can be fully blessed, in the Kingdom of God.



“When I think of the work that God is doing for fallen man, I am lost in wonder that God will take poor, fallen beings and bring to them moral power, that there will be the internal workings of His grace, transforming the character and making men fit for the mansions God is preparing for them—beings fitted for the presence of God, fitted to be companions with angels, and to hold communion with God. Oh, how my heart yearns to be one who shall walk with Jesus Christ in the earth made new!”

EGW (Every day with God, April 18)