

# Proverbs 2 Commentary

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Proverbs Overview						
Purpose of Proverbs 1:1-7	Proverbs to Youth 1:8-9:18	Proverbs of Solomon 10:1-24:34	Proverbs of Solomon (Hezekiah) 25:1-29:27	Words of Agur 30:1-30:33	Words of Lemuel 31:1-31:31	
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<b>Title:</b> Proverbs 1:1	Precepts of Wisdom	Proverbs of Solomon	Proverbs Copied by Hezekiah's Men	Proverbs of Agur	Proverbs of Lemuel 31:1-9	Capable Wife 31:10-31
<b>Theme:</b> Proverbs 1:7	Wisdom for Young Men	Proverbs for Everyone		Personal Notes from Agur & Lemuel		
Prologue	Principles of Wisdom			Epilogue		
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**Proverbs 2:1** My son, if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you,

- **if** - Pr 1:3; 4:1; 7:1; John 12:47,48; 1 Timothy 1:15
- **treasure** - 3:1; 4:20-22; 6:21; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Job 23:12; Ps 119:9-11; Matthew 13:44; Luke 2:19,51; 9:44)

## IF... THEN

**NET Note - Proverbs 2:1-11** "forms one long conditional sentence in the Hebrew text: (1) the [protasis](#) ("if...") encompasses Pr 2:1–4 and (2) the [apodosis](#) ("then...") consists of two parallel panels in Pr 2:5–8 and Pr 2:9–11 both of which are introduced by the particle *ʾaz*, "then")."

**Warren Wiersbe** adds "Note the argument that Solomon gives in this chapter that begins with the "if" of Pr 2:1 and continues with the "then" of Pr 2:9 and the "thus" of Pr 2:20... The key verse in chapter 2 is Pr 2:8: "He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints" (NKJV). The repetition of the phrase "my son" (Pr 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; and see Pr 4:1, "my children") reminds us that the Book of Proverbs records a loving father's wise counsel to his family. The British statesman Lord Chesterfield said, "In matters of religion and matrimony I never give any advice; because I will not have anybody's torments in this world or the next laid to my charge." But Jewish fathers were commanded to teach their children wisdom (Dt. 6:1–9); if the children were smart, they paid attention and obeyed. Life is dangerous. It is wise to listen to the counsel of godly people who have walked the path before us. ([Be Skillful - Proverbs](#))

**Phillips** titles Pr 2:1-22 "Wisdom's Protection. The Conditions for Acquiring Wisdom (Pr 2:1-4)

1. We Must Be Receptive (Pr 2:1)
2. We Must Be Responsive (Pr 2:2-3)
3. We Must Be Resolute (Pr 2:4)

As noted Proverbs 2:1-22 the most tightly knit chapter in this book because it is one long sentence in the Hebrew and is also an "alphabetic" poem... consisting of 22 verses, matching the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, probably to suggest its completeness."

**Wiersbe** outlines this chapter as "three different walks"...

Pr 2:1-9 Walking with God

Pr 2:10-19 Walking with the Wicked

Pr 2:20-22 Walking with the Righteous

**Hubbard** outlines Proverbs 2

### **Argument Pr 2:1–9**

condition Pr 2:1–4

result Pr 2:5

reason Pr 2:6–9

### **Illustrations Pr 2:10–20**

men of perverse speech Pr 2:10–15

women of loose sexuality Pr 2:16–20

### **Antithetic conclusion Pr 2:21–22**

positive Pr 2:21

negative Pr 2:22

**My son** - The father's first lecture was in Pr 1:8-19 and now he gives a second "lecture."

**Hubbard** rightly says "'Take my teaching seriously" is what every dedicated teacher asks of a student. No talking, no sleeping, no gazing out of the window, no snapping the notebook shut before the bell rings. The entire flow of the argument in 2:1–9 is designed to evoke that sense of seriousness."

**My son** occurs 23x in Proverbs especially in the first section representing the father's exhortations on Wisdom (Proverbs 1-9) - Pr. 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1, 20; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1; 19:27; 23:15, 19, 26; 24:13, 21; 27:11; 31:2;

**If** (also in Pr 2:3, 4) - This word introduces a conditional clause which signifies that we must make a choice if we are to acquire wisdom. God will not force us to receive His wisdom.

**Charles Bridges** - Wisdom, having solemnly warned rebellious scoffers, now instructs her obedient children. The deep question previously asked, "Where can wisdom be found?" is now answered. It is set before us here as the fear of the LORD (Pr 2:5). It is seen as the principle of practical godliness (Pr 2:7–9), as preserving us from besetting temptations (Pr 2:10–19), and as a guide into the right and safe path (Pr 2:20). So its pupils are safe (Pr 2:21), but the ungodly who despise it will definitely be ruined (Pr 2:22). The way to find wisdom is easy. If this way is carefully pondered and faithfully cultivated, it will give the key to understanding the whole of the Word of God.

**Wiersbe** - The metaphor of life as a journey is a familiar one; it is found in the Bible as well as in classical literature. The Odyssey of Homer describes Ulysses' ten-year journey from Troy to his home in Ithaca, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is an account of Christian's journey from the City of Destruction to the heavenly city. The Bible frequently exhorts us to choose the right path, but the contemporary world thinks there are "many ways to God" and any path you sincerely follow will eventually take you there. Jesus made it clear that in this life we can take only one of two ways, and each of them leads to a different destination. Everybody has to choose either the crowded road that leads to destruction or the narrow road that leads to life (Mt. 7:13-14). There's no middle way. In the book of Proverbs, the words "path" and "way" (and their plurals) are found nearly 100 times (kjv). Wisdom is not only a person to love, but wisdom is also a path to walk, and the emphasis in Proverbs 2, 3, and 4 is on the blessings God's people enjoy when they walk on Wisdom's path. The path of Wisdom leads to life, but the way of Folly leads to death; when you walk on the path of Wisdom, you enjoy three wonderful assurances: Wisdom protects your path (Pr 2), directs your path (Pr 3), and perfects your path (Pr 4). ([Be Skillful - Proverbs](#))

**Receive my words** - The idea is readily, willingly receive. The son is to put the "welcome mat" out so to speak so that his father's words can come into his ears, his mind, his heart. If you do this there are some potential benefits described in Pr 2:5-8 and Pr 2:9-11 (as noted above both sets of benefits are introduced by the conjunction "then.").

**MacArthur** - Appropriating wisdom begins when one values it above all else. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Bridges** says the father's words "should be received by a good and honest heart (Lk 8:15), a heart that is prepared by God. Read God's Book like the person who sat at Jesus' feet and listened to him speaking (Luke 10:39). Be like the Bereans who were so keen to examine the Scriptures (Acts 17:11).

**Receive** (03947)(**laqach**) means to take, grasp, acquire something worth having, take hold of, as Noah reached out and "took hold of," the dove (Ge 8:9). This implies we must be ready, willing and able (enabled by the Spirit), to grasp God's Word. **Does this describe you (me)?** It is interesting that the **Septuagint** translators choose the verb **dechomai** (in middle voice = reflexive = we initiate and participate in effects of our reception) to translate **laqach**, because **dechomai** conveys the sense of receiving God's instruction with a favorable attitude. **Dechomai** means that we accept with deliberate and ready reception God's offer of divine instruction, etc. We welcome His Word (and Him) as our Teacher and Friend as one would warmly welcome a guest into one's home, readily receiving His Truths with open arms, minds, and hearts, even going beyond normally expected gracious hospitality. **May God grant us grace to welcome His Word as an honored guest, giving it the special attention it deserves. Amen**

**James** says, "Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive (**Ed**: This is the same verb **dechomai** described above) the word implanted, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21 note).

**Laqach** is used 908 times in the OT and 19 times in Proverbs...

Pr 1:3 To **receive** instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;

Pr 1:19 So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence; **It takes** away the life of its possessors.

Pr 2:1 My son, if you will **receive** my words And treasure my commandments within you,

Pr 4:10 Hear, my son, and **accept** my sayings And the years of your life will be many.

Pr 6:25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart, Nor let her **capture** (**Lxx = sunarpazo = to seize suddenly and violently! Take hold of forcibly! To seize and carry clean away! It was used to mean seize with the mind -- that is where her beauty makes its first assault -- on our mind = a desire, an epithumia, a strong lust is created! All you men reading, don't miss how powerful is the lure of sexual immorality be it pornography or open fornication. Beware! And this applies to young and old men!!!**) you with her eyelids.

Pr 7:20 He has **taken** a bag of money with him, At the full moon he will come home."

Pr 8:10 **"Take** (not a suggestion but a command!) my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold.

Pr 9:7 He who corrects a scoffer **gets** dishonor for himself, And he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself.

Pr 10:8 The wise of heart will **receive** commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined.

Pr 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wisew**ins** souls.

Pr 17:23 A wicked man **receives** a bribe from the bosom To pervert the ways of justice.

Pr 20:16 **Take** (command) his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for foreigners, hold him in pledge.

Pr 21:11 When the scoffer is punished, the naive becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he **receives** knowledge.

Pr 22:25 Or you will learn his ways And **find** a snare (**Lxx = brochos = a noose, with epiballo = to throw a noose on someone to catch him and restrain him!**) for yourself.

Pr 22:27 If you have nothing with which to pay, Why should he **take** your bed from under you?

Pr 24:11 Deliver those who are **being taken** (Lxx = ago = in present passive = continually being led) away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.

Pr 24:32 When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and **received** instruction.

Pr 27:13 **Take** (command) his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for an adulterous woman hold him in pledge.

Pr 31:16 She considers a field and **buys** it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

**Treasure my commandments within you** - In a word, the father encourages the son to memorize the Scriptures. Are you actively memorizing the Word of God, the Word which endures forever, even after heaven and earth pass away? If you are a parent, I strongly encourage you to join your children in the great adventure of memorizing Scripture together. Be inventive -- have them depict the passage in pictures; put some passages into the form of a song ([See Scripture memory songs by topic from Integrity music - why not play this in your car on trips or when taking the children to school in the morning?](#)); etc.

#### Related Resources:

- Memorizing His Word
- Topical Memory Verses
- [Fighter Verse Program](#)
- [MemLok - Bible Memory System](#)
- [John Piper on "Why Memorize Scripture?"](#)

**Treasure** (06845)(**tsapan/sapan**) means means primarily to hide, to keep secret, to conceal something often of great value with a definite purpose. **Tsaphan** is used in reference to things of value which are secreted away for future use, e.g., wealth, dowry for a bride, wise words of a father (Pr 2:2). Since a father's wise words will be useful throughout one's life and will not always be immediately applicable, the idea of storing up his sayings **within** (as in Pr 7:1, compare **in one's heart** in Ps 119:11 - [Spurgeon on Ps 119:11](#) - [see commentaries on Ps 119:11](#), see [sermons on Ps 119:11](#)) is fitting. These sayings influence the way one thinks which in turn influences one's attitudes and ultimately their actions.

**Tsapan** means primarily to hide, to keep secret, to conceal something often of great value with a definite purpose (for protection or for sinister purposes). The wicked hide themselves in order to ambush the innocent (Pr 1:11), but in the end it is their own lives for which the ambush is set (Pr 1:18). The translates tsapan in Pr 2:1 with the verb **krupto** - which means to hide, to conceal, with the idea that which is hidden is kept safe (as believers are safe in Christ in Col 3:3-note where "hidden" = **krupto**).

**Treasure** (Webster) = Jealously safeguard something considered precious. Collect and store up something of value for future use (Ed: I like that definition - Unless we memorize the Word, how can the Spirit enable us to utilize it in the future in our time of need?). Esteem - set a high value on, regard highly and prize accordingly. Keep carefully. Cherish (hold dear, feel or show affection for, entertain something in one's mind deeply and resolutely - eg, he still cherishes that memory; Keep or cultivate with care and affection). Prize highly as valuable, rare or costly!

I am convinced that the "secret" to Job's "success" in suffering the incredible trials that befell him lay in the fact that he had held on to God's Word, so that when the winds of adversity began to blow in his life, the Word held him fast!

**Job 23:12-see in depth commentary of this verse**—"I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have **treasured (tsapan)** the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

**Comment:** Observe the context - In Job 23:8-9 note Job's frustration. Then in Job 23:10 note his firm declaration. He did not see Him, but He knew about Him, about His ways, His character, His heart and thus he was enabled to make one of the greatest affirmations of faith in all of Scripture - "When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Why did He know God knew? He had obeyed what he knew (see Job 23:11-12a). Hearing must be coupled with heeding of the Word for it to hold us fast when trials come (which they always will!).

**Tsapan** is used 8x in Proverbs...

Pr 1:11 If they say, "Come with us, Let us lie in wait for blood, Let us **ambush** (Lxx = krupto) the innocent without cause;

Pr 1:18 But they lie in wait for their own blood; They **ambush** their own lives.

Pr 2:1 My son, if you will receive my words And **treasure** (Lxx = krupto) my commandments within you,

Pr 2:7 He **stores up** sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

Pr 7:1 My son, keep my words and **treasure** (Lxx = krupto) my commandments within you.

Pr 10:14 Wise men **store up** (Lxx = krupto) knowledge, But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.

Pr 13:22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, And the wealth of the sinner is **stored up** for the righteous.

Pr 27:16 He who would **restrain** her **restrains** the wind, And grasps oil with his right hand.

Not only must we study God's Word, we must also hide it in our hearts. The psalmist wrote, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Ps 119:11-[note](#)). The word hidden conveys the thought of storing something up against a time of future need. We do this by meditating continually on God's Word, by constantly thinking about it, and by applying its truths to the everyday situations of life. I personally have found a systematic Scripture memorization program (see suggestions above) to be absolutely necessary to facilitate continual **meditation** on God's Word. We cannot think throughout the day about what we do not have in our memory.

**THOUGHT** - Are you hiding this "hidden treasure" in your heart daily? Not as a "work" of the flesh to impress all the saints how much Scripture you have memorized, but as a labor of love. What you spend time doing usually is a reflection of what you really love.

**H A Ironside** on Proverbs 2:1-5 - In the opening verses of Proverbs 2 the secret that so many have sought in vain is revealed: how to find the knowledge of God. After all, there is very little mystery about it. The Christian need not be scholarly and profound to understand the Scripture. It is a certain condition of soul, rather than a well-equipped mind, that is required. God has given His Word. He exhorts us to search it in dependence on His Holy Spirit, who guides us into all truth.

These verses do not suggest a careless reading or cursory examination of the Scriptures. The soul is exhorted to "receive" these words. The sayings of God must be received into the heart where they are to be stored. The ear must be inclined to wisdom; the heart applied to understanding; the mouth crying after knowledge; and the voice lifted up for spiritual intelligence. The whole being is thus devoted to the search for the truth. The earnest seeker must dig into the Word of God as a man searching for silver or hidden treasure. He will not be content with surface findings. When God's words are valued more than our necessary food, the result is certain: "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (5). Diligent Bible study is on the decline even among those who value precious truth. Reading books about the Bible is very different from searching the Word for oneself. Notes and expositions may be helpful. But these works of uninspired men must not be permitted to take the place of the sure Word of God. Such one-sided study will cause men to draw their thoughts from one another instead of from God. This will result in dry intellectuality rather than fresh, vigorous spirituality. ([Proverbs 2 Commentary - Ironside's Notes](#))

The following are notes from **William Arnot's "Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth"** (1858) of whom C H Spurgeon writes "'We wish Dr. Arnot had gone steadily through the whole book, for his mind was of an order peculiarly adapted for such a task. Those passages which he dilates upon are set in a clear and beautiful light. For a happy blending of illustrative faculty, practical sound sense, and spirituality, Dr. Arnot was almost unrivalled."

**William Arnot on Proverbs 2:1-5** - Seek, and ye Shall Find - "If thou seekest her as silver... thou shalt find the knowledge of God."—Pr 2:4, 5.

WISDOM continues still to cry unto men with the affectionate authority of a parent. The incarnation of the Son is God's grand

utterance to mankind. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He came to make known the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him."

Such is the speaker, and such the theme. Wisdom cries, "Incline thine ear unto wisdom." Christ calls on men to come unto Christ. It was He who opened the Scriptures; and He taught from them the things concerning himself. He is Prophet and Priest. He gives the invitation; and the invitation is, "Come unto me." It is Christ offering Christ to sinners; the teacher and the lesson alike divine. The preacher and the sermon are the same. He is the beginning and the ending. He is all in all.

The matter of the whole passage, Pr 2:1–9, consists in a command to seek, and a promise to bestow. The same speaker, at a later day, condensed his own discourse into the few emphatic words, "Seek, and ye shall find;" in this passage there is a needful expansion and profitable repetition of these two great pillar thoughts.

The seeking is in Proverbs 2:1–4; the finding in Pr 2:5–9. A Father speaks, and He speaks as unto children: He demands a reasonable service, and promises a rich reward.

In the fourfold repetition of the command there seems an order of succession; and the order, when observed, is both comely and instructive. It combines the beauty of the blossom and the profit of the fruit.

1. Receive my words, and hide my commandments.
2. Incline thine ear, and apply thine heart.
3. Cry after knowledge: lift up thy voice for understanding.
4. Seek her as silver: search for her as for hid treasure.

**1. "Receive my words." (Proverbs 2:1)** This is the first thing; practical instruction must ever begin here. The basis of all religion and morality is the word of the Lord, taken into the understanding and heart. When the sower went forth to sow, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured it. This is the first danger to which the published truth is exposed; it does not enter the ground at all; it tinkles on the surface of the mind, like seed on a beaten path, and next moment it is off, no one knows whither; it never penetrated the soil; it was never received. Corresponding to that first danger is the first counsel, "My son, receive my words;" and if there should be any doubt about the meaning of the precept, the clause which balances it on the other side supplies the comment, "hide my commandments with thee." Our adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, or ravening bird, seeking whom he may devour. He carries off the word from the surface of listless minds as birds carry away the seed that lies on the surface of unbroken ground. The word of God is a vital seed, but it will not germinate unless it be hidden in a softened receptive heart. It is here that providence so often strikes in with effect as an instrument in the work of the Spirit. Especially, at this point, bereaving providences work together for good. Even these, however, precious though they have been in the experience of all the saved, are only secondary and subordinate agencies. Sorrow is not seed. A field that is thoroughly and deeply broken may be as barren in the harvest as the beaten pathway. The place and use of providential visitation in the divine administration of Christ's kingdom, is to break up the way of the word through the incrustations of worldliness and vanity that incase a human heart and keep the word lying hard and dry upon the surface.

Every one is capable of perceiving the difference between merely hearing the word and receiving it. It is a blessed thing to have that word dwelling richly within you; felt in all its freshness touching your conscience and enlightening your mind, during the busy day and in the silent night, giving tone to your spirit within, and direction to your course through life.

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Behold, He stands at the door and knocks; if any man open, He will come in. To as many as receive Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. ([Proverbs 2:4.5 Seek and Ye Shall Find](#))

**George Lawson** comments on Proverbs 2:1-7 (Spurgeon wrote "A thoroughly sound and useful commentary. Lawson wrote popularly and vigorously.") - WISDOM is an excellent thing, therefore get wisdom. But how shall we get wisdom? or in what shall the attainment of it profit us? You have an answer to both these questions in this chapter.

How shall we get wisdom? The wise man answers,

Proverbs 2:1–7. It is not enough for us to attend the public ordinances of God, and to read a chapter or two of the Bible at home every day, but we are required to receive the words of wisdom, to keep them in our hearts, and to apply our souls to them.

We are to receive the words of our heavenly Father, with reverence and love, with faith and diligent attention. No gift is so precious as that knowledge which God imparts to us in the scriptures, and we ought to receive it with eagerness, like that which the covetous man shews for gold and silver; and as he who receives money is careful to lay it up where he may find it when he has occasion to use it, so in like manner it becomes us to lay up in the midst of our heart the instructions of wisdom, collecting and hiding the precious treasure, till the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom. When we give due attention to the word of truth, it will dwell

in our minds, dispelling ignorance and error, and communicating that light which is necessary to direct the whole of our conduct; in our memories, affording a constant supply for spiritual meditation, ready for use on every emergency; in our wills, to guide their choice and inclination; in our affections, to direct their motions, to curb their extravagance, and to inflame their ardour towards spiritual objects; and in our consciences, to preserve alive the impressions of the divine law, and to direct them in judging of the spiritual state of the soul.

The ear must be inclined to wisdom, that we may learn it. The senses of the body minister to the soul. The eye, surveying the wonders of God's hand, furnishes the soul with apprehensions of his power and wisdom; but the ear is that learning sense by which the richest treasures of spiritual knowledge are admitted into the soul. As the mouth tastes the food of the body, so the ear receives and tries those words that nourish the soul. We attend to our friends or neighbours when they are informing us of some new thing; we count it a piece of good manners to listen, when nothing is to be heard but dulness and insipidity: shall we not, then, attend to Him that made the ear, when he condescends to speak to us, and to disclose truths of eternal moment?

Whilst our ears are attentive, our hearts must be applied to wisdom. Angels, who are so much our superiors, apply themselves to the learning of it. They are already replenished with the stores of truth, and yet they desire to pry deeper into the mystery of wisdom. Great as was the measure which Solomon had received, he still continued to apply his heart to it; surely, then, the wisest of us ought to apply our whole hearts; for what is so needful to us, and so valuable in itself?

But after all our application, we have understandings so dark, that the Bible must remain a sealed book unto us, unless our eyes are enlightened to discern the wonders of God's law. With our instructions, therefore, earnest prayer must be mingled, that the Spirit of wisdom and revelation may illuminate our understandings, and fit our souls for receiving and retaining the truths of God. David was wiser than his teachers, and yet he still lifts up his voice for wisdom to the Father of lights, and pleads, with fervent importunity, that God would open his eyes, and not conceal his laws from him, nor take the word of truth out of his mouth. Let us, in imitation of such a holy example, earnestly pray that we may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God; and particularly, that we may be furnished with all that wisdom and knowledge that is requisite for directing us in our respective stations and circumstances. Solomon was already a wise man, yet when commanded to chuse what he would have, he chose a greater measure of wisdom, of that wisdom especially which would be most useful for him in governing the kingdom of Israel. With this petition God was well pleased. He gave him not only what he requested, but everything most highly valued by men.

But while we cry after wisdom, and depend on God to bestow it on us, it would be presumptuous to neglect the means of obtaining it. We must seek it as silver, and search for it as for hid treasure. We every day see with what anxious diligence men seek for silver. They fatigue their bodies, and waste their spirits; they destroy their health, and expose their lives; they even wound their consciences, and expose themselves to shameful deaths and everlasting misery, that they may load themselves with shining clay. Shall the professed disciples of the great Teacher set less value upon knowledge, than other men set upon silver? David well knew the value of this knowledge, and esteemed it above thousands of gold and silver. Job prefers it to every thing that dazzles with its lustre the eyes of mortals\*.

It is therefore highly reasonable, that we diligently and carefully use all those means which God hath appointed for this end; that we hear sermons with earnest attention; that we read and search the word of God, and make it the subject of our frequent meditation; that we make use of edifying conversation; that we go to the wise, who have the law of God in their hearts, so that their mouth speaks wisdom, and their tongue talks of judgment. To the use of such means of improvement as these, we must add prayer for the divine blessing, to render them effectual to our instruction and salvation. Truth is like a mine, more precious than that which is the depository of gold and of diamonds. Had any of us such a precious treasure as this in our garden, we would not travel over the ground for pleasure, but employ ourselves day and night in digging, till our houses should be enriched with the precious store. Why, then, are we careless about that which will enrich us to eternity, and fill all our treasures?

You see the means to be used by us for attaining wisdom. Our ears and hearts must be employed in the search. We must lift up our voices to the Author of wisdom, and seek for it with all the desire of our souls, and with such earnest endeavours as men use in digging for hid treasures. Through the blessing of God the search shall not be unsuccessful; for "then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." It is plain that those who employ themselves in the diligent pursuit of wisdom, have been already blessed with some degree of true knowledge; for how could they value so highly that with which they were altogether unacquainted? He is already wise, who prefers wisdom to every earthly object; and he shall be wiser still, for to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly.

The fear of the Lord, and the sound knowledge of God, are inseparably connected. Religious fear is not a blind and tormenting passion of the soul, but a holy and delightful grace, founded in true apprehensions of the awful and lovely glories of the divine nature, and disposing him who possesses it, to walk with God. The knowledge of God regulates this fear, and preserves it from sinking into terror, or degenerating into superstition, but guides it to express its power in checking and subduing every corrupt affection, and animating the soul to every instance of obedience.



If men are careless about wisdom, and use no diligence in seeking it, they make it evident that they are destitute of the knowledge and fear of the Lord. They have not, and from them shall be taken even that which they seem to have.

The efficacy of every means of knowledge is from God, for "the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Every beam of reason in men, is communicated from the wisdom of God\*. The simplest of the mechanical arts cannot be acquired unless men are taught of God†. How, then, can we expect to understand the mystery of the divine will, without spiritual light communicated from that God who is the Father of lights, and the author of every good and perfect gift!

Knowledge and understanding cometh out of the mouth of God. By his Spirit he bestows upon us this blessing through his word, for it is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding to men. Experience, however long, observation, however close, human teaching, however skilful, can do nothing to supply us with true knowledge, without the influence of that Spirit which rested upon Christ as a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and which is given by him to all his followers in their measure‡.

The wisdom that God in his kindness bestows upon men, is sound and substantial. There are many kinds of knowledge of little importance. The knowledge which some possess tends only to vex and disquiet them, or to inspire them with vanity and self-conceit. How different the knowledge that God imparts to the diligent students of wisdom! Far from perplexing or elating, it fills their understanding with the most pleasant truths, and directs them in the way everlasting.

But who are the blessed persons that are favoured with this divinely excellent wisdom? "The Lord lays it up for the righteous." God is said to teach sinners in the way\*; for man's unworthiness does not exclude him from divine mercy. Saul the persecutor had the Son of God revealed in him by divine grace, and neither his stubborn prejudices, nor his cruelty to the church of Christ, could shut out the beams of heavenly light. Sinners are invited to Christ as the light of the Gentiles, and the salvation of the lost‡; but here it is said, he lays it up for the righteous. Sinners and fools may have it, but the righteous shall have it. They are already made sensible of their need of it, and desire it more than silver and gold. They ask it from God, who giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given them. The Lord layeth up this wisdom for them. There are infinite stores of it in his possession, and they are all treasured up in Christ, and out of his fulness shall the righteous receive supplies suited to their exigencies.

To encourage God's people to expect all needful supplies of wisdom from him, let them consider his peculiar regard to them, and the constant protection he has engaged to afford them. (George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs)

### Proverbs 2:2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding

- **Your** - Pr 18:1; Ps 119:111,112; Isaiah 55:3; Matthew 13:9
- **Incline** - Pr 22:17-21; 23:12; Ps 90:12; Ecclesiastes 7:25; 8:9,16; Acts 17:11)

The truth has to be received and obeyed to be of value. This passage is so important it is repeated in Proverbs 5:1.

My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your **ear** (heart in Pr 2:2) to my understanding;

**Make your ear attentive** - That is, listen (HCSB = "listening closely", NLT = "Tune your ears to wisdom"). This is how we are to prepare our heart and mind to receive divine instruction. The idea is **not** just to hear ("in one ear and out the other"), but to **hear** and **heed**. (cp James 1:22-note) A hearing ear describes an obedient heart, which is underscored by the parallelism with "heart" and by the **Septuagint (Lxx)** translation of the Hebrew phrase with the Greek verb **hupakouo**, which literally means to *listen under*, implying to listen with attentiveness and to respond positively to what is heard. The sense is that one understands and responds accordingly. Obedience consists in listening and is coupled with the willingness to surrender and respond as exemplified by Abraham's unflinching obedience in Genesis 22 - In Ge 22:1 God spoke to him and he responded immediately "Here I am." In Ge 22:18 Jehovah acknowledged that he not only heard but he heeded (**Lxx** of Ge 22:18 = **hupakouo** = Abraham obeyed).

**MacArthur** on **your ear** and **your heart** - Once wisdom is properly valued, both the ear and mind are captivated by it. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Wisdom is the right use of knowledge:

All true spiritual wisdom is found only in Christ.

**Wisdom** ([02451](#))(**chokmah** from the verb **chakam** - to be wise) is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. Wisdom is the ability to see something from God's viewpoint. **Wisdom** is "God's character in the many practical affairs of life." **Chokmah** is the knowledge and the ability to make the right choices at the opportune time. The consistency of making the right choice is an indication of one's spiritual maturity. The prerequisite for this "wisdom" is the fear of the Lord (Pr 1:7-note). "Wisdom" is personified as crying out for disciples who will do everything to pursue her (Pr 1:20-note).



The person who seeks **chokmah** diligently will receive **understanding**: (Pr 2:6) and will benefit in life by walking with God (Pr 2:20, cf Gal 5:16).

"Wisdom is knowing and having discernment, so that we can apply the truth of the Word of God at the right time, in the right way, with the right motive. Wisdom comes from the Word of God and from getting to know Him and ourselves better." (Warren Wiersbe)

We can get INFORMATION "on LINE" (from Google)  
but WISDOM is from "on HIGH" (from God)!

- [Wisdom - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Wisdom - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Wisdom and Wise Men - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)

**Incline** (05186)(**natah**) means to spread out, to stretch out, to extend; to pay attention. **Natah** conveys the idea of "extending something outward and toward" something or someone. In this context **natah** means to incline one's heart to God and His commands.

A wise man named Joshua with his dying words (Josh 24:1, 28, 29) exhorted Israel to **"put away"** (a command to turn aside from ~ equivalent to repent) the foreign gods which are in your midst, and **incline** (a command) **your hearts** to the LORD, the God of Israel." (Joshua 24:23).

If you sense your heart is not inclined toward God's understanding, consider praying "May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, that **He may incline our hearts to Himself**, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers." (1Ki 8:57-58) Or praying as did the psalmist **"Incline my heart** to Your testimonies And not to dishonest gain. (Ps 119:36 [Spurgeon's note](#)). Or perhaps there are days or even seasons, when we need to pray "Do not **incline my heart** to any evil thing." (Ps 141:4)

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** uses the verb **paraballo** which literally means to throw beside and depicts placing something beside something else for the purpose of comparison. It was a nautical technical term describing a ship come near by or beside (Acts 20:15). The picture here in Pr 2:2 could be that our heart (like a ship) is to be brought near by the "safe harbor" of understanding.

**John Phillips** - In other words, we need to make an active and determined effort to become acquainted with wisdom. We need to make an active and determined effort to get to know the Word of God where the highest wisdom is stored.

**Understanding** (08394)(**tebunah** from **bin** = to discern) is a noun describing the ability to discern a right course of action (Dt 32:28, Ps 136:5, 145:5, Pr 3:19). In other contexts, **tebunah** refers to skill or the ability to perform a craft (Ex 31:3). **Tebunah** is the object of knowledge (Pr 2:3; 3:13; 5:1; 14:29; 18:2; 19:8 Ps 49:4; 147:5 Is 40:28 1Ki 5:9; 7:14) **Vine** summarizes **tebunah** - it represents the act (Job 26:12), faculty (Ex. 31:3), object (Pr 2:3), and personification of wisdom (Pr. 8:1).

- [Understanding - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)

The Lxx translates **tebunah** in Pr 2:2 and Pr 2:6 with **sunesis** (**sun** = with + **hiemi** = send) literally is a sending together or a bringing together. **Sunesis** describes the putting together, grasping or exhibiting quick comprehension. **Sunesis** is the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them. **Sunesis** suggests quickness of apprehension, the penetrating consideration which precedes action. **Sunesis** is the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them.

**Understanding** (Webster) = power of comprehending; especially the capacity to apprehend general relations of particulars; the power to make experience intelligible by applying concepts and categories. The faculty of the human mind by which it apprehends the real state of things presented to it, or by which it receives or comprehends the ideas which others express and intend to communicate. The understanding is called also the intellectual faculty. It is the faculty by means of which we obtain a great part of our knowledge.

**Augustine** has a good word on understanding - Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand.

**Charles Swindoll** - Because our **understanding** is earthbound... human to the core... limited... finite... we operate in a dimension totally unlike our Lord... who knows no such limitations. We see now. He sees forever. (**Ed**: It follows that we can greatly benefit from divinely dispensed understanding!)

**Oswald Chambers**-If there is anything hidden from us as disciples today, it is because we are not in a fit state to **understand** it. As soon as we become fit in spiritual character, the thing is revealed; it is concealed at God's discretion until the life is developed

sufficiently.

- [Understanding in Baker's Evangelical Dictionary](#)

**NAS Usage:** discernment(1), reasonings(1), skill(1), skillful(1), skillfully(1), understanding(37).

**Tebunah** - 42v - Ex. 31:3; 35:31; 36:1; Dt. 32:28; 1Ki. 4:29; 7:14; Job 12:12, 13; 26:12; 32:11; Ps. 49:3; 78:72; 136:5; 147:5; Pr. 2:2-3, 6, 11; 3:13, 19; 5:1; 8:1; 10:23; 11:12; 14:29; 15:21; 17:27; 18:2; 19:8; 20:5; 21:30; 24:3; 28:16; Isa. 40:14, 28; 44:19; Jer. 10:12; 51:15; Ezek. 28:4; Hos. 13:2; Obad. 1:7, 8

Here are all the uses of **tebunah** in Proverbs (**Take a moment to read through these passages which will give you a good "working definition" of the Hebrew word tebunah**).

Pr 2:2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to **understanding**;

Pr 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for **understanding**;

Pr 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and **understanding**.

Pr 2:11 Discretion will guard you, **Understanding** will watch over you,

Pr 3:13 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains **understanding**.

Pr 3:19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth, By **understanding** He established the heavens.

Pr 5:1 My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your ear to my **understanding**;

Pr 8:1 Does not wisdom call, And **understanding** lift up her voice?

Pr 10:23 Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, And so is wisdom to a man of **understanding**.

Pr 11:12 He who despises his neighbor lacks sense, But a man of **understanding** keeps silent.

Pr 14:29 He who is slow to anger has great **understanding**, But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.

Pr 15:21 Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, But a man of **understanding** walks straight.

Pr 17:27 He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of **understanding**.

Pr 18:2 A fool does not delight in **understanding**, But only in revealing his own mind.

Pr 19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps **understanding** will find good.

Pr 20:5 A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, But a man of **understanding** draws it out.

Pr 21:30 There is no wisdom and no **understanding** And no counsel against the LORD.

Pr 24:3 By wisdom a house is built, And by **understanding** it is established;

Pr 28:16 A leader who is a great oppressor lacks **understanding**, But he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.

The following are notes from **William Arnot's "Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth" (1858) on Proverbs 2:1-5 - 2. "Incline thine ear." (Proverbs 2:2)** The entrance of the word has an immediate effect on the attitude of the mind and the course of the life. The incoming of the word makes the ear incline to wisdom; and the inclining of the ear to wisdom lets in and lays up greater treasures of the word.

In practice it will be found that those who hide the word within them, feeding on it as daily bread, acquire a habitual bent of mind towards things spiritual. On the other hand, when the truth touches, and glances off again, like sunlight from polar snows, it is both a symptom and a cause of an inclination of the mind away from God and goodness. The great obstacle to the power and spread of the gospel lies in the averted attitude of human hearts. The mind is turned in another direction, and the faculties occupied in other pursuits. How hopeful the work of preaching becomes when the lie and the liking of the listener's soul is towards saving truth! When the heart is applied to it, some portion of the word goes in, and that which has obtained an entrance prepares the way for more. To him that hath that little will be given much, and he shall have abundance. A man inclines his ear to those sounds which already his heart desires; again to turn the ear, by an exercise of will at God's high command, to the word of wisdom, is the very way to inoculate the heart with a love to that word passing the love of earthly things. The lean of the disciples' hearts in the days of old drew them to Jesus; and Jesus near, made their hearts burn with a keener glow. The ear and the heart!—precious gifts! He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith; he that hath a heart to love, let him love with it the altogether Lovely. The ear inclined to divine wisdom will draw the heart; the heart drawn will incline the ear. Behold one of the circles in which God, for his own glory,

makes his unnumbered worlds go round. ([Proverbs 2:4,5 Seek and Ye Shall Find](#))

## Proverbs 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding

- if - Pr 3:6; 8:17; 1Ki 3:9-12; 1Chr 22:12; Ps 25:4,5;119:34,73,125,169; Luke 11:13; Ephesians 1:17,18; James 1:5

### DO YOU HAVE NOT BECAUSE YOU ASK NOT?

**For** - Probably better translated - indeed (NET), furthermore (HCSB), yes (ESV), yea (KJV). **Indeed** if you cry for discernment...

**Barnes** - Not "receiving" only, but "hiding" or treasuring up—not the "ear" only, but the "heart"—not the mere "cry," but the eager "lifting up the voice."

The point of this introductory section (Pr 2:1-5) on wisdom is that it does not drop out of the sky so to speak but requires us to make a choice to diligently pursue it.

**Warren Wiersbe** says that "If you want wisdom, you must listen to God attentively (Matt. 13:9), obey Him humbly (John 7:17), ask Him sincerely (James 1:5), and seek Him diligently (Isa. 55:6–7), the way a miner searches for silver and gold. "Obtaining spiritual wisdom isn't a once-a-week hobby, it is the daily discipline of a lifetime. But in this age of microwave ovens, fast foods, digests, and numerous 'made easy' books, many people are out of the habit of daily investing time and energy in digging deep into Scripture and learning wisdom from the Lord. Thanks to television, their attention span is brief; thanks to religious entertainment that passes for worship, their spiritual appetite is feeble and spiritual knowledge isn't 'pleasant to [their] soul' (Prov. 2:10). It's no wonder fewer and fewer people 'take time to be holy' and more and more people fall prey to the enemies that lurk along the way." ([Be Skillful - Proverbs](#))

**If you cry** ("if" = Pr 2:1, 3, 4) - The implication is that we have to desire discernment with a sense of desperation, of earnestness, of passion. We have to exert some effort, an idea that is accentuated by our need to **seek** and **search** in Pr 2:4. **Do you desire divine discernment? Are you desperate to know and apply God's truth? Have you ask God? Are you indifferent or passionate?** **James** says that "if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (James 1:4-note)

**Webster** says that to **cry** is to utter in a loud voice, to call importunately (overly persistent in request or demand), by way of earnest request or prayer. **Have you ever cried out to God like this, asking for discernment or insight in a particular matter?**

**James Smith** - Now God, who possesses Heaven and earth, whose condescension and love are infinite, who has shown wondrous liberality in **giving** to others, and who can get great glory by **giving** to you — bids you **"Ask for whatever you want me to give you."** Let us consider... Do you like Solomon, **ask for wisdom?** Wisdom "to win souls for God," to walk wisely and worthily before men, and to manage your trials so as to glorify God. It shall be given you — **for the Lord gives wisdom to all sincere seekers, and upbraids not.** ([God's Gracious Proposal](#))

**Charles Bridges** applies this passage to our prayer life writing that **-Every verse we read and meditate on gives material for prayer.** David (Ps 119:18-[Spurgeon's Note](#)) and his wise son (1Ki 3:9–12) sought for this learning on their knees. **The most mature Christian will continue to the end of his life to call out for discernment and for more understanding.**

In Proverbs 1, it was **wisdom** who was crying out and lifting her voice

Proverbs 1:20-21-note Wisdom shouts in the street, She lifts her voice in the square; 21 At the head of the noisy streets she cries out; At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:

**Now** we are to pursue her companions, **discernment** and **understanding** (Both personified as was wisdom), with a holy urgency and ardor.

**Discernment** (insight = ESV, NIV) ([0998](#))([binah](#) [see word study]) is translated as "understanding" far more often than as "discernment" in the NAS (29/38x). This noun conveys a strong moral and religious connotation as exemplified by Job 28:28 which records that "to depart from evil is **understanding**."

Here are the 14 (of a total of 38 OT) uses of **binah** in Proverbs:

Pr 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of **understanding**,

Pr 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for **understanding**;

Pr 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own **understanding**.

Pr 4:1 Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, And give attention that you may gain **understanding**,

Pr 4:5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire **understanding**! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

Pr 4:7 "The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get **understanding**.

Pr 7:4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," And call **understanding** your intimate friend;

Pr 8:14 "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am **understanding**, power is mine.

Pr 9:6 "Forsake your folly and live, And proceed in the way of **understanding**."

Pr 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is **understanding**.

Pr 16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get **understanding** is to be chosen above silver.

Pr 23:4 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your **consideration** of it.

Pr 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and **understanding**.

Pr 30:2 Surely I am more stupid than any man, And I do not have the **understanding** of a man.

**Discernment** (Webster) - the power or faculty of the mind, by which it distinguishes one thing from another, as truth from falsehood virtue from vice; acuteness of judgment; power of perceiving differences of things or ideas, and their relations and tendencies. The errors of youth often proceed from the want of discernment.

Listen to the prayers of the psalmist (many think it is David) in Psalm 119. How informative, that he repeatedly cries out for understanding! Should we do any less? **Consider praying these prayers as part of your morning, noon and evening devotionals, and be eager and ready for God's Spirit to answer!**

(Ps 119:34) **Give me understanding**, (**Why does he desire it? To be a "smarter sinner"? Clearly not!**) that I may observe Your law And keep it with all my heart.

**Spurgeon's note** - This is the same prayer enlarged, or rather it is a supplement which intensifies it. He not only needs teaching, but the power to learn: he requires not only to understand, but to obtain an **understanding**. How low has sin brought us; for we even lack the faculty to understand spiritual things, and are quite unable to know them till we are endowed with spiritual **discernment**. Will God in very deed give us **understanding**? This is a miracle of grace. **It will, however, never be wrought upon us till we know our need of it; and we shall not even discover that need till God gives us a measure of understanding to perceive it.** We are in a state of complicated ruin, from which nothing but manifold grace can deliver us. Those who feel their folly are by the example of the Psalmist encouraged to pray for understanding: **let each man by faith cry, "Give me understanding."** Others have had it, why may it not come to me? It was a gift to them; will not the Lord also freely bestow it upon me?

We are not to seek this blessing that we may be famous for wisdom, but that we may be abundant in our love to the law of God. **He who has understanding will learn, remember, treasure up, and obey the commandment of the Lord.** The gospel gives us grace to keep the law; the free gift leads us to holy service; there is no way of reaching to holiness but by accepting the gift of God. If God gives, we keep; but we never keep the law in order to obtaining grace. The sure result of regeneration, or the bestowal of **understanding**, is a devout reverence for the law and a resolute keeping of it in the heart. The Spirit of God makes us to know the Lord and to understand somewhat of his love, wisdom, holiness, and majesty; and the result is that we honour the law and yield our hearts to the obedience of the faith.

(Ps 119:73) Yodh. Your hands made me and fashioned me; **Give me understanding**, that I may learn Your commandments.

**Spurgeon's note** - **Give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.** As thou hast made me, teach me. Here is the vessel which thou hast fashioned; Lord, fill it. Thou hast given me both soul and body; grant me now thy grace that my soul may know thy will, and my body may join in the performance of it. The plea is very forcible; it is an enlargement of the cry, "Forsake not the work of thine own hands." Without understanding the divine law and rendering obedience to it we are imperfect and useless; but we may reasonably hope that the great Potter will complete his work and give the finishing touch to it by imparting to it

sacred knowledge and holy practice. If God had roughly made us, and had not also elaborately fashioned us, this argument would lose much of its force; but surely from the delicate art and marvellous skill which the Lord has shown in the formation of the human body, we may infer that he is prepared to take equal pains with the soul till it shall perfectly bear his image.

A man without a mind is an idiot, the mere mockery of a man; and a mind without grace is wicked, the sad perversion of a mind. We pray that we may not be left without a spiritual judgment: for this the Psalmist prayed in Ps 119:66-note, and he here pleads for it again; there is no true knowing and keeping of the commandments without it. **Fools can sin; but only those who are taught of God can be holy.** We often speak of gifted men; but he has the best gifts to whom God has given a **sanctified understanding** wherewith to know and prize the ways of the Lord. Note well that David's prayer for understanding is not for the sake of speculative knowledge, and the gratification of his curiosity: he desires an enlightened judgment that he may learn God's commandments, and so become obedient and holy. This is the best of learning. A man may abide in the College where this science is taught all his days, and yet cry out for ability to learn more. The commandment of God is exceeding broad, and so it affords scope for the most vigorous and instructed mind: in fact, no man has by nature an understanding capable of compassing so wide a field, and hence the prayer, "give me understanding"; -- as much as to say -- I can learn other things with the mind I have, but thy law is so pure, so perfect, spiritual and sublime, that I need to have my mind enlarged before I can become proficient in it. He appeals to his Maker to do this, as if he felt that no power short of that which made him could make him wise unto holiness. We need a new creation, and who can grant us that but the Creator himself?

**He who made us to live must make us to learn;  
he who gave us power to stand must give us grace to understand.**

**Let us each one breathe to heaven the prayer of this verse ere we advance a step further, for we shall be lost even in these petitions unless we pray our way through them, and cry to God for understanding.**

(Ps119:125) I am Your servant; **give me understanding**, That I may know (speaks of an "intimacy" with) Your testimonies.

**Spurgeon's note** - **Give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies** In the verse he sought teaching; but here he goes much further, and craves understanding. Usually, if the instructor supplies the teaching, the finds the understanding; but in our case we are far more dependent, must beg for understanding as well as teaching: this the ordinary cannot give, and we are thrice happy that our Divine Tutor can furnish us with it. **We are to confess ourselves fools, and then our Lord will make us wise, as well as give us knowledge.** The best understanding is that which enables us to render perfect obedience and to exhibit intelligent faith, and it is this which David desires, -- "understanding, that I may know thy testimonies." Some would rather not know these things; they prefer to be at ease in the dark rather than possess the light which leads to repentance and diligence. The servant of God longs to know in an understanding manner all that the Lord reveals of man and to man; he wishes to be so instructed that he may apprehend and comprehend that which is taught him. A servant should not be ignorant concerning his master, or his master's business; he should study the mind, will, purpose, and aim of him whom he serves, for so only can he complete his service; and as no man knows these things so well as his master himself, he should often go to him for instructions, lest his very zeal should only serve to make him the greater blunderer.

**It is remarkable that the Psalmist does not pray for understanding through acquiring knowledge, but begs of the Lord first that he may have the gracious gift of understanding, and then may obtain the desired instruction.** All that we know before we have **understanding** is apt to spoil us and breed vanity in us; but if there be first an **understanding heart**, then the stores of knowledge enrich the soul, and bring neither sin nor sorrow therewith. Moreover, this **gift of understanding** acts also in the form of **discernment** and thus the good man is preserved from hoarding up that which is false and dangerous: he knows what are and what are not the testimonies of the Lord.

(Ps 119:169) Tav. Let my cry come before You, O LORD; **Give me understanding** according to Your word (**So what is the ultimate source of understanding? Are you giving daily attention to His Word? If you are not, could it be possible that this explains some of the poor life choices you have made? Just a thought to ponder honestly!**).

**Spurgeon's note** - Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD. He is tremblingly afraid lest he should not be heard. He is conscious that his prayer is nothing better than the cry of a poor child, or the groan of a wounded



beast. He dreads lest it should be shut out from the ear of the Most High, but he very boldly prays that it may come before God, that it may be in his sight, under his notice, and looked upon with his acceptance; yea, he goes further, and entreats, "Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord." He wants the Lord's attention to his prayer to be very close and considerate. He uses a figure of speech and personifies his prayer. We may picture his prayer as Esther, venturing into the royal presence, entreating an audience, and begging to find favour in the sight of the blessed and only Potentate. It is a very sweet thing to a suppliant when he knows of a surety that his prayer has obtained audience, when it has trodden the sea of glass before the throne, and has come even to the footstool of the glorious seat around which heaven and earth adore. It is to Jehovah that this prayer is expressed with trembling earnestness -- our translators, filled with holy reverence, translate the word, "O LORD." We crave audience of none else, for we have confidence in none beside.

**Give we understanding according to thy word.** This is the prayer about which the Psalmist is so exceedingly anxious. **With all his gettings he would get understanding, and whatever he misses he is resolved not to miss this priceless boon.**

**He desires spiritual light and understanding  
as it is promised in God's word,  
as it proceeds from God's word, and  
as it produces obedience to God's word.**

He pleads as though he had no understanding whatever of his own, and asks to have one given to him. "Give me understanding." In truth, he had an understanding according to the judgment of men, but what he sought was an **understanding** according to God's word, which is quite another thing. **To understand spiritual things is the gift of God.** To have a judgment enlightened by heavenly light and conformed to divine truth is a privilege which only grace can give. Many a man who is accounted **wise** after the manner of this world is a **fool** according to the word of the Lord. **May we be among those happy children who shall all be taught of the Lord.**

**If you... Lift your voice for understanding** - In Pr 8:1 it is understanding which lifts her voice.

**Lift your voice** - More literally "give your voice." - This "expression is idiomatic for raising or lifting the voice to make a sound that carries further (e.g., Jer 2:15). This deliberate expression indicates that something significant is being uttered. J. H. Greenstone says, "If it [understanding] does not come at your first call, raise your voice to a higher pitch, put forth greater efforts" (Proverbs, 17)." (NN)

**Understanding** (08394)(See [tebunah](#)) is insight which is infinite in God (Job 12:13, Ps 147:5) Who graciously gives it to His children (Pr 2:6). Understanding (tebunah) is the capacity for discerning a right course of action (Dt 32:28) and describes a knowledge which is superior to the mere accumulation of data. I often fear I have much *knowledge* about God, but am woefully deficient in my *understanding* of God. May the preceding prayers of the psalmist, be our (my) prayer, O Lord God Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. Amen.

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**What Should I Do?** - My friend Krista is struggling with a decision: Should she keep her old car with its continual maintenance problems or buy a newer model? She wants to be a good steward of her finances, and she desires to make a wise decision. And most of all, she wants to honor God. Financial decisions can be tough to make. Billy Graham even says, "If a person gets his attitude toward money straight, it will help straighten out almost every other area in his life." Here are a few ideas to consider about wisdom in money matters:

Do a checkup to be sure you're following God's priorities. Are you giving to Him and to others? (1 Cor. 16:2). Taking care of family needs? (1 Tim. 5:8). Not letting money control you? (Luke 16:13).

Research the topic. Consider all the options and the pros and cons of each one.

Ask God for wisdom. Pray, pray, and pray some more. He will direct you (Pr. 2:6).

Trust God and make the decision. Use the knowledge and wisdom you've gained, and commit your decision to Him.

Obedience to God nurtures a growing love-and-trust relationship with Him. What's most important is that we see each decision as an opportunity to draw closer to Him. - Anne Cetas

When you're facing a decision  
And it seems a daunting task,

Trust the Lord for true discernment—  
He'll give wisdom if you ask.  
—Hess

**The closer we walk with God,  
the clearer we see His guidance.**

The following are notes from **William Arnot's "Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth" (1858) on Proverbs 2:1-5 - 3. "Cry after knowledge." (Proverbs 2:3)** The preceding verse expressed the bent heavenward of the heart within and the senses without: this verse represents the same process at a more advanced stage. The longing for God's salvation already begotten in the heart, bursts forth now into an irrepressible cry. It is not any longer a Nicodemus inclined toward Jesus, he cannot tell how, and silently stealing into his presence under cloud of night; it is the jailer of Philippi springing in, and crying with a loud voice, "What must I do to be saved?" While the man was musing, the fire burned: now it no longer smoulders within; it bursts forth into a flame. He who gave Himself for his people loves to feel them kindling thus in his hands. Men may be offended with the fervour of an earnest soul—God never. "Hold thy peace," the prudent will still say to the enthusiastic follower of Jesus: but he feels his want, and hopes for help; he heeds them not: he cries out all the more, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." Even disciples, apparently more alarmed by what seem irregularities in the action of the living than they were by the silence of the stiffened dead, may interpose with a frown and a rebuke; but compression will only increase the strength of the emotion struggling within. That word hidden in the heart will swell and burst and break forth in strong crying and tears, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Ps. 73:25, 26)..  
([Proverbs 2:4,5 Seek and Ye Shall Find](#))

#### **Proverbs 2:4 If you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures;**

- **You** - Pr 3:14,15; 8:18,19; 16:16; 23:23; Ps 19:10; 119:14,72,127; Matthew 6:19-21; Matthew 13:44; 19:21,22,29
- **search** - Job 28:12-20; Ecclesiastes 4:8; Luke 16:8)

### **GOD'S WISDOM: PRICELESS!**

**If** - Introduces a conditional statement as discussed below.

**As silver... as for hidden treasures** - These are both **terms of comparison** specifically **similes** (introduced by "like" or "as"). Always pause to ponder these terms to allow time for the Spirit to open your mind and use them to give you insight into the passage. Temporal treasures are transient and futile when compared with the treasure of wisdom which yields both temporal and eternal rewards.

**The worldly wealthy Psalmist describes true treasures...**

**Ps 19:10- In Depth Commentary** - They (Ps 19:9) are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

[Spurgeon's note on Ps 19:10](#) - Bible truth is enriching to the soul in the highest degree; the metaphor is one which gathers force as it is brought out;—gold—fine gold—much fine gold; it is good, better, best, and therefore it is not only to be desired with a miser's avidity, but with more than that. As spiritual treasure is more noble than mere material wealth, so should it be desired and sought after with greater eagerness. Men speak of solid gold, but what is so solid as solid truth? For love of gold pleasure is forsworn, ease renounced, and life endangered; shall we not be ready to do as much for love of truth?

**Ps 119:14** I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches.

[Spurgeon's note](#) - David compared his intense satisfaction with God's will with that of a man who possesses large and varied estates, and the heart to enjoy them... He rejoiced in all sorts of riches consecrated and laid up for the noblest uses, and yet the way of God's Word had given him more pleasure than even these (cp Job 23:12). Observe that his joy was personal, distinct, remembered, and abundant.

**Ps 119:72** The law of Your mouth is better to me Than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

[Spurgeon's note](#) - Wealth is good in some respects, but obedience is better in all respects. It is well to keep the treasures of this life; but far more commendable to keep the law of the Lord. The law is better



than gold and silver, for these may be stolen from us, but not the word; these take to themselves wings, but the word of God remains; these are useless in the hour of death, but then it is that the promise is most dear. Instructed Christians recognize the value of the Lord's word, and warmly express it, not only in their testimony to their fellow men, but in their devotions to God. It is a sure sign of a heart which has learned God's statutes when it prizes them above all earthly possessions; and it is an equally certain mark of grace when the precepts of Scripture are as precious as its promises. The Lord cause us thus to prize the law of his mouth.

**Ps 119:127** Therefore I love Your commandments Above gold, yes, above fine gold.

**Spurgeon's note** - Wealth brings with it so many conveniences that men naturally esteem it, and gold as the symbol of it is much set by; and yet, in the judgment of the wise, God's laws are more enriching, and bring with them more comfort than all the choicest treasures.

**If** (Pr 2:4)... **then** (Pr 2:5)... **for** (Pr 2:6). The condition - seek and search. The consequence - discern and discover. Compare the introductory **"if"** (Pr 2:1) The **for** of Pr 2:6 gives explanation (see **terms of explanation**)

**Did you notice the progression, the rise in intensity?** Solomon begins with - **If you will receive... treasure** (Pr 2:1)... **make your ear attentive... incline your heart** (Pr 2:2)... **cry... lift your voice** (Pr 2:3)... **seek... search** (Pr 2:4).

We do not lazily drift into the bountiful sea of wisdom. Getting wisdom requires a conscious choice, a deliberate decision to pursue it all the days of our life. But when we are willing to meet God's **"if"** conditions, we can count on Him blessing us with the **"then"** benefits! And they are truly priceless! Many (probably most) worldly wealthy men are woefully wanting in these priceless treasures of wisdom!

**Bernard** wisely said of worldly wealth - "Riches are acquired with difficulty, enjoyed with trembling, and lost with bitterness." O my, too true!

**Thomas Watson** - Let us be persuaded to labor after this spiritual substance. As well may one expect a harvest without sowing—as the heavenly substance without labor, Proverbs 2:4, "If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasure." Our labor for this **hidden treasure** must be so great, that all labor about the world, compared with this, should be as it were no labor. John 6:27, "Do not labor for the food which perishes." Has not God said, "Six days shall you labor"? Yes—but it must be as if were no labor—when compared with that labor we must take for the Bread of Life. Just so, in that parallel Scripture, Matthew 6:19, "Lay not up your treasure upon earth." No? Are not parents bid to lay up treasure for their children? 2 Corinthians 12:14. It is granted—but the meaning is, the labor for **earthly treasure** must be nothing, in comparison of the pains we take for better and eternal things. What sweating even to an agony—should there be for that substance which endures forever. But before I press the exhortation, I must first remove an objection. (**The Substantial Excellency**)

**Ortlund** concludes that "Wisdom is not automatic for us. Wisdom is not our default setting. We will never get there by drifting. You cannot become a significant person by being neutral and cute and safely unchanged. That is complacency. God is offering you a treasure infinitely worth seeking—more of himself entering into you, renewing you, safeguarding you."

**C. S. Lewis** explained "God cannot bless us, unless he has us. When we try to keep within us an area that is our own, we try to keep an area of death. Therefore, in love, God claims all. There's no bargaining with him."

**Seek her as silver** - As suggested above, always pause and ponder **similes**, for these **terms of comparison** are the Spirit's way of giving us a "window" into the heart and mind of God, in this case His treasure chest of wisdom. And so just as greedy men search diligently to gain earthly wealth which is fleeting (silver), how much more should God's children ardently, earnestly seek for that wealth which is eternal and will never fade away! In ancient Israel, silver was actually so rare that it was prized more than gold! This Hebrew word (**keseph**) is most often translated **silver** (284x) but is also translated as **money** (100x) and is used in Genesis to describe the money Joseph slipped in his brother's sacks of provisions (Ge 42:25, 27, 28, 35).

**Silver** (**03701**)(**keseph** from **kasaph** = to long for) means silver or money. It is a common noun (343 verses) in the OT and is used 13 times in Proverbs. **Read through the following passages to see what is of real value in God's eyes -- Clue: You won't find any mention of the Dow Jones in these passages!**

Pr 2:4 If you seek her as **silver** And search for her as for hidden treasures;

Pr 3:14 For her (Wisdom's) profit is better than the profit of **silver** And her gain better than fine gold.

Pr 7:20 He has taken a bag of **money** with him, At the full moon he will come home."

Pr 8:10 "(Wisdom says) Take my instruction and not **silver**, And knowledge rather than choicest gold.

Pr 8:19 "My (Wisdom's) fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, And my yield better than choicest **silver**.

Pr 10:20 The tongue of the righteous is as choice **silver**, The heart of the wicked is worth little.

Pr 16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above **silver**.

Pr 17:3 The refining pot is for **silver** and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests hearts.

Pr 22:1 A good name is to be more desired than great wealth, Favor is better than **silver** and gold.

Pr 25:4 Take away the dross from the **silver**, And there comes out a vessel for the smith;

Pr 25:11 Like apples of gold in settings of **silver** Is a word spoken in right circumstances.

Pr 26:23 Like an earthen vessel overlaid with **silver** dross Are burning lips and a wicked heart.

Pr 27:21 The crucible is for **silver** and the furnace for gold, And each is tested by the praise accorded him.

**Seek** (01245) (**baqas**) expresses a person's earnest seeking of something or someone which exists or is thought to exist with the intention that it will be found or acquired. It pictures one searching earnestly until the object of the search is located. The **Septuagint** (**Lxx**) translates **baqas** with the verb **zeteo** which implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. Webster says that to seek means to go in search or quest of, to look for, to try to discover, to search for by going from place to place. **Zeteo** in classical Greek is often used as a technical term for philosophical investigation, something "examined, considered" or "deliberated."

For example, **baqas** describes seeking for Moses' life (Ex 4:19 Lxx = **zeteo**), Absalom seeking to kill David (2Sa 16:11), those seeking to kill Pharaoh and Zedekiah (Jer 44:30)

**Baqas** describes an earnest search until the object of the search is located. Thus peace is to be searched for earnestly (Ps 34:14-[see note](#)). The Lord's face (His presence) must especially be sought (Ps 27:4, 8-[see note](#)) On the other hand, we are not to seek the occult (Lev 19:31). Naomi sought for security for her daughter-in-law Ruth (Ru 3:1-[note](#)). Jehovah "**sought out** for Himself a man after His own heart." (1Sa 13:14 - **As an aside God is ever looking for this quality in a man or woman! Does it describe you [me]?**) God promises if we seek for Him we will find Him (Dt 4:29).

In the present context **baqas** conveys the idea of an earnest seeking after the wisdom of God (which is ultimately found in Christ, 1Co 1:30, cp Col 2:3) with the intention that it be found or acquired by the seeker.

**Swanson** - 1. (piel) seek, search, look for, i.e., try to learn information about an object, implying a diligence in the procurement of the information (1Sa 9:3); (pual) be sought, be investigated, be searched (Est 2:23; Jer 50:20; Eze 26:21); 2. (piel) hold responsible, call to account, i.e., be held accountable to a certain standard, often with sanctions for not meeting the standard (Ge 43:9); 3. (piel) inquire about, ask for, i.e., make a verbal request (Ezr 8:21); 4. (piel) try to do, attempt, i.e., try with a certain amount of intensity, often implying lack of success (Ex 2:15); 5. (piel) conspire, i.e., to make plans of rebellion against an authority (Est 2:21); 6. (piel) בָּקַשׁ (bā-qāš pā-nē(h)) associate, be in association, formally, seek the face, i.e., be in relation to another as a figurative extension of seeking to be in the presence of that person (1Ch 16:11);

**NAS Usage:** aim(1), beg(1), begging(1), concerned(1), consulted(1), demand(1), desire(1), eager(1), hold\*(1), inquired(2), investigated(1), look(3), looked(1), looking(3), plead(1), pursuit(1), request(2), require(7), required(1), requires(1), search(8), search will be made(1), searched(8), searching(1), seek(94), seeking(24), seeks(16), set about(1), sought(38), tried(2).

**Baqas** - 215v -

- Ge 31:39; 37:15-16; 43:9, 30; Ex 2:15; 4:19, 24; 10:11; 33:7;
- Lev. 19:31; Nu 16:10; 35:23; Dt. 4:29; 13:10;
- Jos. 2:22; 22:23; Jdg. 4:22; 6:29; 14:4; 18:1; Ru 3:1;
- 1Sa 9:3; 10:2, 14, 21; 13:14; 14:4; 16:16; 19:2, 10; 20:1, 16; 22:23; 23:10, 14-15, 25; 24:2, 9; 25:26, 29; 26:2, 20; 27:1, 4;
- 2Sa 3:17; 4:8, 11; 5:17; 12:16; 16:11; 17:3, 20; 20:19; 21:1-2;
- 1Ki. 1:2-3; 2:40; 10:24; 11:22, 40; 18:10; 19:10, 14; 20:7;
- 2Ki. 2:16-17; 6:19; 1Chr. 4:39; 14:8; 16:10-11; 21:3;
- 2Chr. 7:14; 9:23; 11:16; 15:4, 15; 20:4; 22:9; 26:5;
- Ezra 2:62; 8:21-23; Neh. 2:4, 10; 5:12, 18; 7:64; 12:27;
- Esther 2:2, 15, 21, 23; 3:6; 4:8; 6:2; 7:7; 9:2;
- Job 10:6; Ps. 4:2; 24:6;
- Ps 27:4, 8; 34:14; 35:4; 37:25, 32, 36; 38:12; 40:14, 16; 54:3; 63:9; 69:6; 70:2, 4;
- Ps 71:13, 24; 83:16; 86:14; 104:21; 105:3-4; 119:176; 122:9;

- Pr. 2:4; 11:27; 14:6; 15:14; 17:9, 11, 19; 18:1, 15; 21:6; 23:35; 28:5; 29:10, 26;
- Eccl. 3:6, 15; 7:25, 28-29; 8:17; 12:10; Song 3:1-2; 5:6; 6:1;
- Isa. 1:12; 40:20; 41:12, 17; 45:19; 51:1; 65:1;
- Jer. 2:24, 33; 4:30; 5:1; 11:21; 19:7, 9; 21:7; 22:25; 26:21; 29:13;
- Jer 34:20-21; 38:16; 44:30; 45:5; 46:26; 49:37; 50:4, 20; Lam. 1:11, 19;
- Ezek. 3:18, 20; 7:25-26; 22:30; 26:21; 33:8; 34:4, 6, 16;
- Dan. 1:8, 20; 8:15; 9:3;
- Hos. 2:7; 3:5; 5:6, 15; 7:10; Amos 8:12; Nah 3:7, 11;
- Zeph. 1:6; 2:3; Zech. 6:7; 8:21-22; 11:16; 12:9; Mal. 2:7, 15; 3:1

Here are all the uses in **Proverbs**. **Study them to give you a better "feel" for the meaning of the Hebrew verb baqas..**

Pr 2:4 If you **seek** her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures;

Pr 11:27 He who diligently seeks (shachar- look for diligently) good**seeks** favor, But he who seeks evil, evil will come to him.

Pr 14:6 A scoffer **seeks** wisdom and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.

Pr 15:14 The mind of the intelligent**seeks** knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

Pr 17:9 He who conceals a transgression**seeks** love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.

Pr 17:11 A rebellious man **seeks** only evil, So a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

Pr 17:19 He who loves transgression loves strife; He who raises his door**seeks** destruction.

Pr 18:1 He who separates himself**seeks** his own desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom.

Pr 18:15 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise **seeks** knowledge.

Pr 21:6 The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue Is a fleeting vapor, the **pursuit** of death.

Pr 23:35 "They struck me, but I did not become ill; They beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will **seek** another drink."

Pr 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, But those who **seek** the LORD understand all things.

Pr 29:10 Men of bloodshed hate the blameless, But the upright are **concerned** for his life.

Pr 29:26 Many **seek** the ruler's favor, But justice for man comes from the LORD.

**As silver... as hidden treasure** - These are both **similies**, and in dependence on our Teacher, the Spirit (1Cor 2:10-13), we do well to always pause and ponder (interrogate) what is being compared and what truth it is intended to convey.

**NET Note** explains that these "two **similies** affirm that the value placed on the object (silver, treasure) will influence the eagerness and diligence in the pursuit and development of **wisdom** (e.g., Job 28:9–11). The point is not only that the object sought (wisdom) is valuable, but that the effort will be demanding but rewarding." I would add that the fact that the **treasure** is "**hidden**" implies it will take some Spirit enabled effort to find that **treasure** (wisdom).

## DILIGENTLY DIGGING FOR WISDOM

**Search** (02664)(**hapas**) means to search for, and so describes a searching out or a "looking for something with one's mind and imagination." (Ps 64:6). **Hapas** means properly, to search by digging deeper; to mine out (implied by its Syriac and Aramaic cognates); searching that is set on arriving at the *ultimate objective*; a *plan* to uncover and discover. **Hapas** means something sought out, such as "hidden treasures" that represent the spoils of war (Ob. 1:6). Used of Laban searching for the household idols (which must have been a "treasure" to him) which had been stolen by Rachel (Ge 31:35). Ben Hadad of Aram told Ahab he would " **search** your house" for "whatever is desirable in your eyes" (1Ki 20:6). The Lord Himself searches out His enemies (Amos 9:3). In a reflexive sense, **hapas** means to let oneself be searched out and is translated to disguise (hide) oneself (1Sa 28:8, 1Ki 20:38, Pr 28:12).

The **Septuagint** translates **hapas** here with the rare verb **exereunao** (**ek** = an intensifier + **ereunao** = to search into, investigate, explore) used in the NT only in 1 Peter 1:10 and meaning to search diligently for something, especially for something hidden like miners engaged in digging for precious metals in the bowels of the earth. This word was first used to tell of a dog sniffing out something with his nose. The **Septuagint** uses **exereunao** 5 times in the great Psalm 119 where it translates the word "**observe**" -

**Read** the passages with this verb in mind - it gives a new "nuance" on what it means to **'observe'** God's testimonies, law, precepts, commandments = Ps. 119:2; Ps. 119:34; Ps. 119:69; Ps. 119:115; Ps. 119:129.

**THOUGHT** - Now let's apply because truth not applied is in one ear and out the other (aka James 1:22+). Do you just skim over God's Word so that you can "satisfy" your goal of reading through the Bible in a year? Do you read it superficially so you can check that box in your list of activities in your quiet time? The verb *exereunao* calls us to "dig into" the precious Word, more precious in fact than gold, but too often we barely scratch the surface for we more constrained by our fallen flesh to go out into the world and "dig for gold!" Little wonder that so many believers are spiritual paupers and their faith is weak and their walk is like a yo-yo on a string! We go to cross fit to train our bodies, but too often we fail to go the old rugged Cross to train our souls! Tomorrow morning begin a new discipline (under grace not law), a discipline enabled by the Spirit, and begin to "dig in" to the living and active Word of God as if your spiritual life depended on it (because it does! cf Jesus' words Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4+). I am a retired medical doctor and would write prescriptions like this **"Take 1 tablet q.d. for 30 days."** Now that I am retired, I more often treat the soul, so let me prescribe that you try this "discipline" for "1 q.d. x 30 days" and see what a difference it makes in your spiritual vitality and your walk in Christ. I dare you! (under grace of course!).

And so Solomon, the richest, wisest man (other than Jesus) who ever lived, extols the value of diligently digging for wisdom writing "If you seek her as silver, and **search** (Lxx = *exereunao*) for her (referring to wisdom) as for hidden treasures (it was the custom to bury valuables in the ground or in holes in the rocks)." (Pr 2:4+) What is emphasized is the diligent effort that must be made to obtain wisdom. The tragedy is that too often men show more zeal in acquiring material wealth than spiritual treasures.

**Search** (Webster) = to look into or over carefully or thoroughly in an effort to find or discover something: as to examine in seeking something searched the north field or to look through or explore by inspecting possible places of concealment or investigating suspicious circumstance. To read thoroughly

**NAS Usage** - devise(1), disguise(2), disguised(5), distorted(1), examine(1), hide(1), ponders(1), ransacked(1), search(6), searched(2), searching(1), well-conceived(1).

**Hapas** - 20v - Ge 31:35; 44:12; 1Sa. 23:23; 28:8; 1Ki. 20:6, 38; 22:30; 2 Ki. 10:23; 2 Chr. 18:29; 35:22; Job 30:18; Ps. 64:6; 77:6; Pr. 2:4; 20:27; 28:12; Lam. 3:40 (= "examine"); Amos 9:3; Obad. 1:6; Zeph. 1:12

Pr 2:4 If you seek her as silver And **search** for her as for hidden treasures;

Pr 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, **Searching** all the innermost parts of his being.

Pr 28:12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory, But when the wicked rise, men **hide** themselves.

**NET Note** - The verb חָפַץ (**hapas**) means "to dig; to search" (BDB 344 s.v.; cf. NCV "hunt for it"). The Arabic cognate means "to dig for water." It is used literally of Joseph searching his brothers' sacks (Gen 44:12) and figuratively for searching the soul (Ps 64:7). This is a more emphatic word than the one used in the first colon and again emphasizes that acquiring wisdom will be demanding.

**Hidden treasure** (see Job 3:21; Mt 13:44) ([04301](#)) (**matmon** from **taman** = to hide, to conceal) means a secret storehouse, a cache, a stockpile, a hidden reserve. It refers to things of value which have been hidden.. Figuratively as used here in Pr 2:4, the word portrays the preciousness of an item which is greatly desired: wisdom, discernment (Pr 2:4), and death (Job 3:21).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **matmon** with **thesauros** refers to the place where goods and precious things are stored for safekeeping (Think about the glorious Gospel you possess!) and thus a repository (place, room, or container where something is deposited or stored), a treasure chest, a storehouse, a treasury.

**Treasure** (Webster) = A collection of something (in this case the sayings of wisdom) which is very much valued or highly prized. Something of great worth. Wealth accumulated; particularly, a stock or store of money in reserve. A great quantity of any thing collected for future use. The word is used literally of wealth and figuratively of divine blessings or resources.

**Matmon** - 5v - Gen. 43:23; Job 3:21; Prov. 2:4; Isa. 45:3; Jer. 41:8, translated hidden(1), hidden treasures(2), hidden wealth(1), stores(1), treasure(1).

The question then we must each ask ourselves is "What is my attitude toward the treasures of wisdom AND knowledge in God's Word?" Do I not have time because I feel I am too busy? If you are in the latter category then the truth is you are indeed TOO BUSY. Be diligent AND do not be sluggish but be imitators of all the saints that have gone before us who by their faith and patience inherited the promises of God. It is difficult to inherit what you do not "know". And God's precious and magnificent promises are based not upon warm fuzzies but upon a grasp of the true knowledge of Him (2Pe1:3, 4). No Christian who treats the Word of God with casual indifference or approaches it only sporadically and haphazardly will gain much in wisdom nor progress much in holiness.

We are transformed by the Holy Spirit, but He does this as our minds are renewed by His Word (2Cor 3:18, Ro 12:2).

### The Bible is no lazy man's book!

"If you seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasure — then you will understand the fear of the LORD and discover the knowledge of God!" Proverbs 2:4-5

"The Bible is no lazy man's book! Much of its treasure, like the valuable minerals stored in the bowels of the earth, only yield up themselves to the diligent seeker." (Arthur Pink)

"Do not be satisfied with a superficial survey of Scripture, as many Christians are. These are not the days of contemplation as the old Puritan times were, we are too apt to be superficial; but do remember that while there are nuggets of gold upon the very surface of Scripture, yet the most valuable mines of gold are far down!" (Charles Spurgeon)

"Truth lies deep, and must be dug for." (William Gurnall)

"Strive to penetrate to the bottom of Divine truths, and never be content with a superficial knowledge." (David Brainerd)

"Dig for the truth like a man digging for Australian gold!" (J.C. Ryle)

"Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding!" Proverbs 4:7

**Matthew Henry** - Those who earnestly seek heavenly wisdom, will never complain that they have lost their labor; and the freeness of the gift does not do away the necessity of our diligence, John 6:27. Let them seek, and they shall find it; let them ask, and it shall be given them. Observe who are thus favoured. They are the righteous, on whom the image of God is renewed, which consists in righteousness. If we depend upon God, and seek to him for wisdom, he will enable us to keep the paths of judgment.

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**Searching For A Rare Jewel** - When Betty Goldstein of Staten Island, New York, entered the hospital, her husband Ron wrapped her 3.5-carat diamond ring in a napkin for safekeeping. But in a forgetful moment, the 63-year-old Goldstein threw the napkin in the trash. When he realized his mistake, he dashed outside, only to see the garbage truck rumbling down the street. So he called the local sanitation department and got permission to follow the truck to a transfer station. Workers began sorting through hundreds of garbage bags and recovered the ring an hour later. The writer of Proverbs urges us to search diligently for something far more precious—wisdom. In Pr 2, a father encourages his son to do whatever is necessary to get insight and wisdom. This strenuous search for wisdom is actually a search for God Himself (Pr 2:3-5). In fact, inner happiness comes when man attains this wisdom (Pr 3:13). He encourages his son to search diligently for this rare jewel because wisdom is not usually discovered by the casual observer. Wisdom is discovered and enjoyed only by those who are diligent, devoted, and determined to seek it. Let us devote our whole being to searching for that rare jewel of wisdom. —Marvin Williams

More valuable than diamonds rare  
Is priceless wisdom from above;  
With purest gold it can't compare  
Because it's filled with truth and love.  
—D. De Haan

With all your getting, get understanding. —Solomon

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London music student Richard Steel prized the old violin that had once been his grandfather's. One day Richard tried to help a bus driver who couldn't get close to the curb because of a barrier. Putting aside his old violin, he removed the obstacle. But then the driver, unable to see the books and the violin, drove over them. The crushed books could be replaced. And the old violin, though valued for sentimental reasons, could be replaced too--or could it? As Richard examined his splintered instrument, inside he found the signature of Stradivarius, the greatest of all violin makers. The old violin was a priceless and irreplaceable masterpiece. The Sotheby auction firm estimated that it had been worth more than \$700,000. Many families pass treasured Bibles from one generation to the next as spiritual heirlooms. But these treasures are often treated as mere antiques while their pages go unread and their promises remain unclaimed. The message of salvation goes unheeded. Its true value is never realized. The Bible is more than just a record of long-ago events and ancient wisdom. It is the Book that bears God's signature. It is His message of truth and grace to us. Let's not neglect it. Let's read it, believe it, and obey it. --V C G

Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine,

And jewels rich and rare  
Are hidden in its mighty depths  
For every searcher there.  
--Hodder

**Many people store the Bible on the shelf  
instead of in their heart.**

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Mel Fisher was a treasure hunter who searched for gold and found it. In 1985, after 16 years of looking, he finally discovered the Spanish wreck Nuestra Señora de Atocha in 55 feet of water near Key West, Florida. His divers salvaged millions of dollars' worth of treasure from that sunken ship—but it didn't come easy. They toiled long and hard with metal detectors, diving to investigate every metallic "hit." Fisher's dreams and work eventually paid off when he came upon his big find.

The Bible describes another kind of treasure as being more precious than gold, silver, or rubies (Pr. 3:14-15). It is wisdom, which is more than knowledge. It's the ability to apply that knowledge to everyday life. Solomon, who asked God for a wise and understanding heart, told us in Proverbs 2 to seek for wisdom with the same persistence and intensity as we would search for hidden treasures (v.4). We must cry out for discernment and understanding (v.3), incline our ear to wisdom (v.2), and receive God's words and treasure them in our heart (v.1). Do we value wisdom? Do we seek it as diligently as if it were gold? If so, we will be rewarded with life's greatest treasure—the knowledge of God. —MRDII

What will it profit when life here is o'er,  
Though great worldly wisdom I gain,  
If seeking knowledge I utterly fail  
The wisdom of God to obtain?  
—Nelson

**You can gain much knowledge on your own,  
but true wisdom comes only from God.**

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**Today in the Word** - Earlier this year, a nationwide treasure hunt began with the publication of the book, *The Clock Without a Face*. The story contains clues to find emerald-encrusted numbers from a clock—and in fact, twelve actual numbers have been buried across the United States. If you read the story, follow the clues, and find one of these numbers (with actual emeralds!), you get to keep it. As of this writing, nine of the twelve numbers have been found by people from Texas to Connecticut to Wisconsin.

If we're going to find buried treasure, it's important to have a map or clues to guide us. Today we'll begin a series of studies focused on how to grow in the knowledge of God. In our reading, wisdom, knowledge, and insight are compared to hidden treasure; just as we would commit time and energy to uncover buried riches, so too we should commit ourselves to the pursuit of the knowledge of God (Proverbs 2:4).

The instruction in this passage, first given by David to his son Solomon, exhorts the reader to do two things. The first involves knowing content: "Store up my commands within you" (Proverbs 2:1). Growing in knowledge means knowing the content of God's Word. This discipline is indispensable for our spiritual growth. But the knowledge of God does not end with the study of content. The second exhortation describes an attitude that hungers for spiritual knowledge and values wisdom. Notice the verbs in Pr 2:3-4: "call out," "cry aloud," "look," and "search." This is a pursuit for more than just facts. This is a passionate quest to know God.

We are instructed to study God's Word and to desire God's wisdom. And God does not leave us alone in this endeavor; He engages with our efforts. He promises to bestow His wisdom, knowledge, and understanding (Proverbs 2:6). In response to our searching, He provides victory and protection. Through our experience of His care and sovereign guidance, we then have the blessings of the knowledge of God. We know His commands and we know His character, and "wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul" (Proverbs 2:10).

**Apply the Word** - The knowledge of God is a treasure that we can find! As you reflect on this passage, ask the Spirit to evaluate your heart. Do you commit time to studying the Word of God? Do you have a passion to grow in His insight and understanding? Perhaps you've walked with God for many years, and can testify to your experience of His protection in your life. Share that testimony with others, just as David did with Solomon, to encourage them to grow in the knowledge of God.



The following are notes from **William Arnot's "Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth" (1858) on Proverbs 2:1-5 - "Seek her as silver." (Proverbs 2:4)** Another and a higher step. The last (Pr 2:3) was the earnest cry; this is the persevering endeavour. The strong cry is not enough: it is a step in the process, but the end is not yet. It might be Balaam's cry, "Let me die the death of the righteous," while in life he loved and laboured for the wages of iniquity. Fervent prayer must be tested by persevering pains.

Seek wisdom. Not only be inclined to spiritual things, and earnestly desire salvation, but set about it. Strive to enter in; lay hold on eternal life. Work out the salvation. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The Christian life is a battle to be fought: the reward at last is a crown to be won.

More particularly, the search for wisdom is compared to another search with which we are more familiar. Seek her as silver. Those who seek the treasures that are at God's right hand are referred to their neighbours who are seeking treasures that perish in the using, and told to go and do likewise. The zeal of Mammon's worshippers rebukes the servants of the living God. We are invited to take a leaf from the book of the fortune-seeker. Besides the pursuit of money in the various walks of merchandise, there is, in our day, much of a direct and literal search for treasures hid in the earth. A prominent part of our daily public news, for years past, has been the stream of emigration from the settled countries of Europe to the western shores of America, and the great Australian Continent in search of hid treasure. The details are most instructive. Multitudes of young and old, from every occupation, and every rank, have left their homes, and traversed stormy seas, and desert continents, to the place where the treasure lies. Not a few have perished on the way; others sink under privations on the spot. The scorching sun by day, and the chill dews at night; labouring all day among water, and sleeping under the imperfect shelter of a tent; the danger of attack by uncivilized natives on the one hand, and by desperately wicked Europeans on the other,—all these, and a countless multitude more, are unable to deter from the enterprise, or drive off those who are already engaged. To these regions men flock in thousands, and tens of thousands. Those shores lately desolate are in motion now with a teeming population.

Search for her as for hid treasure! He knows what is in man. He who made the human heart, and feels every desire that throbs within it, takes the measure of men's earnestness in their search for silver, and pronounces it sufficient for the object which he has at heart, the salvation of sinners. He points to it as a fit measure of the zeal with which a being, destitute by sin, should set out in the search for the salvation by grace: He intimates this will do—this earnestness, if directed upon the right object. How all this puts to shame the languid efforts of those who do seek the true riches! There may be an inclination on the whole rather to the imperishable riches—a wish to be with Christ rather than left with a passing world for a portion. There may be the desire in that direction, but another question comes in,—what is the strength of that desire? That blessed portion in Christ is what you desire; well, but how much do you desire it? Will not the far-reaching plans, and heroic sacrifices, and long-enduring toil of Californian and Australian gold diggers rise up and condemn us who have tasted and known the grace of God? Their zeal is the standard by which the Lord stimulates us now, and will measure us yet. Two things are required in our search,—the right direction, and the sufficient impulse. The Scriptures point out the right way; the avarice of mankind marks the quantum of forcefulness wherewith the seeker must press on.

But the search for hid treasure, which reads a lesson to the Church, is not confined to the gold regions, and the gold diggers. They dig as hard at home. It cannot be told how much of plan and effort, of head and hand, are expended in making money. It is no business of ours here to draw the nice distinctions between the rightful industry of a Christian merchant, and the passage through the fire of Mammon's child; this is not our present theme at all. What we want is to get our slackness in seeking a Saviour rebuked and quickened by the parallel movement of a more energetic search. Our question here is not how much is gold worth? but is gold worth as much as the grace of God in Christ to a sinner? You answer, No. This is our unanimous reply. It is true in its own nature; and sincerely it is uttered by our lips. Out of our own mouths then will we be condemned, if He who compasseth us about like air in all our ways, feels us striving with our might for the less, and but languidly wishing for the greater. Seek first the kingdom.

Those who seek thus shall not seek in vain; we have the word of the true God for it in many promises. Among the gathered multitudes in the great day, it will not be possible to find one who has sought in the right place for the right thing, as other men seek money, and who has nevertheless been disappointed. No doubt there are some who seek after a fashion, and gain nothing by it; who vent a wish to die the death of the righteous, and never attain to the object of their desire: but none fail who seek according to the prescription of the word, and after the example of the world. Many people proceed upon a principle the very reverse of that which the word inculcates: they search for money as if it were saving truth, instead of searching for saving truth as if it were money. These must be turned upside down ere they begin to prosper. ([Proverbs 2:4,5 Seek and Ye Shall Find](#))

#### **Proverbs 2:5 Then you will discern the fear of the LORD and discover the knowledge of God**

- **Then** - 2 Chronicles 1:10-12; Hosea 6:3; Matthew 7:7,8; Luke 11:9-13
- **fear** - 9:10; Job 28:28; Jeremiah 32:40,41



- **discover** - Jeremiah 9:24; 24:7; 31:34; Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 17:3; 1 John 5:20

## WISDOM: HARD-WON!

**Then (az)** means at that time. What time? After we have carried out the seeking, searching, etc described in Pr 2:1-4 (**See discussion of the value of observing and interrogating expressions of time**)

**Discern** (0995)(**bin** [see word study]) in this verse describes the ability to grasp, discern or be sensitive to what it means to fear the LORD. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **bin** with **sunesis** which literally means a sending together or a bringing together. **Sunesis** describes the putting together of the pieces of information received. **Sunesis** is the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them. **Sunesis** describes the faculty of comprehension, intelligence, acuteness, shrewdness.

**The Fear of the LORD** - Jehovah is "objective genitive" or the Object one is to fear and reverence. This phrase is a **key note** of the Book of Proverbs and is highlighted in the key verse, Proverbs 1:7 - See more discussion at **Proverbs 1:7 commentary**.

Here are the 14 uses of **Fear of the LORD** in Proverbs

Proverbs 1:7 The **fear of the LORD** is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 2:5 Then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 8:13 "The **fear of the LORD** is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.

Proverbs 9:10 The **fear of the LORD** is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Proverbs 10:27 The **fear of the LORD** prolongs life, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.

Proverbs 14:26 In the **fear of the LORD** there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge.

Proverbs 14:27 The **fear of the LORD** is a fountain of life, That one may avoid the snares of death.

Proverbs 15:16 Better is a little with the **fear of the LORD** Than great treasure and turmoil with it.

Proverbs 14:33 The **fear of the LORD** is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.

Proverbs 16:6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the **fear of the LORD** one keeps away from evil.

Proverbs 19:23 The **fear of the LORD** leads to life, So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.

Proverbs 22:4 The reward of humility and the **fear of the LORD** Are riches, honor and life.

Proverbs 23:17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the **fear of the LORD** always.

The concept of **fear** implies reverence, such as a good son would feel toward his godly father. When necessary, of course, God, just as do earthly fathers (cp Heb 12:5-11), may be forced to chastise His disobedient sons. In view of this latter truth there is an added sense in which we **fear** Jehovah. Specifically, in our humanity, we naturally dread (fear) divine discipline, even though we welcome His life giving reproof (cp Pr 6:23).

**Discover** (04672)(**masa**) means to find, to attain, to uncover, to find, to find out. E.g., to learn the location of an object (Ge 26:19). To gain or learn information not previously known (1Ki 13:28).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **masa** with the verb **heurisko** which means to find after searching and so to discover (Mt 7:7). Figuratively, **heurisko** speaks of a spiritual or intellectual discovery gained through observation.

**Discover** (Webster) = Literally means to uncover; to remove a covering. To lay open to the view; to disclose; to show; to make visible; to expose to view something before unseen or concealed.

**Knowledge** (01847)(**daat**) goes beyond cognition; "it is often used **metonymically** (cause) for obedience (effect); see, e.g., Pr 3:6, "in all your ways acknowledge Him." This means that the disciple will follow God's moral code; for to know God is to react ethically and spiritually to His will." (NN) The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **daat** in this passage with **epignosis** which conveys the thought of a knowledge which is fuller, larger and more thorough. It also conveys the idea of a more intimate and personal relationship than the simple term gnosis.

**Knowledge** (Webster, et al) = **Knowledge**, according to the OT and NT, is attained through a **personal relationship between the subject and the object to be known**, rather than the Greek idea of theoretical pursuit through observation. **Knowledge** is a clear and certain perception of that which exists, or of truth and fact; the perception of the connection and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of our ideas. We can have no knowledge of that which does not exist. God has a perfect knowledge of all his works. **Human knowledge** is very limited, and is mostly gained by observation and experience. **Knowledge** in the OT connotes an intimate acquaintance with something. **Knowledge** is the truth or facts of life that a person acquires either through experience or thought. The greatest truth that a person can possess with the mind or learn through experience is truth about God (Ps. 46:10; Jn 8:31–32, Jn 17:3). This cannot be gained by unaided human reason (Job 11:7; Ro 11:33). It is acquired only as God shows Himself to people. **Knowledge** strictly is the apprehension by the mind of some fact or truth in accordance with its real nature; in a personal relation the intellectual act is necessarily conjoined with the element of affection and will (choice, love, favor, or, conversely, repugnance, dislike, etc.). **Knowledge** is distinguished from “opinion” by its greater certainty. The mind is constituted with the capacity for knowledge, and the desire to possess and increase it. **Knowledge** is a state of awareness and understanding, resulting from information which has been obtained or revealed (spiritual knowledge, e.g., God’s wisdom must be revealed - see the role of the Holy Spirit our Teacher in 1Cor 2:10-13) concerning people or objects. Scripture stresses God’s total knowledge of his creation and also the importance of his people knowing his will and purposes for them. Knowledge involves the observation and recognition of objects within the range of one’s senses; acquaintance of a personal nature which includes a response of the knower.

**Hubbard** - “**Fear**” and “**knowledge**” are words of attitude and action (see Pr 1:7, 29), as well as information. They are code terms for the total response in life—worship, obedience, service, love—which God enables those to make who fully commit their ways to Him (see Pr 3:5–6). They describe an exclusive relation that transforms all other relationships: to ourselves, our neighbors, our things, our work, our world.

**Wiersbe** - If you want wisdom, you must **listen** to God attentively (Mt. 13:9), **obey** Him humbly (John 7:17), **ask** Him sincerely (James 1:5-note), and **seek** Him diligently (Isa. 55:6-7), the way a miner searches for silver and gold. [Be Skillful - Proverbs](#)

**Kidner** points out that Proverbs 2:1-5 "is the essential counterpart to Pr 1:20ff., where wisdom was clamoring to be heard. Here it is the pupil who must clamor (Pr 2:3). Yet the search, strenuous as it must be, is not unguided. Its starting-point is revelation—specific (words) and practical (commandments); its method is not one of free speculation, but of treasuring and exploring received teachings so as to penetrate to their principles (see the verbs of Pr 2:1–5); and its goal, far from being academic, is spiritual: **the fear of the Lord... the knowledge of God** (Pr 1:5)."

#### Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding

- **Lord** - Ex 31:3; 1Kings 3:9,12; 4:29; 1 Chronicles 22:12; Job 32:8; Isaiah 54:13; Daniel 1:17; Daniel 2:21,23; Luke 21:15; John 6:45; Ephesians 1:17,18; James 1:5,17
- **From** - Pr 6:23; 8:5-9; Ps 19:7; 119:98,104; Isaiah 8:20)

Ex 31:3 “I have filled him ([Bezalell](#)) with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship,

God's gift of wisdom to Daniel and his friends literally changed their lives and it has the same potential in our life...

**Da 1:17-note** As for these four youths, **God gave** them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and **wisdom**; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams.

**Da 2:21-note** “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; **He gives wisdom** to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding ([See A W Pink's article on "Wisdom for the Wise"](#)).

**Da 2:23-note** “To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For **You have given me wisdom** and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king’s matter.”

**For** (because) (Lxx = hoti = because) - Always be alert to this **term of explanation**, asking what is the writer explaining? In this **context**, the father is explaining to his son why he must fear the LORD and know (discover the knowledge of) the LORD.

**The LORD** - The great Name **Jehovah**.

**The LORD gives wisdom** - He is "the only wise God" and "from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory

forever. Amen." (Ro 11:36).

**James Smith** - We daily need **wisdom** — and the Lord daily gives it! If we... feel our need, ardently desire it, earnestly seek it, and perseveringly expect it — the Lord will bestow it!

**Solomon** had received this very thing after asking God for an understanding heart...

1Kgs 3:9 "So **give** Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

1Kgs 3:12 behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, **I have given you a wise and discerning heart**, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.

1Kgs 4:29 Now **God gave Solomon wisdom** and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

As **Kidner** says "What you find, **then** (Pr 2:5), is what he gives (Pr 2:6); discovery and revelation are inseparable. This paragraph (Pr 2:6-9) goes on to show that to know the Lord is also to know how to live."

**Hubbard** - What is implicit in all of Proverbs, chapter 2 makes brightly explicit: Wisdom comes from God and no one can enjoy it who does not choose God's paths.

**From His mouth** - "This expression is an anthropomorphism; it indicates that the LORD is the immediate source or author of the wisdom. It is worth noting that in the incarnation many of these "anthropomorphisms" become literal in the person of the Logos, the Word, Jesus, who reveals the Father." (NN) (cf Heb 1:1-2-note, 2Pe 1:20-21-note) Heavenly wisdom comes only by divine revelation ("Jehovah gives wisdom").

**Knowledge** ([01847](#))(**daat** - see study) See comments on **knowledge** on Pr 2:5. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **daat** in this passage with **gnosis** refers to knowledge gained by experience in contrast to intuitive knowledge. Gnosis is an "experiential knowledge," and not a mere passing acquaintance.

**John Stott** - Knowledge is indispensable to Christian life and service... Knowledge is given us to be used, to lead us to higher worship, greater faith, deeper holiness, better service.

**Sinclair Ferguson** - However paradoxical it seems to our natural minds, it is one of the facts of spiritual reality that practical Christian living is based on understanding and knowledge.

**Thomas Fuller** - **Knowledge** is to be the usher of grace; information in the **understanding** must go before reformation in the will and affections.

**Pete Lowman** - To the Christian, all knowledge is, in the long run, revelation; and it is almighty God, not us, who ensures that we are able to know what we need to know.

**Alexander Maclaren** - Every man has far more knowledge of good than he uses. Let me always remember that it is not the amount of religious knowledge which I have, but the amount which I use, that determines my religious position and character.

**Thomas Watson** - Knowledge is the eye that must direct the foot of obedience.

**Richard Baxter** - Ignorance is your disease; knowledge must be your cure.

**Stephen Charnock** - Knowledge is the foundation of wisdom.

**Understanding** (08394)([tebunah](#) - see discussion in Pr 2:2) The **Lxx** translates **tebunah** in this passage with **sunesis** = "putting together the pieces."

**Ray Pritchard** says that understanding "is an inexhaustible fountain of practical truth that God gives to those who are good students of their own decisions. By contrast, fools never learn, and so God's discipline is wasted on them."

**Understanding** (Webster, et al) = **Understanding** does not mean just a possession of the facts. A person of understanding is one who can use what he or she knows, wisely, in real-life situations. **Understanding** has a moral aspect. It is a component of character and is not merely a function of intelligence. The basic idea presented by the Hebrew is one of judgment. The person with **understanding** can make distinctions between options. Given information, the person who has **bin/biyn** is able to discern the best and right choice. **Understanding** is insight and applied knowledge, usually involving moral or spiritual as well as intellectual faculties. The English word denotes comprehension of knowledge resulting from intelligence and reason. It implies a mental grasp of the nature and significance of something, along with discernment and good judgment. In short, it is common sense, closely akin to

wisdom, not the mere accumulation and possession of knowledge. God-given perception of the nature and meaning of things, resulting in sound judgment and decision-making; in particular the ability to discern spiritual truth and to apply it to human disposition and conduct. “**Understanding** is the cognitive faculty of the soul” (Shedd). It is comprised of intellect and conscience. The intellect is the perceptive faculty and the conscience the perceptive faculty in the **understanding**. The Biblical usage of the word indicates that **understanding** denotes more than a mere mental apprehension of facts. It is a wise perception and reception of the significance of those facts as laid down by God. Thus, the **understanding** of the ungodly is said to be “darkened” (Eph. 4:18), for “the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7). It needs to be “enlightened” (Eph. 1:18) and until it is, it will remain in the condition described in 1 Cor. 2:14.

**H A Ironside** on Proverbs 2:6-9 - Searching for truth must always be followed by walking in the truth that is found. God will defend those who earnestly desire to live in the power of His truth. He will guard them and preserve their way. By diligently seeking His truth they will daily increase in the knowledge of every good path. This is very different from merely holding to a certain theological system or school of Biblical thought. It is not so much “holding the truth,” as being held by that truth. There is a vast difference between the two states. There are many “vain talkers and deceivers” who boast of their knowledge of prophetic and dispensational teaching. Yet their unguarded ways and careless life bring shame on these solemn and precious truths. As they continue in this life their conscience is seared and their heart is hardened until the most searching ministry fails to make any impression on them. ([Proverbs 2 Commentary - Ironside's Notes](#))

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**What Should I Do?** - My friend Krista is struggling with a decision: Should she keep her old car with its continual maintenance problems or buy a newer model? She wants to be a good steward of her finances, and she desires to make a wise decision. And most of all, she wants to honor God.

Financial decisions can be tough to make. Billy Graham even says, “If a person gets his attitude toward money straight, it will help straighten out almost every other area in his life.”

Here are a few ideas to consider about wisdom in money matters:

Do a checkup to be sure you’re following God’s priorities. Are you giving to Him and to others? (1 Cor. 16:2). Taking care of family needs? (1 Tim. 5:8). Not letting money control you? (Luke 16:13).

Research the topic. Consider all the options and the pros and cons of each one.

Ask God for wisdom. Pray, pray, and pray some more. He will direct you (Prov. 2:6).

Trust God and make the decision. Use the knowledge and wisdom you’ve gained, and commit your decision to Him.

Obedience to God nurtures a growing love-and-trust relationship with Him. What’s most important is that we see each decision as an opportunity to draw closer to Him. - Anne Cetas

When you're facing a decision

And it seems a daunting task,

Trust the Lord for true discernment—

He'll give wisdom if you ask. —Hess

The closer we walk with God, the clearer we see His guidance.

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**Information Isn't Wisdom** - Are there any limits to the knowledge we can acquire? With today’s amazing technology we are able to tap into incredible sources of information. Yet Bill Gates, visionary founder of Microsoft, claims that we are only on the threshold of far greater wonders. In his book *The Road Ahead*, Gates makes this prediction: “When tomorrow’s powerful information machines are connected on the highway ... you’ll be able to stay in touch with anyone, anywhere, who wants to stay in touch with you; to browse through any of thousands of libraries day or night.”

Surely we are grateful for the technology that makes available such remarkable means of obtaining information. A mere accumulation of facts, though, doesn’t add up to insight and understanding. All the learning of philosophers, the speculations of ethicists, and the achievements of scientists can’t give us the truth about God and His will, His grace, or the good news concerning Jesus Christ and salvation from sin. For that knowledge, we need the Bible—and we always will.

So don't squander your time merely acquiring facts. It's far better to study the truth God has given us in His Word. Remember: "The Lord gives wisdom" (Prov. 2:6).

Holy Bible, Book divine,  
Precious treasure, thou art mine;  
Mine to tell me whence I came;  
Mine to teach me what I am. —Burton

We can get information online, but wisdom comes from on high.

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**Proverbs 2:1-11 - Today in the Word** - In 2007, rare coin dealer John Feigenbaum flew coast-to-coast with a special dime in his pocket. He didn't eat and he didn't sleep; he was nervous. He bought an economy-class ticket and dressed to be inconspicuous. After his flight landed in New York, he had to kill time in a Starbucks, waiting for a bank to open. Finally it did, and Feigenbaum breathed a sigh of relief. The dime Feigenbaum was delivering to a buyer was worth \$1.9 million. It's called an 1894-S dime—only 24 were known to have been minted, and only nine are still known to exist. That's one expensive 10-cent coin!

The Bible, though, keeps matters in perspective: The financial value of such treasures pales in comparison to wisdom. It is "more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her" (Pr. 8:11).

Today's reading is basically a long conditional statement, that is, an if/then statement. If we search after wisdom, then God will give it to us. The search for wisdom is described as a whole-person, holding-nothing-back, all-out endeavor (Proverbs 2:1–4). It involves listening, obeying, diligence, and passion. One must understand the value of wisdom in order to "search for it as for hidden treasure" (Proverbs 2:4).

The key truth undergirding this quest is that God is the source and giver of wisdom (Proverbs 2:5–8). That's why wisdom is described here and elsewhere as "the fear of the LORD." Even while suffering, Job grasped this truth. Men dig gold and silver mines and find precious gems deep in the earth, but they cannot find wisdom. "God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells" (Job 28:23). When God gives wisdom to those who pursue and call out for it, there are many positive and pleasurable results, including moral understanding and discretion (Proverbs 2:9–11). Wisdom, though, is not simply a means to an end—it is a relationship with the Giver, with Wisdom Himself. And that is something that money just can't buy!

Apply the Word - Today's passage gives us many reasons to put our trust in God rather than money. Not only is the Lord the giver of wisdom and the source of all knowledge and understanding, He also gives victory to the upright, is a shield to the blameless, guards the path of the just, and protects the way of the faithful (Proverbs 2:–8). Trusting in Him is the very definition of wisdom, and putting our trust in anything else the very definition of foolishness!

#### Proverbs 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity

- **Stores** - Pr 8:14; 14:8; Job 28:8; 1 Corinthians 1:19,24,30; 2:6,7; 3:18,19; Colossians 2:3; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; James 3:15-17
- **Shield** - Pr 28:18; 30:5; Ps 84:11; 144:2

**Stores up** (06845)(tsapan/sapan - see word study) earlier was translated treasure in Pr 2:1 where it was the responsibility of man to "treasure my commandments" whereas here we see God storing up sound wisdom.

**Upright** (03477)(yashar from yashar = to be smooth, straight or right) is an adjective which means straight, right, just.

**MacArthur** on the **upright** - This identifies those who are true believers, who seek to know, love, and obey God and to live righteously. These covenant keepers alone can know wisdom and experience God's protection. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**NET Note** - The Hebrew word translated "**upright**" (יָשָׁר, yashar) is one of the terms used for the righteous. It points to the right conduct of the believer—that which is right or pleasing in the eyes of God. It stresses that the life of the individual is upright, straightforward, and just. It is paralleled with "those who walk in integrity."

The Upright One (His Name in Isa 26:7) stores up sound wisdom for the upright.

**Sound wisdom** (08454)(**tushiyyah**) means sound, efficient wisdom, abiding or continuing success. **Who would not desire this blessing?** **Tushiyyah** stresses the successful results of wisdom's activities and is variously translated as "ability" (NEB), "help," (JB), "victory," (NIV). Goldberg adds that **tushiyyah** means "sound judgment, wisdom that leads to practical success. Thus the son will find life and honor if he follows his father's sound judgment (Pr 3:21f.). Because personified wisdom gives this quality to kings, they rule effectively. On the other hand, God frustrates the shrewd so that their hands cannot attain success (Job 5:12). Sound judgment is based on the righteous character of God's rule. The upright have sound wisdom hidden in them (Pr 2:7). But Job questioned whether his wisdom, his ability to succeed, was driven from him in his adversity (Job 6:13)."

**Tushiyyah** - 11v - Job 5:12; 6:13; 11:6; 12:16; 26:3; Pr. 2:7; 3:21; 8:14; 18:1; Isa. 28:29; Mic. 6:9

Pr 2:7 He stores up **sound wisdom** for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

Pr 3:21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep **sound wisdom** and discretion,

Pr 8:14 "Counsel is mine and **sound wisdom**; I am understanding, power is mine.

Pr 18:1 He who separates himself seeks his own desire, He quarrels against all **sound wisdom**.

**Walk (halak)** is an idiom for one's lifestyle or habitual manner of life.

**Integrity** (08537)(**tom** from **tamam** = to be complete or finished) means completeness, blameless. 1. completeness, fullness: acc. to their full measure; in his very completeness. 2. innocence, simplicity. 3. integrity: integrity of mind.

**Tom** - 23v - Ge 20:5, 6; 2Sa 15:11; 1Ki. 9:4; 22:34; 2Chr. 18:33; Job 4:6; 21:23; Ps. 7:8; 25:21; 26:1, 11; 41:12; 78:72; 101:2; Pr. 2:7; 10:9, 29; 13:6; 19:1; 20:7; 28:6; Isa. 47:9

Pr 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in **integrity**,

Pr 10:9 He who walks in **integrity** walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will be found out.

Pr 10:29 The way of the LORD is a stronghold to the **upright**, But ruin to the workers of iniquity.

Pr 13:6 Righteousness guards the one whose way is **blameless**, But wickedness subverts the sinner.

Pr 19:1 Better is a poor man who walks in his **integrity** Than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool.

Pr 20:7 A righteous man who walks in his **integrity**— How blessed are his sons after him.

Pr 28:6 Better is the poor who walks in his **integrity** Than he who is crooked though he be rich.

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**SOUND WISDOM:** Some people throughout history have erred by overemphasizing certain elements of the truth while ignoring others. This has resulted in behavior that is absurd. For instance, some individuals have stressed to an extreme the apostle Paul's instruction to separate themselves from the world and crucify the flesh (Ro. 12:2; Gal. 5:24). Simeon Stylites, a 5th-century monk, after being buried up to his neck in the ground for several months, decided to pursue godliness by living on top of a pole. He spent 30 years there. Another self-styled "holy man" developed a reputation for sanctity because he never changed clothes or bathed after he became a hermit.

Although such instances were not widespread, they serve to illustrate the sad consequences of an unbalanced view of scriptural truth. The wisdom mentioned in Proverbs 2 is the kind that takes into consideration the whole counsel of God. A life that is built on such a foundation is characterized by balance and freedom from extremes. Only by carefully studying the entire Word of God and daily applying our hearts to understanding it and living it can we avoid the one-sided behavior of the pole-sitting hermit. --M R De Haan II

We cannot find a safer guide to follow  
Than precepts from the pages of God's Word;  
But if we twist and misapply the Scripture,  
We make its sacred teachings seem absurd.  
--Hess

**Apply yourself to the Scriptures  
and the Scriptures to yourself.**

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**Today in the Word** - In 2007, rare coin dealer John Feigenbaum flew coast-to-coast with a special dime in his pocket. He didn't



eat and he didn't sleep; he was nervous. He bought an economy-class ticket and dressed to be inconspicuous. After his flight landed in New York, he had to kill time in a Starbucks, waiting for a bank to open. Finally it did, and Feigenbaum breathed a sigh of relief. The dime Feigenbaum was delivering to a buyer was worth \$1.9 million. It's called an 1894-S dime—only 24 were known to have been minted, and only nine are still known to exist. That's one expensive 10-cent coin!

The Bible, though, keeps matters in perspective: The financial value of such treasures pales in comparison to wisdom. It is "more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her" (Pr. 8:11). Today's reading is basically a long conditional statement, that is, an if/then statement. If we search after wisdom, then God will give it to us. The search for wisdom is described as a whole-person, holding-nothing-back, all-out endeavor (Proverbs 2:1-4). It involves listening, obeying, diligence, and passion. One must understand the value of wisdom in order to "search for it as for hidden treasure" (Proverbs 2:4). The key truth undergirding this quest is that God is the source and giver of wisdom (Proverbs 2:5-8). That's why wisdom is described here and elsewhere as "the fear of the LORD." Even while suffering, Job grasped this truth. Men dig gold and silver mines and find precious gems deep in the earth, but they cannot find wisdom. "God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells" (Job 28:23). When God gives wisdom to those who pursue and call out for it, there are many positive and pleasurable results, including moral understanding and discretion (Proverbs 2:9-11). Wisdom, though, is not simply a means to an end—it is a relationship with the Giver, with Wisdom Himself. And that is something that money just can't buy!

**Apply the Word** - Today's passage gives us many reasons to put our trust in God rather than money. Not only is the Lord the giver of wisdom and the source of all knowledge and understanding, He also gives victory to the upright, is a shield to the blameless, guards the path of the just, and protects the way of the faithful (Proverbs 2:-8). Trusting in Him is the very definition of wisdom, and putting our trust in anything else the very definition of foolishness.

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**George Lawson** comments on Proverbs 2:7-8 - Whoso hearkeneth unto wisdom shall dwell safely, for God is a sure defence to those that walk in wisdom's ways. There are many adversaries that would destroy them if they could, and these are too strong for them; but there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, that rideth on the heavens in their help, and in his excellency in the skies. While therefore they are walking to their eternal home, they may sing in the ways of the Lord. Mighty is their protector; in the shadow of his wings they may trust, and to his faithfulness they may look as their shield and buckler.

The most dreadful enemies of them that walk uprightly, are those that endeavour to turn aside the way of their paths; but against these enemies God is a mighty defence, for he keepeth the paths of wisdom and righteousness. He is a fence about their ways, and a wall of fire around those that walk in them. The devil casteth his fiery darts, but they are safe from the arrow that flieth by day, and from the noisome pestilence. No weapon formed against them shall prosper. They are commanded still to trust in the name of the Lord, and their faith is like a shield that will quench every fiery dart. The world displays its terrors and its charms to terrify or allure them into the paths of sin. Against this, as well as the adversary formerly mentioned, they must exercise vigilance. Still, however, in the hottest part of the combat they may be of good cheer, for the Captain of their salvation hath overcome the world, and shall make them through their faith to share in his victory\*.

Their own remaining corruptions give them many alarms. Nor is it wonderful that they feel alarmed when ready to halt by its influence, or powerfully solicited to turn aside unto the flowery but destructive paths where poisons grow and serpents haunt. But their fears shall not overpower them, for the spirit lusts against the flesh, and shall prevail. What says their Almighty guide? "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

Those that walk in the paths of judgment are God's saints. He has beautified them with holiness, and he acknowledges them as his own property. They are his portion and the lot of his inheritance, his treasure and his glory, and he will suffer none of them to be lost. Every one of them shall be hid in the day when he maketh up his jewels.

Let us ask for these good old ways, and walk in them, and we shall find rest and safety for our souls. They are safe paths when God guards them, and preserves the way of those that walk in them. No lion, no ravenous beast is found there; and the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. But it is our duty, while we trust in God to guide and preserve us, to make use of our eyes. None of Zion's travellers shall be found wanting in the end, but many too that thought themselves in the good way shall fail of the end of their hopes, because they entered not in at the gate, neither trod the narrow path. He that is born of God keepeth himself, that the wicked one toucheth him not. We cannot by our utmost care keep ourselves in safety; but a true dependence upon God will dispose us to be as sober and vigilant as if we had none else to keep us, while we yet trust entirely in God, and not in ourselves, knowing that if left to ourselves one hour, we must perish.

You see that the lovers of wisdom are furnished with the best wisdom, and led into those paths of holiness where safety is to be found. In order to persuade us to hearken to the instructions of wisdom, the wise man adds (see Proverbs 2:9) ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))



- **Guarding** - Pr 8:20; Ps 1:6; 23:3; 121:5-8; Isaiah 35:9; 49:9,10; John 10:28,29
- **and** - Pr 3:21-24; Deuteronomy 33:3,26-29; 1 Samuel 2:9; Ps 37:23,24,28,31; 66:9; 145:20; Jeremiah 32:40,41; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 1:24)

## OUR GUARDIAN GOD

The LORD (**Jehovah**) is the subject, the One **guarding** and the One Who **preserves**.

**Guarding** ([05341](#))(**natsar**) means to guard, keep, observe, hide, preserve, hide. Many of the uses of **natsar** are nuanced by the object that is being watched or guarded. The first use in Ex 34:7 God says He "**keeps** faithfulness!" **Natsar** is used with a similar sense of keeping faithfulness in "keeping" the covenant (Dt. 33:9); "keeping" the law (Ps. 105:45); "keeping" the rules of parents (Pr. 6:20).

The **Septuagint (LXX)** translates **natsar** in this passage (and Pr 2:11) with the verb **phulasso** which means to watch over as does a sentinel standing alertly at his guard post keeping careful watch to make sure the military base remains safe. The application to the present passage is obvious.

**Natsar** is used 18 times in Proverbs (out of 57 OT uses)...

Proverbs 2:8 **Guarding** (Lxx = **phulasso**) the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones.

Proverbs 2:11 Discretion will guard you, Understanding will **watch** (Lxx = **phulasso**) over you,

Proverbs 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart **keep** (Lxx = present imperative = make this your habitual practice; Lxx = **tereo** = basic meaning keep in view, take note, watch over) my commandments;

Proverbs 3:21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight; **Keep** (Lxx = aorist imperative = Do this now! It is urgent! ; Lxx = **tereo** = basic meaning keep in view, take note, watch over) sound wisdom and discretion,

Proverbs 4:6 "Do not forsake her (wisdom... understanding - Pr 4:5), and she will guard you; Love her, and she will **watch** (Lxx = **tereo** = basic meaning keep in view, take note, watch over) over you.

Proverbs 4:13 Take hold of instruction; do not let go. **Guard** (Lxx = aorist imperative = Do this now! It is urgent! ; Lxx = **phulasso** = guard like a military guard on duty) her, for she is your life.

Proverbs 4:23 (see notes) **Watch** (Lxx = present imperative = make this your habitual practice; Lxx = **tereo** = basic meaning keep in view, take note, watch) over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 5:2 That you may observe discretion And your lips may **reserve** knowledge.

Proverbs 6:20 My son, **observe** (Lxx = present imperative = make this your habitual practice; Lxx = **tereo** = basic meaning keep in view, take note, watch) the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;

Proverbs 7:10 And behold, a woman comes to meet him, Dressed as a harlot and **cunning** (Lxx uses an unusual verb *exiptamai* = to fly out or fly away!) of heart.

Proverbs 13:3 The one who **guards** (Lxx = **phulasso**) his mouth preserves his life; The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

Proverbs 13:6 Righteousness **guards** (Lxx = **phulasso**) the one whose way is blameless, But wickedness subverts the sinner.

Proverbs 16:17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who **watches** (Lxx = **phulasso**) his way preserves (shamar) his life.

Proverbs 20:28 Loyalty and truth preserve (Lxx = *phulake* = act of guarding - personifies loyalty and truth as the guards!) the king, And he upholds his throne by righteousness.

Proverbs 22:12 The eyes of the LORD **preserve** knowledge, But He overthrows the words of the treacherous man.

Proverbs 24:12 If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who **keeps** your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?

Proverbs 27:18 He who **tends** the fig tree will eat its fruit, And he who cares for his master will be honored.

Proverbs 28:7 He who **keeps** (Lxx = **phulasso** in the present tense which means habitually - the only way possible is by continual dependence on the enabling power of the Holy Spirit!) the law is a discerning son, But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.

**He preserves the way of His godly ones** - This implies we need preserving!

**The way of His godly ones** - contrast **The way of evil** (Pr 2:12)

**Preserves** (08104)(**shamar**) means God watches over us, guards us, keeps us. If you need to be encouraged by this truth or to have it re-enforced slowly read Psalm 121 which uses the verb shamar six times in eight verses!

### Psalm 121

(See commentary on this great Psalm)

121:1 (A Song of Ascents.)

I Will lift up my eyes to the mountains;

From whence shall my help come?

2 My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not allow your foot to slip; He who **keeps** you will not slumber.

4 Behold, He who **keeps** Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD is your **keeper**; The LORD is your shade on your right hand.

6 The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD will **protect** you from all evil; He will **keep** your soul.

8 The LORD will **guard** your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **shamar** with the verb **diaphulasso** which means to watch very closely, to carefully guard and is used in the Lxx of Psalm 91:11 "For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To **guard** (shamar; Lxx = diaphulasso) you in all your ways"

His godly ones - The Lxx translates it with a phrase that is certainly descriptive of God's godly ones = "them that fear Him," where the word "fear" in Greek is eulabeomai which means to show reverence or respect in this case for God. Eulabeomai is in the present tense indicating that this is the habitual practice of the godly (not perfection, but direction)!

**Proverbs 2:9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course.**

Pr 1:2-6; Ps 25:8,9; 32:8; 119:99,105; 143:8-10; Isaiah 35:8; 48:17; Jeremiah 6:16; Matthew 7:13,14; John 14:6

**THE ETHICAL TRIAD:**  
**RIGHTEOUSNESS**  
**JUSTICE**  
**EQUITY**  
(cf Pr 1:3)

**Then (az)** means at that time. What time? This seems to be after God has given **wisdom** (Pr 2:6, 7) which is mentioned again in the explanation in Pr 2:10. (See discussion of the value of observing and interrogating expressions of time)

**ESV Study Bible** - Following the description of the wisdom that the Lord grants (Pr 2:9–11), this section gives three statements of its purpose: it delivers from the deception of those on the evil path (Pr 2:12–15), it delivers from being flattered into unfaithfulness (Pr 2:16–19), and it directs one instead to walk in the way that is both true and good (Pr 2:20).

**Discern** ([0995](#))([bin/biyn](#)) is not a mere accumulation of data but an understanding resulting from comparative study.

To **discern** is to perceive by the sight or some other sense or by the intellect and so to distinguish or recognize as different. In this case wisdom helps us recognize those things that are right and just in God's eyes.

**Righteousness** ([06664](#) - [717](#)) (**tsedeq**) speaks of that which conforms to an ethical or moral standard, God's standard as revealed in His Word. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **tsedeq** with the noun **dikaosune** which means the quality of being upright. **Dikaosune** is rightness of character before God and rightness of actions before men. Righteousness of God could be succinctly stated as all that God is, all that He commands, all that He demands, all that He approves, all that He provides through Christ (Click here to read Pastor Ray Pritchard's interesting analysis of righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew).

Jesus Thy Blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
'Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head. ([Play](#))

**Justice** ([04941](#))(**mishpat**) has the primary sense of exercising the processes of government. The word includes a judgment, a legal decision rendered, justice as a state or condition of fairness in disputes. Justice "refers to the entire process of the administration of justice, including hearing the case, rendering a decision, pronouncing a verdict, and implementing the sentence." (Patterson)

In context **justice** seems to speak of just behavior and just treatment.

One English dictionary says **justice** is "the moral principle determining just conduct... the moral principle determining just conduct."

**Vine on mishpat** - This word has two main senses; the first deals with the act of sitting as a judge, hearing a case, and rendering a proper verdict. Eccl. 12:14 is one such occurrence: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Mishpat can also refer to the "rights" belonging to someone (Ex. 23:6). This second sense carries several nuances: the sphere in which things are in proper relationship to one's claims (Gen. 18:19—the first occurrence); a judicial verdict (Deut. 17:9); the statement of the case for the accused (Num. 27:5); and an established ordinance (Ex. 21:1).

**Equity** (04339)(**mesar**) is a masculine noun designating rightness, equity, smoothness. It is found only in the plural. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **mesar** with the verb **katorthoo** which means to cause something to be correct or to come out right (set straight, brought to a successful conclusion).

**Course** ([04570](#) - [717](#)) (**magal, magalah**) is a masculine noun which refers to a track, course or path. In several passages it describes an encampment or circle of a camp (1Sa 17:20, 26:5, 7). Magal refers to either good (God's) paths (Ps 17:5, 23:3, 65:11, Pr 2:9, Pr 4:11) or bad (evil men and women's) path (Pr 2:15, 18, Isa 59:8). Since there are both good and bad paths we must "watch the path of" our feet (Pr 4:26) ever mindful that the Omniscient Eye of the Holy One "watches all (our) paths!" (Pr 5:26). Indeed, let us pray "O Upright One, make the **path** of the righteous level." (Isa 26:7)

The Lxx translates **magal** in this verse with an interesting, rare Greek noun **axon** which means an axle and figuratively a course or path.

**Magal, magalah** - 16 verses - especially in Proverbs - NAS Usage: circle of the camp(3), course(1), path(2), paths(5), tracks(2), ways(2), wayside(1).

1 Samuel 17:20 So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the **circle of the camp** while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry.

1 Samuel 26:5 David then arose and came to the place where Saul had camped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army; and Saul was lying in the **circle of the camp**, and the people were camped around him.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night, and behold, Saul lay sleeping inside the **circle of the camp** with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people were lying around him.

Psalms 17:5 My steps have held fast to Your **paths**. My feet have not slipped.

Psalms 23:3 He restores my soul; He guides me in the **paths** of righteousness For His name's sake.

Psalms 65:11 You have crowned the year with Your bounty, And Your **paths** drip with fatness.

Psalms 140:5 The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; They have spread a net by the **wayside**; They have set snares for me. Selah.

Proverbs 2:9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course.

15 Whose **paths** are crooked, And who are devious in their ways;

18 For her house sinks down to death And her **tracks** lead to the dead;

Proverbs 4:11 I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright**paths**.

26 Watch the **path** of your feet And all your ways will be established.

Proverbs 5:6 She does not ponder the path of life; Her ways are unstable, she does not know it.

21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his**paths**.

Isaiah 26:7 The way of the righteous is smooth; O Upright One, make the **path** of the righteous level.

Isaiah 59:8 They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their **tracks**; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

**George Lawson** comments on Proverbs 2:10-11 - That we may enjoy the advantages of wisdom, it must enter into our heart, which is naturally disposed to entertain sin and folly; for man, however fond he may be of the reputation of wisdom, is born like the wild ass's colt. Some receive the words of wisdom into their ears, but understand not what they hear; others hear, and form clear apprehensions of what they hear, so as to be able to talk of them, like Balaam or Judas, and instruct others. But the children of wisdom not only hear and understand, but love the truth. The Spirit of God writes it in the inward part; then it comes to them in power and in the Holy Ghost, and the testimonies of God are received by their spirits with pleasure and joy. Knowledge becomes sweeter than honey dropping from the comb, and is esteemed more than necessary food. Paul counted every thing but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. When Jeremiah found the word of God, he did eat it, and it was to him the joy and rejoicing of his heart.

The pleasure that saints take in knowledge, is very different from the transient affection experienced in the word by those hearers whom our Lord compares to stony ground. These false believers were moved and transported by the novelty of the truth, by the prospect of deliverance from hell and possession of heaven which it presented to them, but they had no spiritual apprehensions of its divine glory, nor any deep-rooted affection to it. They still loved the world more than the testimonies of God, and this reigning earthliness of spirit in time choked the beautiful springing of this seed in their souls. But those into whose hearts wisdom enters, have their eyes opened to see its glory, and their affections sanctified to relish its genuine sweetness. They rejoice in the truths that oppose their most darling corruptions. They take pleasure in the way of God's testimonies, as well as in the glorious prospects which they present. They heartily esteem all God's precepts concerning all things to be right, and delight in the law of God after the inward man, because it is pure and spiritual. They delight in it, though it forces them to confess that they are carnal, sold under sin.

This wisdom entering into their souls, furnishes them with understanding to see their way, and discretion to manage their affairs with prudence and judgment to the end\*.

This understanding and prudence is an antidote against the poisonous infection of evil men and strange women.—It is, first, a means of preserving us from the snares of bad men. ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

#### Proverbs 2:10 For wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul

- Pr 18:1,2; 24:13,14; Job 23:12; Ps 19:10; 104:34; 119:97,103,111,162; Jeremiah 15:16; Colossians 3:16

**Wisdom** ([02451](#))(**chokmah** from the verb **chakam** - to be wise) is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. Wisdom is the ability to see something from God's viewpoint. **Wisdom** is "God's character in the many practical affairs of life.

**Enter your heart** - Not so much your head (cp 1Cor 8:1KJV) but heart understanding.

**Heart** ([03820](#))(**leb**) sometimes refers to a literal heart (Ex 28:29, 1Sa 25:37, 2Ki 9:24), but most often is used figurative to refer to what I term the "control center" of our being. Think of an Air Traffic Controller and how dysfunctional, even destructive it is when the controllers fail to function as they should.

Just as a healthy human heart is at the center of the body and absolutely essential for physical life and health, so too a healthy spiritual heart (intellect, emotion, will) is at the center of one's inner being (soul) and is vital for a healthy soul, serving as the "fountain" of all moral attitudes and actions. Our spiritual heart thus controls our actions and our actions determine our habits, which

in turn determine our character. When God measures the "worth" of a man's life He puts the measuring tape around his heart, not around his head. Be a man after God's Own heart (Acts 13:22) We must continually "post a guard" at the doorway of our heart (Pr 4:23), so that every avenue for sin's entry is blocked.

**John MacArthur** - The "heart" commonly refers to the mind as the center of thinking and reason (Pr 3:3; 6:21; 7:3), but also includes the emotions (Pr 15:15, 30), the will (Pr 11:20; 14:14), and thus, the whole inner being (Pr 3:5). The heart is the depository of all wisdom and the source of whatever affects speech (Pr 4:24), sight (Pr 4:25), and conduct (Pr 4:26, 27). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**John Phillips** writes that "Wisdom brings its own rewards: "Wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul." Those who have acquired wisdom have had their eyes opened. They are unlike blind old Pew, one of the villains in Treasure Island. What terror he struck into the heart of young Jim Hawkins! What consternation Pew's visit to the Admiral Benbow Inn brought to the drunken old pirate who lodged there! Pew cursed his companions as they ransacked the inn looking in vain for the treasure map and he cursed his own blindness. Finally when his companions abandoned him to his fate, when the warning signal sounded and the drumming of hoofbeats was heard, Pew changed his tune. He staggered to and fro. Tap, tap, tap went his stick. He dashed here; he dashed there. Then utterly confused, he ran straight under the hooves of the leading horse and was trampled by the galloping revenue officer and his men. Pew's dying screams rang to the heaven above." (Explore the Proverbs)

**James Smith** exhorts us - Wait for WISDOM IN TRIALS. It requires much wisdom to use trials well, so that we may glorify God in the fires, and get only good to our own souls. Every trial, properly directed, will prove a great blessing; but if not well-directed, it may prove a sore evil. James was speaking of the believer's trials when he said- "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not; and it shall be given him." We can not make ourselves wise; but God can make us so, and he is prepared to give wisdom unto all who devoutly wait upon him. The wisdom that comes from God, used in our trials, will lead us to the strong for strength, will teach us to use the promises aright, and will direct us to seek the deepening of our sanctification, before anything and everything else. A wise man in trial will be patient and calm, prayerful and hopeful, resigned and humble, and will be more concerned to have the trial made a blessing, than to have it removed. Wait, then, on the Lord for wisdom, and see that you obtain it. You may, for God in the Scripture declares- "If you will receive my words, and hide my commandments with you; so that you will incline your ear unto wisdom, and apply your heart unto understanding; yes, if you cry after knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding; if you seek her as silver, and seek for her as for hid treasures; then shall you understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding." Hence the exhortation- "Get wisdom, get understanding. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom; and with all your getting, get understanding." ([Wait on the LORD](#))

**H A Ironside on Proverbs 2:10-19** - The proper attitude for one who really holds the truth is set forth in these verses. When wisdom and knowledge are embraced they give discretion that preserves from evil and guards from false ways.

Two enemies are seen attacking the young man: the evil man and the strange woman. "The evil man" is the man who walks in the pride of his heart and in independence of God. This way of life seems very attractive to the young, appealing to their natural mind. To follow the evil man is to leave the straight paths of righteousness and to walk in the ways of darkness (13). But when one receives the truth of God and allows it to control his life he will be delivered from the perverse paths of the evil man.

The Word of God is also given to deliver the young man from "the strange woman" ("adulteress" in niv). Again and again we catch glimpses of this strange woman flitting in and out of the book of Proverbs. Who is she? Does she speak of anything more than impurity and uncleanness? The primary meaning is clear on the face of the passages that concern her. As the enemy of morality and virtue, she seeks to ensnare the young and unwary. Forsaking the guide of her youth and forgetting the covenant of her God, she gives herself up to impure pleasures and soul-destroying lusts. Those who have been ensnared by the strange woman must live with the consequences of their unclean ways. Even sincere repentance will not erase the shameful memories.

Could there be a secondary meaning in these many warnings concerning the strange woman? In the evil man we saw independence from God-rationalism gone wild. Whereas the strange woman represents false religion that eventually will be headed up in "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots" (Revelation 17:5). How devious are her ways! How subtle and deceptive her solicitations! And how truly can it be said that "her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead." ([Proverbs 2 Commentary - Ironside's Notes on Selected Books](#))

**Proverbs 2:11 Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,**

- Pr 4:6; 6:22-24; Ps 25:21; 119:9-11; Ecclesiastes 9:15-18; 10:10; Ephesians 5:15

**MacArthur** - Truth is the protector from all evil (see Ps 119:11, 97–104). (**Comment** - And remember while our Adversary is powerful, his most dangerous weapon is lies and "half-truths" and therefore the battlefield is our mind, which is all the more reason we need to daily renew our mind with the sound ["healthy"] doctrine of God's Word). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Discretion** ("Wise planning" = NLT) ([04209](#)) (**mezimmah** from **zamam** = to plan, consider, purpose) describes the ability to form plans based on knowledge. It is the ability to make proper decisions. The quality of showing discernment or good judgment in conduct. Most of the OT uses are in a negative sense = evil plans or thoughts (Pr 12:2, 14:17, 24:8), but clearly in this context the sense is positive and is what God desires for men for He knows this quality of thinking will serve to "guard" us from our enemies (world, flesh, devil).

In this passage the **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **mezimmah** with the noun **boule** which describes an inward thought process leading toward a decision (deliberation, plan, purpose, decision). Boule is that which has been purposed and planned. Boule has in it the ideas of intelligence and deliberation. In other words boule describes the result of deliberate determination

**Discretion** in English refers to the quality of behaving or speaking in such a way as to avoid causing offense or revealing private information. ("she knew she could rely on his discretion"). Synonyms: circumspection, carefulness, caution, wariness, chariness, guardedness; tact, tactfulness, diplomacy, delicacy, sensitivity, prudence, judiciousness ("you can rely on his discretion"). **Discretion** also refers to the the freedom to decide what should be done in a particular situation. ("it is up to local authorities to use their discretion in setting the charges") Here the synonyms = choice, option, preference, disposition, volition; pleasure, liking, wish, will, inclination, desire ("his sentence would be determined at the discretion of the court") **Discretion** is that discernment which enables a person to judge critically of what is correct and proper, united with caution.

**Mezimmah** - 19v - Job21:27; Job 42:2; Ps 10:2, 4; 21:11; 37:7; 139:20; Pr. 1:4; 2:11; 3:21; 5:2; 8:12; Pr 12:2; Pr 14:17; 24:8; Jer. 11:15; 23:20; 30:24; 51:11 NAS Usage: devises evil(1), discretion(5), evil devices(1), intent(1), plans(1), plot(1), plots(1), purpose(2), purposes(1), schemer\*(1), thoughts(1), vile deeds(1), wicked schemes(1), wickedly(1).

Pr 1:4 To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion,

Pr 2:11 Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,

Pr 3:21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion,

Pr 5:2 That you may observe discretion And your lips may reserve knowledge.

Pr 8:12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and discretion.

Pr 12:2 A good man will obtain favor from the LORD, But He will condemn a man who devises evil.

Pr 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is hated.

Pr 24:8 One who plans to do evil, Men will call a schemer.

**Guard** (08104)([shamar](#)) is a verb meaning to watch, to keep, to preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. Adam was to watch over (shamar; Lxx - phulasso) and care for the Garden of Eden where the Lord had placed him (Ge 2:15) The sense is to exercise great care over something. **Shamar** can suggest the idea of protecting: David gave orders to keep Absalom safe (1Sa 26:15; 2Sa 18:12); the Lord keeps those who look to Him (Ps 121:7).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates [shamar](#) with the Greek verb **phulasso** which means to watch, to keep from escaping, be on guard from being lost or perishing (e.g., 2Ti1:14). **Phulasso** is a picturesque word meaning to carry out the function as a military guard or sentinel (cp Acts 23:35, 28:16). **Phulasso** means to guard a person that he might remain safe (from violence, from another person or thing, from being snatched away, from being lost). The NT also uses **phulasso** of guarding truth (eg, 1Ti 5:21, 6:20, 2Ti 1:14-note)

**Understanding** (08394)([tebunah](#)) is a noun describing the ability to discern a right course of action (Dt 32:28, Ps 136:5, 145:5, Pr 3:19). The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **tebunah** in Pr 2:11 with **ennoia** literally describes what takes place in the mind (nous). **Ennoia** describes a mental conception that follows consideration or deliberation. **Ennoia** relates especially to the development of a perspective that will provide insight and so shape our attitude and guide one's actions.

#### Proverbs 2:12 To deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things

- **deliver** - Pr 1:10-19; 4:14-17; 9:6; 13:20; Ps 17:4,5; 26:4,5; 141:4; 2Cor 6:17
- **from the man** - Pr 3:32; 8:13; 16:28-30; Ps 101:4; Isa 59:3-5; Acts 20:30; 1Cor 15:33)



## THE FIRST TEMPTER THE EVIL MAN

Pr 2:12-15

**Duane Garrett** describes Pr 2:12-19 as "**The Two Tempters**," that can influence the decisions and course of one's life, the first being the evil man (Pr 2:12-15, cp Pr 1:10-19) and the second being the evil woman (Pr 2:16-19).

**ESV Study Bible** - Following the description of the wisdom that the Lord grants (Pr 2:9–11), this section gives three statements of its purpose: it delivers from the deception of those on the evil path (Pr 2:12–15), it delivers from being flattered into unfaithfulness (Pr 2:16–19), and it directs one instead to walk in the way that is both true and good (Pr 2:20).

Our "deliverers" are **discretion** and **understanding** in Pr 2:11 (ultimately our strong Deliverer is God Himself) and the verb in both Hebrew and Greek depicts a "rescue operation" if you will! It would seem that the implication is that we are in fact in need of rescue (from those who speak "perverse things.")

**Charles Bridges** agrees with this thought commenting that "Some of the various **snare**s for the young, are about to be detailed; a fearful picture of the **temptations**, to which our beloved children (**Ed**: And US!) are exposed! Will it not awaken our earnest cries for their immediate and solid conversion to God; that wisdom may indeed enter into their hearts, and its pleasures be really enjoyed; that they may have a religious taste as well as a religious education; that they may know the Gospel—not only in the conviction of their conscience, or the excitement of their feelings (**Ed**: Mere "Professors") —but in the entire renewal of their hearts before God (**Ed**: Genuine "Possessors!")? **This—and nothing else—will preserve them from the snare of their cruel foe** Every town and village swarms with his emissaries: first, initiated themselves into the mysteries of his art; then going forth, laborious and practised teachers, well trained by their Master for his murderous work. Against one of these enticements we have been before warned. (Pr 1:10-16). Another such warning is given here. The character of the tempter is seen from what the writer says. His words are perverse. They are like a polluted spring that sends out contaminated streams. How quickly the disease spreads. ([An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**Deliver** (05337 - [לָצַד](#)) (**natsal**) means to snatch away or rescue. To extricate (to free or remove from an entanglement or difficulty—see "[Are you entangled?](#)"). In many contexts **natsal** describes the drawing out or pulling out and was used of literal deliverance as in Ps 34:4 and Judges 6:9. **Natsal** is a common verb in the OT (>190 uses) with several uses in Proverbs (several referring to deliverance the seductive snare of sexual temptation - Pr 2:16, 6:3, 5)...

Pr 2:12 To **deliver** you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things;

Pr 2:16 To **deliver** you from the strange woman, From the adulteress who flatters with her words;

Pr 6:3 Do this then, my son, and **deliver** yourself; Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor.

Pr 6:5 **Deliver** yourself like a gazelle from the hunter's hand, And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

Pr 10:2 Ill-gotten gains do not profit, But righteousness **delivers** from death.

Pr 11:4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness **delivers** from death.

Pr 11:6 The righteousness of the upright will **deliver** (rescue Lxx = **rhumi** = see below) them, But the treacherous will be caught by their own greed.

Pr 12:6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will **deliver** (rescue Lxx = **rhumi** = see below) them.

Pr 14:25 A truthful witness **saves** (Lxx = **rhumi** = see below) lives, But he who speaks lies is treacherous.

Pr 19:19 A man of great anger shall bear the penalty, For if you **rescue** him, you will only have to do it again.

Pr 23:14 You shall beat him with the rod, And deliver (rescue Lxx = **rhumi** = see below) his soul from Sheol.

Pr 24:11 Deliver (rescue Lxx = **rhumi** = see below) those who are being taken away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **natsal** with the great Greek verb **rhumi** which is derived from **rhúo** = to draw, drag along the ground) means to draw or snatch to oneself and invariably refers to a snatching from danger, evil or an enemy. This basic idea is that of bringing someone out of severe and acute danger, and so to save, rescue, deliver, preserve. **Rhumi** emphasizes greatness of peril from which deliverance is given by a mighty act of power. In the NT **rhumi** is always associated with God as the Deliverer and with a person as the object of His deliverance. **Rhumi** was used in a secular writing to describe a soldier going to a wounded



comrade on the battlefield and carrying him to safety (he runs to the cry of his comrade to rescue him from the hands of the enemy) (Godet)

**The way** ([01870](#) - דֶּרֶךְ) (**derek** = road, journey, direction, conduct) is frequently used in Proverbs to describe the two ways of life - the stairway to heaven or the highway to hell! The phrase "**the way**" is found 32 times in Proverbs = Pr 1:15; 2:8, 12, 20; 4:11, 14, 19; 6:23; 7:8, 27; 8:2, 20; 9:6; 10:29; 12:15, 26, 28; 13:15; 14:12; 15:9-10, 19; 16:25, 31; 21:8, 16; 22:5-6; 23:19; 29:27; 30:19-20. The **way of evil** - Pr 2:12, 4:14, **evil way** - Pr 8:13, 28:10.

**The way of evil** - contrast **the way of His godly ones** (Pr 2:8)

**Evil** ([07451](#) - רַע) (**ra'**) describes the inability to come up to good standards and is the opposite of good, beautiful, beneficial, best, better (**tov/tob** - [02896](#)). It speaks of inferior quality and "can range in meaning from moral wickedness to physical injury. Poor moral choices lead us down the path to pain and destruction." (Kitchen)

**Robert Frost** alludes to the two ways in his poem "Road Not Taken" writes...

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:"  
two roads diverged in a wood, and I --  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

In an even more famous discourse on roads taken and not taken, Jesus admonishes those who have an ear to hear to

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.  
For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it. (Mt 7:13, 14-notes)

**On which road will you travel?  
It will make all the difference in eternity!**

**Garrett** on speaks perverse things - he justifies his way of life with a distorted set of values in order to persuade others to join him. (New American Commentary)

Be very careful about what (who) you listen to, because Solomon makes it clear that the *modus operandi* of evil men is perverse speech and of evil women is flattering words. The upshot is that the evil way gets its expression from the words of evil men.

**MacArthur** - Twisted speech is typical of those who reject wisdom (cf. Pr 8:13; 10:31, 32). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Perverse things** ([08419](#) - תַּהֲפֻכּוֹת) (**tahpukah** from **hapak** = to turn, overturn) is a feminine noun which means to turn away from what is normal and right. The first OT use describes the **perverse generation** of Israelites who deviated and distorted the Lord's ways, turning from Him (Dt 32:20), for their true life is found in Him. **Tahpukah** describes deceptive and corrupt speech, things that are distorted (Pr. 2:12). "Perversity of evil" signifies that evil itself features perversity, a distortion of what is straight and right (Pr. 2:14). Perversity issues from one's heart (Pr 6:14). Notice that many of the OT uses refer in some way to one's speech (Pr 2:12, 8:13, 10:31, 32, 23:33) and Pr 6:14 links perversion with the heart which makes sense since as Jesus taught out of the mouth comes that which fills the heart (Mt 12:34, Lk 6:45).

God hates a **perverted** mouth which of course speaks of perverted speech (Pr. 8:13). A perverse person spreads strife (Pr 16:28). A **perverse person** is one showing a deliberate and obstinate desire to behave in a way that is unreasonable or unacceptable, often in spite of the consequences. It is one who is willfully determined or disposed to go counter to what is expected or desired in this case by God. Perverse describes that which is obstinate in opposing what is right.

In English **perversity** describes a deliberate desire to behave in an unreasonable or unacceptable way; contrariness. **Perversity** is the quality of being contrary to accepted standards or practice.

**Kitchen** - Often this turning away is expressed through the mouth (Pr 2:12; 10:31, 32; 16:30), but only because it is already a condition of the heart (Pr 6:14) and mind (Pr 23:33), fed by what the eyes take in (Pr 16:30). (Proverbs: A Mentor Commentary)

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **tahpukah** with a phrase (meden piston) = "speaks nothing faithfully."

**Tahpukah** - 10v - a "**key word**" in Proverbs (9/10 OT uses)! - **NAS Usage**: perverse(2), perverse things(3), perversity(2), perverted(2), what is perverted(1). Note that except for the first use, this word is found only in Proverbs.

Deuteronomy 32:20 "Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; For they are a **perverse** (**Lxx = ekstrepho** = to turn aside from correct behavior or what is considered morally proper,

"to change for the worse" - the verb is in the **perfect tense** which suggests this is their fixed attitude!) generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness.

Proverbs 2:12 To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks **perverse things**; (**Lxx** = diastrophe = a distortion or perversion)

Proverbs 2:14 Who delight in doing evil And rejoice in the **perversity** (**Lxx** = diastrophe = distortion, perversion - see cognate **diastrepho**) of evil;

Proverbs 6:14 Who with **perversity** (**Lxx** = **diastrepho** in **perfect tense** speaks of a permanent state or condition = literally to that which has become misshapen, figuratively that which is distorted, deformed; caused to depart from an acceptable standard of oral or spiritual values) in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife.

Proverbs 8:13 "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the **perverted** mouth, I hate.

Proverbs 10:31 The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, But the **perverted** tongue will be cut out. (**Lxx** translated - "but the tongue of the unjust shall perish.") 32 The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked (**Lxx** = **asebes** = ungodly) what is **perverted** . (**Lxx** = apostrepho in present tense = continually turned away from correct behavior and/or belief)

Proverbs 16:28 A **perverse** (**Lxx** = **skolios** = that which is bent, crooked, deviating from a standard and often describes that which is morally corrupt) man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends.

Proverbs 16:30 He who winks his eyes does so to devise **perverse** (**Lxx** = **diastrepho** in **perfect tense** speaks of a permanent state or condition = literally to that which has become misshapen, figuratively that which is distorted, deformed; caused to depart from an acceptable standard of oral or spiritual values) things; He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.

Proverbs 23:33 Your eyes will see strange things and your mind will utter **perverse** (As above **Lxx** = **diastrepho** in **perfect tense**) things.

**Disciple's Study Bible** on **perverse things** - The world offers alternatives to draw us away from God's wisdom. We face the choice of walking wisdom's way or the world's. If we choose the world's, we deserve the destruction we ultimately will experience. See Pr 1:20-33. Wisdom comes from God and has the ability to rescue people from evil choices and poor decisions. God can speak through the awakened mind and imagination of a believer. God not only uses the mind in dreams and visions at night or in an event that communicates His will, but He also gives insight to the average individual in reading and reflecting on His truth (Ps 145:5). See Pr 1:20.

**George Lawson** comments on Proverbs 2:12-15 - That we may enjoy the advantages of wisdom, it must enter into our heart, which is naturally disposed to entertain sin and folly; for man, however fond he may be of the reputation of wisdom, is born like the wild ass's colt. Some receive the words of wisdom into their ears, but understand not what they hear; others hear, and form clear apprehensions of what they hear, so as to be able to talk of them, like Balaam or Judas, and instruct others. But the children of wisdom not only hear and understand, but love the truth. The Spirit of God writes it in the inward part; then it comes to them in power and in the Holy Ghost, and the testimonies of God are received by their spirits with pleasure and joy. Knowledge becomes sweeter than honey dropping from the comb, and is esteemed more than necessary food. Paul counted every thing but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. When Jeremiah found the word of God, he did eat it, and it was to him the joy and rejoicing of his heart.

The pleasure that saints take in knowledge, is very different from the transient affection experienced in the word by those hearers whom our Lord compares to stony ground. These false believers were moved and transported by the novelty of the truth, by the prospect of deliverance from hell and possession of heaven which it presented to them, but they had no spiritual apprehensions of its divine glory, nor any deep-rooted affection to it. They still loved the world more than the testimonies of God, and this reigning earthliness of spirit in time choked the beautiful springing of this seed in their souls. But those into whose hearts wisdom enters, have their eyes opened to see its glory, and their affections sanctified to relish its genuine sweetness. They rejoice in the truths that oppose their most darling corruptions. They take pleasure in the way of God's testimonies, as well as in the glorious prospects which they present. They heartily esteem all God's precepts concerning all things to be right, and delight in the law of God after the inward man, because it is pure and spiritual. They delight in it, though it forces them to confess that they are carnal, sold under sin.

This wisdom entering into their souls, furnishes them with understanding to see their way, and discretion to manage their affairs with prudence and judgment to the end\*.

This understanding and prudence is an antidote against the poisonous infection of evil men and strange women.—It is, first, a means of preserving us from the snares of bad men. ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

The following are notes from one of Spurgeon's favorite commentator's **William Arnot** in his book "**Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth**" (1858) on Proverbs 2:12-19 entitled "Perils in the Deep"

The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest." Here an arm of that sea is spread out before us, and we are led to an eminence whence we may behold its raging. We must one by one go down into these great waters. We see many of our comrades sinking beneath the surge. It is good to count the number and measure the height of these ranks of raging waves, that we may be induced to hold faster by the anchor of the soul, which is sure and steadfast. The dangers are delineated here in exact order, continuous succession, and increasing power. They come as the waves come when the tide is flowing; they gradually gain in strength until they reach their height; then, when Satan has done his worst, he retires sullenly, leaving all who have not been overwhelmed, high, and safe, and triumphing.

**1. "The way of the evil."** (Proverbs 2:12) Whether they be persons or principles, whether they be men or devils, the word does not expressly say (**Ed:** Note that "man" is added to the translation but is not in the original Hebrew text).. The announcement, in the first place, is couched in terms the most general; the particulars are enumerated in the verses following. The way of the evil is the way which Satan trod, and by which all his servants follow. It is the way whereon all the wicked travel to their doom.

**2. But more specifically, the first item of the evil is "the man that speaketh froward things."** (Proverbs 2:12b) "The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." This little fire kindles a flame which spreads and licks up all that is lovely and of good report in a wide circle of companionship. The man who speaks froward things is one of the foremost dangers to which the young are exposed at their first start in life. In a workshop, or warehouse, or circle of private friendship, there is one who has a foul tongue. It is difficult to conceive how quickly and how deeply it contaminates all around. There may be much specific variety in the forms of frowardness. In one case, the pollution assumes the shape of profane swearing: in another, it is the frequent injection of obscenities amidst the conversation of the day, feathered with wit to make them fly: in a third, it is infidel insinuation: in a fourth, it is one huge mass of silliness, a shapeless conglomerate of idle words, injuring not so much by the infliction of positive evil, as by occupying a man's heart and his day with vanity, to the exclusion of all that is substantial either for this world or the next.

It is hardly possible that one who is much in contact with these froward words should come off unscathed. Even when a person does not sympathize with the evil, and imitate it, his conscience gets a wound. Only One has ever appeared on earth who was entirely safe under the fiery darts of the wicked: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John 14:30). If there were perfect purity within, these onsets from without would leave no stain; but upon our impure hearts, even when the temptation in the main is resisted, and the tempter put to flight, the marks are left behind: some of the filth sticks, and will not off, to the dying day. For us, even in our best estate, it is not good, in that experimental way, to know evil. The foul tongue of the froward is one grand cause of dread to godly parents in sending their youths to a business, and even in sending their children to school.

How good are pure words! Set a watch upon your mouth. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." Bad as it is to hear froward words, it is inconceivably worse to speak them. It is more cursed to give temptation than to receive it.

**3. "Who leave the paths of righteousness."** (Proverbs 2:13) When the imagination is polluted, and the tongue let loose, the feet cannot keep on the path of righteousness. Thinking, and hearing, and speaking evil, will soon be followed by doing it. The world is startled from time to time by the report of some daring crime; but if the history of the criminal were known, however much grief there might be, there would be no surprise at the culmination of his wickedness. When you see a mighty tree in the forest, you assume that it did not leap into maturity in a day, although you saw not its gradual growth: you may as confidently count that full-sized crime did not attain its stature in a day. In all of us are the seeds of it, and in many the seedlings are growing apace. The ways follow the thoughts and words, as trees spring from seeds. He who would be kept from the path of the destroyer must crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, and soon after murders and adulteries follow. In the matter of watching for one's soul, as in all other matters, the true wisdom is to take care of the beginnings.

**4. "To walk in the ways of darkness."** (Proverbs 2:13b) There is a strictly causal and reciprocal relation between unrighteous deeds and moral darkness. The doing of evil produces darkness, and darkness produces

the evil-doing. Indulged lusts put out the eye-sight of the conscience; and under the darkened conscience the lusts revel unchecked. "From him that hath not, shall be taken away."

**5. "Who rejoice to do evil."** (Proverbs 2:14) This is a more advanced step in guilt. At first the backslider is ashamed of his fall. He palliates, alleges the strength of the temptation, and promises amendment. As the hardening process goes on, however, he begins to feel more easy: he ceases to make excuses, and at last he glories in his shame. "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (Jer. 6:15). This is a measure of evil which should make even the wicked tremble. A man has become the very essence of antichrist, when it is his meat and his drink to oppose the will of our Father who is in heaven.

**6. Profligacy can yet one step further go.** They who "**delight in the frowardness** (froward = difficult to deal with; contrary) **of the wicked**" (Proverbs 2:14b) are more abandoned than the wicked themselves. To take pleasure in sin is a characteristic of fallen humanity; to delight in seeing others sinning is altogether devilish. Some monsters in human form have presided over the process of torture, and drunk in delight from a brother's pain; but it is a still clearer evidence that a man is of his father the Devil, when he lays snares for a brother's soul, and laughs at his own success. There are not a few amongst us who have reached this stage of depravity, and yet have no suspicion that they are in any way more guilty than others. They have so drunk into the spirit, and been changed into the image of the first tempter, that they relish as dainty food the pollution of a neighbor, and yet never perceive that there is anything out of the way. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled:" cursed are they that hunger and thirst after wickedness, for they shall be filled too; they shall be filled with food convenient for them. It is the Lord's way both in mercy and judgment to provide for every creature in abundance that which it loves and longs for. This principle is announced with terrific distinctness in the prophet Habakkuk (Hab 2:15, 16-note). Those who have a relish for the sin of others, will be filled with the food they have chosen; and although the horrid sweet pall upon the taste by reason of its abundance, there is no variety, and no diluting of sin by fragments of good in the place of the lost. The same—the same that they loved on earth, the lost must abide for ever; sin—nothing but sin, within and around them.

To complete the picture of the danger, one other peril of the world's deep is marked on the chart which is mercifully placed in the voyager's hands—it is "**the strange woman**." (Proverbs 2:16) Thanks be to God for his tender care in kindling these beacon-lights on the rock to scare the coming passenger away from the quicksands of doom.

The deceiver is called a "**strange**" woman. Whoredom is distinguished from marriage, which God appointed and approves. When man and woman are given to each other, as helps meet from the Lord, they become "one flesh:" they are not only known to each other, but, in an important sense, they lose their individual personality, and are merged into one. "A man shall leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife." (Ge 2:24) To follow the "**strange woman**" is the Satanic reversal of this divine ordinance. There is no love, no holy union, no mutual helpfulness; but wild, selfish passions, followed by visible marks of God's vengeance. For it is not his word only; with equal clearness his providence frowns on licentiousness. That vice eats like a festering sore into the body of society. If all should act as libertines do, the race would dwindle away. We are fearfully and wonderfully made; we are fearfully and wonderfully governed. It is in vain that the potsherds of the earth strive with their Maker: his anger will track lust through all its secret doublings: he makes sin generate its own punishment. Vengeance against that evil thing circulates through the veins, and dries up the marrow in the heart of the bones. Verily, there is a God that judges in the earth. Of the strange woman it is said, "Her house inclines to death, and her paths to the dead." Mark well this description, ye simple ones who are enticed to follow her. There is an "incline on the path;" it goes down. She leads the way, you follow. It is easy to go down—down a slippery, slimy path; but its issue is death. What death? The death of the soul, and the body too. It leads to "the dead." It brings you to the society of libertines; and they are dead while they live. This lust is a cankerworm that quickly withers the greenness of spring in the soul of youth. We have no trust in the patriotism, the truth, the honesty, the friendship of licentious men. When you get down into their company, you are among the dead: they move about like men in outward appearance; but the best attributes of humanity have disappeared—the best affections of nature have been drained away from their hearts. ([Proverbs 2:12-19](#)  
[Perils in the Deep](#))

**George Lawson** comments on on **Proverbs 2:12-15** - Such is the portrait drawn by Solomon of those bad men by whom his pupils are in danger of being seduced, unless furnished with wisdom to avoid the snare. They speak froward (contrary) things; they pay no regard to truth, but bend their tongue like their bow for lies. Among these pests of men, none are such virulent pests of every thing

that is good, as those that once made a profession of religion, but have left the way of uprightness to walk in those miserable and gloomy paths (Pr 2:13), which begin in the darkness of the mind, and end in the darkness of hell. The stings of conscience which such persons experience, instead of reclaiming them, tend only to irritate their spirits, and inflame them into fierce enmity against religion. If, instead of being pierced with such stings, they are cursed with the conquest of their own consciences, they are hardened enough for the blackest sin, and prepared not only to do evil, but to work it with both hands greedily. They rejoice in the service of Satan,' (Pr 2:14) and no greater pleasure do they know than that which arises from seeing that his interests flourish, that his kingdom prospers. Such persons are crooked in their ways. (Pr 2:15) The only straight way is the way of uprightness, but that sinners leave, and wander into paths where they are bewildered and lost. They know not whither they go, because darkness hath blinded their eyes. One sin leads them on to another, and that to a third, till at length they run into wickednesses, of which they could not have thought without horror when first they set foot in these deceitful paths.

These miscreants (those who behave badly or in a way that breaks the law) are froward (contrary) and stubborn in their ways; (Pr 2:15KJV) and why? Custom has become a second nature to them, their hearts are become impenetrably hard, and proof against admonition. Yet look back to their early days, and you shall find them to have evinced tempers and dispositions very different. They would then have abhorred gross impieties, and were not without impressions of the necessity of virtue and holiness. But the unwearied adversary of mankind spread his toils around them, and employed such men as they are now become, to efface every good impression, and to lead them on, by slow and imperceptible degrees, to those lengths in wickedness at which they have now arrived. Had they been armed with the instructions of wisdom, and employed these in their own defence, what different persons might they now have been! Whilst they would mislead us by their persuasions, let us learn instruction from their miserable situation, and thankfully improve those means which God has afforded, to keep us out of the paths of destruction. God is our preserver, but He has been pleased to appoint the instructions of wisdom as our great defence against these instruments of mischief. The knowledge of the truth, and the cordial love of it, will open our eyes to our danger, and possess our hearts with a settled aversion to the practices of the ungodly. As our Lord repelled every temptation of the devil by the word of God, so when it abides in us, it will enable us to meet every temptation of the old serpent, and of his instruments, with safety and stedfast resolution (Ps 112:5).

Grace in the soul is weak of itself, but the seed of God shall remain for ever. The powers of hell shall never be able to extinguish it utterly, for it receives new supplies from the fountain of grace (Jer. 32:40. Rev. 3:10). ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

#### Proverbs 2:13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness

- **leave** - Pr 21:16; Ps 14:3; 36:3; Ezekiel 18:26; 33:12,13; Zephaniah 1:6; Matthew 12:43-45; 2 Timothy 4:10; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2Peter 2:20-22; 1John 2:19
- **walk** - Pr 4:19; Job 24:13-16; John 3:19-20; 12:35; Romans 1:21; 1Thes 5:5-7; 1John 1:6; 2:9-11)

### TWO PATHS CONTRASTED: UPRIGHTNESS vs DARKNESS

See William Arnot's and George Lawson's notes on this passage at the end of note on Proverbs 2:12.

Solomon continues to describe the evil man's conduct.

**Kitchen** observes that in Pr 2:13 "we find his design, in Pr 2:14 we find his delight, and in Pr 2:15 his demeanor. His design is to depart from the light and walk in the darkness, to throw off the restraints of wisdom. This departure appears to be premeditated. This one's brief walk in the light was not motivated by a true conversion, or else they would not have left the 'paths of uprightness' (1Jn 2:19-note). (Ibid)

Cross references on walking in darkness...

**Pr 4:19** The way of the wicked is like **darkness**; They do not know over what they stumble.

**Job 24:13** "Others have been with those who **rebel against the light**; They do not want to know its ways, Nor abide in its paths. 14 "The murderer arises at dawn; He kills the poor and the needy, And at **night** he is as a thief. 15 "And the eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, Saying, 'No eye will see me.' And he disguises his face. 16 "In the **dark** they dig into houses, They shut themselves up by day; They do not know the **light**.

**John 3:19** "And this is the judgment, that the **light** is come into the world, and men **loved the darkness** rather than the **light**; for their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone who does **evilhates the light**, and does not come to the **light**, lest his deeds should be exposed.

**John 12:35** Jesus therefore said to them, "For a little while longer the **light** is among you. Walk while you have the **light**, that **darkness** may not overtake you; he who walks in the **darkness** does not know where he goes.

**1John 1:6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet **walk in the darkness**, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the **light** as He Himself is in the **light**, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

**1John 2:9-11** The one who says he is in the **light** and yet hates his brother is in the **darkness** until now. 10 The one who loves his brother abides in the **light** and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But the one who hates his brother is in the **darkness** and **walks in the darkness**, and does not know where he is going because the **darkness** has blinded his eyes.

Notice that the writer switches from "**you**" (Pr 2:11) to "**those**" regarding which **Bridges** says "The change to the plural number implies confederacy (an alliance of people or groups formed for an illicit purpose.)."

**Leave the paths of uprightness** - It is a conscious, willful, volitional choice. To walk on the **paths of uprightness** is to walk in the light (1Jn 1:7-note)

**Leave** (05800) ('**azab**) means to forsake or to loose. To **forsake** means to abandon (someone or something) or to renounce or give up (something valued or pleasant). **Synonyms:** renounce, abandon, relinquish, dispense with, disclaim, disown, disavow, discard, wash one's hands of; give up, drop, jettison, do away with, ax; informal = ditch, scrap, scrub, junk; formal = forswear.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates '**azab** with the Greek verb **egkataleipo** which means literally to leave down in. It conveys the sense of deserting someone in a set of circumstances that are against them. The idea is to let down, to desert, abandon, leave in the lurch, leave helpless. In this context the irony is when they leave God's path they are helpless!

**Azab** - 11/204 uses in Proverbs...

Proverbs 2:13 From those who **leave** the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness;

Proverbs 2:17 That **leaves** the companion of her youth And forgets the covenant of her God;

Proverbs 3:3 Do not let kindness and truth **leave** you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 4:2 For I give you sound teaching; Do not **abandon** my instruction.

Proverbs 4:6 "Do not **forsake** her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you.

Proverbs 9:6 "**Forsake** your folly and live, And proceed in the way of understanding."

Proverbs 10:17 He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who **ignores** reproof goes astray.

Proverbs 15:10 Grievous punishment is for him who **forsakes** the way; He who hates reproof will die.

Proverbs 27:10 Do not **forsake** your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.

Proverbs 28:4 Those who **forsake** the law praise the wicked, But those who keep the law strive with them.

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and **forsakes** them will find compassion.

**Uprightness** (03476 - יָשָׁר) (**yosher** from **yashar** = literally straight, ethically a moral life) is a noun speaks of straightness, uprightness (quality of conforming to a standard) and can connote sincerity (Ps 119:7), honesty (Pr 17:26), accuracy (Eccl 12:10) and straightness (Pr 4:11) It refers to honesty and integrity (1Ch 29:17; Job 6:25; Pr 11:24; 17:26). An uncommon meaning is to give to another what is due and thus describes equity (Prov. 11:24). It is not surprising that this noun with the ethical sense of straightness is often associated with the **heart** (Deut 9:5, 1Chr 29:7, Job 33:3, Ps 119:7), the ethical/moral "control center" of man's being.

The Lxx translates **yosher** here in Proverbs 2:13 with the adjective **euthus** which is used idiomatically with **hodos** = way (as in this passage - *hodos eutheias*) and literally means straight road, and ethically correct behavior or the right way (cp evil men in 2Pe 2:15-note)

In English **upright** literally means vertical (as supporting beams of a structure should be perfectly "upright") and ethically of a person or their behavior that is strictly honorable or honest.



**Kitchen** - The straightness of God's way is contrasted in the next verse (Pr 2:14) by the 'perversity' (i.e. crookedness) of the way of the evil. God promises He will straighten the paths of those who look to Him (Pr. 3:6).

### **Brown-Driver-Briggs** -

1 straightness, evenness, of paths (with moral implication) Proverbs 2:13; Proverbs 4:11.

2 rightness, uprightness Proverbs 17:26; תָּם וְיֶשֶׁר Psalm 25:21; of words, spoken Job 6:25, written Ecclesiastes 12:10; of the moral walk בִּישָׁר 1 Kings 9:4; Proverbs 14:2; יֶשֶׁר לְבָב Job 33:3; יֶשֶׁר לבב Deuteronomy 9:5; Psalm 119:7; 1 Chronicles 29:17: — on Psalm 111:8 see יֶשֶׁר

3. what is due, right Job 33:23; Proverbs 11:24.

**Yosher** - 14 verses - NAS Usage: correctly(1), honest(1), integrity(1), justly due(1), right(1), upright(1), uprightness(8), what is justly due(1).

Deuteronomy 9:5 "It is not for your righteousness or for the **uprightness** (Lxx = **hosiotes** [cognate = **hosios**] - state of proper attitude toward God as shown by one's actions = devoutness, dedication, holiness) of your **heart** that you are going to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

1 Kings 9:4 "As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of **heart** and **uprightness** (Lxx = **euthutes** = literally straightness, figuratively a life of honesty, integrity), doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances,

1 Chronicles 29:17 "Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness (Lxx = **dikaiousune** = righteousness), I, in the integrity of my **heart**, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You.

Job 6:25 "How painful are **honest** (Lxx = **alethinós** = words that conform to facts - true, correct, dependable) words! But what does your argument prove?

Job 33:3 "My words are from the **uprightness** (Lxx = **katharos** = literally free from dirt, ethically a "clean" life, free from wrong) of my **heart**, And my lips speak knowledge sincerely.

Job 33:23 "If there is an angel as mediator for him, One out of a thousand, To remind a man what is **right** for him,

Psalm 25:21 Let integrity and **uprightness** (Lxx = **euthus**) preserve me, For I wait for You.

Psalm 119:7 I shall give thanks to You with **uprightness** (Lxx = **euthutes** = literally straightness, figuratively a life of honesty, integrity) of **heart**, When I learn Your righteous judgments.

Proverbs 2:13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness;

Proverbs 4:11 I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you **inupright** (Lxx = **orthos** = pertains to that which is in a straight line in contrast to crooked, figuratively persevering on a correct course of life toward a goal - Heb 12:13) paths.

Proverbs 11:24 There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds **what is justly due**, and yet it results only in want.

Proverbs 14:2 He who walks in his **uprightness** (Lxx = **orthos** = pertains to that which is in a straight line in contrast to crooked, figuratively persevering on a correct course of life toward a goal - Heb 12:13) fears the LORD, But he who is devious in his ways despises (treats with contempt, disdains) Him.

Proverbs 17:26 It is also not good to fine the righteous, Nor to strike the noble for their **uprightness** (Lxx = **dikaíos**).

Ecclesiastes 12:10 The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth **correctly** (Lxx = **euthutes** = literally straightness, figuratively honesty, integrity).

**Charles Bridges** - He does not sin in ignorance. He and his companions (The change to the plural number = the man—who leave = implies confederacy) have probably been trained in the paths of uprightness. But they were ready for the first opportunity to leave the paths which they never loved, to walk in the ways of darkness—more suitable to their taste, and which their hearts do love. (Pr 4:16, 17. Job 14:13-16. John 3:19, 20) And now, having left the hated paths, they become foremost in iniquity. (Poisoned

themselves, they now poison everyone around them) ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

Jesus speaks to those who walk in the ways of darkness - "And this is the judgment, that the **light** is come into the world, and men loved the **darkness** rather than the **light**; for (explains what it means to love darkness = do evil) their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the **light**, and does not come to the **light**, lest his deeds should be exposed (Isn't this the main problem with many of those with whom you try to share Jesus - they enjoy their evil and do not like it exposed to make them feel even more guilty and ashamed!)." (Jn 3:19-20)

**Isaiah** writes "Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the LORD, And whose deeds are done in **adark place**, and they say, "Who sees us?" (cf Pr 15:3-) or "Who knows us?" (Isa. 29:15)

Paul reminds all believers "The night (cp "the ways of darkness") is almost gone, and the day (of Christ's return to bring justice and righteous to light forever! Hallelujah! Maranatha!) is at hand (It is "**imminent**"! Are you eagerly looking for His return?). Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 (In light of the soon return of the "Light of the world"! Let us behave properly as in the day, not in (implication is the following evil are more prevalent in the darkness - isn't that often when we are most tempted?) carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy." (Ro 13:12-13-note).

**To walk in the ways of darkness** - Disobedience is a way of darkness. Remember that Satan is over the darkness (Acts 26:18), so we need to be careful how we walk, not as unwise but as wise (Eph 5:15).

Solomon repeats the contrast between light and dark ways in Proverbs 4:18-19 - "But the path of the righteous is like the **light** of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like **darkness**; They do not know over what they stumble."

And in presumably his last writing Solomon says "I saw that wisdom excels folly as **light** excels **darkness**." (Eccl 2:13) Sadly he spoke from personal experience! (Wise = 1Ki 3:12, folly = 1Ki 11:1-12 - light and dark ways separated by only 8 chapters in Solomon's life - What's the moral of the story? 1Cor 10:6, 11, 12!)

#### Proverbs 2:14 Who delight in doing evil and rejoice in the perversity of evil

- **delight** - Pr 10:23; Jeremiah 11:15; Habakkuk 1:15; Zephaniah 3:11; 1 Corinthians 13:6
- **and** - Hosea 7:3; Luke 22:4,5; Romans 1:32)

### A DEVILISH DELIGHT

See William Arnot's notes on this passage at the end of note on Proverbs 2:12.

This passage is a continuation of the description of from those who speak perverse things (Pr 2:12), who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in ways of darkness (Pr 2:13). Now they even delight in doing evil! This reminds me of Paul's opening salvo in the book of Romans where he explains the "spiritual pathology" of the ungodly and sums it up explaining that "although **they know** (don't let anyone tell you they don't know about God because they do!) the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval (cf "**delight in doing evil**") to those who practice them." (Ro 1:32-note)

**Kitchen** - God has created us with the capacity for 'delight,' but this one has distorted God's intention by finding it in the wrong people, places and things. (Ibid) \

**Delight** (08056)(**sameach** from root **s-m-h** which denotes being glad or joyful with one's whole disposition as indicated by its association with the heart - Ps 104:15) is an adjective which usually refers to spontaneous emotion or extreme happiness expressed in some visible and/or external manner. It is a joy filled emotion which comes from one's entire being. **Sameach** is not normally an abiding state of wellbeing or feeling, but was an emotion at festivals, circumcision feasts, wedding feasts, harvest feasts, the overthrow of one's enemies, and other such events. As one might surmise, The Lord and His salvation He are most frequently related with this sense of joy (e.g. Ps. 5:11; 9:2; 63:11).

See the antithesis of the delight of evil men as in this proverb - **Delight Yourself in the Lord**

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **sameach** in this verse with the verb **euphraino** which means to be glad, to be joyful, to celebrate or be jubilant (used 4 times with this sense in story of Prodigal son = to feast in token of joy), to enjoy oneself, to be delighted, to

keep a day of rejoicing.

**NAS Usage:** glad(2), joyful(5), joyfully(1), merry-hearted\*(1), pleased(1), rejoice(3), rejoiced(2), rejoices(1), rejoicing(4), who delight(1)

**Sameach** - 4/21 uses are in Proverbs

Proverbs 2:14 Who **delight** in doing evil And rejoice in the perversity of evil;

Proverbs 15:13 A **joyful** heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.

Proverbs 17:5 He who mocks the poor taunts his Maker; He who **rejoices** at calamity will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 17:22 A **joyful** heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones.

**Charles Bridges** - They rejoice, like Satan himself, to do evil (Cp Isa. 3:9 ; Jer 11:15. God's heavy judgment. 2Th 2:12.)—to draw their fellow sinners into the net; ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**Rejoice in the perversity of evil** - Is this not another clear marker of the utter, total depravity of fallen men, that they would actually experience the emotion of joy over evil (cp similar sick sentiment in Pr 17:5)! (See [Total Depravity by John Piper](#))

**MacArthur** - Fools love most what is worst. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Kitchen** observes that "the one who has corrupted his conscience with sin finds his deepest being resonating with the call of evil and he finds his feet ready to dance down the path of wickedness. Indeed, his delight is not simply in evil as a concept or philosophy, but in 'doing' it; he strives to become a connoisseur of corruption."

**Rejoice** (01523 - לִיֵּץ)(**giyl, gul**) has the root mean ""to circle around" (to spin round under influence of any violent emotion) from which such ideas as "to circle in joy" are readily derived. It speaks of vigorous, enthusiastic expressions of joy (cp Ps 2:11). In sum it usually means to rejoice, be glad, be joyful, i.e., be in a state of an attitude or feeling of favorable circumstance.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **giyl, gul** in this verse with the verb **chairō** which means to be "cheer" full, calmly happy or well-off. **Chairō** implies and imparts joy. **Chairō** is used in a whole range of situations in which the emotion of joy is evoked. To be in a state of happiness and well being (often independent of what is happening when the Source is the Spirit!). Chairō means to enjoy a state of gladness, to be delighted.

**Giyl, gul** - 44v - NAS Usage: cry(1), exult(1), glad(3), rejoice(38), rejoiced(1), rejoices(1). Here are the other uses in Proverbs...

Proverbs 2:14 Who delight in doing evil And **rejoice** in the perversity of evil;

Proverbs 23:24 The father of the righteous will greatly **rejoice**, And he who sires a wise son will be glad in him.

Proverbs 23:25 Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her **rejoice** who gave birth to you.

Proverbs 24:17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart **be glad** when he stumbles;

**Perversity** (08419 - תַּהֲפֻקָּה) ([tahpukah](#) from **hapak** = to turn, overturn) is a feminine noun which describes that which is turned away from what is right or good. "Perversity of evil" signifies that evil itself features perversity, a distortion of what is straight and right.

### Proverbs 2:15 Whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways;

- Deuteronomy 32:5; Ps 125:5; Isaiah 30:8-13; 59:8; Philippians 2:15

**Paths** (04570 - מַעַלְלָה) (See discussion of [magal, magalah](#)) is a masculine noun which refers to a track, course or path.

**Kitchen** - 'Paths' and 'ways,' denoting the course of one's life determined by one's choices, show up often in this chapter (Pr 2:8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 18–20) and the rest of the book (e.g. Pr 3:6, 17; 4:11, 26; 7:25; 8:32). The evil man's ways are 'crooked' (found again in Pr 8:8; 11:20; 17:20; 19:1; 22:5; 28:6, 18). The picture is of that which has been twisted and distorted from its original design. The evil way may have a vestige of morality remaining, but it has been deformed. What is evil may be what was pure, but now slightly twisted—just enough of the original remains to appear moral, but it is now distorted to serve the enemy's purposes. 'The perverse in heart are an abomination to the Lord' (Pr 11:20a). (Ibid)

**Crooked** (06141)('iqqesh from **aqash** = to twist, make crooked, pervert) means twisted, perverted. The passages **iqqesh** is found in

give a sense of the meaning - the moral, religious, and social perversion and crookedness of Israel (Dt. 32:5), the perverse in general (2Sa 22:27; Ps. 18:26; Pr 2:15; 17:20), a deceitful, perverse heart, the source of evil (Ps 101:4), as a character trait that destroys the rich (Pr 28:6), as that which is not found in wisdom (Pr 8:8), as that which God hates (Pr 11:20), as speech from a fool (Pr. 19:1).

The **Septuagint** translates **iqqesh** in this passage with **skolios** describing literally that which is not straight and figuratively anything that is spiritually corrupt and those who do not walk in "straightness"

**Iqqesh** - 11v - **NAS Usage:** crooked(2), crooked\*(1), perverse(4), perverted(2), who is perverse(1), who has(1), who has a crooked(1).

Deuteronomy 32:5 "They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a **perverse** (Lxx = skolios = literally that which is not straight and figuratively anything that is spiritually corrupt and those who do not walk in "straightness") and crooked generation.

2 Samuel 22:27 With the pure You show Yourself pure, And with the **perverted** (Lxx = streblos = twisted, crooked, of a wrinkled brow, twisting in wrestling competition) You show Yourself astute.

Psalms 18:26 With the pure You show Yourself pure, And with the **crooked** (Lxx = streblos = twisted, crooked, of a wrinkled brow, twisting in wrestling competition) You show Yourself astute.

Psalms 101:4 A **perverse** heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil.

Proverbs 2:15 Whose paths are **crooked**, And who are devious in their ways;

Proverbs 8:8 "All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing crooked or **perverted** (Lxx = skolios) in them.

Proverbs 11:20 The **perverse** (Lxx = diastrepho) in heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in their walk are His delight.

Proverbs 17:20 He who has a **crooked** mind finds no good, And he who is perverted in his language falls into evil.

Proverbs 19:1 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity Than he who is **perverse** in speech and is a fool.

Proverbs 22:5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the **perverse** (Lxx = skolios); He who guards himself will be far from them.

Proverbs 28:6 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than he who is **crooked** though he be rich.

**Devious** (03868)(**luz**) means to turn aside, to depart, to be crooked, to be perverse, to be devious. To go the wrong way. Baker says "It indicates what a person or nation trusts in. In context it indicates guile, deviousness, etc. found in political alliances with Egypt rather than trust in God's word (Isa. 30:12). The wicked and perverse follow a path of perversity, crookedness, deviousness (Pr. 2:15; 3:32), and the Lord abhors them. Their way of crookedness shows that they despise and reject the Lord (Pr. 14:2). In two passages, it has the sense of losing sight of something or of something being lost sight of (Pr. 3:21; 4:21)."

**Devious** - deviating from a right, accepted, or common course, not straightforward, cunning. Showing a skillful use of underhanded tactics to achieve goals. Synonyms - underhanded, deceitful, dishonest, dishonorable, unethical, unprincipled, immoral, unscrupulous, fraudulent

**Luz** - 6v - **NAS Usage:** depart(1), devious(3), guile(1), vanish(1).

Proverbs 2:15 Whose paths are crooked, and who are **devious** (Lxx = kampulos = bent, crooked, curved, of a bow, of a wheel) in their ways;

Proverbs 3:21 My son, let them not **vanish** (Lxx = **pararrhueo** = literally to slip off as in Heb 2:1) from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion,

**Comment on pararrhueo** - pararrhueo means to slip or drift away from belief. It is a picture of a gradual, almost unnoticed movement past a certain point. It describes that carelessness of mind which, perhaps occupied by other things, is not aware it is losing ground. It is like a ship drifting without anchorage and so drifting away from its moorings and from a place of safety to one of danger.

Proverbs 3:32 For the **devious** (Lxx = **akathartos** = ritually unclean, impure, moral impurity; in a moral sense refers to that which is unclean in thought, word, and deed) are an abomination to the LORD; But He is intimate with the upright.

Proverbs 4:21 Do not let them **depart** (Lxx = **ekleipo** = to depart or go away from a place) from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart.

Proverbs 14:2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is **devious** (Lxx = **skoliazō** = to be crooked, perverse, to turn aside from) in his ways despises Him.

Isaiah 30:12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, "Since you have rejected this word And have put your trust in oppression and **guile**, and have relied on them

**Comment** - Isaiah explains the root problem for the evil man in Pr 2:15 - They have rejected the Word of Life and chose the evil way because they have trusted in their evil heart (Jer 17:9)!

**Charles Bridges** - They delight in those, who are most froward (difficult to deal with) in their wickedness (The sin of the heathen, Ro 1:32.). Thus they plunge deeper and deeper into sin, till all traces of the straight way are lost to their eyes, and all their ways become crooked, leading, with sure steps, to eternal ruin. Is not this the picture, drawn to the very life, of many a Sunday-scholar, or a child of godly parents, the subject of deep and tender care, "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb 3:13)—the neglect of faithful warning—the stifling of solemn conviction? How do they deserve to be left of God, who have first left him with such fearful aggravation! (They now deserve to be abandoned by God, whom they have abandoned so callously.) Young man! especially shun companions, who are sinning against better knowledge and instruction. They are hardened in devotedness to their master's work. Oh! **If misguided sinners could but see sin in its horrid deformity, and certain, eternal ruin, would not "their hearts meditate terror?"** (Ed: And for us who are saved eternally, would it be true of us that we could see sin in all its horrid deformity! And that true perception would serve to motivate us to kill sin by the enabling power of the Spirit - Ro 8:13, Col 3:5) But, the crookedness of their ways hides the end from view. Satan presents the bait, palliates the sin, covers the enormity, closes the eyes, and conceals the certain end of all—Hell (Ps 125:5, Ro 6:21 with 2Cor 4:3-4). The froward (difficult to deal with) in their paths cannot—will not—turn back (Wicked men cannot, will not, turn back from their crooked paths). ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**Proverbs 2:16 To deliver you from the strange woman, from the adulteress who flatters with her words**

- **deliver** - Pr 5:3-20; Pr 6:24; Pr 7:5-23; 22:14; 23:27; Genesis 39:3-12; Nehemiah 13:26,27; Ecclesiastes 7:26)(flatters - Pr 7:21; 29:5

## THE SECOND TEMPTER THE EVIL WOMAN

Pr 2:16-19

See related discussions...

- Proverbs 5:3 - **Commentary**
- Proverbs 6:24 - **Commentary**
- Proverbs 7:5 - **Commentary**

**NIV** - It will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words,

See William Arnot's notes on this passage at the end of note on Proverbs 2:12.

**Kitchen** observes that "The fear of the Lord (Pr 2:5) delivers us not only from the evil man (Pr 2:12–15), but also from the evil woman (Pr 2:16–19). (Ibid)

**ESV Study Bible** - Following the description of the wisdom that the Lord grants (Pr 2:9–11), this section gives three statements of its purpose: it delivers from the deception of those on the evil path (Pr 2:12–15), it delivers from being flattered into unfaithfulness (Pr 2:16–19), and it directs one instead to walk in the way that is both true and good (Pr 2:20).

**What is "it" that saves or delivers?** In context we go back to Pr 2: where we see the "deliverers" (strictly speaking it is primarily the latter = understanding) named **Discretion** ("Wise planning" = NLT) ([04209](#)) (**mezimmaḥ** and **Understanding** (08394)(**tebunah**). As Bridges sees it "Wisdom hidden in the heart is, as before, the most effectual deliverance; restraining even the eye from the hurtful object."

**Deliver** ([05337](#) - **נָצַל**) (**natsal**) means to snatch away or rescue. In many contexts **natsal** describes the drawing out or pulling out and was used of literal deliverance as in Ps 34:4 and Judges 6:9. Natsal is a common verb in the OT (>190 uses) with several uses in Proverbs (several referring to deliverance the seductive snare of sexual temptation - Pr 2:16, 6:3, 5).

**Strange woman** is actually two words strange (**zur**) and woman (**'ishshah**) and is translated in NAS with a single word adulteress



but with two words "strange woman" in the KJV.

**Strange** (02114 - זָרָא) (**zur**) is a verb which means to be a stranger. Things described as strange (in this sense the verb seems to be used as an adjective) - fire, gods (Dt 32:16, Ps 44:20), waters (2Ki 19:24 = water in foreign lands), children ("illegitimate" - NAS, "alien" - ESV)

**Zur** frequently refers to a **layman** (anyone not a priest. Lxx == allogenes = another race, alien, foreign, stranger) could not eat the meat apportioned to the priests (Ex 29:33, KJV = "stranger", cp Ex 30:33, Lev 22:10, 12, 13, Nu 1:51, 3:10, 3:38, 16:40 all translated by Lxx with allogenes). NAS translates zur as outsider (Lxx = allogenes) in Nu 18:4,7.

**Zur** conveys the idea of **estranged** (Lxx = allotrios) (Job 19:13, cp Ps 69:8 where Lxx = apallotrioo = alienated). In Ps 58:3 David writes "the wicked are **estranged** (Lxx = apallotrioo = alienated, in Eph 4:18 = "excluded from the life of God") from the womb," a description of everyone born!

In (Ex 30:9) the priests were not to offer incense that was **'strange'** (zur; Lxx = heteros = another of a different kind) incense.

In (Lev 10:1, cf Nu 3:4, 26:61) Nadab and Abihu offered fire that was **'strange'** (zur; Lxx = allotrios = belonging to another, not one's own, of lands - strange - Acts 7:6, of strangers - Jn 10:5) for which God took their life

In Dt 25:5 **zur** refers to a "strange (**zur**; Lxx - exo = outside) man" in the description of "the so-called "levirate" custom (from the Latin term levir, "brother-in-law"), an ancient provision whereby a man who died without male descendants to carry on his name could have a son by proxy, that is, through a surviving brother who would marry his widow and whose first son would then be attributed to the brother who had died. This is the only reference to this practice in an OT legal text but it is illustrated in the story of Judah and his sons (Gen 38) and possibly in the account of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 2:8; 3:12; 4:6)." (NET Note) (See also lengthy article on [Levirate law - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#))

Dt 32:16 says the Israelites made Jehovah "jealous with **strange** (Lxx = allotrios = not one's own) *gods*" (word gods added for clarification, but not in Hebrew) (cp Ps 44:20, 81:9, Isa 43:12). In Jer 5:19 God passes judgment - "It shall come about when they say, 'Why has the LORD our God done all these things to us?' then you shall say to them, 'As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you will serve **strangers** (zur) in a land that is not yours." a prophecy that was fulfilled when Judah was taken into captivity in the strange/foreign land of Babylon!

In Jer 2:25 Judah says "I have loved **strangers**" but the NET interprets it as "I love those **foreign gods**." Again in Jer 3:13 NAS translates **zur** as **strangers** (ESV as "**foreigners**") but again NET sees this as a reference to "foreign gods." This shows how every Bible translation is in essence an "interpretation" (a veritable "mini-commentary" if you will) of the original language, another reason I strongly encourage the diligent student to become facile with the original Greek and Hebrew (at least able to use a Bible program to determine the original words) (cp similar prophecy in Ezek 11:9). In Ezek 14:5 God says Judah is "**estranged** (zur; Lxx = apallotrioo = alienated) from me through their idols." Speaking to faithless Judah God says "You adulteress wife, who takes **strangers** (zur) instead of her husband! (Ezekiel 16:32)

**NET Note on adulteress** (in Pr 2:16) - Heb "*strange woman*" (so KJV, NASB); NRSV "*the loose woman*." The root zur ("to be a stranger") sometimes refers to people who are **ethnically foreign** to Israel (Isa 1:7; Hos 7:9; 8:7) but it often refers to what is **morally estranged** from God or his covenant people (Ps 58:4; 78:30). Referring to a woman, it means **adulteress** or **prostitute** (Pr 2:16; 5:3, 20; 7:5; 22:14; 23:33). It does not mean that she is a *foreigner* but that she is **estranged** from the community with its social and religious values. It describes her as outside the framework of the covenant community. Here an Israelite woman is in view because her marriage is called a "covenant with God." She is an adulteress, acting outside the legal bounds of the marriage contract.

In Isaiah 1:4 **zur** describes the sinful nation as "**turned away**" (zur; Lxx = parorgizo = provoke to anger) from God (ESV has **they are utterly estranged**). In Isaiah 28:21 the LORD will rise up and "do His **unusual** (zur; Lxx = pikria = state of being bitter!) task.

**Swanson** summarizes **zur** - (1) (qal) be a stranger, i.e., not be in the main cultural group in an area, and so be estranged from society (Job 19:13); (hof) alienated, be a stranger (Ps 69:8); 2. (nif) deserted, astray, turned aside, i.e., pertaining to abandoning an association or relationship (Isa 1:4; Eze 14:5); 3. (qal) go astray, i.e., be in a state of apostasy and rebellion, as an extension of the non-linear motion of turning or pivoting away from an object (Ps 58:3); 4. 3 unit: (qal) לֹא זָרָא (lō = negates + zûr) = fulfill, complete, finish to the full, formally, not be estranged, i.e., to finish or complete an event to its conclusion (Ps 78:30)

**Zur** - 75v - NAS Usage: adulteress(3), adulteress\*(1), alien(2), aliens(2), another(2), enemies(1), estranged(4), foreign(2), foreigners(2), illegitimate(1), layman(9), outsider(2), satisfied(1), strange(11), strange thing(1), strange things(1), stranger(7), strangers(22), turned away(1), unusual(1).

**Zur** - 75v - Ex 29:33; 30:9, 33; Lev 10:1; 22:10, 12f; Nu 1:51; 3:4, 10, 38; 16:40; 18:4, 7; 26:61; Deut 25:5;



32:16; 1Kgs 3:18; 2Kgs 19:24; Job 15:19; 19:13, 15, 27; Ps 44:20; 54:3; 58:3; 69:8; 78:30; 81:9; 109:11; Pr 2:16; 5:3, 10, 17, 20; 6:1; 7:5; 11:15; 14:10; 20:16; 22:14; 23:33; 27:2, 13; Isa 1:4, 7; 17:10; 25:2, 5; 28:21; 29:5; 43:12; 61:5; Jer 2:25; 3:13; 5:19; 18:14; 30:8; 51:2, 51; Lam 5:2; Ezek 7:21; 11:9; 14:5; 16:32; 28:7, 10; 30:12; 31:12; Hos 5:7; 7:9; 8:7, 12; Joel 3:17; Obad 1:11

Proverbs 7:5 links **adulteress** with **foreigner** (strange woman) - "That they may keep you from an **adulteress**, From the **foreigner** (KJV = "strange woman") who flatters with her words."

**Henry Morris** on the **adulteress** (KJV = **strange woman**) - The "**strange woman**" ("alien woman") is named as such no less than ten times in Proverbs, with both literal and figurative applications. Foreign women, with different gods and moral standards than those of Israel, often led God's people into sin, including Solomon himself (1Ki 11:1-8). This situation also represents spiritual adultery, with the Israelites not only consorting with strange women but also worshipping strange gods. This is suggested in the next verse, "forgets the covenant of her god" (Pr 2:17).

**W A Criswell** on why she is called "**strange**"- The "immoral woman" is the adulteress or harlot, one who is outside of divinely assigned proper relationships.

**Ryrie** - What kind of woman is the adulteress? She is a flatterer (Pr 2:16), unfaithful to her husband (Pr 2:17), may have a religious background but is backslidden (Pr 2:17), and offers a taste of life but delivers death (Pr 2:18-19). Adulteress (is) literally, foreign woman; i.e., a woman outside the circle of a man's proper relationships, hence a harlot or adulteress.

**Adulteress** (foreigner, alien) ([05237](#))(**nokriy**) comes from a word that means "to recognize" or be conspicuous. The most common usage is in describing that which is foreign, especially "foreign" people. One of the most tragic uses of **nokriy** is to describe King Solomon's incredible disobedience in that he "loved many foreign women" (1Ki 11:1) and he even backslid (some actually wonder if he was even genuinely saved -- I think he was) to the point of building idolatrous high places "for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods." (1Ki 11:8, Context = 1Ki 11:7, cp allusion to this sin in Neh 13:26)! All seven uses of **nokriy** in Ezra 10 refer to the Israelites taking foreign wives (Ezra 10:2, 10-11, 14, 17-18, 44). We see a confrontation of the men of Israel in Neh 13:27 - "Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying **foreign women**?" Notice how God felt about this sin (it was a great evil)!

The **adulteress** is called "foreign" or "strange" because originally these women were from nations other than Israel. She is also foreign in the sense that she is "foreign" to the accepted marital arrangement.

**Nokriy** is used to describe an **adulteress** in Pr 2:16, 5:10, 6:24, 23:27, 27:2, 27:13 and Pr 7:5 (where adulteress is equated with foreigner - nokriy). Most of the uses of **nokriy** meaning adulteress are translated in the **Lxx** with the adjective **allotrios** which means "belonging to another, not one's own." (Lk 16:12) or "stranger, foreigner" (Jn 10:5) It is notable (and incredible) that all of these uses of **nokriy** are in sections of Proverbs penned by King Solomon and then he proceeds in his later years to seek out these very women! Amazing! Frightening! Deception is a powerful "aphrodisiac" (or perhaps better understood - the temptation that precedes the deception!) which reminds me of Paul's warnings in 1Cor 10:6, 11, 12. We ALL need to run the race with endurance -- ALL THE WAY to the finish line! And ALL by reliance on God's grace and God's Spirit! Amen (or "O my")!

**Nokriy** in Proverbs...

Proverbs 2:16 To deliver you from the strange woman, From the **adulteress** who flatters with her words;

Proverbs 5:10 And strangers will be filled with your strength And your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an **alien**;

Proverbs 5:20 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress And embrace the bosom of a **foreigner**?

Proverbs 6:24 To keep you from the evil woman, From the smooth tongue of the **adulteress**.

Proverbs 7:5 That they may keep you from an adulteress, From the **foreigner** who flatters with her words.

Proverbs 20:16 Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for **foreigners**, hold him in pledge.

Proverbs 23:27 For a harlot (zanah) is a deep pit And an **adulterous woman** is a narrow well.

Proverbs 27:2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A **stranger**, and not your own lips.

Proverbs 27:13 Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for an **adulterous woman** hold him in pledge.

**Webster** says that to **flatter** is to praise excessively especially from motives of self-interest. Flattery is praise insincerely given for an interested purpose.

The **1828 Noah Webster's dictionary** has a great definition of **flattery** as "to please a person by applause or favorable notice, by respectful attention, or by any thing that exalts him in his own estimation, or confirms his good opinion of himself."

Flattery is like chewing gum—enjoy it briefly, but don't swallow it! Flattery is the art of telling a person exactly what he thinks of himself.

The one who flatters is like a bee which has honey in his mouth and a sting in his tail.

Thomas Brooks rightly said that "Flattery is the devil's invisible net."

George Chapman described flatterers this way - Flatterers look like friends as wolves look like dogs.

Warren Wiersbe - "If the evil man uses perverse words to snare the unwary [Pr 2:12], the adulteress uses flattering words. Someone has said that flattery isn't communication, it is manipulation; it's people telling us things about ourselves that we enjoy hearing and wish were true. The strange woman knows how to use flattery successfully... Anyone who listens to her words and follows her path is heading for the cemetery!" ([Be Skillful - Proverbs](#))

**Flatters** (02505) (**chalaq**) has two general meanings (1) to make smooth (slippery) or to be smooth (smooth language = flattery) and (2) divide or distribute. As discussed below the writers of the NAS concordance felt there was such a big difference in meanings between (1) and (2) that they chose to classify (1) as Strong's # 2505 and (2) as Strong's 2505a. KJV lumps both uses together. Now are you really confused? This is discussed further below.

**Garrett** on the meaning of **chalaq** in this context = "to make smooth, i.e., to flatter implies that seduction is achieved by appeal to the ego and not by sexuality alone... to inflate the ego of her victim and draw him in. " (Ibid)

Let me illustrate it with **4 passages from Proverbs** in which the same Hebrew word **chalaq** is translated with **sense 1 (flatter)** and **sense 2 (divide)**.

#### **Sense #1 - flatter...**

Proverbs 28:23 He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor Than he who **flatters** (**chalaq**) with the tongue.

Proverbs 29:5 A man who **flatters** (**chalaq**) his neighbor Is spreading a net for his steps.

#### **Sense #2 - divide...**

Proverbs 16:19 It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to **divide** (**chalaq**) the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 17:2 A servant who acts wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully, And will **share** in (**chalaq**) the inheritance among brothers.

**Baker** says **chalaq** is "A verb indicating to share, to divide. It indicates receiving or obtaining one's share of something (1 Sam. 30:24; Jer. 37:12). It means to allot something (Deut. 4:19; 29:26[25]), to give a share to someone. Of persons it means to divide up into sections or groups or even to scatter them (Gen. 49:7; 1 Chr. 23:6; 24:3); of objects it means to divide them up (Ezek. 5:1); or distribute them (2 Chr. 23:18). It takes on the nuance of to be a sharer or partner with (Pr. 29:24)."

**TWOT** discussing the sense of **SMOOTH** ([See Swanson's description 1](#)) says **chalaq** "refers once to the literal process of smoothing metal to make an idol by hitting it on an anvil with a forge hammer (Is 41:7). Its principal use (Qal and Hiphil) is of **smooth speech or flattery**, i.e. words which were smoother than butter and like oil (Ps 55:21). This use of the tongue is always condemned (Ps 5:9) and ends in the speaker being himself entrapped (Pr 29:5). It is characteristic of the seductive woman who is to be avoided (Pr 2:16; 7:5). The enigmatic man who "flatters himself in his own eyes" (Ps 36:2) may possibly be better translated, "His God will destroy him with a glance when he uncovers his impious slander" (cf. Dahood, M. "Psalms" I, AB, p. 271), taking this from **halaq** III "perish." Ugaritic **hlq** "perish" is parallel to mt "die" (UT 19: no. 969) and Akkadian **halāqu** "disappear." "Their heart is divided" (Ho 10:2 KJV) is better taken as "is false" (RSV) that is, figurative of the fickle heart. ([Donald Wiseman - TWOT](#))

**TWOT** discussing the sense of **DIVIDE** ([See Swanson's description 2](#)) says **chalaq** "word has legal connotations similar to **naālā**, "give as a possession" but with the more specific implication of what is granted. It differs radically from the many Hebrew roots for "divide" used in the sense of "to break into parts." The verb, used only in Qal and Piel (sixty-two times) is used including its derivatives some 194 times.

The verb is commonly used of parcelling out shares (RSV "allotments") of land (Nu 26:53), whether by lot (Num 26:53), inheritance (Pr 17:2), or other forms of division (Pr 29:24). It can be used of any division, whether of food at a feast (II Sam 6:18), clothing (Ps 22:19), or the spoils of war (Prov 16:19). Thus people may be divided into unspecified groups (Gen 14:15; though this might be derived from an equivalent to Arabic *lq* "encircle"), two factions (I Kgs 16:21), or specific divisions as in the case of the priests and Levites for temple service (see *maḥālōqet*).

God makes the division. The question is asked if it is he who "distributes" pains in his wrath (Job 21:17) which "divides" (KJV; "scatters" RSV) the wicked. The "divided" heart of Hos 10:2 is perhaps to be translated "false" or "flattering" heart; (see *ālaq* II). It is God who gives a share of (ASV "allots") sun, moon, and stars as guides (not deities for worship) to all peoples (Deut 4:19). Since some Jewish commentators consider this to condone idolatry among the gentiles, they and the Vulgate translate *ḥlq* here as an equivalent of the Arabic *halaqa* "create." God is the source of light which is "distributed" (RSV Job 38:24). Although the verb is not directly used of the Lord's allocation of land to his people, the use of the noun (see *ḥēleq*) shows that it was ultimately his. ([Donald Wiseman - TWOT](#))

**Strong** lists 64 verses that use **chalaq** (lumping the senses of **divide** and **flattery**) -

Ge 14:15; 49:7, 27; Ex 15:9; Num 26:53, 55f; Deut 4:19; 29:26; Josh 13:7; 14:5; 18:2, 5, 10; 19:51; 22:8; Jdg 5:30; 1Sa 30:24; 2Sa 6:19; 19:29; 1Kgs 16:21; 18:6; 1Chr 16:3; 23:6; 24:3ff; 2Chr 23:18; 28:21; Neh 9:22; 13:13; Job 21:17; 27:17; 38:24; 39:17; Ps 5:9; 22:18; 36:2; 55:21; 60:6; 68:12; 108:7; Pr 2:16; 7:5; 16:19; 17:2; 28:23; 29:5, 24; Isa 9:3; 33:23; 34:17; 41:7; 53:12; Jer 37:12; Lam 4:16; Ezek 5:1; 47:21; Da 11:39; Hos 10:2; Joel 3:2; Amos 7:17; Mic 2:4; Zech 14:1

**KJV** translates **chalaq** as - divide 40, flatter 6, part 5, distribute 4, dealt 2, smoother 2, given 1, imparted 1, partner 1, portion 1, received 1, separate 1; 65

The **NAS concordance** lists 9 verses for **Strong's 2505** and 55 verses for **2505a** (the "a" added because the writers of the NAS concordance felt there was such a great difference between the two main meanings - smooth and divide)

**NAS 2505** (sense of flattery) = Ps 5:9; 36:2; 55:21; Pr 2:16; 7:5; 28:23; 29:5; Isa 41:7; Hos 10:2.

**NAS translation of 2505:** faithless(1), flatter(1), flatters(5), smoother(1), smooths(1).

**NAS 2505a** (sense of divide) = Ge 14:15; 49:7, 27; Ex 15:9; Nu 26:53, 55f; Dt 4:19; 29:26; Josh 13:7; 14:5; 18:2, 5, 10; 19:51; 22:8; Jdg 5:30; 1 Sam 30:24; 2 Sam 6:19; 19:29; 1Kgs 16:21; 18:6; 1Chr 16:3; 23:6; 24:3ff; 2Chr 23:18; 28:21; Neh 9:22; 13:13; Job 21:17; 27:17; 38:24; 39:17; Ps 22:18; 60:6; 68:12; 108:7; Pr 16:19; 17:2; 29:24; Isa 9:3; 33:23; 34:17; 53:12; Jer 37:12; Lam 4:16; Ezek 5:1; 47:21; Dan 11:39; Joel 3:2; Amos 7:17; Mic 2:4; Zech 14:1

**NAS translation of 2505a** - allot him a portion(1), allotted(3), apportion(2), apportions(1), assigned(1), disperse(1), distribute(1), distributed(2), divide(12), divided(18), divides(1), dividing(2), given her a share(1), parcel(1), parceled(1), partner(1), portion(2), scattered(1), share(2), take possession(1), take possession of some property(1), took a portion(1).

**Swanson's Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains** divides **chalaq** into two main definitions...

#### (1) FIRST MEANING **SMOOTH/FLATTERY** (NAS #2505)

(qal) be smooth, creamy, slippery - pertaining to a state or condition of a moist, viscus food, so easy to swallow = Ps 55:21

(qal) be deceitful - give a misleading opinion or thought about what is true often encouraging wrong behavior = Ho 10:2

(hif) speak deceit, flatter, seduce = Ps 5:9; 36:2; Pr 2:16; 7:5; 28:23; 29:5; Isa 41:7

#### (2) SECOND MEANING **DIVIDE** (NAS #2505a)

(qal) divide, apportion, assign, i.e., divide up and distribute a collection of objects and give them out to a series of persons = Dt 4:19; 29:26; Jos 14:5; 18:2; 22:8; 1Sa 30:24; 2Sa 19:29; 1Ch 24:4, 5; 2Ch 23:18; 28:21; Ne 9:22; 13:13; Job 27:17; 39:17; Pr 17:2; 29:24

(nif) divided, dispersed, be distributed (Ge 14:15; Nu 26:53, 55, 56; 1Ki 16:21; Job 38:24), note: MT also has 1Ch 23:6; 24:3

(piel) divide, allot, apportion, scatter = Ge 49:7, 27; Ex 15:9; Jos 13:7; 18:10; 19:51; Jdg 5:30; 2Sa 6:19; 1Ki 18:6; 1Ch 16:3; Job 21:17; Ps 22:18; 60:7; 68:12; 108:7; Pr 16:19; Isa 9:3; 34:17; 53:12; La 4:16; Eze 5:1;

47:21; Da 11:39; Joel 3:2; Mic 2:4

(pual) be divided = Isa 33:23; Am 7:17; Zec 14:1

(hif) get one's share = Jer 37:12

(hitp) divide among themselves = Jos 18:5), note: La 4:16,

**Charles Bridges** - Another snare of the fowler is here graphically portrayed (Pr 5:3-20; 6:24; 7:5-23; 12:14; 23:27. Some commentators give an allegorical interpretation to these pictures, as descriptive of idolatry or false doctrine.). Wisdom hidden in the heart is, as before, the most effectual deliverance; restraining even the eye from the hurtful object. (Cp. Job 31:1, and our Lord's rule:—Mt 5:28.) Ought not the **strange woman** (The strange woman—a stranger. Two different words in the Hebrew, the latter appearing to mark a foreigner. Cp Dt. 23:17; Lev 19:29. It is, however, but too evident that this abandoned class was not confined to foreigners. Cp. Ge 38:15, 16; Jdg. 11:1; 1Ki 3:18.), even if she be born and baptized in a Christian land, to be counted as a stranger and foreigner among us? ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**George Lawson's** comments on **Proverbs 2:16-19** - Secondly, Wisdom, by its instructions received into the heart, will preserve us also from the malignant influence of bad women. It is a great happiness for young people to escape the snares of the harlot, in which so many have been entangled and lost. A true love to the word of God is eminently fitted to secure such a happiness. (**Ed: Again we see the principle of the expulsive power of a "new affection!" - a love for God and His "love letter" energized in our heart by the Holy Spirit produces a strong impediment to the aphrodisiac of a harlot's house, whether via the internet or literally in person!**)

There is no viler object in nature than an adulteress. Her beauty is but a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. Though born and baptized in a Christian land, she is to be looked upon as a heathen woman and a stranger; and as self-made brutes are greater monsters than natural brute beasts, so baptized heathens are by far the worst of pagans. Her words may be sweet and soft to the inexperienced ear of a thoughtless youth, but she is only flattering with her lips. Honey and milk seem to be under her tongue, but it is the cruel venom of dragons.

She is a monster of ingratitude to that husband who was the guide and protector of her youth. All the fervors of her first love are forgotten. She returns the most cruel treatment for all that fond affection by which he bound her to him in the most endearing obligations. But her profaneness is still more shocking; for she violates that sacred bond which was instituted by him whom she presumes to call her God, and regards not the marriage-oath which she swore by his great and awful name.

Shall a woman unfaithful to the best and kindest of friends,—a wretch that commits perjury without remorse,—prove faithful to any man? When she speaks fair, believe her not, for there are seven abominations in her heart.

Miserable are they who trust to her alluring professions, for there is scarcely a hope that they will recover themselves from the snare of the devil. Her house is full of the pestilence of sin, and will infect every one that enters with a mortal and almost incurable distemper (illness). (Pr 2:18-19) The mind is darkened, and the conscience deadened; the affections, too, are by uncleanness sunk into sensuality. How then can they again take hold of **the paths of life**? (Pr 2:19) No doubt there is virtue in the blood and Spirit of Christ for the remission of the greatest sins, and the purification of the most defiled souls. It is even admitted, that whoremongers (men who habitually consort with or pay for the services of prostitutes) have been made illustrious monuments of the power of divine grace (1Cor 6:11); but let it be remembered that these are **miracles of grace!** Who would cast himself into a deep pit, in the hopes of coming out alive, when almost all that fell into it were dashed in pieces or buried alive! (**Woe!**)

Whosoever pleases God, shall escape from this devouring deep. Let us therefore cleave to God's judgments, and follow their direction, and keep at a distance from the place of temptation (cp 1Pe 2:11). How worthy of our imitation is the example of Joseph, who was tempted day by day, but hearkened not to his mistress to lie by her or to be with her, because he would not sin against God (Ge 39:7-10, 11, 12). But **wisdom** will not only keep us from the paths of the wicked, it will also lead us in the way of good men. ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

#### Proverbs 2:17 That leaves the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God;

- **companion** - Pr 5:18; Jeremiah 3:4
- **forgets** - Ezekiel 16:8,59,60; Malachi 2:14-16)

### THE ANTITHESIS OF LEAVE AND CLEAVE!

See related discussions -

- Proverbs 5:18- **Commentary**
- Ezekiel 16:59 - **Commentary**

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translation gives a slightly different sense - "My son, do not let bad counsel (boule) overtake (katalambano) you, that which forsakes (apoleipo) the teaching (didaskalia) of youth and has forgotten the divine covenant (diatheke)."

For **George Lawson's** comments related to this verse see his comments at the end of the note on Proverbs 2:16.

**Garrett** comments that "The immoral man abandons the straight paths (Pr 2:13) whereas the immoral woman abandons her lawful husband and the promises<sup>39</sup> she made before God (Pr 2:17). (Ibid)

This verse emphasizes this woman's unfaithfulness as she leaves her husband.

**Leaves** ([05800](#))('azab) means to forsake. It pictures this unfaithful woman as departing from her companion.

**Forgets** ([07911](#) - שכח)(shakach = to forget, ignore, wither) means to be oblivious of from want of memory or attention, cease to care. Israel forgot Jehovah their God (Judges 3:7). Israel would often "forget" God's law (Hos 4:6). In NT excellent example of one who did not forget (Lk 17:15-18). It seems from some of the other Scriptures that we are a forgetful folk and need to be admonished not to be forgetful of our Lord, His covenant, His benefits, Dt 4:9 the things which your eyes have seen. (This verb is used in Proverbs 2:17, 3:1, 4:5, 31:5, 31:7)

**Forget** means to fail to remember, to inadvertently neglect to attend to, to put out of one's mind; cease to think of or consider. Synonyms: stop thinking about, put out of one's mind, shut out, blank out, pay no heed to, not worry about, ignore, overlook, take no notice of.

**Kitchen** observes that "Companion describes someone with whom you have shared an intimate friendship (Prov. 16:28; 17:9; Ps. 55:14; Jer. 3:4). Longstanding relationships and enduring commitments mean nothing to her. They are easily sacrificed for sensual fulfillment."

## COVENANT BREAKER

What covenant? In context (i.e., leaving the companion of her youth) this is probably the marriage covenant as discussed below (cf Malachi 2:14-16-note).

**MacArthur** - In a wide sense this could be the covenant of Sinai (Ex 20:14), but specifically looks to the marriage covenant of Ge 2:24, with its commitment to fidelity.(BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

### Related Resource - Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage

**Covenant** ([01285](#))(berit/berith/beriyth) means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). Beriyth in the OT often referred to a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. The essence of covenant is a **solemn, binding arrangement between two parties** and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (For summary of covenants see - **Covenant in the Bible**). This is the only use of **covenant** in Proverbs.

Webster says **Covenant** is an agreement that brings about a relationship of commitment between God and his people. The Jewish faith is based on the biblical covenants made with Abraham, Moses, and David.

**God** ([0430](#))(Elohim) The plural ending (-im) is usually described as a plural of majesty and not intended as a true plural when used of God. This is seen in the fact that the noun elohim is consistently used with singular verb forms and with adjectives and pronouns in the singular.

**Charles Bridges** - One who had forsaken the guide of her youth (Though an harlot, she might be - Pr 7:5, 10, 19 or might have been a married woman -John 4:17, 18), and forgotten the solemn bond of the covenant of her God—what else could she be to the unwary but a vile flatterer with her lips? (Pr 5:3; 7:5, 21) ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

### Cross References on forgets the covenant...

**Ezekiel 16:8**-note "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a **covenant** with you so

that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD...

**Ezek 16:59; 60**-note For thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also do with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath by **breaking the covenant**. 60 "Nevertheless, **I will remember My covenant** with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an **everlasting covenant** (Referring to the Abrahamic and the New Covenants) with you.

**Malachi 2:14-16**-note "Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15 "But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then, to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. 16 "For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

#### Proverbs 2:18 For her house sinks down to death and her tracks lead to the dead

- Pr 5:4-14; 6:26-35; 7:22-27; 9:18; 1Cor 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5; Rev 21:8; 22:15)

### WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?

**Notice the "for" - For** (gar in the Septuagint) is a strategic **term of explanation** which should always prompt a pause to prayerfully ponder what the author is saying in a given section. This pause that refreshes will give your Teacher, the Spirit, an opportunity to speak to your heart (so that what you read is more than just head knowledge), not only illuminating the text (see [The Bible and Illumination](#)) but applying the text practically to your personal life (**Application**). Therefore, energized by the Spirit, let us **discipline** ourselves for godliness and frequently "**P & P**" (pause and ponder) the Word -- we are sure to be richly rewarded by our Father in Heaven, for "godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for **the present life** and also for **the life to come**!" (1Ti 4:7-8-note, 1Ti 4:9-10-note) .

For **George Lawson's** comments related to this verse see his comments at the end of the note on Proverbs 2:16.

#### See related commentaries on...

- Proverbs 5:4-17 - **Commentary**
- Proverbs 6:26-35 - **Commentary**
- Proverbs 7:22-27 - **Commentary**

**Sinks down** ([07743 - שׁוּכַח](#))(**shuwach**) means flows or melts away, vanishes and always is used in the context of humiliation and/or moral danger.

In parallel passages describing the adulteress Solomon says

Proverbs 5:5 Her feet go down to **death**, Her steps take hold of [Sheol](#).

Proverbs 7:27 Her house is the way to [Sheol](#), Descending to the chambers of **death**.

**Sinks down** presents a sad picture of the house of an adulteress! This rare Hebrew verb is used only 2 other times in the OT and both refer to one's soul - Ps 44:25 (describes soul of one from whom God hides face) and Lam 3:20 = referring to Jeremiah's soul.

**MacArthur** - Death in Proverbs is presented as both a gradual descent (Pr 5:23) and a sudden end (Pr 29:1).(BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Kitchen** comments on **her house sinks down to death** - The general meaning, however, is still clear—adultery brings a slow death. 'Her house is a highway to the grave' (Pr 7:27NIV). The path of adultery leads to death (Pr 5:5; 9:18). The death may be a literal and sudden physical death (Prov. 29:1), or it will likely be a slow unfolding of the consequences of sin which end in death (5:23). It could describe the end brought on by sexually transmitted diseases, or it could describe the opposite of the prosperity, life and joy that comes from walking within wisdom (Pr 4:8, 9; 8:18–21).

**Death** ([04194 - מָוֶת](#)) (**maveth** from **muth** = to die) describes death by natural or violent means and in some contexts such as this passage it designates the place where the dead are destined to go, the place known in the OT as [Sheol](#) (Job 28:22, Ps 9:13, Pr 7:27).



Here are all the passages in Proverbs that use **maveth**...

Proverbs 2:18 For her house sinks down to **death** And her tracks lead to the dead;

Proverbs 5:5 Her feet go down to **death**, Her steps take hold of Sheol.

Proverbs 7:27 Her house is the way to Sheol, Descending to the chambers of **death**.

Proverbs 8:36 "But he who sins against me injures himself; All those who hate me love **death**."

Proverbs 10:2 Ill-gotten gains do not profit, But righteousness delivers from **death**.

Proverbs 11:4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from **death**.

7 When a wicked man **dies**, his expectation will perish, And the hope of strong men perishes.

19 He who is steadfast in righteousness will attain to life, And he who pursues evil will bring about his own **death**.

Proverbs 12:28 In the way of righteousness is life, And in its pathway there is no **death**.

Proverbs 13:14 The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, To turn aside from the snares of **death**.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of **death**.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, That one may avoid the snares of **death**.

32 The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing, But the righteous has a refuge when he **dies**.

Proverbs 16:14 The fury of a king is like messengers of **death**, But a wise man will appease it.

25 There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of **death**.

Proverbs 18:21 **Death** and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Proverbs 21:6 The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue Is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of **death**.

Proverbs 24:11 Deliver those who are being taken away to **death**, And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.

Proverbs 26:18 Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and **death**,

**Charles Bridges** - The slave of unlawful desire; having no guide but her own will; no pleasure but sensual gratification; quickly she becomes her own and her victim's murderer. Her house is the land of death. (Pr 5:5.) Eternal death is her doom. Her paths incline to the dead, with the awful monuments of Divine vengeance in olden time. (Cp. Pr 9:18) ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**Tracks** (04570 - מַעַלְלָה) (See discussion of [magal, magalah](#)) is a masculine noun which refers to a track, course or path. "The idea of 'tracks' comes from the well-worn trenches left by the regular movement of carts pulled by oxen." (Kitchen)

**Her tracks lead to the dead** - This reminds of the story told of the "Temple prostitutes" in Corinth whose shoes left an imprint in the dirt pointing to their house of harlotry! Here is the note from Wikipedia - "Independent prostitutes who worked the street were on the next higher level. Besides directly displaying their charms to potential clients they had recourse to publicity; sandals with marked soles have been found which left an imprint that stated ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΕΙ = ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΕΙ ("**Follow me**" - **The very command Jesus issued to His disciples!!!** cf Mt 9:9, Mk 2:14, Mt 10:38, 16:24, Mk 8:34, Mt 19:21) on the ground." ([Prostitution in ancient Greece](#))

**Comment:** It seems to me that simply by looking at the preceding uses of the verb *akoloutho*, we see the "secret" for snapping the cords of bondage to internet pornography (see below). There is a fork in the road of our mind (especially when we see certain images in commercials, on billboards, on the side lines of football games, etc) at which we have an instant to choose - Whom will I follow? If you follow Jesus, you can't follow the pornographic prostitute! The famous sermon by **Thomas Chalmers** (1780-1847) taught this principle of the "**Expulsive Power of a New Affection**." ([Read the original long version](#) or the [Shorter paraphrased version](#)) It follows the first thing we **MUST** do (under grace) each morning (**BEFORE** anything else) is fix our eyes on Jesus, and in light of the certainty of His love for us (Jn 3:16, Ro 5:8), abandon ourselves to Him, that act even energized out of the love poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Ro 5:5). Then we are prepared for to walk out into the crooked and perverse world and fight the good fight of faith enabled by the power of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus! There is no surer path to victory! Indeed, beloved, there is no other path to victory

other than to follow Jesus!

## FOLLOW ME TO DEATH...

### Death TO self or Death OF self

Given the incredible proliferation of polluting pornography (especially on the internet) and the snare it has produced for so many Christian men, the words of Solomon in Proverbs 2:18 are frightening and need to be carefully pondered by all of God's men! If you don't believe this is a problem, then take a look at this article - [Shocker- Study Shows MOST Christian Men Are Into Porn!](#) (or [here](#)) Here is an open letter from highly respected Pastor Charles Swindoll...

The most recent studies available suggest that one out of every two people-that's 50 percent of the people sitting in our pews, are looking at and/or could be addicted to Internet pornography... Truth be told, that statistic could be even higher...

Stop and imagine the ugly but very real possibility of some of your own elders and deacons leaving your meetings and going home to surf porn. Think about youth leaders viewing it one minute, and leading a small group with your kids thirty minutes later. It's ruining marriages, destroying relationships, harming youth, and hurting the body of Christ. You hardly need to be reminded that fallen pastors and priests did not "suddenly" fall. More often than not, pornography played a role in their downward spiral.

My friend, it's time to do something about it. In fact, we need to start today. Making a difference requires action... **Our churches are in trouble.** This is no time to simply wait and pray.

See Related Discussion in commentary on Job 31:1

#### Proverbs 2:19 None who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life

- **None** - Ps 81:12; Ecclesiastes 7:26; Jeremiah 13:23; Hosea 4:14; Matthew 19:24-26
- **reach** - Pr 4:18; Hebrews 6:18)

For **George Lawson's** comments related to this verse see his comments at the end of the note on Proverbs 2:16.

This verse completes the description of the evil woman, adding that what was true for the adulteress is true for those who take part in her illicit activity - Pr 2:16-19.

**Solomon** wrote "I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her." (Eccl 7:26)

**James** has a good "commentary" on this verse in the description of how our fallen flesh takes us down "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death." (James 1:14-15-note)

**None** is actually two words in Hebrew - (1) (03605)(**kol**) means "all" and has an inclusive meaning of all or every one of something and (2) (03808) (**lo**) means no or not.

In Ecclesiastes, which was probably Solomon's last written work (probably written after he had fallen into the trap of idolatry and adultery - 1Ki 11:1-12), he penned these Spirit inspired words - "I discovered (Lxx - **heurisko** - means to find with or without searching) **more bitter than death** the woman whose heart is **snares** and **nets**, whose hands are **chains**. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her (We should all shout a "Hallelujah" for this statement! There is a way of escape - 1Cor 10:13-note! This reminds me of Joseph - Ge 39:12 and also calls to mind Pr 24:15 "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity."), but the sinner will be captured by her." (Eccl 7:26) Notice the multiple metaphors - **snares**, **nets**, **chains**! If Solomon who wrote these words could fall into snares, nets and chains, dear brethren in Christ, may none of us think that we are immune! Paul's warning is apropos = "Therefore let him who thinks he stands **take heed** (**present imperative** = command to make this our lifestyle, only possible as we yield to the Spirit Who enables us) lest he fall." (1Cor 10:12)

**Go** (0935)(**bo**) means to come in, to come, to go, to go in. I know a man I am 99.99% sure is a believer and yet who went into a prostitute (which he subsequently confessed to his wife). So Solomon is not saying one sin damns a person ("none who go to her return"). The **Septuagint** helps us out as it translates "**go**" (**bo**) with the verb **poreuo** which means to go from one place to another (in this case to the house of the strange woman). The verb **poreuo** is in the **present tense** which describes this "**going**" not as an **occasional lapse** but as a **lifestyle**, as one's habitual practice. We see this same thought in Paul's list of sins in Gal 5:19-21 in

which he emphasizes " those who practice (**prasso** in the **present tense** = as a lifestyle) such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**" Have you ever envied anyone (as in Gal 5:21-note)? Doubtless, your answer is of course, but not as your "lifestyle." So envying others, while an occasional lapse (sin), is not your habitual practice and does not result in you being cut off from the kingdom of God. (cp similar use of "shall inherit the kingdom of God" in 1Cor 6:9-10)

## THE PATHS OF LIFE

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt make known to me the **path of life**; In Thy presence is fulness of joy; In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.

Proverbs 5:6 She (adulteress) does not ponder the **path of life**; Her ways are unstable, she does not know it.

Proverbs 10:17 He is on the **path of life** who heeds instruction, But he who forsakes reproof goes astray.

Proverbs 15:24 The **path of life** leads upward for the wise, That he may keep away from Sheol below.

Contrast the **path of the righteous** - "But the **path of the righteous** is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day. (Prov. 4:18)

**Kitchen** - The pull of immorality's vortex is nearly inescapable. When you walk through the door of sexual sin, it slams behind you and you soon discover that it is a door with a knob on only one side. While the possibility of repentance is always held out to the penitent, the nature of sexual sin is such that it blinds to that possibility. The one who pursues this wanton lifestyle does not 'reach the paths of life.' What is rationalized as a youthful side trip on sin's path is soon discovered to be an addicting course of life that is more than difficult to leave. The addictive power of illicit sex, pornography, and voyeurism is nothing to be experimented with. (Ibid)

**Charles Bridges** - Some instances indeed of deliverance are given; not so much examples, as special miracles, of grace, to show how far the "arm of the Lord" can reach. (Solomon's own case. Cp. Lk, 7:37-50; 1Co 6:9-11) But so rare are they, that it is as if scarcely none (None in comparison, very few. Cp. Isa 59:4; 64:7) that go unto her return again. And what madness is it to rush into the snare upon so faint and glimmering hope of escape! (Eccl 7:26.) The spell of lust palsies the grasp, by which its victim might have taken hold of the paths of life for deliverance. He that is "saved, is so as by fire" (1Cor 3:15, Jude 1:23), the wonder of heaven and earth. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (Zech 3:2). ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

### Proverbs 2:20 So you will walk in the way of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous

- Pr 13:20; Ps 119:63,115; Song 1:7,8; Jeremiah 6:16; Hebrews 6:12; 3John 1:11

## IMITATE WHAT IS GOOD

3 Jn 1:11

**So** - Picks up the theme of wisdom and explains the purpose of seeking wisdom. Wisdom directs one to walk in the way of good men which would be the good way!

**Warren Wiersbe** adds "Note the argument that Solomon gives in this chapter that begins with the "if" of Pr 2:1 and continues with the "then" of Pr 2:9 and the "thus" of Pr 2:20. If we receive God's words and obey them, then we will have wisdom to make wise decisions, and thus God will keep His promise and protect us from the evil man and the strange woman. When you obey God, you have the privilege to "walk in the ways of good men" (Pr 2:20NIV). If you follow the Word of God, you will never lack for the right kind of friends." ([Be Skillful - Proverbs](#))

**Kitchen** - The primary intent of wisdom, however, is not simply avoiding evil, but seeking the good. The former must happen as an application of wisdom, but it is not the primary purpose. Wisdom is not first of all about refraining from bad things, but about pursuing God's best things. The orientation of wisdom is not primarily negative, but positive. (Ibid)

Proverbs 13:20 echoes this truth = "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."

Walking in the good way is a choice (a good choice of course) as shown by the incredible description in Jeremiah - "Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the **good** way is, and **walk** in it; And you shall find **rest for your souls**. But they said, '**We will not walk in it.**'"

**Charles Bridges** - Here is the consummating blessing of engrafted **wisdom**. Not only does it deliver from evil men; but it guides us into the way of good men. Clad with this Divine armour, thou shalt have courage, like Joseph, to turn thy face from the enchantment

(snare, trap, enticement) of Sin (Ge 39:9, 10), and keep the paths of the righteous, rugged indeed, yet the only paths of rest and security. (Song 1:7, 8. Jer 6:16.) ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**H A Ironside on Proverbs 2:20-22** - Only the Word of God can preserve the soul from her corruptions and keep one's feet on the paths of life. These verses, like the rest of the Old Testament, speak of earthly rewards since the heavenly rewards were not revealed yet. Here we read of the earthly hope of the godly Israelite: He will dwell in the land when the lawless Gentiles and the transgressing Israelites will be rooted out of it. Ours (**Ed**: all who have been purchased for God by the blood of Christ) is a far better portion. We have an inheritance reserved for us in Heaven where Christ the forerunner has entered for us. How much greater is our responsibility to see that our steps are ordered according to the Word of the living God! ([Proverbs 2 Commentary - Ironside's Notes on Selected Books](#))

**George Lawson on Proverbs 2:20.** - **It is not enough to refrain from wickedness, we must also work righteousness** We profess to be the servants of God, and it will be no sufficient excuse for a servant that has slept all day, to say that he did no mischief. There are two ways, in one or other of which all men walk,—the narrow way that leads unto life, and the broad way that leads to destruction. In the former way few walk, but it has been trodden by the feet of all who are worthy of our imitation. In it Abraham, and Job, and David walked, whilst those whose memorials are now perished, or whose names are remembered only to be execrated, were travelling in the broad way that leads to destruction. Which of these classes of persons would we chuse to follow in our course of life? If the former, we must take our directions from the wisdom taught by Solomon, and the other inspired writers. Those venerable men who have obtained a good report, and who through faith and patience inherit the promises, were close students of the word of God, so far as they enjoyed the benefit of its instructions; and by faith in its doctrines and promises, and a constant regard to its precepts, they obtained their good report. Happy shall we be if, like them, we esteem the word of God more than our necessary food, and keep the judgments of God still in our view; ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

#### Proverbs 2:21 For the upright will live in the land and the blameless will remain in it

- Job 1:1; 42:12; Ps 37:3,9,11,22,29; 84:11; 112:4-6

### TWO ENDS CLEARLY CONTRASTED

Pr 2:21-22

As Solomon closes out this chapter, first he gives the promise to the one who chooses to walk in the fear of the LORD (Pr 2:5) and balances the positive promise with a negative warning in Pr 2:22.

Just as the first chapter ended with a contrast of the fate of the godly and the ungodly, this chapter does also.

Proverbs 1:32-note (WRONG WAY) For the waywardness of the naive shall kill them, And the complacency of fools shall destroy them. 33 (RIGHT WAY) "But he who listens to me shall live securely, And shall be at ease from the dread of evil."

**Charles Bridges** - Thus shalt thou dwell and remain in the land, as its original inheritor (Ps 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34. Mt 5:5), having the best portion in earth, and an infinitely better portion in heaven ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**For the upright will live in the land** - This is a reference to the Promised Land of Canaan. This comment about **the land** probably even has an eschatological sense in that it looks forward to the future time when **"erets"** is returned to Israel by God and His Messiah rules (See Messianic Age) the land with righteousness. Clearly and even more completely it looks forward to the New Heaven and New Earth where "righteousness dwells" (2Pe 3:13-note), and where only those who are 100% righteous will dwell in presence of the Righteous Branch, Christ Jesus.

**Upright** (right - cp Pr 2:7,13) (adjective) ([03477](#))(**yashar** from verb **yashar** = to be smooth, straight or right) is an adjective that means straight; reliable, level, pleasing; upright; righteous. **Yashar** only rarely is used literally of that which is straight (Ezek 1:7). **Yashar** can refer to something physical like a path, but even in those uses is often a metaphorical description of one's conduct or behavior (Ps 107:7). It is fitting that God is the standard of **yashar** (what is "straight") (Ps 92:15, called the **"Upright One"** - Isa 26:7). In short, **yashar** represents, first, God's own character and, then, the character of the one who becomes like Him. God's Word is described as **upright** (right) (Ps 19:7) as are His judgments (Ps 119:137) and His way (Ps 107:7). "God made men **upright** (Ge 1:27), but they have sought out many devices." (Eccl 7:29)

Below are uses of **yashar** in Proverbs...

Proverbs 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the **upright**; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

21 For the **upright** will live in the land And the blameless will remain in it;

Proverbs 3:32 For the devious are an abomination to the LORD; But He is intimate with the **upright**.

Proverbs 8:9 "They are all straightforward to him who understands, And **right** to those who find knowledge.

Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the **upright** will guide them, But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.

Proverbs 11:6 The righteousness of the **upright** will deliver them, But the treacherous will be caught by their own greed.

Proverbs 11:11 By the blessing of the **upright** a city is exalted, But by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down.

Proverbs 12:6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the **upright** will deliver them.

Proverbs 11:15 The way of a fool is **right** in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

Proverbs 14:9 Fools mock at sin, But among the **upright** there is good will.

Proverbs 14:11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, But the tent of the **upright** will flourish.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seems **right** to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Proverbs 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the **upright** is His delight.

Proverbs 15:19 The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns, But the path of the **upright** is a highway.

Proverbs 16:13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And he who speaks **right** is loved.

Proverbs 16:17 The highway of the **upright** is to depart from evil; He who watches his way preserves his life.

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way which seems **right** to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Proverbs 20:11 It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself If his conduct is pure and **right**.

Proverbs 21:2 Every man's way is **right** in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.

Proverbs 21:8 The way of a guilty man is crooked, But as for the pure, his conduct is **upright**.

Proverbs 21:18 The wicked is a ransom for the righteous, And the treacherous is in the place of the **upright**.

Proverbs 21:29 A wicked man displays a bold face, But as for the **upright**, he makes his way sure.

Proverbs 28:10 He who leads the **upright** astray in an evil way Will himself fall into his own pit, But the blameless will inherit good.

Proverbs 29:10 Men of bloodshed hate the blameless, But the **upright** are concerned for his life.

Proverbs 29:27 An unjust man is abominable to the righteous, And he who is **upright** in the way is abominable to the wicked.

**Live** (07931)(**shakan**) means to settle down or to dwell. **Shakan** is the verb from which is derived the rabbinic word **Shekinah** "that which dwells" ~ "residence" the light on the mercy-seat which symbolized the Divine presence (Ex 25:8). In order to avoid appearing to localize the Divine Being, wherever God is said to "dwell" in a place, the Targum renders that He "causes His Shekinah to dwell" there.

**Webster** on **upright** - Showing a strict regard for what is morally right. Honest; just; adhering to rectitude in all social intercourse; not deviating from correct moral principles; as an upright man. Job 1:1 ("was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil.", Job 1:8, 2:3 = God's assessment of Job = "upright" or **yashar**!). Conformable to moral rectitude. Demonstrating a strict adherence to moral principles.

**The blameless will remain in it** - Those who possess integrity, wholeness, w/o spot, undefiled... they will remain.

**Blameless** (without defect or blemish, perfect, integrity) (08549)(**tamim** from the verb **tamam** = to be complete, entire or whole (literal sense in Lev 3:9, Ezek 15:5), refers to a action which is completed) has both physical (without defect) and spiritual (blameless, devout, upright) significance. **Tamim** has the fundamental idea of completeness or wholeness and deals primarily with a state of moral or ceremonial purity. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **blameless** in this passage with the adjective **hósios** which when used of persons describes those who live right before the Lord (holy, devout, dedicated) and in Heb 7:26 the holy nature of our great High Priest Christ Jesus.

**Kitchen** adds that blameless (tamim) "describes the character of one who has no hidden agendas and no cloaked sins. His heart and life are open to the Lord and therefore open to examination by all others as well."

**Tamim** is used 6 times in Proverbs - Pr 1:12 = "whole", Pr, 2:21, 11:5, 20, 28:10, 18

**George Lawson** on **Proverbs 2:21**. - They shall enjoy a long and a prosperous life, as far as it is for their real advantage, in that good land which God bestowed on his people, and shall, even when they are dead, possess it in the persons of their posterity, who are blessed for their sakes. Sinners enjoy not this happiness, ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

## Proverbs 2:22 But the wicked will be cut off from the land and the treacherous will be uprooted from it

- Pr 5:22,23; Job 18:16-18; 21:30; Ps 37:20,22,28,37,38; 52:5; 104:35; Ps 145:20; Isaiah 3:10,11

## THE FRIGHTENING FATE OF THE WICKED

NET Proverbs 2:22 but the wicked will be removed from the land, and the treacherous will be torn away from it.

**But** - Proverbs is filled with striking contrasts (e.g., "**but**" is used 247x in 243 verses!), none more striking than this one which depicts the separation of the righteous from the wicked. See **terms of contrast** for the importance of pausing to ponder these conjunctions (but, yet, on the other hand, etc).

In a parallel passage Solomon gives a similar contrast "The righteous will never be shaken, but the wicked will not dwell in the land. (Pr 10:30)

Solomon later adds that "His own iniquities will capture (ensnare) the **wicked**" (Pr 5:22-note) and if they never repent they will be forever cut off.

We see a frightening description in Job 21:30 - "For the **wicked** is reserved for the day of calamity; They will be led forth at the day of fury."

**David** repeated contrast the fate of the **godly** and **ungodly** (perish, vanish, cut off destroyed) - "Those blessed by Him will inherit the land, but the **wicked** will **perish**. And the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures, They vanish—like smoke they **vanish away**... For those blessed by Him will inherit the land; But those **cursed** by Him will be **cut off**... For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His godly ones; They are preserved forever; But the **descendants of the wicked** will be **cut off**... Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity. But transgressors will be altogether **destroyed**; The **posterity of the wicked** will be **cut off**." (Ps 37:20, 22, 28, 37-38)

**Wicked** ([07563 - רָשָׁע](#)) (**rasha'** from the verb **rasha'** = be wicked or act wickedly) is used frequently in Proverbs but this is the first use. The first use of **rasha'** in Scripture is in the famous question from Abraham to God "Wilt Thou indeed sweep away the righteous with the **wicked** (The **Lxx** translates the uses of **rasha** in Ge 18:23 **and** in Pr 2:22 with the adjective **asebes** which means without reverence, destitute of reverential awe toward God, ungodly) ?" (Ge 18:23, 25) Indeed, this first use of **rasha'** in Genesis to describe the temporal judgment of the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah was but a foretaste of the eternal judgment for all those who are wicked are are cut off from the land!

**Rasha'** is a common word in the OT (263x in 249 verses) and is especially common in Proverbs (78x in 77v with the leading use being in Psalms = 80 verses) -

Ge 18:23, 25; Ex 2:13; 9:27; 23:1, 7; Num 16:26; 35:31; Deut 25:1f; 1 Sam 2:9; 24:13; 2 Sam 4:11; 1 Kgs 8:32; 2 Chr 6:23; 19:2; Job 3:17; 8:22; 9:22, 24; 10:3; 11:20; 15:20; 16:11; 18:5; 20:5, 29; 21:7, 16f, 28; 22:18; 24:6; 27:7, 13; 34:18, 26; 36:6, 17; 38:13, 15; 40:12; Ps 1:1, 4ff; 3:7; 7:9; 9:5, 16f; 10:2ff, 13, 15; 11:2, 5f; 12:8; 17:9, 13; 26:5; 28:3; 31:17; 32:10; 34:21; 36:1, 11; 37:10, 12, 14, 16f, 20f, 28, 32, 34f, 38, 40; 39:1; 50:16; 55:3; 58:3, 10; 68:2; 71:4; 73:3, 12; 75:4, 8, 10; 82:2, 4; 91:8; 92:7; 94:3, 13; 97:10; 101:8; 104:35; 106:18; 109:2, 6f; 112:10; 119:53, 61, 95, 110, 119, 155; 129:4; 139:19; 140:4, 8; 141:10; 145:20; 146:9; 147:6; Pr 2:22; 3:25, 33; 4:14, 19; 5:22; 9:7; 10:3, 6f, 11, 16, 20, 24f, 27f, 30, 32; 11:5, 7f, 10f, 18, 23, 31; 12:5ff, 10, 12, 21, 26; 13:5, 9, 17, 25; 14:11, 19, 32; 15:6, 8f, 28f; 16:4; 17:15, 23; 18:3, 5; 19:28; 20:26; 21:4, 7, 10, 12, 18, 27, 29; 24:15f, 19f, 24; 25:5, 26; 28:1, 4, 12, 15, 28; 29:2, 7, 12, 16, 27; Eccl 3:17; 7:15; 8:10, 13f; 9:2; Isa 3:11; 5:23; 11:4; 13:11; 14:5; 26:10; 48:22; 53:9; 55:7; 57:20f; Jer 5:26; 12:1; 23:19; 25:31; 30:23; Ezek 3:18f; 7:21; 13:22; 18:20f, 23f, 27; 21:3f, 25, 29; 33:8f, 11f, 14f, 19; Dan 12:10; Mic 6:10; Hab 1:4, 13; 3:13; Zeph 1:3; Mal 3:18; 4:3



**NAS Usage:** evil(1), evil man(1), evil men(1), guilty(3), man(1), offender(1), ungodly(1), wicked(228), wicked man(21), wicked men(2), wicked one(1), wicked ones(3).

**Cut off from the land** - The Promised Land. The fate of the ungodly reminds us of Jesus' words to the Jews - "And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Mt 8:11-12, cp Lk 13:24-30-note)

**Cut off** (03772)(**karath**) literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action (e.g., Messiah would be **cut off** in Da 9:26 [see note] a prophetic description of His crucifixion). Literal uses include Zipporah when she "**cut off** her son's foreskin." (Ex 4:25) or the Jews when they "**cut down** a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24).

It is interesting that **karath** is used for cutting a covenant [*karath berit/berith/beriyth*] (first use Ge 9:11 of God "cutting a covenant" with Noah and in Ge 15:18 where God cut a covenant with Abraham). To enter into the Abrahamic Covenant (Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic) by faith brought salvation (cp Ge 15:6, Ro 4:3). How interesting that **karath** on one hand leads to eternal life but on the other (as in Pr 2:22) leads to eternal death!

Figuratively **karath** refers to being "cut off" from Israel for some disobedience such as failing to receive circumcision or celebrate Passover (Ge 17:14, Ex 12:15, Nu 9:13 - **karath** translated in both in Lxx with verb **exolethreuo** which means to utterly destroy or "root out"). "The person who does anything defiantly (willfully), whether he is native or an alien, that one is blaspheming the LORD; and that person shall be cut off (**Lxx** = **exolethreuo**) from among his people." (Nu 15:30-31) The idea of a disobedient or unclean individual being "cut off" is the meaning in almost all of the uses in the Leviticus (Lev 7:20, 21, etc). Many of the uses of **karath** in this context in Leviticus are translated in the Lxx with the verb **apollumi**, which describes that which is ruined and no longer usable for its original, intended purpose. The question arises is what does **karath** signify in these uses? Does it just mean the person becomes a social outcast or does it signify actual physical death? See **Covenant Solemn & Binding** for detailed analysis of this question. See also discussion of the verb **exolethreuo** which also addresses this question.

Here in Proverbs 2:22 the context (always **Keep Context King** to assure accurate interpretations) seems to make it clear that to be **cut off from the land** is to be cut off from the land of the living (not only in this life, but worst of all in the life to come and throughout eternity!)

**Charles Bridges** agrees writing that "The wicked and transgressors (Pr 2:22), though they may "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," shall be ultimately cut of rooted out, and "driven away " into everlasting ruin. (Pr 10:30; 14:32; 15:25. Ps 52:5-7; 92:7. Mt 3:10)."

**Treacherous** (0898)(**bagad** apparently from an Arabic root meaning to deceive) means to act deceitfully, unfaithfully, to commit faithlessness. And so it describes a traitor, one who does honor his word, who violates his allegiance and betrays something or someone (e.g., God). **Bagad** means to 'break faith' which speaks of one who does not honour the terms of an existing agreement. In a word this person is characterized by unfaithfulness.

The translates **Lxx bagad** in Pr 2:22 with the adjective **paranomos** (not found in NT but the cognate **paranomia** is found = transgression) which means contrary to the law, lawless, against the law. **Paranomos** is used e in the some 45 times as in the first two uses -- Dt 13:13 = **worthless** men and Jdg 19:22 = **worthless** fellows. In both of these passages the Hebrew word for "**worthless**" is **beliyal** (belial - see note below) which is used by Paul as the name of Satan! "Like father, like son" cp Jn 8:44).

The term **belial** (בְּלִיַּאל bēli-yaal) is a Hebrew adjective meaning "worthless" from two common words beli- (בלי "without-") and ya'al (עַל "value"). It occurs twenty-seven times in the Masoretic Text, in verses such as the following: "A naughty person (Hebrew adam beli-yaal)" Book of Proverbs 6:12 ([See Belial - Wikipedia](#))

**Uprooted** (05255)(**nasah**) is a verb meaning to tear down, tear out , uproot, cause to be displaced (Ps 52:5, Pr 2:22), to demolish or dismantle, tearing down a house as an divine act of deserved destruction (Pr 15:25 - Lxx = **kataspao** = to pull down, tear down, destroy = as the altars of Manasseh in 2Ki 23:12 = "broke down"). Notice that it is often used in the context of **divine judgment**, both temporal (Dt 28:68 prophesying of the 70 year Babylonian exile of Judah) and eternal (Ps 52:5, Pr 2:22).

Moses gives the blessing for faithfulness and the curse for unfaithfulness in Deuteronomy 28:63 "It shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and (prophetic promise) you **will be torn from** (same verb **nasah**; Lxx = **exairo** = to expel, drive out, "to exclude or remove some from a group-drive away" -BDAG) the land where you are entering to possess it." (Fulfilled in the 70 year exile of Judah when Babylon conquered and sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 586BC)

Spurgeon's comment on the tearing away of men in Ps 52:5 is also applicable to the judgment described in Proverbs 2:22 = "God shall extinguish his coal and sweep him away like the ashes of the hearth; he would have quenched the truth, and God shall quench him... The persecutor shall be eradicated, stubbed up by the root, cut up root and branch. He sought the death of others and death shall fall upon him. He troubled the land of the living, and he shall be banished to that land where the wicked cease from troubling. Those who will not "let live" have no right to "live." God will turn the tables on malicious men, and mete to them a portion with their own measure. "SELAH." Pause again, and behold the divine justice proving itself more than a match for human sin."

Here are the only 4 uses of *nasah* in the OT...

Deuteronomy 28:63 (see above)

Psalm 52:5 But God will break you down forever; He will snatch you up and **tear you away** from your tent, And uproot you from the land of the living. Selah.

Proverbs 2:22 But the wicked will be cut off from the land and the treacherous will be **uprooted** from it.

Proverbs 15:25-note The LORD will **tear down** the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow.

**George Lawson** on **Proverbs 2:22** and the dramatic contrast between the destiny of the wicked and the righteous! - Must not the righteous leave the earth too? Yes: But the earth is a very different thing to the righteous, and to the wicked. **To the latter it is all the heaven they ever have; to the righteous it is a place of preparation for heaven. Death is a kind messenger sent to the righteous by their heavenly Father, calling them to the possession of their eternal inheritance; to the wicked it is a messenger of wrath, summoning them to the abodes of misery.** It is almost the beginning of happiness to God's people, but the final conclusion of all that the wicked counted their happiness. To the righteous, death is a translation to a better life. To the wicked, it is destruction and woe. And is it all one to us whether we share with the wicked in the miseries of their latter end, or with Zion's travellers in those everlasting joys that shall crown them when they attain the end of their faith (Ps. 37:36-40)?, ([George Lawson - Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

**Bridges summarizes Chapter 2 of Proverbs** - And now, what serious reader of this chapter can fail to estimate above all price the privilege of being early enlisted under the banner of the cross (at an early age); early taught in the ways, and disciplined in the school, of the Bible; and early led to hide that blessed book in the heart, as the rule of life, the principle of holiness, the guide to heaven! Parents, sponsors, teachers of youth; ponder your deep responsibility with unceasing prayer for special grace and wisdom. Beware of glossing over sins with amiable or palliating terms. Let young people be always led to look upon vicious; habits with horror, as the most appalling evil. Discipline their vehemence of feeling, and all ill-regulated excitement. Keep out of sight, as far as may be, books calculated to inflame the imagination. To give an impulse to the glowing passion may stimulate the rising corruption to the most malignant fruitfulness. Oh! what wisdom is needed to guide, to repress, to bring forth, develop safely, and to improve fully, the mind, energies, and sensibilities of youth!

Young man! Beware! Do not flatter thyself for a moment, that God will ever wink at your sinful passions; that He will allow for them, as slips and foibles of youth. They are the "cords of your own sins," which, if the power of God's grace break them not in time, will "hold" you for eternity. (Pr 5:22-note) Shun then the society of sin, as the infection of the plague. Keep thy distance from it, as from the pit of destruction. Store thy mind with the preservative of heavenly wisdom. Cultivate the taste for purer pleasures. Listen to the fatherly, pleading remonstrance, inviting thee to thy rest---"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, 'My Father! thou art the guide of my youth?'" (Jer 3:4) ([Bridges- An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))