

Topics in Proverbs

Intro: Foundational Truth of the book of Proverbs - The Fear of the Lord; The opening thoughts 1:7, and the final thoughts 31:30, used fourteen times

I. Wisdom's First Steps - The Fear of the Lord - Pt 1

A. Involves a Subject

1. Self Preparation for Involvement

a. The Bible Depicts people either fearing or not fearing the Lord

i. Abraham knew Abimelech's people did not fear the Lord - Gen 20:11

ii. Moses knew that the Egyptians did not yet fear the Lord after several Plagues - Ex 9:30

iii. When Pharaoh's Army was defeated, the people of Israel feared the Lord - Ex 14:31

iv. God commanded Israel to fear the Lord - Lev 19:14,32; 25:17; De 6:13

b. An Individual thing; Cannot be done for you.

2. Stop and Think

a. God did not address the priests alone - no special subset

b. Demands personal involvement - Jer 31:34; Eph 4:11-12

B. Involves an Object

1. The Name of God

a. LORD/ GOD = YHWH - used 6823 times

i. God obviously wants His name used

ii. People's understanding of Lev 24:16 as a blanket prohibition of its use

iii. Jews, when reading the OT when they come to YHWH, they will substitute Elohim (God) or Adonai (Lord)

b. The Encasement of Tradition remains until today

i. The Hebrew alphabet is all consonants, no vowels

ii. Vowel points were introduced around 900 A.D.

iii. YHWH received vowels - pronounced Yehowah (later Yahweh) or Jehovah

iv. The English translations perpetuate the tradition by capitalizing the letters in LORD and GOD - Isa 40:28 NKJV compared with HCSV

v. YHWH probably best translates the Self Existent One

2. The Opposing View - Some say . . .

a. The use of Yahweh rather than the general term Elohim is not significant. It just means the national deity of the Jews who regard Him as the supreme and only God. - Crawford H. Toy

b. The mention of the God of Israel (Yahweh) is made more in the form of a concession: we could easily substitute the more general phrase "the fear of God" or even "of the deity" for the expression "the fear of the Yahweh" w/o facing the problem of the identity of the deity to which reference was made. The expression

could be equated to a popular saying “a bit of religion never hurt anyone.” - J. Alberto Soggins

3. The Main Point

- a. A personal name brings the focus down tight and specific.
 - i. The Book - General
 - ii. The Book, “Knowledge of the Holy” by A. W. Tozer - Specific
- b. In essence, Solomon is saying, the true God has revealed Himself, if you want true wisdom, you must start with Him on His revealed terms. You must have a VITAL, LIVING, relationship w/ the one true God

C. The Content of the Fear of the Lord

1. Involves Revelation - There Is Much to Learn

- a. Not speaking necessarily of Emotion though emotion are not absent
- b. De 4:1-14
 - i. hold tight to God’s word - vs 1-3
 - ii. equated to holding tight to God - vs 4-5
 - iii. emphasis on possession of verbal revelation as source of national wisdom and that which separated them from the nations - vs 6-8
 - iv. Must hold tight to their encounter with God - vs **9-10**
 - fear is not merely an emotion, the fire would have done that
 - fear - something learned and requires revelation
 - v. Recognize the focus - vs 12-14
 - you heard the words, saw no form - 12b
 - He gave you the 10 commandments - 13
 - He gave Moses statutes and rules to teach you - 14
 - no form, only the word of God - 15
- c. De 31:9-13
 - i. commanded the Levites to read God’s word to the people at national assemblies - 9-11
 - ii. for the purpose that they may
 - hear, learn, and fear the LORD and be careful to observe all the words of the Law - 12
 - teach their children to hear and learn the fear Yahweh - 13
 - note the emphasis - (the children) “who have not known **it**”
- d. Ps 119:38 - Establish your word which produces reverence for You
 - i. God’s word produces a right attitude toward God
 - ii. His word reveals Him, His mind, His ways to us, His Content to our faith
- e. Jo 8:31-32
 - i. To be set free, you need to know the truth
 - ii. To know the truth, you must be students (disciple) of Jesus
 - iii. To be students (disciple) of Jesus, you must continue in His word
- f. The true seeker of wisdom will look to God’s word - Ps 119:18; Heb 3:7