

# Proverbs Week #49 (5:1,2)

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*“My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your ear to my understanding; that you may observe discretion and your lips may reserve knowledge.” Prov 5:1-2*

Once again the book of Proverbs invites us into a conversation between a father and a son. Here the father directs the son to give attention and incline his ear to his wisdom and understanding. If the son listens and does what the father commands then he will “observe discretion” and his lips will “reserve knowledge.” Before we look at these two phrases more closely I want you to consider the wisdom and understanding this father calls “my wisdom” and “my understanding.” In Proverbs 3:5,6 the son is told not to lean on his own understanding but to trust in the LORD with all his heart. In what ways is the father drawing the son’s attention to his teaching and at the same time directing him not to lean on his understanding? As I reflected on this question I was reminded of two other passages of scripture.

*“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.” Psalm 1:1-3*

I am considering that the father who is advising his son, in these first few verses of Proverbs chapter five, is spiritually mature. His meditation on the Torah of the LORD day and night has made him wise and the fruit that he is producing is evident in how he lives, speaks, and what he is teaching his son. The LORD told Joshua not to let the Torah depart from his mouth (Joshua 1:8,9) and the Shema commands us to be teaching God’s words throughout the day to our children.

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Eph 6:1-4*

Paul was teaching the families of faithful believers in the Messiah in Ephesus how they should relate to one another. He reminds the children of one of the ten words and connects the commandment to the blessing which God describes when Israel would be faithful to keep and do it. Paul also expresses the need for fathers to be aware of how their teaching impacts their children. Do we require or expect too much or too little as fathers and mothers? Are our children overwhelmed by the expectations we place upon them or undisciplined by our lack of expectations? Our modern culture answers this question in a variety of ways. The expectations levied by the parents of a competitive gymnast will differ from those levied by a parent whose children are obsessed with video games.

Consider for a moment the expectations of our heavenly Father. None of us are perfect, yet God calls us all to be holy. He intends those who are faithful in Messiah Yeshua to be holy and blameless before Him (Eph 1:4). As we are connected to one another as members of Messiah’s family we are to mature in His ways.

These children’s lessons serve as reminders for us as parents and community of the importance of keeping our hearts and minds on the plans and thoughts of God as expressed in scripture. For us to boldly go to our children and tell them to pay attention to our teaching requires us to have God’s teaching on our lips. The next few verses in this chapter will warn the son about those who would attempt to replace God’s plans and ways in his life. Lord willing, we will investigate these warnings in the next few weeks.