

Lesson 56 - The Character of Being Prudent

1. Who are called prudent? **Proverbs 16:21**

EGW: To those who were humble of heart, who trusted not in their own wisdom or righteousness, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven could be revealed. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent [the worldly wise,] and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." {ST, October 24, 1892 par. 2}

2. What will a prudent person receive of their father, even God our Father? **Proverbs 15:5**

EGW: "David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely; and Saul set him over the men of war." David was prudent and faithful, and it was evident that the blessing of God was with him. Saul at times realized his own unfitness for the government of Israel, and he felt that the kingdom would be more secure if there could be connected with him one who received instruction from the Lord. Saul hoped also that his connection with David would be a safeguard to himself. Since David was favored and shielded by the Lord, his presence might be a protection to Saul when he went out with him to war. {PP 649.2}

3. What does a prudent man do? **Proverbs 22:3, Proverbs 27:12**

EGW: If men could foresee the result of their course, if they could realize the influence which they exert upon their own families and upon society, they would move with greater caution, and would maintain a firmer reliance upon God. The misconduct of parents frequently produces the most ruinous effects upon their children and associates, after the actors themselves have been laid in the grave. There is no evil which man should so much dread, as being given up to his own lusts. This was the fate of Israel. After Gideon's death, the people, especially his own house, plunged into the grossest idolatry. {ST, July 28, 1881 par. 13}

4. What is from the Lord? **Proverbs 19:14**

EGW: "A prudent wife is from the Lord." "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. . . . She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her," saying, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." He who gains such a wife "findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." {AH 46.1}

5. What does a prudent person deal with? **Proverbs 13:16**

EGW: When you are growing in grace, you will love to attend religious meetings, and you will gladly bear testimony of the love of Christ before the congregation. God, by his grace, can make the young man prudent, and he can give to the children knowledge and experience. {YI, September 1, 1886 par. 2}

6. What do they do with that "which they deal with" once they obtain it? **Proverbs 12:23**

EGW: God had provided a way of escape for his servant in this hour of peril. A vigilant eye had followed Luther's movements, and a true and noble heart had resolved upon his rescue. It was plain that Rome would be satisfied with nothing short of his death; only by concealment could he be preserved from the jaws of the lion. God gave wisdom to Frederick of Saxony to devise a plan for the reformer's preservation. With the co-operation of true friends, the elector's purpose was carried out, and Luther was effectually hidden from friends and foes. Upon his homeward journey, he was seized, separated from his attendants, and hurriedly conveyed through the forest to the castle of Wartburg, an isolated mountain fortress. Both his seizure and his concealment were so involved in mystery that even Frederick himself for a long time knew not whither he had been conducted. This ignorance was not without design; so long as the elector knew nothing of Luther's whereabouts, he could reveal nothing. He satisfied himself that the reformer was safe, and with this knowledge he was content. {GC88 168.1}

7. What do the prudent get? **Proverbs 18:15**

EGW: He commenced with great prudence, but as he discerned more clearly the errors of the papacy, he taught more earnestly the doctrine of faith. His knowledge of theology, his penetrating mind, the purity of his life, and his unbending courage and integrity, won for him general confidence and esteem. {4SP 87.1}

8. What is a prudent person crowned with? **Proverbs 14:18**

EGW: Strive to run the Christian race with patience, keeping the crown of life in view, seeking to have a knowledge of the will of God, striving for precedence in His acquaintance and affections. {TSB 56.3}

9. What will a prudent person do regarding how they live their life? **Proverbs 14:15**

EGW: You may become a prudent, modest, virtuous girl, but not without earnest effort. You must watch, you must pray, you must meditate, you must investigate your motives and your actions. Closely analyze your feelings and your acts. {2T 564.2}

10. What does the wisdom of a prudent person result in? **Proverbs 14:8**

EGW: If you seek wisdom from the Lord to understand his way and to keep it, he will give you wisdom and grace. {RH, September 15, 1891 par. 3}

11. What does a prudent person do about their past sinning so as not to glorify it? **Proverbs 12:16**

EGW: Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. "I counsel thee," He says, "to buy of Me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Revelation 3:18. {COL 311.3}

12. What dwells with prudence? **Proverbs 8:12**

EGW: The interpretation was so reasonable and consistent, and the policy which it recommended was so sound and shrewd, that its correctness could not be doubted. But who was to be entrusted with the execution of the plan? Upon the wisdom of this choice depended the nation's preservation. The king was troubled. For some time the matter of the appointment was under consideration. Through the chief butler the monarch had learned of the wisdom and prudence displayed by Joseph

in the management of the prison; it was evident that he possessed administrative ability in a pre-eminent degree. The cupbearer, now filled with self-reproach, endeavored to atone for his former ingratitude, by the warmest praise of his benefactor; and further inquiry by the king proved the correctness of his report. In all the realm Joseph was the only man gifted with wisdom to point out the danger that threatened the kingdom and the preparation necessary to meet it; and the king was convinced that he was the one best qualified to execute the plans which he had proposed. It was evident that a divine power was with him, and that there were none among the king's officers of state so well qualified to conduct the affairs of the nation at this crisis. The fact that he was a Hebrew and a slave was of little moment when weighed against his evident wisdom and sound judgment. "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" said the king to his counselors. {PP 221.1}

13. What do wisdom and prudence make known? **Ephesians 1:8-9**

EGW: The first chapter of the Ephesian letter is full of rich encouragement. This scripture sets before us the privileges and the opportunities, the hope and the confidence, given us by and through our Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous. By Paul's words Christ is uplifted. The apostle desired all to behold the world's Redeemer, "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." {ST, May 14, 1902 par. 3}

14. When sinful practices abound forcing the prudent person to be silent, what is it the opposite of being prudent? **Amos 5:12-13 [Answer at the end of verse 13]**

EGW: Caution is to be prayerfully exercised by everyone who believes the truth. There are trying scenes before us, and we need to exercise great caution, keeping the door of our lips while the wicked are before us. We shall have to meet in our experience with men having fanatical zeal which will provoke those who hate the truth and it will be necessary to preserve a calm attitude and not state all we do know, for impressions will be made upon human minds that will, under the influence of Satan, grow to large proportions. {TDG 250.2}

There is need of watching unto prayer. The evils we shall meet have long been gathering and like a storm, will come upon many when they least expect it. While they cannot be charged with originating the evil, they precipitated it. Charges will be made which believers cannot refute, because they have not shown wisdom in the use of either the pen or the voice. {TDG 250.3}

Many laws will be enacted for the government of nations, calculated to oppress; and old laws that have practically become of none effect, will be resurrected. We need to move forward in our work understandingly and in faith, under the wise generalship of Jesus Christ. A great work is to be done

for the Master in proclaiming the last message of mercy to our world, and we are dependent upon authorities and powers to find passage from one end of the world to another, and as long as we are dependent upon the powers that be, we must not divorce ourselves from them, for this is a worldwide message. {TDG 250.4}

We are to go forward quietly, and when our way is apparently blocked in one direction we are to make no condemnation of the powers that be, for in thus doing we are teaching other powers how to work to hedge up our way. We are not to stir up opposing elements or provoke retaliation or revenge. The climax will come soon enough. It is already stealing on as a thief in the night. And we can speak Bible truth which will not set opposing influences at work.--Manuscript 90, Aug. 29, 1893, "Our Attitude Toward the 'Powers That Be.'" {TDG 250.5}

15. "The ways of the LORD [are] right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein", but what do the wise and what do the prudent have? **Hosea 14:9 [Though it be in the form of a question, it is more of a sarcastic rebuke to the unwise and reckless.]**

EGW: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." Those who dishonor God by transgressing his law may talk sanctification, but it is of that value, and just as acceptable, as the offering of Cain. Obedience to all the commandments of God is the only true sign of sanctification. Disobedience is the sign of disloyalty and apostasy. {HM, July 1, 1897 par. 14}

16. Who are those that "deal prudently"? **Isaiah 52:13**

EGW: The Lord permits men to go to a certain length in sin, and then, as in the destruction of the old world, He will arise and punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The earth will disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain. {ST, July 12, 1899 par. 7}

"Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; so shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." {ST, July 12, 1899 par. 8}

Thus it was. The terrible scenes of the crucifixion revealed what humanity will do when under Satan's control. They revealed what the outcome would be if Satan was to control the world. Those who witnessed these scenes never lost the impressions made upon their minds. Many were converted, and told others of the awful scene they beheld. Many who heard the report of Christ's death were converted, and commenced searching the Scriptures. Thus were fulfilled the words, "So shall He sprinkle many nations." {ST, July 12, 1899 par. 9}

17. Who is an example of being prudent? **Isaiah 10:12-13**

EGW: (no comment)

18. Early on in his life, who was an earthly example of being endowed with prudence? **2 Chronicles 2:12**

EGW: "It came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said. Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram" "answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon," saying:-- {RH, November 2, 1905 par. 6}

"Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. . . . Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endowed with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the Lord." {RH, November 2, 1905 par. 7}

19. Who else was initially an earthly example of exercising prudence? **1 Samuel 16:18**

EGW: Even before he was summoned to the court of Saul, David had distinguished himself by deeds of valor. The officer who brought him to the notice of the king declared him to be "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters," and he said, "The Lord is with him." {PP 644.3}

20. What must we be careful about when measuring prudence? **Isaiah 5:21**

EGW: God designed to teach the people that they must approach Him with reverence and awe, and in His own appointed manner. He cannot accept partial obedience. It was not enough that in this solemn season of worship nearly everything was done as He had directed. God has pronounced a

curse upon those who depart from His commandments, and put no difference between common and holy things. He declares by the prophet: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness! . . . Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! . . . which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! . . . They have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." Isaiah 5:20-24. Let no one deceive himself with the belief that a part of God's commandments are nonessential, or that He will accept a substitute for that which He has required. Said the prophet Jeremiah, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Lamentations 3:37. God has placed in His word no command which men may obey or disobey at will and not suffer the consequences. If men choose any other path than that of strict obedience, they will find that "the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 14:12. {PP 360.2}