

## 2. New Year's Message

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Sub-title: Receiving Wisdom & Strength for 2024

We are at the beginning of a brand-new year. 2023 is now behind us. As wise people, we settle all the issues of last year, and focus on the year before us.

- We can't change the past, but we can position ourselves for a better future
- Wise decisions made today will bear rich fruit in the coming weeks and months

### Recap of last week's main points:

- God appeared to king Solomon & asked him what He can give him
- Solomon asked God for a discerning heart & the ability to distinguish between (what's) right and (what's) wrong

**1 Kings 3:5 (NLT)** *That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, "What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!"*

**1 Kings 3:9 (NIV)** *So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. ...*

**1 Kings 3:10–13 (NIV)** *The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. 11 So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for **discernment** in administering justice, 12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. 13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.*

- God wants to give us many things in 2024, but what He really wants to give us is a wise and discerning heart

### 1. Wisdom & Strength for 2024

**Proverbs 24:3–5 (NKJV)** *Through wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; 4 By knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. 5 A wise man is strong, yes, a man of knowledge increases strength;*

- It would be fair to say: Everybody wants to live in a house
- Prov. 24:3 says: Through wisdom a house is built ... (bought)
- ... by understanding it is established ... (made firm, strong)
- ...by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious & pleasant things...
- Acquiring wisdom makes us strong
- Increasing our knowledge base increases our strength

**Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)** *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.*

- In Hosea's day, God's people were destroyed because of a lack of knowledge
- They rejected knowledge of God's Word, and suffered the consequences

## **2. Wisdom, Knowledge & Understanding**

**Proverbs 4:5–9 (NKJV)** *Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. 6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. 7 **Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom.** And in all your getting, get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. 9 She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you."*

- In the Book of Proverbs, there are three words that keep re-occurring:
  - Wisdom (49 x)
  - Knowledge (42 x)
  - Understanding (54 x)
- It would be fair to say that the main message of the book of Proverbs is:
  - Get Wisdom
  - Get Knowledge
  - Get Understanding

## **3. Where does Wisdom, Knowledge & Understanding come from?**

**Proverbs 2:6 (NKJV)** *For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding;*

- 'Knowledge' has to do with information (input)
  - 'Understanding' has to do with comprehension (processing)
  - 'Wisdom' has to do with output
    - Wisdom is the ability to correctly apply knowledge
    - Wisdom helps us to minimise and / or solve problems
    - Wisdom empowers us to make wise decisions & choices in life
- When Solomon listened to the argument of both mothers, he received knowledge (1 Kings 3:16–22)
  - Having listened, he understood & comprehended what they were saying
  - But it was not until he applied wisdom & asked for a sword that the solution to the problem was revealed

#### 4. How do we get Wisdom?

**James 1:5 (NKJV)** *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

- a. Pray & ask God for wisdom
- b. Study the Scriptures & search for wisdom (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,)
- c. Listen to the teaching & preaching of the Word
- d. Draw on the wisdom of the Spirit of God within you

**1 Corinthians 2:13 (NKJV)** *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but **which the Holy Spirit teaches**, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

**Colossians 2:1–3 (GNB)** *Let me tell you how hard I have worked for you and for the people in Laodicea and for all others who do not know me personally. 2 I do this in order that they may be filled with courage and may be drawn together in love, and so have the full wealth of assurance which true understanding brings. In this way they will know God's secret, which is Christ himself. 3 He is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.*

- Jesus Christ is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom & knowledge
- The wisest thing that anybody can do is receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour

**Colossians 1:9–11 (NKJV)** *For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to **ask that you may be filled with the***

**knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and **increasing in the knowledge of God**; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;**

## **5. Ask for wisdom for specific areas**

- Spiritual Wisdom
- Relationship (social) wisdom
- Financial wisdom
- Nutritional wisdom
- Political wisdom
- Etc.