

Job 28:1 ¶ Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold *where they fine it.*

Job 28:2 Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass *is molten out of the stone.*

Job 28:3 He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

Job 28:4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.*

In this chapter Job talks about the value of wisdom and declares God as its source.

Job begins by painting a picture of man's search for valuable gems. It seems that from the earliest times men knew how to mine for precious metals and gems from deep within the earth. He notes that you find silver in silver mines and gold in gold mines; he also establishes that men knew how to refine these metals. Iron and brass are also taken from the earth and need refining. Those who want these metals are willing to take their light into the deep areas of darkness to obtain them. They are willing to face great dangers to possess them.

Doesn't it set your mind to wondering how men first learned such things and how they were able to accomplish such things without modern technology!

Job 28:5 *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.*

Job 28:6 The stones of it *are* the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.

Job observes that though the earth seems peaceful on the surface where sources of food are planted and grown, the deep places of the earth have fires of transformation. It is where sapphires and gold dust are formed and found.

Job 28:7 *There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:*

Job 28:8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

Job goes on to describe these places in the earth as unknown even to the birds of prey with their amazing vision and not explored by the mighty animals of the forest like the lion.

Job 28:9 He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

Job 28:10 He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

Job 28:11 He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and *the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.*

Job describes how man digs into the rocky ground and mountain caves to search out the deep places of the earth and bring out its hidden treasures.

Job 28:12 But where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of

understanding?

Job then begins to draw a contrast between searching for the treasures of earth and searching for wisdom. He poses the question of where man can find wisdom and understanding. To be able to get wisdom assumes a foundation of knowledge (facts and data about any given subject). Understanding is the ability to interpret knowledge. Wisdom is the ability to put your understanding to the best possible use.

Job 28:13 Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

Job 28:14 ¶ The depth saith, *It is not in me:* and the sea saith, *It is not with me.*

Job 28:15 It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.

Job 28:16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

Job 28:17 The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* jewels of fine gold.

Job 28:18 No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is above* rubies.

Job 28:19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Job reasons that man cannot place a price on wisdom; it's not a commodity you can get from the ground or from the seas. It cannot be bought with precious metals or gems. It is priceless in comparison to those things.

Job 28:20 ¶ Whence then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding?

Job 28:21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.

Job 28:22 Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

Again, Job poses the question of where man can get wisdom and understanding. He notes that it cannot be seen. Even the unknown world of the dead has only heard of it.

The NIV Commentary makes this observation: "That Destruction and Death have a rumor about wisdom probably means those who reach that place have a belated understanding they missed in life." This seems to be supported by the account Jesus reported of the death of the rich man and Lazarus as recorded in Luke.

Luke 16:19–31 "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich

man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Job 28:23 God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

Job 28:24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;

Job 28:25 To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

Job 28:26 When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

Job 28:27 Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

Job 28:28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Job concludes that God is the source from which man can gain understanding. This fact is shown by His ability to know and see everything on planet earth and His ability to control the forces of nature. God revealed to man that it is a healthy fear and awe of Him that is the source of wisdom. Only when we are willing to live lives yielded to Him in faith and obedience can we truly find wisdom. When we make that choice, we demonstrate good understanding.

Psalms 111:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."

Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."

Adam Clarke provides a possible scenario for God's instruction to man regarding wisdom: "This probably refers to the revelation of his will which God gave to Adam after his fall. He had before sought for wisdom in a forbidden way. When he and Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, they took and did eat. Thus they lost all the wisdom that they had, by not setting the fear of the Lord before their eyes; and became foolish, wicked, and miserable. Hear, then, what God prescribes as a proper remedy for this dire disease: The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; it is thy only

wisdom now to set God always before thy eyes, that thou mayest not again transgress.”