



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics) Lesson 2.6.5 – The Doctrine of God

The Attributes of God: Wisdom

God's wisdom refers to how God uses His vast knowledge and power according to His gracious plans for the benefit of His children. **"The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly"** (Proverbs 15:2). God's ways do not always seem wise to us, for God's ways are foolish to the natural man. But when we study God's Word and consider how God has worked throughout history, we are led to say with Paul: **"To God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever"** (Romans 16:27). **"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever"** (1 Timothy 1:17).

The wisdom literature of the Old Testament emphasizes God's wisdom demonstrated by the creation of the world. **"O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions"** (Psalm 104:24). **"The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens"** (Proverbs 3:19). Proverbs chapter 8 details how God's wisdom is demonstrated in the various things He made, arranged, and continues to control even to this day. **"He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at His discretion"** (Jeremiah 10:12). God has balanced all the forces in nature. The earth is neither too hot nor too cold for human habitation. We see this balance in the water cycle, in the intricacies of the human body and brain, and in the balance between animal life and plant life.

The wisdom of God is also evident in the way God has worked and continues to work in history up to the present time. The life of Joseph is presented in Genesis chapters 37 to 50. He was Jacob's favorite son, he was sold into slavery, he was put into prison, and God was with him all the way until he was exalted to great honor in Egypt and enabled to provide for his family and bring about the move of the children of Israel to the land of Egypt, where God wanted them to be. Joseph recognized God's hand in his life and told his brothers how the evil they had done was used by God for good. **"As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive"** (Genesis 50:20).

Eliphaz, Job's friend, was not a good counselor or comforter for Job in his troubles, but he spoke the truth when he said that God **"does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number. He gives rain on the earth, and sends water on the fields. He sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety. He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot carry out their plans"** (Job 5:9-12). Job agreed with Eliphaz and added an important point: **"He makes nations great, and destroys them; He enlarges nations, and guides them"** (Job 12:23). As history unfolds, we cannot figure out what God is doing, but Job assures us: **"God understands its way, and He knows its place"** (Job 28:23).

Daniel was known in Babylon as a very wise man, but that was only because God gave Daniel wisdom to interpret dreams and visions. Daniel recognized that this wisdom was not his, but God's: **"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him. I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of You"** (Daniel 2:20-23).

The apostle Paul revealed that God rules the world according to His grand plan for the good of His people: **“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose”** (Romans 8:28). The highest and deepest aspect of God’s wisdom is His plan for the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ and the Gospel. Paul says about this Gospel: **“We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory”** (1 Corinthians 2:7). What is this wisdom? **“Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe... We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”** (1 Corinthians 1:20-24).

The wisdom of God is centered in His plan of salvation through a crucified and risen Messiah. **“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence”** (Ephesians 1:7-8).

Questions

1. What is the difference between God’s knowledge and God’s wisdom?
2. How does God’s creation of the world demonstrate God’s wisdom?
3. How does the life of Joseph illustrate the wisdom of God?
4. What is God’s grand plan as He controls the destinies of nations?
5. Can you see God’s wisdom in the history of your nation? Explain.
6. What kind of wisdom did God give to Daniel?
7. Why does Paul call Christ crucified the wisdom of God?
8. How is the Gospel both foolishness and wisdom at the same time?
9. What events in your own life proves the truth of Romans 8:28?