

Wisdom

**A model for word study from the Bible
by Katherine Harms**

The Word *Wisdom*

Job 28:12 -- Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?

The story – Background of Job story, specifics – the three men who gather to persuade Job to confess the sin that has led to his “punishment” as they see it.

Detail leading to this verse.

Bildad, Job 25 – Who do you think you are? to protest? to justify? How arrogant!

Job – Job 26 – 31. After all these words, the men were angry, because they thought Job justified himself rather than God. In the midst of Job’s discourse, in Job 28, Job compares wisdom to great treasures that must be laboriously mined from the bowels of the earth. Yet wisdom cannot be found by the same aggressive mining techniques. He asks, “Where then does wisdom come from?” (Job 28:20) and eventually concludes, “Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.” (Job 28:28)

- Look up the word in an English dictionary
- Look up the word in a Bible dictionary
 - Harper’s Bible Dictionary
 - New Bible Dictionary – notice that there is a whole additional section on Wisdom Literature, which you may want to explore before you conclude your study of the word *wisdom*
 - Various special dictionaries – see extracts – lots of information about language and culture that will help to understand the word as used in the Bible

See Resource Guide for examples

- Look up the word in a topical Bible or topical Index
 - Nave’s
 - NASB topical index
 - New Topical Textbook

See Resource Guide for examples

- Read numerous texts that use the word
 - Job 28
 - Proverbs 15:33
 - Proverbs 9:10
 - Luke 11:31
 - Matthew 13:54
 - Colossians 2:3
 - I Cor 3:19
 - Romans 11:33

Take notes. Write down questions as they occur to you.

- Do all the texts use the same word the same way?

- After reading in both the Old and New Testaments, do you see the word any differently than when you simply read the verse in Job?
- Could you write a meaningful definition of the word *wisdom* in your own words after this study?
- If someone asked you what the Bible says about wisdom, would you feel comfortable answering that question after your study?



Thy word is a lamp to my feet.

