

## Doctrine of Prudence

1. The Hebrew word for prudent is *bene* and means, “to separate mentally (distinguish)”. It is variously translated: “attend, consider, be cunning, diligently, direct, discern, eloquent, feel, inform, instruct, have intelligence, know, look well to, mark, perceive, be prudent, regard, (can) skill (-full), teach, think, (cause, make to, get, give, have) understand (-ing), view, (deal) wise (-ly, man).
  
2. Young people can be prudent as David was said to be.
  - *1 Samuel 16:18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him.*
  
3. A prudent person is characterized by what he will or will not do.
  - A prudent person will cover the shame of showing excessive anger. *Proverbs 12:16 A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.*
  - A prudent person will receive correction and instruction and learn from it. *Proverbs 15:5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.*
  - A prudent person can foresee evil and will avoid it. *Proverbs 22:3 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*
  - A prudent person will know of and walk in the ways of the Lord. *Hosea 14:9 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.*
  
4. A prudent person is characterized by what he will or will not say.
  - A prudent person will not speak on matters beyond his or her capacity or area of expertise. *Proverbs 12:23 A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.*
  - A prudent person knows when to remain silent. *Amos 5:13 Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time.*
  
5. A prudent person is characterized by what he or she will study.
  - A prudent person wants to understand not only what is to be done but why something is to be done. *Proverbs 14:8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.*

- A prudent person values education. *Proverbs 13:16 Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.*
- A prudent person will evaluate a matter so there are no negative unintended consequences. *Proverbs 14:15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*

7. The prudent person will find rewards in life.

- There is the reward of knowledge. *Proverbs 14:18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*
- There is the reward of a good name. *Proverbs 16:21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.*
- There is the reward of a good spouse in marriage. *Proverbs 19:14 House and riches are the inheritance of fathers and a prudent wife is from the Lord.*

8. When God is determined to visit a nation in righteous judgement, He removes the prudent from their midst.

- *Isaiah 3:1 For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, 2 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, 3 The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.*

9. It is possible for foolish people to believe they are prudent in their own estimation.

- *Isaiah 5:21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*

10. God looks with disdain on the arrogance of rulers that insist they are prudent as illustrated in the king of Assyria during the days of Isaiah.

- *Isaiah 10:13 For he [Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, BC 747 to B.C. 730] saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: 14 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.*

11. Gospel truth is withheld from the worldly wise and prudent (Gk. *sunetos* (soon-et'-os), sagacious) person.

- *Matthew 11:25 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, and hast revealed them unto babes.*
- *1 Corinthians 1:19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.*

12. The unconverted can be prudent and all the more so when they are attentive and want to hear the word of the Lord.

- *Acts 13:6 And when they [Barnabas and Paul] had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: 7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.*