

Wisdom and Virtue

Here are some basic teachings from the Bible that connect wisdom and personal virtue:

- Wise people are virtuous people. Wisdom and virtue are the only path to happiness.
- A wise person has self-control, especially when it comes to speech.
- Wise people seldom speak, but when they do, they speak words that are pleasing rather than foolish.
- Wise people develop the disciplines of honesty, diligence, gentleness, and humility.
- Wise people act in ways that guarantee them a good reputation.
- Wise people are not overconfident; they put their trust in God.

Discussion Questions:

1. Whom would you consider to be wise?
2. What virtues do you think these people (and other wise people) have?
3. How can we cultivate these virtues in ourselves?

Apocalyptic Literature

Characteristics	Function
1. Heavy use of symbolism and images	Veils the meaning. Lack of specificity adds sense of mystery. Allows long-term interpretation.
2. Angels and demons	Angels emphasize the supernatural, add to a sense of mystery and dramatize divine control.
3. Written under a pseudonym	Antiquity adds to prestige of writings. Allows accurate “predictions” which foster hope and inspire right conduct.
4. Determinism	Divine control. Course of history is set with fate for the righteous and wicked. Human decisions are not predetermined.
5. Predictions of the end	During persecution, it is easier to keep going if the specific day of relief is known.