

1. Review – “Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD” - Psalm 24:3

- Cosmic Mountain
 - the place where heaven and earth meet.¹
 - the place where the presence of God dwells.
 - Mt. Sinai is an example of a cosmic mountain.
- Sufficient cultivation of character ² -
 - Why is the command to “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18; Mk. 12:31) so difficult to do?
- The goal of all humanity is to ascend the mountain of God (metaphorically) into God’s presence –
 - Out of **Foolishness** – delusion, self-deception, suffering, out of touch with reality.
 - Toward **Wisdom** – break free of delusion and self-deception, in touch with the reality of God, transcend suffering, and experience *shalom*.
- Growth Process:
 - **Proper Goal** – Jesus as our banner (Heb-*nes*) that orients us toward the goal (Gk- *telos*).
 - **Spiritual Attunement** – cultivate a “listening heart” (1 Kings 3:9). Solomon asks for a “hearing” or “listening heart.” God gives him **wisdom** (1 Kings 3:12).
 - **Cultivate a Christian Character** – habitual practice of the highest virtues of love, forgiveness, humility, courage, self-control, and trust (or faith) in God’s goodness.

2. Preview:

- Exploring Wisdom.
- How can we apply wisdom and the concept of ascending to God’s commands?
- Exodus 23:1-3 (issues of justice)

3. Divine vs. Practical Wisdom:

- Divine wisdom is a gift from God. An insight into the nature of reality that helps us understand the world and our actions within it.
- “Wisdom is the right understanding of reality” ...and the basis for a “moral and ethical life.”³

¹ L. Michael Morales, 2012. *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus*. Biblical Tools and Studies 15.

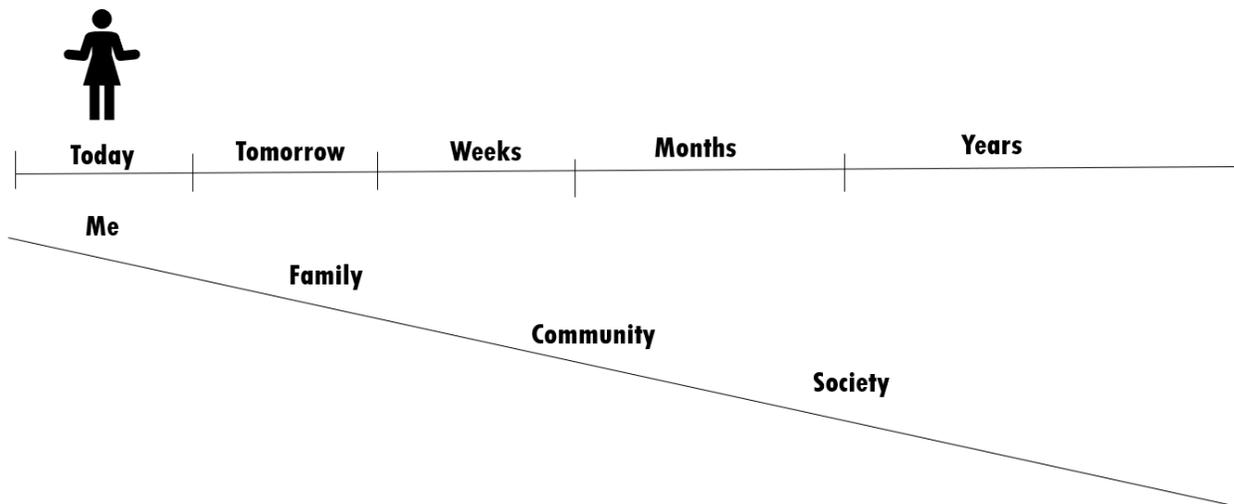
² N.T. Wright, 2010. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters*. New York: HarperOne.

³ Donald J. Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 9, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 93.

4. Wisdom produces goodness across time:

- We exist across time but have difficulty understanding the entirety of God’s cosmos and the effect our actions have on us and the world.
- Divine Wisdom gives us insight into the will of God and helps us discern right from wrong/good from evil, and shape our actions in a way that allows us manifest goodness, order, stability, and peace across time.
- Practical Wisdom helps us structure our lives in a manner that produces the highest possible amount of goodness, order, stability, and peace.

Practical Wisdom = Knowledge + Experience



5. Exodus 23:1-3 –

- Do not “carry” a false report (statement) – rumors and false reports distort reality.
 - Virtue: Self-control.
- being a “malicious witness” perverts justice which is the foundation of God’s throne (Ps. 89:14). Virtue(s): self-control, courage, and justice.
- “Do not follow the crowd” – unfortunately, the crowd is often wrong, and we are easily influenced to go along with them. It takes courage to stand outside the crowd.
 - Virtue(s): Courage and self-control.
- Testify fairly. Do not be influenced by the individual’s social status (see Lev. 19:15).
 - Virtue(s): justice, courage, self-control.