

UNLOCKING PROVERBS

THE ADVENTURES OF
ELLA AND SAM
PART 1



PRAISE PUBLISHING HOUSE

Prologue

The Grandfather's Secret

In the heart of the Kingdom of Virtue, nestled between sparkling rivers and forested hills, stood the humble village of Elderwood. Time moved slowly here. Winds sang through the tall birch trees, and every home smelled of cinnamon and stories.

Among the villagers lived two children—Ella and Sam.

Ella was twelve, a girl of keen intellect and quiet strength. She could read the stars like maps and always seemed to carry an unspoken knowing in her eyes. Sam, ten, was her opposite—impulsive, wild-hearted, and full of questions. He'd once tried to build a flying machine from feathers and string. It didn't work. But that didn't stop him.

They lived with their grandfather Elias, a quiet man with silver hair and a long cloak that smelled faintly of cedarwood and parchment. Most people believed he was just a retired librarian. He was not.

On the eve of Ella's twelfth birthday, the skies above Elderwood swirled with strange clouds. That night, their grandfather summoned them to his study—a room usually forbidden.

The old house creaked under the weight of memory, and the fire danced as if it knew the tale about to unfold. Books lined every wall. Strange globes hovered in midair, glowing faintly. And in the center of the room lay a table, upon which rested a scroll bound in gold thread, wrapped in a golden

ribbon, and sealed with wax shaped like an open eye. Beside it lay a smooth stone engraved with two words: **“Know Me.”**

Elias stood tall, his eyes twinkling, though his voice was solemn. “Ella. Sam. Tonight, I pass on to you the ancient gift of our family. A map... a scroll... a key. This was once entrusted to me. And now it belongs to you.”

He picked up the scroll reverently. The parchment pulsed gently in the lamplight. “What is it?” Ella whispered. “Not what,” Elias replied, “but who. This scroll is alive with Wisdom, forged by the breath of the **Most High**. Inside are thirty-one golden keys. Each unlocks a doorway into a world shaped by a proverb. Behind each door is a lesson. A challenge. A treasure. But not the kind that fills pockets. One that fills hearts.”

Sam leaned in eagerly. “What kind of treasure? Like... buried treasure?” Ella nudged him. “He means something deeper.”

Elias smiled, though his voice carried a warning. “Indeed. The treasure is not one you can hold in your hands, but one that will guide your hands forever. But beware, children—not all doors open to safe places. There are shadows in the world that hate wisdom and feed on foolishness. They will try to distract you, tempt you, even frighten you. But if you listen to the voice of Wisdom... you will never walk alone.”

Sam’s eyes glimmered. “And if we open all the doors?” “Then,” the old man said slowly, “you will hear the echo.”

“Echo?” they both asked.

“The echo of time—a second scroll hidden within the first. Not made of gold, but of vapor and questions. You must pass through wisdom before you can understand the weight of meaning. This is not one journey. It’s two. First, you **Unlock Wisdom**. Then... you **Unravel Time**.”

Ella’s breath caught. “And both are for us?” “Yes,” Elias whispered, his voice softer than shadow. “But be warned. The second scroll doesn’t shout. It haunts. It humbles. It will ask you what remains when everything else fades.”

Then he handed the scroll to Ella. The golden ribbon unraveled on its own. The parchment shimmered, alive with light, and unrolled just enough to reveal a map etched with thirty-one glowing marks.

At the top, the words glowed:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” —Proverbs 1:7

Ella read it aloud.

The First Scroll: Unlocking Proverbs

When dawn kissed the edge of their village, the scroll burst open, revealing a glowing map—thirty-one points of light stretching into unknown lands.

The first phase had begun: Unlocking Proverbs.

Each golden key bore the mark of its theme: wisdom, integrity, diligence, humility, justice, discipline, purity, counsel, and more. The children would walk through marketplaces of temptation, mountains of pride, valleys of fear, and gardens of insight. They would meet The Lady Wisdom,

the voice of Folly, the Ant who labors unseen, the Whisperer who divides, and the Righteous King who waits.

Some doors opened with light. Others with fire. Some felt like triumph. Others like loss.

And all the while, the scroll continued to whisper scriptures into their minds—not cold words, but living truths that guided and warned, taught and tested.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but the foolish despise instruction.” —Proverbs 1:7

With every door opened, their souls grew heavier—but not with burden. With purpose.

And as the last key turned in the thirty-first lock, something unexpected happened.

The scroll dimmed.

And then it breathed.

A new set of symbols shimmered across its parchment—this time not golden, but silver and blue. Not keys. But echoes.

The Second Scroll: Unraveling Time

Ella and Sam found themselves standing at the edge of a vast plain, where the stars fell lower and time felt slower. The map had changed. It no longer showed linear paths but circles, spirals, loops, and mirrored trails.

Their grandfather’s words came rushing back. “Wisdom will build the house... But only meaning will make you dwell in it.”

This was the second journey. No longer about right and wrong, good and evil, wise and foolish. Now the path would ask bigger questions:

1. What is the purpose of work?
2. Does pleasure satisfy?
3. What remains when youth fades?
4. What is eternal in a world of dust?

The scroll whispered again, but this time not as a guide—but as a questioner.

**“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher;
“All is vanity.” —Ecclesiastes 1:2**

**“There is a time to be born, and a time to die...
A time to weep, and a time to laugh...” —Ecclesiastes 3:2–4**

They would walk through the Halls of Time, meet the Scribe of Seasons, face The Man Who Gained the World but Lost Himself, and drink from the Cup of Futility.

And they would have to decide: Is life a vapor? Or is the vapor sacred?

This second scroll didn’t offer answers easily. It asked Ella and Sam to wrestle with a mystery. To accept paradox. To walk by light—yes—but also by faith when the light flickered.

Two Scrolls, One Journey

Together, these two books—Unlocking Proverbs and Unraveling Time—form one whole. The first speaks with clarity. The second speaks with mystery. The first gives direction. The second asks, “*Why?*”

They are not merely the tales of two siblings.
They are the tale of every soul that has ever asked:

1. “What is right?”
2. “What is good?”
3. “What is true?”
4. “And what is the point of it all?”

The Way Forward

This story is not about reaching a destination.

It’s about becoming.

Becoming wise.

Becoming grounded.

Becoming human.

Becoming eternal.

So open the first scroll. Let the keys shine.

But know—when you reach the last door... time itself will
begin to speak.

Key 1 awaits.

And beyond it, so does the echo.

That night, sleep did not come easily. The skies still swirled with strange clouds, and in their small wooden room, the golden key pulsed like a living flame. Ella tossed and turned, hearing whispers of voices she did not recognize. Sam clutched his blanket tightly, as though fighting unseen hands that reached for him in the dark.

The journey had already begun.

Chapter 1 – Wisdom Calls

Part 1 – The Marketplace of Voices

The night had been long, restless, and filled with dreams that shimmered like fragments of another world. Ella tossed and turned, hearing whispers of voices she did not recognize—voices that called her name from far beyond the borders of their village. Sam, too, stirred often, clutching his blanket tightly, as if fighting unseen hands that reached for him in the dark.

But through every dream, through every stirring, one thing remained: the glow of the **golden key**.

It hovered in the corner of their small wooden room, pulsing like a living flame, steady as a heartbeat. At times it dimmed to a faint flicker, only to flare again, filling the room with a warm radiance that painted their walls with shifting patterns of gold. It had not left them since Grandfather Elias had unrolled the scroll the night before.

His words echoed even now in Ella's heart: "Inside the scroll are thirty-one golden keys, each unlocking a door. Behind every door lies a lesson, a challenge, a treasure—not the kind that fills your pockets, but the kind that fills your heart."

When dawn stretched pale fingers across the horizon, the key stirred. It pulsed once, twice, and then darted toward the door.

Ella sat up, her breath catching. "Sam—wake up. It's moving."

Sam's eyes flew open. He saw the key shimmer, then sweep across the room like a firefly guided by unseen winds. He leapt out of bed, hair a tangled mess, excitement flickering in his voice. "It's leading us!"

Their hands fumbled with cloaks and sandals, hearts hammering as if racing ahead of their feet. Grandfather Elias lay asleep by the hearth, the scroll resting on his chest, rising and falling with each breath. They longed to wake him, to tell him what they saw—but something held them back.

"Let him rest," Ella whispered. "We carry his words with us."

Sam nodded, though his face was pale with awe.

They slipped into the morning air, the chill of dew clinging to their sandals. The River Still lay quiet, its surface like polished glass, reflecting the first blush of dawn. Oaks stretched their branches above the path like guardians, silent and solemn. And always, just ahead, the golden key drifted, never too far, never too near—beckoning.

Sam tried once to seize it, lunging with eager fingers. But his hand passed through the light as though through mist. He stumbled back, eyes wide. "It's alive," he whispered. "**Alive**, Ella."

She watched it pulse gently, her own heart echoing its rhythm. "Yes," she said softly. "Alive with wisdom."

They walked in silence, save for the crunch of pebbles beneath their sandals and the occasional flutter of doves taking wing from the trees. At last, the key slowed, hovering before a

massive **bronze gate** that loomed out of the earth itself, tall and unmoving, as if it had stood watch since the world was young.

Across its arch, words glowed, each letter carved in fire: “**Key 1 – Wisdom Calls.**”

Sam stepped closer, hand trembling as it reached toward the glowing inscription. But before his fingers brushed the letters, the gate groaned. With a thunderous shudder, it swung open, spilling light brighter than the sun. Ella shielded her eyes. Sam staggered back.

And then the light dimmed, revealing what lay beyond.

They gasped in unison.

It was a city.

Not like their quiet village where life moved slowly and simply. This was vast—crowded, pulsing, alive with noise and color. Banners streamed from rooftops, painted in every hue. Jugglers tossed flaming torches into the sky. Musicians clashed cymbals and pounded drums, each competing for attention. Merchants shouted from stalls stacked with wares that glittered in the sun. Acrobats swung from ropes high above the square, their laughter echoing like wild birds.

Sam’s eyes sparkled. “Ella—look at it! It’s amazing!”

But Ella felt her chest tighten. Something about the city unsettled her. It wasn’t just the noise or the size—it was the way every sound seemed to tug at her heart, pulling her in different directions, like invisible strings wound tight around her soul.

“Come, children!” cried a man holding trays of sweets that gleamed like jewels. “Taste what will make you happy!”

“No, here!” shouted another, his stall heavy with crooked scales. “Riches without work! Gold without sweat!”

A jester cartwheeled before them, his painted mask frozen in a grin. “Follow me! You’ll never know boredom again!”

Sam laughed, caught in wonder. He darted left, then right, torn between promises. “Ella, do you hear them? We could—”

But Ella seized his arm, her grip tight. Her heart thudded with a voice not her own. From the depth of her spirit, words ignited like fire:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.” — Proverbs 1:7

She froze. These words were not shouted from a stage. They came from within—alive, burning, undeniable.

“Sam,” she said urgently, “not every voice is true. We must be careful.”

Sam hesitated, torn between the glitter and his sister’s warning. “But they sound so good. Happiness, riches, fun—what if we’re missing it?”

Ella’s voice sharpened. **“Promises don’t make truth.”**

As they pressed deeper into the square, they saw what became of those who listened too quickly. A woman who had chased after gold stumbled out of a dark alley, her purse gone,

her eyes swollen with tears. A boy who had followed a street performer emerged pale, his laughter hollow, his spirit drained. Men who had shouted for wine now staggered in circles, their cups empty, their laughter fading to nothing.

Sam's smile vanished. His voice trembled. "This isn't a marketplace... It's a battlefield."

Ella gripped his sleeve. "A battlefield of voices."

And then, above the clamor, **another voice rose.**

It was different. Not shrill. Not slick. Not desperate. **It was strong, clear, steady—like thunder wrapped in compassion, like a river carving through desert stone.**

"Wisdom calls aloud in the street! She utters her voice in the public squares! She calls at the head of noisy places. At the entrance of the city gates, she utters her words." —Proverbs 1:20–21

The crowd faltered. Some covered their ears. Others laughed mockingly. But Ella and Sam froze, their hearts pounding, for the voice filled not only the air but their very souls.

And then they saw her.

At the center of the square stood a woman clothed in light. Her robe shimmered with dawn's fire. Her eyes blazed with justice yet glowed with mercy. Her arms stretched wide—not commanding, but welcoming. Lady Wisdom.

Her voice rang again, clear and terrible with love:

"How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? How long will mockers delight in mockery, and fools hate

knowledge? Turn at my reproof. Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you. I will make known my words to you.” — Proverbs 1:22–23

Sam’s body trembled. His voice cracked. “Ella... she’s talking to us.”

Ella’s chest tightened. She nodded slowly. “Yes. She is.”

Around them, the marketplace stirred. Some turned away angrily. Some mocked, jeering loudly. Yet a few faces softened, their shoulders lifted, their eyes filled with sudden light. Slowly, timidly, they stepped closer to Lady Wisdom.

Ella pressed her palm to her satchel, where the scroll rested. It pulsed warmly against her skin. The golden key flared brighter, urging them onward.

She turned to Sam. “We must go to her.”

Sam bit his lip, torn. “But what if she asks something hard?”

Ella’s eyes locked on Wisdom. Her voice was steady, resolute. **“Then we obey. Her way is life. Every other way leads to chains.”**

The noise of the marketplace surged again—merchants shouted louder, performers leapt higher, deceivers whispered sweeter. Yet through it all, Ella heard only one voice—the unwavering, unshakable cry of Wisdom. And she knew in her heart: this was only the beginning.

Part 2 – The Voice of Wisdom

The square quivered, as if the very stones were listening. **Lady Wisdom** stood at the center—**clothed in light**, unafraid of the noise that rose and fell like a restless sea. Around her, the marketplace strained to reclaim attention: cymbals crashed, ribbons flashed, salesmen shouted, the tightrope walker tossed his pole and caught it with a flourish. But none of it could still the trembling that had begun in hearts when **Wisdom** first spoke.

Ella felt the **scroll** warm against her side, as if its words were breathing. The **golden key** hovered near her shoulder now, a steady flame that seemed to guard her and Sam. She took her brother's hand. It was cold, even in the sunlight.

“Stay with me,” she whispered.

“I’m here,” Sam said—as if he were telling himself.

A line of jugglers formed a bright wall between them and **Lady Wisdom**, tossing knives that winked in the sun. Behind the blades, a man with a **crooked scale** pounded his table. “**Riches without work! Gold without sweat!**” To the left, a singer lifted a crystal cup and let her voice curl around the crowd like perfume. “Follow the music! You will never be sad again!” The tune was beautiful, almost holy—until every note twisted upward into self.

Ella raised her voice to Sam, but it was swallowed by the clamor. She didn’t push through the jugglers; she stepped between the knives. A blade flashed near her cheek—cold

wind—then passed. Sam hissed her name, then followed, his fingers laced through hers so tightly it hurt.

They stumbled clear of the performers, and **Wisdom's face** filled their sight again—**gentle and terrible at once**. She raised her hand, and her words rolled over the square like thunder:

**“Because I have called, and you have refused;
I have stretched out my hand, and no one has paid
attention;
but you have ignored all my counsel,
and wanted none of my reproof;
I also will laugh at your disaster.
I will mock when calamity overtakes you;
when calamity overtakes you like a storm,
when your disaster comes on like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come on you.” —Proverbs 1:24–27**

The tightrope walker missed a step. A merchant's bowl shattered. Somewhere, a child began to cry. A woman clutched her necklace and shook her head, as if the words could be shrugged off. “Harsh,” someone muttered. “She's harsh.”

Sam's jaw worked. “Ella, why would **Wisdom** laugh?”

Ella swallowed. “Not because she delights in pain.” Her voice sounded small against the square. “Because there's a time to listen. If they refuse the voice that would save them now, the moment comes when their own choices answer back.”

They both remembered the alley where the woman had run, then returned empty; the boy who had laughed until his laughter was gone.

A new sound threaded the air—**soft, sweet, low**. It did not fight the noise; it stroked it into agreement. People turned as if in a dream. Sam did too.

From the shadow of a colored canopy, **Folly** stepped forth.

She wore scarlet and violet that shifted like oil on water. Her hair fell like silk. In her hands, a **Golden goblet** steamed with a fragrance that clung to the tongue even before it was tasted—honey, spice, and something sleep-deep. **Her smile was a door left on its latch.**

“Children,” she sang, “why suffer thunder when you can have music? Why sorrow when **I** offer **sweetness without sorrow**? Come. **Turn here**. Taste and forget your fear. Drink and be **free**.”

Ella’s stomach clenched. The word **free** slid over the crowd like velvet. Men lifted their faces; women relaxed their shoulders; even a few who had started toward **Wisdom** hesitated.

Sam took a step.

Ella pulled him back. “Look at her feet,” she whispered.

Folly didn’t move, but the crowd around her shifted—and Ella saw again what **Wisdom** had shown her before: ankles circled with silver that was not silver, links that glimmered until the light touched them true—**Chains in the shape of bracelets.**

Sam blinked. For a second, the glamor misled him: the links looked like jewelry, delicate, lovely. Then the **golden key flared** brighter, and the shine faded. He saw the weight, the

chafing. He saw how those who laughed loudest could not keep from stumbling in a circle that always returned to the cup.

His voice was a scrape. “They’re bound.”

Folly’s smile never cracked, but her eyes slid toward them, measuring. “**Bound?** Oh, little ones. Those are ornaments of victory. **You must never let fear name your freedom.** She—” Folly tipped her head at **Wisdom**— “She rules by threats. **I lead by taste.**”

She lifted the goblet, and steam unfurled like a flag. “**Try it. Just a sip. Feel how light life can be.**”

Sam swayed. “Maybe just—” He choked off the words, but they had been real.

Ella’s voice shook. “**“There is a way which seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” Proverbs 14:12,** She tightened her grip. “That sweetness is **bait.**”

The **square split.** On Folly’s side: **clapping, music, warmth that made the bones sleepy.** On Wisdom’s: **light that was not soft but clean,** a wind that cleared the head. People wavered. A few mocked and sauntered to Folly, as if defiance itself were a feast. A handful wept, then moved toward **Wisdom.** Most drifted in the middle, waiting to be claimed by whatever voice spoke next.

Wisdom lifted her hand again:

“**Then they will call on me, but I will not answer.
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me;
because they hated knowledge,
and did not choose the fear of the Lord.
They wanted none of my counsel.**”

They despised all my reproof.

**Therefore, they will eat of the fruit of their own way,
and be filled with their own schemes.” —Proverbs 1:28–31**

A man near the crooked scales flinched as if struck. He shoved his table over, coins ringing everywhere, then crouched and **grabbed at what had ruined him**. The singer’s voice cracked; she swallowed and sang sweeter. A jester laughed until he coughed, then laughed at the cough.

Folly moved nearer, and the air cooled into comfort. “Look,” she said, laughing softly. “Her words bring storms; **mine bring sips. Who would choose a whirlwind when they can choose a cup?**”

Ella wanted to scream that the **cup became the whirlwind**, but the sentence felt too large for her small mouth. Instead, she did what she could: she stood her ground, **shoulder to shoulder with Sam**, and whispered, “Brother, we **must listen** to the one who loves us enough to wound us with truth.”

A thought lit in her mind—something Grandfather had said by the fire: “**The truest kindness sometimes refuses you so it can rescue you.**” She didn’t know if that was a proverb or a memory, but it gave her steadiness.

Folly’s gaze softened, like a mother’s—**no, like an actress playing a mother**. “You’re frightened,” she told Sam, ignoring Ella as if girls were made of wind. “You’re tired of choosing right and being **ordinary**. I can make you **astonishing**. Drink, and you will stop asking ‘why ’and begin **belonging**.”

Sam’s breath stuttered. He looked very young.

Ella leaned in. **“You already belong. To truth. To what’s right. To Wisdom.”** She didn’t know if she was right until she said it, and then she realized she was.

Across the square, **Wisdom** stepped forward—not to block Folly, not to argue, but to **call**:

“For the turning away of the simple will kill them. The careless ease of fools will destroy them. But whoever listens to me will dwell securely, and will be at ease, without fear of harm.” —Proverbs 1:32–33

The last words lay on the square like **bread set on a table**.

Someone in the thick of Folly’s dancers paused, head tilted, smelling bread from a long way off. Another saw the chain at her own ankle flash true and lifted her foot—startled at the weight. A young man in a glittering cloak pulled away from his friends. “I need... air,” he said, and stepped toward **Wisdom’s wind**.

Folly’s smile held, but her lashes lowered; she calculated. “Children,” she said, twirling the goblet until the steam made shapes—**castles, ships, victories without work**—“many come to me afraid of **fear** itself. **Fear is a cage. Be brave.** Take what you want.”

Ella surprised herself by answering with a steadier voice than she felt: **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 1:7**, She lifted her chin. **“That fear is not a cage—it’s a key.”**

Sam blinked at her, and in his eyes, Ella saw a small dawn.

Folly's perfume deepened, thick as honey. "Be careful, little hero," she laughed. "Keys can lock as well as open."

"**So can cups,**" Ella said, and she pointed—not at Folly, but **at the circle worn in the dust**, where feet had **danced in place** so long the ground had given up pretending it was a path.

The **golden key** at Ella's shoulder flared until the **letters on the gate** behind Wisdom brightened again—**Key 1 – Wisdom Calls**—as if to stamp the moment. The crowd stirred.

"Choose," Folly whispered, and in that whisper were **a thousand good excuses**.

Sam squeezed Ella's hand so hard it hurt. He set his jaw, then—slowly, as if turning through water—**faced Wisdom**.

"We choose you," he said, his voice low but clean.

A silence opened—a held breath—and then broke, like the first wave over a reef. Not everyone rejoiced. Some jeered. Some shrugged. Some clapped once and stopped, as if their hands had quarreled. But a few faces **lit with relief**, as if someone had said the thing they had been dying to say first.

Wisdom nodded, and the **light around her softened**. She lifted her hand toward Ella and Sam, and the air changed—a **clarity**, a **quiet** that the square could not forge or fake. It felt like **home**.

"Come," she said, and the word was both invitation and **answer**.

They crossed the last steps to her side. Up close, **Wisdom's eyes held laughter and grief together**, like rain on warm stone. "You have heard," she said. "Now you must **learn.**"

"We will," Ella said, surprised again to find her voice ready.

Wisdom touched the space just over Ella's heart, where the **scroll** rested, and then the space over Sam's, where courage went to hide. The **golden key** bobbed between them like a small sun, then **blazed**, splitting into threads of light. One thread, fine as hair, **sank into each of them**—a warmth that did not burn but **clarified**, as if someone had cleaned the glass behind their eyes. Another thread wove itself into a **second key**, which formed in the air—no longer gold but **silver**, shimmering with a quieter promise.

It floated into Ella's palm. Along its shank, words shone:

"Key 2 – The Treasure of Wisdom."

Folly's perfume thinned. Her smile held, but the edges frayed. "Treasure?" she laughed lightly. "Treasure is for **keepers**. Drinkers do not **keep**—they **live.**"

Ella closed her fingers around the **silver key**. "We will live," she said, her voice small and stubborn. "Just not the way you sell it."

Folly tilted her head, as if to say, *We shall see*, and let the crowd fold around her again—music rising, feet turning, **chains chiming like bracelets.**

Wisdom gestured, and the **bronze gate** that had opened into the city of noise **faded like breath on glass**. In its place, another **arch** stood—**stone cool and pale**, carved with **roots and rivers and a tree whose leaves gleamed even in shadow**. Time felt different here, **stretched and patient**, as if all hurry had to remove its shoes.

“This is the **door** your second key unlocks,” Wisdom said. “You have **chosen** to listen; now you must **seek**. **What you choose in the square must become how you live on the path.**”

Sam looked at the carvings—**roots that dug deep, rivers that ran long**. He touched the **silver key** with the back of one finger. “Will it be... hard?”

Wisdom’s smile warmed like morning on stone. “Hard, and **happy**. **Treasure** that is **not dug** is **not kept**. But hear this: **you will not dig alone.**”

She stepped aside. The **arch** waited.

Ella glanced back for one heartbeat. The square was still there—distant now, a **bright lure on the horizon**—and in that far-off brightness she thought she saw **Folly’s cup** flash once like a lighthouse that wanted ships to crash. She turned away and pressed the **silver key** to the **lock** at the arch’s heart.

Metal kissed stone. A note low and pure rang through the trees.

The door swung inward.

A **cool light** spilled out, green as **leaves under water**. Ella and Sam crossed the threshold, and the town of clamor fell away like a loud memory finally finished. Under their feet, the

ground was **soft with moss**. Above, **branches braided a vaulted ceiling**, and through the weave, the sky looked **young**.

They stood at the edge of a **grove** that felt older than the market by a thousand years and yet somehow **new every hour**—paths laced away in quiet, smelling of rain and bark and **something like bread**.

The scroll in Ella's satchel warmed again, and a phrase opened inside her like a hand:

**“My son, if you will receive my words,
and store up my commandments within you;
so as to turn your ear to wisdom,
and apply your heart to understanding;
yes, if you call out for discernment,
and lift up your voice for understanding;
if you seek her as silver,
and search for her as for hidden treasures;
then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
and find the knowledge of God.” —Proverbs 2:1–5**

Sam breathed it out with her, eyes wide. **“Seek her as silver... hidden treasures.”**

Ella lifted the **silver key** that had brought them here. It gleamed more softly in this light, as if pleased to be named.

Behind them, the **archway dimmed**, not shut but changed—like a page after it's been turned. A **stream** ran along the path ahead, shallow and swift, chuckling against stones that looked like **letters** if you stared too long. Trees leaned close. Somewhere, a **hammering sound** came regular and sure, as if a heart were building something.

Wisdom's voice came from the grove itself now, not thunder but **thread**—woven through leaves, water, wind. **“Welcome to the field where treasure is kept. Here, seeking is finding in slow motion. Here, what you plant is what you become.”**

Sam laughed once, a little startled at how light it sounded in this place. “I think I like slow motion.”

Ella smiled. “I think I **need** it.”

They stepped forward together, and the **moss gave way to a path of firm earth**, set with stones that seemed to **remember footsteps**. As they walked, **Lady Wisdom's words** lingered like a banner behind and a lamp before:

“Whoever listens to me will dwell securely, and will be at ease, without fear of harm.” —Proverbs 1:33

The square with its thousand voices faded to a rumor in the trees.

Chapter 1 – Wisdom Calls had done its work: choice made, voices tested, key received.

Ahead, the grove opened wider, and a **low door of living wood** appeared—**veined with roots, hinged with vine, knob of stone**. On it were carved two words that **glowed when the light shifted**:

Chapter 2 — The Treasure of Wisdom.

Ella and Sam traded a breath that was half laugh, half prayer. Ella fit the **silver key** to the **living lock**.

The door answered like a friend.

PRAISE THE LORD

PRAISE PUBLISHING HOUSE

“Bible Engagement Through Creativity — Turn Creativity Into Worship.”

OUR MISSION

“To inspire people of all ages to engage with the Bible through creative, beautiful, and spiritually rich resources that transform hearts, renew homes, and revive communities.”

OUR PUBLISHING FOCUS

Bible-centered Children’s Books • Bible Stories • Devotionals • Coloring & Activity Books • Scripture Resources • Christian Educational & Family Resources

FEATURED BOOK

Unlocking Proverbs — The Adventures of Ella and Sam

Join Ella and Sam as they discover the timeless wisdom of Proverbs through exciting adventures and meaningful lessons. A faith-filled journey that helps young readers explore wisdom, character, good choices, and the practical truths of God's Word.

Available in: Paperback • Hardcover • eBook

Distributed through: Amazon • IngramSpark

PUBLISHING WITH A PURPOSE

“Creating resources that bring God's Word into hearts, homes, families, churches, and communities.”

CONNECT WITH US

Website: praisepublishinghouse.com

Email: connect@praisepublishinghouse.com

Facebook: facebook.com/share/1ER3iXFryA/

Instagram: instagram.com/praisepublishing.house/

Pinterest: pin.it/2Wr4WePPN

TikTok: tiktok.com/@praise_publishing_house9

Follow us for new books, Bible resources & spiritual inspiration.

Praise Publishing House