

Wisdom & Folly

Proverbs 9:1-18

Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece

Lord's Day June 5th, AD 2022

OUTLINE OF PROVERBS:

1) Collection I¹

1:1-7 - Introduction

Purpose:

1:2-3 - 2 To hear wisdom [Hokmah] and instruction [musar], To see the words of understanding, 3 To grab the instruction [musar] of success [haskel], Justice [truth], judgment [choice], and equity [order/beauty];

Thesis:

1:7 - 7 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

A - 1:8-19 - The Father's Invitation vs. The Gang's Invitation

B - 1:20-33 - Wisdom Rebukes the simple

C - 2:1-22 - The Father Warns against evil men and the unchaste woman

D - 3:1-4:27 - The Father Commands that teaching be heeded

D' - 5:1-6:35 - The Father warns against the unchaste woman

C' - 7:1-27 - The Father Warns against the Woman Folly

B' - 8:1-36 - Wisdom's invitation to the simple

A' - 9:1-18 - Wisdom's Invitation vs. Folly's Invitation to the simple

2) Collection II - 10:1-22:16 - The Proverbs of Solomon

3) Collection III - 22:17-24:22 - The Thirty Sayings of the Wise

4) Collection IV - 24:23-34 - Further Sayings of the Wise

5) Collection V - 25:1-29:27 - More Proverbs of Solomon from Hezekiah's Men

6) Collection VI - 30:1-33 - The Sayings of Agur Son of Jakeh

7) Collection VII - 31:1-31:31 - The Sayings of Lemuel

¹ Collection I outline Modified from Bruce Waltke NICOT: Proverbs - page 12

TEXT - PROVERBS 9:1-18 - Chiasm Part A' - Rival Invitations

Wisdom's Invitation:

9:1 Wisdom has built her house,

She has hewn out her seven pillars;

2 She has slaughtered her meat,

She has mixed her wine,

She has also [arranged] furnished her table.

3 She has sent out her maidens,

She cries out from the highest places of the city,

4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"

As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,

5 "Come, eat of my bread

And drink of the wine I have mixed.

6 Forsake foolishness and live,

And go in the way of understanding.

1) V.1-3 - Preparation for the Feast

a) Wisdom - look at the things she says and does

b) Activity - initiative, investment

i) Built her house

(1) Proverbs 14:1 - The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

(2) Proverbs 24:3-4 - 3 Through wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established; 4 By knowledge the rooms are filled With all precious and pleasant riches.

ii) Hewn out her 7 pillars - size, open, facing the inner courtyard.

(1) In a city this is very large (arabic proverb says that a rich man's house has 12 pillars)

(2) Think of modern large houses with windows that are large and face into the private garden or back yard or nice pool area and allow light or the enjoyment of a view.

iii) Slaughtered - food prepared to have a feast in hospitality

iv) Mixed - drinks prepared for hospitality

v) Furnished Table - ready for hospitality

(1) A Theology of Feasting - Meats, Wines, Table

(a) Superiors honoring a table of invited guests with

blessing of enjoyment and wisdom - blessed, fed,
taught, and charged to good service.

(b) Peers honoring each other with each other's resources.

(c) Inferiors honoring superiors in thanks.

vi) Sent out her maidens - the feast is ready, servants are employed to
draw in (father and mother and pastor-teachers)

vii) She cries out

2) V. 4-5 - Invitation to the Feast

a) Invitation to simple

b) Invitation to those who lack understanding

c) Offer of symbolic foods

i) Eat bread

ii) Drink mixed wine

3) V. 6 - Conclusion - Life

a) Forsake foolishness - put away death

b) Live - have life

c) Go in the way of understanding - How to live

Wisdom from Wisdom:

**7 “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself,
And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.**

8 Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;

Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;

Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

4) Correcting/rebuking a scoffer/wicked man brings shame upon/harms oneself.

a) Do you want to be the kind of man whom no one is willing to correct or
rebuke?

5) Correcting the scoffer brings hatred. Why?

6) Correcting the wise brings love. Why?

7) Give instruction to a wise man and he grows in wisdom.

8) Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

**10 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.**

**11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
And years of life will be added to you.**

**12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
And if you scoff, you will bear it alone.”**

- 9) The knowledge of God as the good, of how you are not sufficiently good, and how God will judge sin is the starting point of Wisdom.
- 10) The knowledge of the Holy one is understanding because it allows you to define things with clarity - everything derives its identity from its relationship to God.
- 11) Long life comes from wisdom - everlasting life (John 17:3 and the proverbial tendency).
- 12) Egoism
 - a) Wisdom for you
 - b) Scoffing brings suffering for you

Folly's Invitation:

**13 A foolish woman is [boisterous] clamorous;
She is simple, and knows nothing.**

**14 For she sits at the door of her house,
On a seat by the highest places of the city,**

**15 To call to those who pass by,
Who go straight on their way:**

**16 “Whoever is [naive] simple, let him turn in here”;
And as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,**

**17 “Stolen water is sweet,
And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”**

**18 But he does not know that the dead are there,
That her guests are in the depths of [Sheol] hell.**

- 13) V.13-15 - Preparation for the meal
 - a) Being disorderly and loud rather than meek/controlled and quite
 - b) Activity / Attributes
 - i) Callout
 - ii) Location
- 14) V. 16-17 - Invitation
 - a) Invitation to gullible
 - b) Invitation to those who lack understanding
 - c) Offer of symbolic foods
- 15) V. 18 - Conclusion - Death

Chiastic Parallel - Proverbs 1:8-19

**8 My son, hear the instruction of your father,
And do not forsake the law of your mother;
9 For they will be a graceful ornament on your head,
And chains about your neck.**

**10 My son, if sinners entice you,
Do not consent.**

**11 If they say, “Come with us,
Let us lie in wait to shed blood;
Let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause;**

**12 Let us swallow them alive like Sheol,
And whole, like those who go down to the Pit;**

**13 We shall find all kinds of precious possessions,
We shall fill our houses with spoil;**

**14 Cast in your lot among us,
Let us all have one purse”—**

**15 My son, do not walk in the way with them,
Keep your foot from their path;**

**16 For their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed blood.**

**17 Surely, in vain the net is spread
In the sight of any bird;**

**18 But they lie in wait for their own blood,
They lurk secretly for their own lives.**

**19 So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain;
It takes away the life of its owners.**

Key Points of Doctrine:

- 1) Understanding - Seeing the meaning of things
- 2) Discernment - Seeing the difference between things
- 3) Knowledge - Belief of the truth with a rational justification (an account) of the reasons the content must be true.
- 4) Hokmah - Wisdom - The knowledge of what is good and how to get what is good.
- 5) Musar - Instruction/Training - The work of helping to inculcate, nurture, cultivate, prune, and guard wisdom where it is being planted. This process includes helping the disciple to establish holy goals and relationships, and regularly make righteous choices.
- 6) Holiness - Purpose, goal, dedication, loyalty, intercession, prayer, self sacrificial service for the goal and for those whom you love.
- 7) Friendship - Friends are people who are committed to the good. This commitment is frequently tested and shows itself in life through words and deeds. It will show itself in commitment to the right means to seek one's own good, commitment to the right means to seek the good for you, commitment to the right means to seek the good generally, and in seeking to work together for the good.
- 8) Loyalty - Loyalty is the virtue of holding to commitments to work for the good of another by the lawful means in an appropriate priority level given other duties. Our chief loyalty must always be with God. The 5th commandment helps us to think about our loyalties. The Larger Catechism really does a great job of explaining the duties of people to each other based upon station (See Questions 123-133 in the WLC).
- 9) Covenant - A covenant is a commitment formed by swearing, with life or death consequences, with duties defined by God. The closest and most duty bound relationships are covenanted relationships - God and the individual, Household, Church, and State. Covenants help to make clear what the order of loyalties is in each circumstance by helping to draw out what God's law teaches. Covenants create hedges of discipline and accountability and provide secure zones for openness and the mutual enjoyment of blessing.
- 10) The Simple / The Gullible / The Naive - (Peti) - a raw youth, one without knowledge - swayable - blown about by every wind of doctrine but not having settled on the knowledge of the truth.
- 11) The Fool - (ewil and kesil) - Morally compromised blockheads who suppress the truth because of hardening into the love of sin

- a) ewil - obtuse from moral perversion - idiot - foolishly causes trouble
 - b) kesil - morally perverse because of obtuseness - thick, fat, overconfident - foolishly fails to prevent trouble
- 12) The Scornor / The Mocker - (les) - The Preacher of evil, the overpowered by pride/arrogance, well versed in attacking truth, defiling the pure, and mocking virtue. The anti-wise, the anti-prophet.
- 13) The Unfaithful Woman - One who does not keep loyalty or covenant in holiness. One who gives affections where they are not due instead of where they are due.

Application:

- 1) The Feast of Wisdom and a Theology of Feasting:
 - a) Church and inviting people to the feast on wisdom
 - b) Hospitality & Family Worship done with excellence and beauty
 - c) Raising Children to have beautiful and excellent minds and bodies and skill
 - d) Women - Helping your husband or father with excellence and beauty
 - e) Men doing dominion with excellence and beauty
 - f) Display Wisdom with excellence and beauty
 - g) Display Holiness with excellence and beauty
 - h) Display Righteousness with excellence and beauty
 - i) Building your home and estate so that it is ruled by the Word with Excellence and Beauty - Last Samurai
- 2) Evaluate and Unite with and be loyal to Wisdom and the wise - give your treasure, service, favor, and loyalty to sages and wisdom
- 3) Evaluate and Stay Away from Folly and fools - do not give your treasure, service, favor, and loyalty to fools and folly