

# Proverbs 1 Commentary

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How blessed is the man who finds wisdom,  
And the man who gains understanding.  
Proverbs 3:13

| Proverbs Overview               |                                  |                                      |   |                                |                                  |                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Purpose of Proverbs<br>Pr 1:1-7 | Proverbs to Youth<br>Pr 1:8-9:18 | Proverbs of Solomon<br>Pr 10:1-24:34 | Proverbs of Solomon (Hezekiah)<br>Pr 25:1-29:27 | Words of Agur<br>Pr 30:1-30:33 | Words of Lemuel<br>Pr 31:1-31:31 |                              |
|                                 | Father's Exhortations            | First Collection of Solomon          | Second Collection of Solomon                    | Numerical Proverbs             | Wisdom for Leaders<br>Pr 31:1-9  | Virtuous Wife<br>Pr 31:10-31 |

|                                     |                              |                          |   |                                      |                                    |                             |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Title:</b><br>Proverbs Pr<br>1:1 | Precepts<br>of Wisdom        | Proverbs of<br>Solomon   | Proverbs Copied<br>by Hezekiah's<br>Men | Proverbs<br>of Agur                  | Proverbs<br>of Lemuel<br>Pr 31:1-9 | Capable<br>Wife<br>31:10-31 |
| <b>Theme:</b><br>Proverbs Pr<br>1:7 | Wisdom for<br>Young Men      | Proverbs for<br>Everyone |   | Personal Notes from<br>Agur & Lemuel |                                    |                             |
| Prologue                            | Principles of Wisdom         |                          |   | Epilogue                             |                                    |                             |
| <b>Commend<br/>Wisdom</b>           | <b>Counsel<br/>of Wisdom</b> |                          |   | <b>Comparisons<br/>of Wisdom</b>     |                                    |                             |

**What is a proverb?** First, what it is not - a proverb is not a promise or saying definitely guaranteeing the outcome that is being discussed (See MacArthur below). Second, proverb is the Hebrew word **mashal** which means comparison, similar, parallel. In short, a proverb is a figure of speech in which the author uses comparison in order to present a pithy, poignant observation or instruction. A proverb is a timeless truth in the form of a simple illustration that exposes a fundamental reality of life. Proverbs are practical (not theoretical), easy to memorize (Are you practicing the discipline of Biblical memorization?) and imminently applicable to real life situations.

**Are the Proverbs guaranteed Promises? No.** John MacArthur offers a good perspective: A final area of challenge comes in understanding that proverbs are divine guidelines and wise observations, i.e., teaching underlying principles (Pr 24:3, 4) which are not always inflexible laws or absolute promises. These expressions of general truth (cf. Pr 10:27; 22:4) generally do have "exceptions," due to the uncertainty of life and unpredictable behavior of fallen men. God does not guarantee uniform outcome or application for each proverb, but in studying them and applying them, one comes to contemplate the mind of God, His character, His attributes, His works, and His blessings. All of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge expressed in Proverbs are hidden in Christ (Col. 2:3).

**MacArthur adds:** The word "proverb" means "to be like," thus Proverbs is a book of comparisons between common, concrete images and life's most profound truths. Proverbs are simple, moral statements (or illustrations) that highlight and teach fundamental realities about life. Solomon sought God's wisdom (2Chr 1:8-12) and offered "pithy sayings" designed to make men contemplate 1) the fear of God and 2) living by His wisdom (Pr 1:7; 9:10). The sum of this wisdom is personified in the Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 1:30).

**Wilkinson:** Proverbs is the most intensely practical book in the Old Testament because it teaches skillful living in the multiple aspects of everyday life. Its specific precepts include instruction on wisdom and folly, the righteous and the wicked, the tongue, pride and humility, justice and vengeance, the family, laziness and work, poverty and wealth, friends and neighbors, love and lust, anger and strife, masters and servants, life and death. Proverbs touches upon every facet of human relationships, and its principles transcend the bounds of time and culture. (Talk thru the Bible)

**Theme of Proverbs:** The **fear of the LORD** is the beginning of **knowledge**. Fools despise **wisdom** and **instruction**. (Pr 1:7-note).

The **Septuagint** rendering amplifies the meaning of Pr 1:7-note - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (sophia); and there is good understanding (sunesis = "putting together the pieces") to all that practice it: and piety (eusebeia) toward God is the beginning of discernment (aisthesis); but the ungodly (asebes) will set at naught wisdom and instruction (paideia = "child training")." The Greek emphasizes wisdom instead of knowledge. Notice that "fools" are equated with the ungodly.

The **fear of the LORD** is the beginning of **wisdom**, and the **knowledge** of the Holy One is understanding. (Pr 9:10)

Note that this **fear** is not "shaking fear" but a reverential awe. It is like a child who fears disappointing their father or losing his approval and thus it is a "healthy" fear, good for our "spiritual health!"

**Key Words (NAS95):** Wisdom (48x/47v), Righteous(ness)(90x/89v), Guidance (3x), Wise (62x/58v), Fear of the LORD (14x), my son (23x), Knowledge (40x/39v), Understand(ing) (56x/55v), Instruction (16x), Discipline (17x), Commandment/command (11x), Tongue (18x), Foolish (12x/11v), Fool(s) (58x), Tongue (18x), Evil (58x/55v), Wicked (83x/82v), Life (46x), But (246x/242v).

**Jack Hayford** (Spirit Filled Life Study Bible)- Proverbs make frequent use of vivid contrasts

- Wisdom versus Folly
- Righteousness versus Wickedness
- Good versus Evil
- Life versus Death
- Prosperity versus Poverty

- Honor versus Dishonor
- Permanence versus Transience
- Truth versus Falsehood
- Industry versus Indolence
- Friend versus Enemy
- Prudence versus Rashness
- Fidelity versus Adultery
- Peace versus Violence
- Goodwill versus Anger
- God versus Man

**Sidlow Baxter** has a useful, albeit non-exhaustive topical compilation of proverbs (which he extracted from

- Adultery—Pr 5:1-4; 6:20-35; 29:3
- Anger—Pr 14:29; 15:1; 22:24; 29:22; 30:33
- Borrowing—Pr 6:1-5; 20:16; 22:7, 26-27
- Bribes—Pr 17:8, 23; 18:16; 21:14; 28:21
- Chastening—Pr 3:11-12; 12:1; 22:5; 25:12
- Death and Sheol—Pr 5:5; 7:27; 8:36; 9:18; 11:17; 14:32; 15:11, 24; 23:14; 30:16
- Discipline—Pr 1:2-3; 5:23; 10:17; 12:1; 13:18, 24; 19:18; 23:13; 29:15, 17
- Drinking and Drunkenness—Pr 20:1; 23:31; 31:4
- Enemies—Pr 16:7; 24:17; 25:21; 27:6
- Family Life—Pr 5:15-19; 6:20; 13:1; 14:1; 22:6; 23:24-25; 29:15; 31:10-31
- Fear—Pr 1:7; 9:10; 14:16; 15:16; 29:25
- Food—Pr 10:3; 12:11; 23:20-21; 25:16; 30:8
- Fools—Pr 10:18; 12:15; 14:16; 15:5; 26:3-5
- Gossip—Pr 16:28; 20:19; 25:20
- Love—Pr 8:17; 10:12; 15:17; 27:5
- Poor—Pr 14:31; 19:1, 17; 22:2; 30:8
- Pride—Pr 6:17; 11:2; 16:5, 18; 21:4
- Riches—Pr 10:15; 11:4; 18:11; 23:5; 28:20
- Sin—Pr 14:9, 34; 16:4; 20:9; 24:9, 20; 28:13
- Sleep—Pr 3:24; 4:16; 20:13; 31:15
- Sluggard—Pr 6:6-11; 12:27; 22:13
- Ways—Pr 2:8; 13:15; 14:12; 16:7, 25; 20:24; 22:6
- Wife—Pr 12:4; 14:1; 21:9, 19; 27:15; 31:10-31
- Wisdom—Pr 1:20-23; 3:13-20; 8:1-36; 9:1-6

#### Proverbs 1:1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

- **proverbs** - Pr 10:1; 25:1; 1Kings 4:31,32; Ecclesiastes 12:9; John 16:25
- **Solomon** - 2Samuel 12:24,25; 1Kings 2:12; 1Chronicles 22:9; 28:5; 29:28

### GOD'S TEXTBOOK FOR REAL LIFE!

**INTRODUCTION:** This "commentary" represents a compilation of original work by myself (especially Hebrew word studies) and excerpts from classic commentaries on Proverbs (eg, by Charles Bridges, William Arnot), as well as a host of more modern writers.

**Note** that **yellow highlighting of a word** serves to identify that there is an in depth study on that word on Preceptaustin.

- [Greg W Parsons-Guidelines for Understanding & Proclaiming the Book of Proverbs](#)
- [Bruce Waltke - Does Proverbs Promise Too Much?](#)
- [Bruce Waltke - The Book of Proverbs and Old Testament Theology](#)
- [Bruce Waltke - The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature](#)

**Spurgeon** called Bridges' commentary "The best work on the Proverbs", for "while explaining the passage in hand, he sets other portions of the Word of God in new lights."

As we begin to study the Proverbs, we would all do well to have the attitude of the sons of Korah who said "I will incline my ear to a **proverb**. I will express my riddle on the harp." (Ps 49:4-note). Therefore let us approach the **Proverbs** with reverence and awe and ask our Teacher, the Spirit, to give us the desire to incline our ears to the proverbs and then to empower our hearts to obey them in a manner which is pleasing to our Father Who is in heaven. Amen!

**Jack Hayford** adds that "it is the Spirit Who helps us mine the riches of the Proverbs, rather than Proverbs helping us understand the Spirit. (Spirit filled life study Bible)

John Sailhamer - The Book of Proverbs was not intended to be read as an exhaustive book of right actions but as a selective example of godly wisdom. ([The Mosaic Law and the Theology of the Pentateuch](#))

**Sidlow Baxter** - Proverbs are meant to be to our practical life what the Psalms are to our devotional life. This is there general significance. Here are pointed precepts for practical prudence. Here are laws from heaven for life on earth. Here are counsels from above for conduct here below. Here are the words of the wise on the ways of the world. Here is homely wit for the daily walk; but it is human wit shot through with Divine wisdom; and he who is well versed in it will be soundly guided and safely guarded. We may put it that the general message of this Book of Proverbs is Prudence through Precept.

### THREE CLUES TO THE PROVERBS: "BUT, AND & THAN"

Learn to appreciate the main features of proverb structure. Most common is the **contrasting** proverb, which catches the mind and emphasizes a truth by the compact presentation of some striking contrast. Proverbs of this type may be known at once by the almost invariable "**but**" (**See discussion of terms of contrast**) which starts the second line or member of the proverb. It has been said that **antithesis, or contrast**, is the very life-blood of the proverb. Then there are many proverbs of the **completive** type, in which the second line or member of the proverb agrees with the first, and adds to it, or carries the thought of it to some further point. These may usually be known by the "**and**" which leads the second line or member of the proverb; as in (Pr 16:3) There are proverbs which are **comparative** in their structure. Some of these are very striking in their figures of comparison (**See terms of comparison**); and not infrequently they may be at once known by the "**than**" (**Ed**: Than occurs 39 times in the NAS. Also be alert to "**as**" or "**like**" which together occur over 90 times and identify a comparison, specifically a **simile**) which leads the second line or member; as in (Pr 16:8). (Sidlow Baxter - Explore the Book)

**Jack Hayford** - Stark and immediate contrast is one of the strongest ways the writer makes his point. In Solomon's time this balancing or doubling of a true statement by following up with its opposite was an expected and satisfying literary device. (Spirit filled life study Bible)

#### Simple Outline of Proverbs 1 (David Hubbard - Preacher's Commentary)

Title (Pr 1:1)

Purpose (Pr 1:2-6)

Theme (Pr 1:7)

Call to Attention (Pr 1:8-9)

Warning Against Bad Company (Pr 1:10-18)

Summary Appraisal (Pr 1:19)

Wisdom's Denunciation of Fools (Pr 1:20-31)

Antithetic Summary (Pr 1:32-33)

### THE TITLE

**The proverbs of Solomon** () - The phrase "**The Proverbs of Solomon**" is a title for the entire book. The title does not imply that Solomon authored all the proverbs in this collection; some sections are collections from different authors: the sayings of the wise (Pr 22:17-24:22), more sayings of the wise (Pr 24:23-34), the words of Agur (Pr 30:1-33) and Lemuel (Pr 31:1-9). The title does not imply that the book was in its final canonical form in the days of Solomon; the men of Hezekiah added a collection of Solomonic proverbs to the existing form of the book (Pr 25:1-29:27). The original collection of Solomonic proverbs appears to be the collection of short pithy sayings in Pr 10:1-22:16, and the title might have originally introduced only these. There is question whether Proverbs 1:1-9:18 were part of the original form of the book in the days of Solomon because they do not fit under the title; they are not

"proverbs" per se (sentence sayings) but introductory admonitions (longer wisdom speeches). Proverbs 1-9 could have been written by Solomon and perhaps added later by someone else. Or they could have been written by someone else and added later in the days of Hezekiah. ([NET Note](#))

Proverbs 1:1-6 form one extended sentence in the Hebrew text.

**A. S. Herbert** has well stated that in the OT the **proverb** had "a clearly recognizable purpose: that of quickening an apprehension of the real as distinct from the wished for... of compelling the hearer or reader to form a judgment on himself, his situation or his conduct... This usage... comes to its finest expression in the Parables of Jesus."

## GUARD AGAINST "OVERLOADING"

The wise reader of Proverbs will keep in mind that unlike the rest of the Bible, most of the proverbs consist of a single verse with no literary context. Therefore, they are not intended to be read in large chunks but studied individually, with time taken to ponder each one. **Sidlow Baxter** adds that when you study the book of Proverbs be careful not to read "too many chapters at once. For this study read the whole Book of Proverbs through, but not too many chapters at once. With successions of maxims such as (mainly) we have here, **overloading is the enemy of remembering.**"

**Arthur T. Pierson** - A **proverb** is a wise saying in which a few words are chosen instead of many, with a design to condense wisdom into a brief form both to aid memory and stimulate study. Hence Proverbs verbs are not only wise sayings, but "dark sayings"- parables, in which wisdom is disguised in a figurative or enigmatic form like a deep well, from which instruction is to be drawn, or a rich mine, from which it is to be dug. Only profound **meditation** will reveal what is hidden in these moral and spiritual maxims.

**Of Solomon** - [NET Note](#) says this is "a genitive (possessive) of authorship or source. While Solomon wrote a majority of the proverbial sayings in the book, some proverbial sayings were written by others (e.g., Pr 22:17-24:34; 30:1-33; 31:1-9) and perhaps collected by Solomon. The name also forms a phonetic wordplay on the similarly sounding word (*mishley* [mashal transliterated], "proverbs"), as if to say the name (Solomon) is almost synonymous with proverbs.

**Solomon** was the wisest, richest, and most honored of the kings of Israel (1Ki. 3:12, 13; 4:30,31).

**IVP Background Commentary** - As is the case in modern conversations, proverbs in ancient times functioned as a colloquial means of getting a point across. Then as now they were considered ancient wisdom that must be considered seriously (see 1Sa 24:13). So when the proverb "A penny saved is a penny earned" is quoted today, the speaker is advocating the wisdom of personal thrift. In the same way, when Ezekiel quotes the proverb "Like mother, like daughter" (Ezek 16:44), he is condemning Jerusalem for following in the evil footsteps of her "mother" Samaria (compare Jer 3:6-11 for this theme, but using "sisters" as the kinship term)....Naturally, a proverb is only as useful as the context in which it is spoken. Thus the writer of Proverbs notes that "like a lame man's legs that hang limp is a proverb in the mouth of a fool" (Pr 26:7).

**Proverbs** ([04912](#))(**mashal** [Singular = mashal, Plural = misle] from the verb **mashal** - to rule [e.g., Ge 1:18] or more generally indicates idea of comparison, likeness or equality and thus to speak a proverb or popular saying comparing 2 objects, attitudes or activities -Ps 49:12-[note](#), Ezek 16:44, 18:2, 24:3) usually conveys the meaning of a wise saying (or a pithy maxim which suggest special insight and authority), but in two occurrences of the connotation of **parable** or **allegory** (as defined above) is clearly evident (viz. Ezek 17:2ff = a parable centering on two eagles, Ezek 17:12 representing Babylon and Ezek 17:15 representing Egypt, as well as centering on a vine Ezek 17:6), both in indictments against Israel for her sin. In Nu 23: 7, 18, 24:3ff. **mashal** refers not to a popular or common saying but to Balaam's prophetic oracles (the first 7 uses in Scripture). In Isa 14:4 the context is after Israel's return to the land and the song is one of contempt or taunting (mashal) directed at the king of Babylon.

A proverb is a truth expressed in brief and striking words, like "Pride cometh before a fall."

**John Phillips** noting that the root verb means **to rule** says "**Mashal** therefore are words and sayings that are supposed to rule and govern life. The book of Proverbs then is not simply a collection of bits of human wisdom. It contains God's rules." (Proverbs Commentary)

[NET Note](#) on **mashal** - In Pr 1:1 it "means an object lesson setting out courses of action. It helps one choose the course of action to follow or avoid."

**William Arnot** - It is safer and better to assume that all men know what a proverb is, than to attempt a logical definition of it. As a general rule, the things that are substantially best known are hardest to define.

**Raymond Ortlund** - What then is a Biblical proverb? The Hebrew noun "**proverb**" is related to a verb that means "to represent, to

be like." So a proverb is a little model of reality, a little verbal representation of some aspect of our daily lives. And by picking a proverb up and turning it over and over and looking at it from all angles, we can see something about our lives before we step out into the actual reality. The world says, Live and learn. God is saying, Learn and live. Think of a proverb this way. When the Wright brothers flew their airplane for the first time in 1903, they knew it would take off. How did they know? They had built a wind tunnel where they tested different wing designs before they risked their necks in actual flight. **That is what the proverbs are for. We can explore a real-life situation within the virtual reality of a proverb. We can know in advance what is going to fly and what is going to crash. Biblical wisdom tells us what life is really like.** (Preaching the Word: Proverbs—Wisdom that Works)

**Complete Biblical Library - Hebrew/English Dictionary** - The second nuance of **māshāl** implies its proverbial application, which is best examined by citing the circumstances of its usage. A popular saying of the day could embody an observation so noteworthy that it became a proverb. 1Sa 10:12 states, "Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?" (cf. Ps. 69:11; Ezek. 12:22). **Māshāl** is also used to introduce a collection of proverbs (Pr. 1:1; 10:1; 25:1; Eccl 12:9). **The purpose of a proverb** was to warn against hazardous behavior and to promote wisdom resulting in social harmony among individuals and the community. The Book of Proverbs is the most prominent example of biblical proverbs, although other wisdom literature such as Job, Ps and Ecclesiastes is filled with them also. A person or an object could become a **māshāl** ("by-word"), usually with negative connotations, as an example for others not to follow lest they become a proverbial lesson as well (Jer. 24:9; 2Chr. 7:20; Ezek. 14:8; Ps. 44:14). **Māshāl's** meaning as "a wisdom saying" overlaps into its usage as a "proverb," but is more broad in scope. The Book of Ps includes entire Ps of wisdom (Ps 1, 32, 34, 37, 49, 73, 112, 127f, 133) or wisdom themes which are comprised partially or wholly of proverbs (Ps 25:8ff, 12ff; 31:23f; 40:4f; 62:8ff; 92:6ff; 94:8-15). The prophets used **wisdom sayings** usually as a warning of impending judgment for covenant violation by the community or its leaders (Isa. 1:3; 10:15; Jer. 17:17). A **māshāl** can also refer to an extended parable, like the one in Ezek 17, which is introduced, "set forth an allegory and tell the house of Israel a parable." (Ezek. 24:3) A **māshāl** can be used as a song of mockery or jest against someone, e.g., Mic. 2:4-note Dt. 28:37; Isa. 14:4; Hab 2:6-note.

**Distinguish a proverb from a riddle** - A riddle (Heb = **chidah**) is an obscure and mysterious saying. It hides the truth it imparts, while a parable (Heb = **mashal**) elucidates the truth that underlies it by putting it in fresh light. Jdg 14:12-19 offers an example of how a riddle might be developed and handled in popular usage.

Proverbs are truths made compact and portable which is good because our memories are weak.

**Block** - The Hebrew understanding of **parable** (Hebrew = **mashal**) is broad and applies to most forms of non-prosaic, non-literal speech. Songs, poems, riddles, parables, fables, allegories, and bywords all fall within the category. (Holman Apologetics Commentary on the Bible)

**John Phillips** - All countries have proverbs, the distilled wisdom of cultures and races. "Look before you leap," "A stitch in time saves nine," "A penny saved is a penny earned," "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" are examples of English proverbs. A Zulu proverb says, "He who walks into a thunderstorm must put up with the hailstones." Scandinavians say, "Mix gray locks and golden and spoil two heads" and "Love makes an old man blind." These are sage human sayings, but the proverbs of the Bible are far more than that. They embody the philosophy of Heaven for the benefit of people living on earth.

**Preacher's Outline Study Bible** - **Mashal** has two primary meanings (1) to be like or to compare which highlights three significant characteristics of a proverb: (a) Most proverbs are composed of two parallel statements that teach one truth. The second statement presents a comparison or likeness to the first statement. (Pr.10:20). (b) Proverbs often contain truths expressed by comparisons: (Pr.25:11). (c) Some proverbs use words, images, or stories that convey an extended meaning, more fully describing a contrast or relationship. The kingdom parables of Jesus illustrate this well (Mt.13). In fact, the word parable (**mashal**) in the Old Testament is the same Hebrew word as **proverb**. In the New Testament, the Greek word for parable comes from this word as well. (2) **Mashal** also means to rule or govern. Proverbs are rules for living or stated truths that are to govern life. The proverbs however are not just any rules, but are God's rules for our lives. They have several characteristics that help the reader learn from them, elements such as... short or concise sayings, catchy sayings: constructed in such a way that makes them easy to remember, candid sayings: convicting and to the point, often making the reader uncomfortable, ethical sayings: teach only honorable principles, educational sayings: useful to parents in teaching their children, familiar sayings: often repeated and quoted, handed down through generations (1Sa.10:12; 24:13), sayings that express a general truth.

**Phil Newton** - Jesus (e.g., Mt 13:18) uses a Hebrew figure of speech known as **mashal**. It is paradox intended to arrest our thinking, and even change the way we think.

**Charles Ryrie** - Proverbs are sayings taken from everyday life intended to serve as practical guidelines for successful living.

**Lxx** uses **paroimia** = a pithy saying, proverb, maxim, "brief communication containing truths designed for initiates. veiled saying, figure of speech, in which esp. lofty ideas are concealed (Jn 10:6, Jn 16:25)" (BDAG)

A **parable** is a succinct, didactic story, in prose or verse, which illustrates one or more instructive lessons or principles. It differs from a fable in that fables employ animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature as characters, whereas parables have human characters

**NAS Usage:** byword(3), discourse(9), parable(3), parables(1), proverb(15), proverbs(6), taunt(2 = Isa 14:4, Mic 2:4-note), taunt-song(1 = Hab 2:6). **Byword** = person, place, or thing regarded as a perfect or proverbial example of something (= their name is a byword for good service) or an object of scorn or derision (e.g., in Ps 44:14 the shame of Israel was so well known and enduring that the pagan nations were using Israel as the butt of jokes and sayings (cf Dt 28:37, 1Ki 9:7, 2Chr 7:20)! **How is your testimony among the pagans? I pray it is not fodder for a byword!**)

**Mashal** - 40 v - Nu 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20f, 23; Deut. 28:37; 1Sam. 10:12; 24:13; 1Ki. 4:32; 9:7; 2 Chr. 7:20; Job 13:12; 27:1; 29:1; Ps. 44:14; 49:4; 69:11; Ps 78:2; Pr. 1:1, 6; 10:1; 25:1; 26:7, 9; Eccl. 12:9; Isa. 14:4; Jer. 24:9; Ezek. 12:22-23; 14:8; 17:2; Ezek 18:2-3; 20:49; 24:3; Joel 2:17; Mic. 2:4; Hab. 2:6

Pr 1:1 The **proverbs** of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

Pr 1:6 To understand a **proverb** and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.

Pr 10:1 The **proverbs** of Solomon. A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.

Pr 25:1 These also are **proverbs** of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, transcribed.

Pr 26:7 Like the legs which are useless to the lame, So is a **proverb** in the mouth of fools.

Pr 26:9 Like a thorn which falls into the hand of a drunkard, So is a **aproverb** in the mouth of fools.

**Herbert Lockyer** - **Mashal**, meaning proverb, similitude, parable. In a wide range of use this word "covers several forms of picturesque and suggestive speech—all those forms in which ideas are presented in the robes of imagery. As its applications are thus varied, it is variously translated in our English version." The root idea of **mashal** is "to be like," and often refers to "the sentences constructed in paraboleism," so characteristic of Hebrew poetry. The word is never used in the narrow technical sense of its counterpart in the New Testament. It is used of the figurative discourse of Balaam. (Nu 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15). It is used of short, pithy, proverbial sayings. (1Sa 10:12) Salmond remarks that "in this sense it is used of the maxims of wisdom which are contained in the book that is distinctively known as Proverbs," these maxims being given in large measure in the form of comparisons, as when it is said—

"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death" (Pr 10:2).

**Mashal** is the word used for Proverbs in 1:1; 10:1, and in the phrase, "So is a parable in the mouth of fools" (Pr 26:7, 9; see 1Ki 4:32). It is used of Job's sentences of ethical wisdom. (Job 27:1; 29:1). It is used of a dark saying, enigmatical utterances, riddles. (Ps 49:4, 78:2).

It is used to represent a figure or allegory. (Nu 17:2; 24:3). (All the Parables of the Bible)

**F B Meyer** - An old man, well known for his goodness, is full of sparkling epigrams, which he attributes to his habit of reading the Book of Proverbs through each month.

## PRUDENCE THROUGH PRECEPT

**Sidlow Baxter** - Genius of the Proverb - The English word "proverb" means a brief saying in the stead of many words (*pro* = for; *verba* = words). In popular usage it signifies any pithy saying or terse maxim. The Hebrew word, however, which we translate as "proverbs" has a much wider meaning, and is used of many discourses, sentences, and expressions which would not be classed as proverbs in English today. This accounts for the fact that not all the writings in the "Book of Proverbs" are proverbs in the usual English sense. The larger part of them, however, are true proverbs, and are proverbs of the highest order, too. The genius of the proverb lies in its shrewd concentration of a truth or of some sagacious counsel in a terse and striking way, so that it catches on, and becomes easier to remember than to forget. A proverb does not argue: it assumes. Its purpose is not to explain a matter, but to give pointed expression to it. An aphorism or proverb has several ways of catching on to the mind and the memory. It may do so by elegance of diction, by the beauty of a rhetorical figure, by its oracle-like brevity, or by its smart focusing of a poignant truth. It is not surprising, therefore, that the use of the proverb has figured largely in every nation, more so in the past than in the present era of widespread systematic education, and most of all among Oriental peoples, to whose mental cast the proverb seems peculiarly adapted. (Explore the Bible)

**Charles Bridges** - The book naturally opens with a short account of its author. **Solomon** is recorded as the wisest of men—a man of wisdom, because a man of prayer. (1Ki 3:12. Cp. Pr 2:1-6) His extraordinary wisdom was the admiration of the world. (1Ki 3:28; 4:34.) Had he been the son of Jeroboam, he would have commanded respect. But he was the son of David—formed by his godly prayers (Ps. 72:1) and counsels. (Pr 4:1-4, 1Kings 2:1-4, 1Chr. 28:9.) And if a King's sayings—even though without intrinsic merit—are preserved, much more should we listen with special interest to the wise teachings of this King of Israel (Eccl. 1:1; 12:9, 10).

After all, however, valuable as were Solomon's maxims for their own wisdom (exceeding the sages of his own or any other time) (1Ki 4:29-31); they claim our reverence upon infinitely higher ground. "Behold! a greater than Solomon is here." (Mt. 12:42) Often does he speak in the person (Pr 1:20; 8:1, 9:1; 23:26)—always under the inspiration (2Ti 3:16)—of "the **wisdom** of God;" so that his sayings are in the highest sense "Divine sentences in the lips of the King." (Pr 16:10.)

## INSTRUCTION IS YOUR LIFE!

**The great end of this inestimable book is to teach**—not secular or political wisdom (though many excellent rules of each are interspersed) (Pr 6:1-11; 27:23-27, with Pr 11:14; 14:28, 34; 20:18.)—but that **knowledge of God**, (Pr 1:7-note) which, while it "able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," also perfects and makes the man of God "adequate, equipped for every good work." (2Ti 3:15-17-note, Titus 2:11, 12-note) This is set forth in all its glowing privileges. (Pr 3:13-18) It is pressed upon us with intense earnestness—as "the principal thing"—our very "**life**." (Pr 4:5-9, 13) We are taught **instruction** as the means of gaining it. We are directed to perceive the words of understanding—to receive the instruction, as a complete rule of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity (Comp. Pr 2:9)—sound principles, and practical application.

Here also the **simple** (the naive)—so readily deluded (Pr 14:15; 21:11, Ezek. 45:20)—learn that subtlety—so needful to **discriminate between truth and error** (Phil 1:10-note, 1Th 5:21-22-note, Heb 5:14-note); to guard them from false teachers; (Psalm 17:4-note; 1John 4:1. Comp. Acts 17:11-note) and to enable them to rebuke and convince gainsayers (those who contradict or oppose) (Titus 1:9; 2:8. Comp. Mt. 22:15-46).

Especially is the **young man** directed to this book (Psalm 119:9-note. 'Over the gates of Plato's school, it was written—Μεδεις αγχωμε τητος εισπω. = Literally—"Let no one who is not a geometrician enter." But very different is the inscription over these doors of Solomon—"Let the ignorant, simple, foolish, young enter."—Cartwright in loc.—Lavater in c. Pr 4:20-22.). From want of discipline, his ardor results in waste. Let him seek for that knowledge and discretion, here so richly treasured up for him. For the religion inculcated is not that of feeling, imagination, impulse, or sentiment: but it is the **sound and healthful energy of godliness**, flowing from the vital principles of Scriptural truth. (cp 1Ti 4:6, Titus 2:1-note)

## WHY DID GOD CHOOSE SOLOMON TO AUTHOR PROVERBS?

**William Arnot** - Every writer was chosen by God, as well as every word He had a purpose to serve by the disposition, the acquirements, and the experience of each. The education of Moses as one of the royal race of Egypt was a qualification necessary to the leader of the exodus, and the writer of the Pentateuch. The experience of David, with its successive stages, like geological strata, touching each other in abrupt contrast, first as a shepherd youth, then as a fugitive warrior, and last as a victorious king, was a qualification indispensable to the sweet singer of Israel. God needed a human spirit as a mould to cast consolation in for every kindred in every age; and he chose one whose experience was a compound of meekness and might, of deep distress and jubilant victory. These, when purged of their dross, and fused into one by the Spirit's baptism of fire, came forth an amalgam of sacred psalmody, which the whole church militant have been singing ever since, and "have not yet sung dry."

**Solomon did not, like David, pass his youth in pastoral simplicity, and his early manhood under cruel persecution** Solomon could not have written the twenty-third psalm—"The Lord is my shepherd;" nor the fifty-seventh—A psalm of David when he fled from Saul in the cave. His experience would never have suggested the plaintive strains of the ninetieth psalm—A prayer of Moses the man of God—"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place." But, on the other hand, Solomon went through a peculiar experience of his own, and God, who in nature gives sweet fruit to men through the root sap of a sour crab, when a new nature has been engrafted on the upper stem, did not disdain to bring forth fruits of righteousness through those parts of the king's experience that cleaved most closely to the dust. None of all the prophets could have written the Proverbs or the Preacher; for God is not wont, even in his miraculous interpositions, to make a fig-tree bear olive berries, or a vine figs: every creature acts after its kind. When Solomon delineated the eager efforts of men in search of happiness, and the disappointment which ensued, he could say, like Bunyan, of that fierce and fruitless war, "I was there." The heights of human prosperity he had reached: the paths of human learning he had trodden further than any of his day: the pleasures of wealth, and power, and pomp he had tasted in all their variety. No spring of earthly delight could be named, of whose waters he had not deeply drunk. This is the man whom God has chosen as the schoolmaster to teach us the vanity of the world when it is made the portion of a soul, and He hath done all things well. The man who has drained the

cup of pleasure can best tell the taste of its dregs.

**The choice of Solomon as one of the writers of the Bible at first sight startles, but on deeper study instructs.** We would have expected a man of more exemplary life—a man of uniform holiness. It is certain that, in the main, the vessels which the Spirit used were sanctified vessels; “Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” But as they were all corrupt at first, so there were diversities in the operation whereby they were called and qualified for their work. There were diversities in the times, and degrees of their sanctification. Some were carried so near perfection in the body that human eyes could no longer discern spot or wrinkle; in others the principle of grace was so largely overlaid with earthliness that observers were left in doubt whether they had been turned to the Lord’s side at all. But the diversity in all its extent is like the other ways of God; and He knows how to make either extreme fall into its place in the concert of his praise. He who made Saul an apostle did not disdain to use Solomon as a prophet. Very diverse were the two men, and very diverse their life course; yet in one thing they are perfectly alike,—together in glory now, they know themselves to have been only sinners, and agree in ascribing all their salvation to the mercy of God.

**Moreover, although good men wrote the Bible, our faith in the Bible does not rest on the goodness of the men who wrote it.**

The fatal facility with which men glide into the worship of men may suggest another reason why some of the channels chosen for conveying the mind of God were marred by glaring deficiencies. Among many earthen vessels, in various measures purged of their filthiness, may not the Divine Administrator in wisdom select for actual use some of the least pure, in order by that grosser argument to force into grosser minds the conviction that the excellency of the power is all of God? If all the writers of the Bible had been perfect in holiness—if no stain of sin could be traced on their character, no error noted in their life, it is certain that the Bible would not have served all the purposes which it now serves among men. It would have been God-like, indeed, in matter and in mould, but it would not have reached down to the low estate of man—it would not have penetrated to the sores of a human heart. For engraving the life lessons of his word, our Father uses only diamonds: but in every diamond there is a flaw, in some a greater and in some a less; and who shall dare to dictate to the Omniscient the measure of defect that binds Him to fling the instrument as a useless thing away?

### **PLEASURES OF SIN: BARBED ARROWS!**

When God would leave on my mind in youth the lesson that the pleasures of sin (Ed: **Beware** - Sin *is* pleasurable, but *only* for a season! cp Heb 11:25, 1Jn 2:17) are barbed arrows, he employs the experience of Solomon as the die to impress it indelibly upon my heart. I mark the wisdom of the choice. I get and keep the lesson, but the homage of my soul goes to God who gave it, and not to Solomon, the instrument through which it came. God can make the wrath of men to praise him, and their vanity too. He can make the clouds bear some benefits to the earth which the sun cannot bestow. He can make brine serve some purposes in nature which sweet water could not fulfil. So, practical lessons on some subjects come better through the heart and lips of the weary repentant king than through a man who had tasted fewer pleasures, and led a more even life.

Two principles cover the whole case: “All things are of God;” and “All things are for your sakes.” We can never be sufficiently familiar with these two: 1. The universality of God’s government; and, 2. The special use for his own people to which he turns every person and every thing. All Solomon’s wisdom and power, and glory and pleasure, were an elaborate writing by the finger of God, containing a needful lesson to his children. The wisdom which we are invited to hear is divine wisdom; the complicated life experience of Solomon is the machinery of articulation employed to convey it to the ears of men. In casting some of the separate letters, the king may have been seeking only his own pleasure, yet the whole, when cast, are set by the Spirit, so that they give forth an important page of the word of truth.

**The thought recurs that the king of Jerusalem was not, from his antecedents, qualified to sit in the chair of authority and teach morality to mankind.** No, he was not; and perhaps on that very account the morality which he taught is all the more impressive. Here is a marvel;

### **NOT A LINE OF SOLOMON’S WRITINGS TENDS TO PALLIATE SOLOMON’S SINS.**

How do you account for this? The errors and follies were his own; they were evil **Ed:** Take a moment to read again of wise Solomon’s great idolatry and immorality in 1Ki 11:1-14). But out of them the All-wise has brought good (Ro 8:28). The glaring imperfections of the man’s life have been used as a dark ground to set off the luster of that pure righteousness which the Spirit has spoken by his lips.

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**Advice For The Groom** - The custom of a bachelor party before a wedding is often characterized by drunkenness and carousing. The party-hearty attitude seems driven by the belief that the groom will soon be married and have to settle down to a life of domestic

boredom. Not long ago, one of my nephews got married. The best man planned a get-together for Joel, but with a refreshing difference. Those invited were asked to bring some thoughts to share that would help him in this new chapter of life. When I arrived at the informal breakfast, I found a cheerful spirit of camaraderie. Fathers, uncles, brothers, and friends were animated in lively discussion. The father of the bride and the father of the groom were asked to share their advice on what they had learned in their own Christian marriage. Their thoughts were personal, realistic, and biblical.

The book of Proverbs mirrors this kind of mentoring in facing life's challenges and rewards. "My son, hear the instruction of your father . . . for [it] will be a graceful ornament on your head" (Pr 1:8, 9). **How God-honoring it would be if more couples began their marriage with an attitude that heeded the wisdom of those who walked the path before them.** --Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, give us ears to hear advice  
From loved ones wise and humble,  
So when life's challenges appear  
We will not have to stumble.  
—Sper

**He is truly wise who gains his wisdom  
from the experience of others.**  
(Caveat: Assuming the "others" are godly!)

#### Proverbs 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding,

- **To know wisdom and instruction** - Pr 4:5-7; 7:4; Pr 8:5; 16:16; Pr 17:16; Deut 4:5,6; 1Kings 3:9-12; 2Ti 3:15-17

**Pr 4:5-7 Get wisdom;** get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. 6 Do not forsake **her**, and **she** will keep you; love **her**, and **she** will guard you. 7 The beginning of **wisdom** is this: Get **wisdom**, and whatever you get, get insight.

**Pr 16:16** How much better to **get wisdom** than gold! To **get understanding** is to be chosen rather than silver.

**Deut 4:5** See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 6 Keep them and do them, for that will be your **wisdom** and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

**NET Bible** - To learn wisdom and moral instruction, and to discern wise counsel.

**NIV** - for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight;

### **PURPOSE OF PROVERBS** (Proverbs 1:2-6)

**To know wisdom and instruction** - "This is the first of five purpose clauses in the opening section (Pr 1:2a, Pr 1:2b, Pr 1:3a, Pr 1:4a, Pr 1: 6a). This clause (Pr 1:2a) reveals the purpose of the collection of proverbs in general. The three purpose clauses that follow qualify this general purpose." ([NET Note](#))

**Know** (3045)(**yadah**) does not mean simply to have knowledge of wisdom in the sense of having information about wisdom (e.g., even memorizing passages about wisdom like Pr 1:7-**note**). Indeed, **yadah** speaks of knowledge in fundamentally relational terms as in Pr 7:4 where we are exhorted to "Say to **wisdom**, 'You are my sister,'" for in the OT, one's sister was considered an intimate relative and such should be our relationship with wisdom (cp Pr 8:1). Therefore to **know** God is not just to know about Him but to be in a right relationship with Him (cp ginosko in Jn 17:3), manifesting characteristics such as love, trust, respect, and open, even intimate communication. To **know wisdom** involves intimacy and experience with wisdom, much like that which one experiences in a marriage relationship. The **Septuagint** translates **yadah** with **ginosko** a common Greek verb which emphasizes relational, experiential knowledge rather than "head knowledge" or the accumulation of facts. Knowledge possessed through the intellectual process of learning is one thing. Solomon speaks of knowledge gained by experience (**yadah/ginosko**), by an active relationship between the believer and wisdom, something far superior to the cold intellectualism. **Yadah/ginosko** is what every Christ follower should desire as their personal, permanent, protective possession (cf Php 3:10). **Ginosko** is when you experientially learn

something, either in a classroom or more often in the "classroom of life". **Ginosko** is that knowledge that comes by obeying the Lord. You may intellectually know some truth but you don't really "know" it experientially until you surrender and obey the truth, in this case God's **wisdom**. In sum, to **know wisdom** speaks of a knowledge that goes beyond the merely factual and into the realm of the experiential.

**NET Note** on **yadah** - This term refers to experiential knowledge, not just cognitive knowledge; it includes the intellectual assimilation and practical use of what is acquired. (In Pr 3:6 "acknowledge" = yadah) includes mental awareness of who God is and the consequential submission to his lordship. To know him is to obey him. The sage is calling for a life of trust and obedience in which the disciple sees the LORD in every event and relies on him. To acknowledge the LORD in every event means trusting and obeying him for guidance in right conduct.

In his famous psalm of brokenness and contrition (probably in light of his sin with Bathsheba), David declares **Behold** (this interjection calls for great attention), You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me **know wisdom.**" (Ps 51:6-note) **We would all be wise (pun intended) to make it our frequent prayer that the Father would make us know wisdom in our hidden parts! Amen!**

**Charles Bridges** - The **purpose** of this priceless book is not to teach secular or political wisdom, although many examples of each are included (Pr 6:1-11; 27:23-27), but the knowledge of God (Pr 1:7-note) that makes us wise about salvation and enables us to live godly lives (2Timothy 3:15-17; Titus 2:11-12). Wisdom's stunning privileges are set out (Pr 3:13-18). It is emphasized strongly that this is the principal thing; it is our very life (Pr 4:5-9, 13). ([Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

## **WISDOM: "MORAL SKILL"**

**Wisdom** ([02451](#))(**chokmah** [word study] from the verb **chakam** - to be wise) is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. **Wisdom** is the ability to see something from God's viewpoint. **Wisdom** is "God's character in the many practical affairs of life."

**We can get INFORMATION "on LINE" (from Google)  
but WISDOM is from "on HIGH" (from God)!**

1. **Knowledge** is what is gathered over time through study of the Scriptures. It can be said that **wisdom**, in turn, acts properly upon that knowledge. **Wisdom** is the fitting application of knowledge.
2. **Knowledge** understands the light has turned red; **wisdom** applies the brakes.
3. **Knowledge** sees the quicksand; **wisdom** walks around it.
4. **Knowledge** memorizes the Ten Commandments; **wisdom** obeys them.
5. **Knowledge** learns of God; **wisdom** loves Him.

([What is wisdom?](#))

**Chokmah** is the knowledge and the ability to make the right choices at the opportune time. The consistency of making the right choice is an indication of one's spiritual maturity. The prerequisite for this "**wisdom**" is the fear of the Lord (Pr 1:7-note). "**Wisdom**" is personified as crying out for disciples who will do everything to pursue her (Pr 1:20). The person who seeks **chokmah** diligently will receive understanding: (Pr 2:6) and will benefit in life by walking with God (Pr 2:20, cf Gal 5:16).

**Chokmah** is used most often in Proverbs, so that the reader of the "wise sayings" might **know wisdom** and allow the Truth of God to govern his or her life. It follows that it behooves every child of God to **meditate** frequently and deeply on the Words of Wisdom in the book of Proverbs (see all uses below which would be a wonderful study, making a list of what you learn about wisdom and then praying accordingly). **Do I make Proverbs a frequent and vital part of my daily intake so that my heart and mind and soul and spirit might be nourished with God's wisdom, the wisdom from on high, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy?** (James 3:17, cp Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4)? This **wisdom** is not based on upon "theoretical knowledge but shows itself in a proper discernment between good and evil or right and wrong. **Wisdom** is the divinely created system of rules that governs the "moral fiber" of the universe. To master **wisdom** is to achieve true and lasting success in life. The first step toward **wisdom**, and its controlling principle, is faith in Yahweh" (Criswell), specifically Yeshua, Jesus, "in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col 2:3- note), for Christ is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1Cor 1:24) and by God's doing every believer is "in Christ Jesus, Who became wisdom from God." (1Cor 1:30).

**Wisdom is the right use of knowledge:  
All true spiritual wisdom is found only in Christ.**

There is a "counter-wisdom" called "folly," the practice of which leads just as surely to destruction. God is the starting point for the

education that leads to **wisdom**. **Wisdom** in the biblical sense, is something more than a collection of factual information. It includes knowing how to conduct oneself in the practical affairs of everyday life, to make wise choices, to do the right thing in relation to others, and to have insight into the true nature of things. Wisdom of this kind can only grow out of an awareness of God and His purpose in the world. Fools may acquire encyclopedic information, but they cannot attain wisdom because they fail to take God into account. Wisdom is not acquired by a mechanical formula but through a right relationship with God.

**NET Note** - The noun "wisdom" (חֵכְמָה, khokhmah) could be nuanced "**moral skill**." It refers to "skill" that produces something of value. It is used in reference to the skill of seamen (Ps 107:27), abilities of weavers (Ex 35:26), capabilities of administrators (1Kgs 3:28), or skill of craftsmen (Ex 31:6). In the realm of moral living, it refers to skill in living - one lives life with moral skill so that something of lasting value is produced from one's life.

**Thayer** makes an excellent point that **wisdom** is "used of the knowledge of very diverse matters, so that the shade of meaning in which the word is taken must be discovered from the context in every particular case."

**Louis Goldberg - TWOT** - The verb is used twenty-six times and most of the passages appear in the Qal stem meaning "be wise," etc. In the Piel stem the meaning is "making wise" or "teaching." Of all the words denoting intelligence, the most frequently used are this verb and its derivatives, which occur some 312 times in the Hebrew OT. About three-fifths of the usages are found in Job, Proverbs, and Eccl.

[The main synonyms are **bîn**, **bînâ**, and **tebûnâ**. The verb **bîn** is used more widely to mean "consider," "discern" "perceive," but the nouns are close synonyms to **ḥokmâ** and are used especially in Proverbs and Job. In the well-known verse Proverbs 4:7, "understanding" is not a higher stage than "wisdom," but a poetic synonym used for emphasis. The root **śākal** is also widely used for ordinary intelligence and skill. It is often used for that wisdom which brings success—even prosperity. This wisdom was possessed by David (1 Samuel 18:14) and will characterize the Messiah (Jeremiah 23:5; Isaiah 52:13). But the Hiphil participle is used particularly in Proverbs as another synonym of **ḥokmâ**. This word, **maśkîl**, is also used extensively to designate a type of psalm. *tûshîyâ*, like *śākal*, has the double meaning of wisdom and the success which is the effect of wisdom. R. L. Harrison]

The essential idea of **ḥākam** represents a manner of thinking and attitude concerning life's experiences; including matters of general interest and basic morality. These concerns relate to prudence in secular affairs, skills in the arts, moral sensitivity, and experience in the ways of the Lord.

The subject **wisdom** was discussed throughout the ancient near east. Mesopotamian wisdom, which originated with the Sumerian, emphasized human experiences, character, and counsel regarding practical advice. The problems of death and suffering were discussed. Egyptian wisdom included the concept of *ma'at* ("truth," intelligence, "justice"), according to which one order existed in the whole universe. J. A. Wilson characterizes it as a created and inherited rightness, which tradition built up into an orderly stability (**Borrow The culture of ancient Egypt** University of Chicago, 1951, p. 48). Gods and men were subject to this order of conduct, which was taught by the priests. Some have felt that much of the OT royal wisdom, which great leaders imparted to their students, was borrowed from Egyptian wisdom (e.g. Proverbs 23:13f. borrowed from the teachings of Amenemope, although it is more likely that an original source reflects a revelation of wisdom.) Ugaritic literature also has a form of maxims concerning the father-son relationship possibly reflecting Canaanite wisdom. A later Arabic derivative of the verb denotes "to restrain from acting in an evil manner."

*OT wisdom is the teaching of a personal God Who is holy and just  
and Who expects those who know Him to exhibit His character  
in the many practical affairs of life*

The wisdom of the OT however, is quite distinct from other ancient world views although the format of wisdom literature is similar to that of other cultures. Reflected in OT wisdom is the teaching of a personal God Who is holy and just and Who expects those who know Him to exhibit His character in the many practical affairs of life. This perfect blend of the revealed will of a holy God with the practical human experiences of life is also distinct from the speculative wisdom of the Greeks. **The ethical dynamic of Greek philosophy lay in the intellect; if a person had perfect knowledge he could live the good life (Plato). Knowledge was virtue. The emphasis of OT wisdom was that the human will, in the realm of practical matters, was to be subject to divine causes. Therefore, Hebrew wisdom was not theoretical and speculative. It was practical, based on revealed principles of right and wrong, to be lived out in daily life.**

In the historical and prophetic books, the word **ḥokmâ** is sometimes used just to refer to ordinary intelligence

and skill (Exodus 35:35; Daniel 1:4), but even there sometimes the divine and moral wisdom is in view.

The wisdom literature, while sometimes using wisdom as prudence and cleverness, majors on ethical and spiritual conduct. Because God revealed himself to Israel, their sacred literature has the effect of a divine imperative; *hākām* refers to godly cleverness and skill, which results in practical action. The one who hears (Proverbs 8:33; Proverbs 23:19; Proverbs 27:11), will be industrious, will know how to talk, and his will, will be in captivity to God's. He will have life. This wins divine approbation.

*hokmā*. Wisdom. The usages of *hokmā* cover the whole gamut of human experience. Wisdom is seen in the skill of technical work in making garments for the high priest (Exodus 28:3), craftsmanship in metal work (Exodus 31:3, 6), as well as the execution of battle tactics (Isaiah 10:13). Wisdom is required from government leaders and heads of state for administration (Deut. 34:9; 2 Samuel 14:20), including pagan leaders as well as Israelites (Ezekiel 28:4-5). The Messiah demonstrates wisdom and discernment in his function as leader of his people (Isaiah 11:2).

Wisdom is expressed in shrewdness. The woman of Tekoa averted a town's bloodshed in her clever plea for its safety (2 Samuel 20:22). But a shrewd person is not to boast of his gift (Jeremiah 9:22). The ostrich displays traits lacking shrewdness when she acts in her silly selfish manner (Job 39:17). The gift of shrewdness can be used in an ungodly way to deny the omniscience of God (Isaiah 47:10).

Prudence, an aspect of wisdom, is expressed by those who speak with wisdom (Psalm 37:30; Proverbs 10:31), and who use time carefully (Psalm 90:12). This kind of wisdom in the practical affairs of life is derived from the revelation of God (Isaiah 33:6).

The source of all wisdom is a personal God who is holy, righteous, and just. His wisdom is expressed against the background of his omnipotence and omniscience. By his wisdom God numbered the clouds (Job 38:37), founded the earth (Proverbs 3:19), and made the world (Jeremiah 10:12). Wisdom, being found in God, is regarded as a divine attribute (Job 12:13). He alone knows wisdom in its truest sense (Job 28:20, 23). The wisdom of God is not found in man's speculation. He alone must provide this wisdom for man's guidance so that man can live the best possible moral and ethical life (Proverbs 2:6; Job 11:6).

In proverbial fashion, the Bible personifies divine wisdom so that it seems to be a hypostasis of God, but stops just short of giving it separate existence. This wisdom was brought forth before all things (Proverbs 8:22-31). She has built a house and prepared a banquet for those who will listen to her (Proverbs 9:1f.). She even teaches in public places (Proverbs 1:20; Proverbs 8:1, 6, 11-12). By her instruction her students receive a divine spirit (Proverbs 1:2), the naive become wise, politicians become wise, and those who receive from her wealth are crowned with honor and riches (Proverbs 8:1-21).

This personification of wisdom is unique. While there were gods and goddesses in the ancient near east who were thought to possess the gifts of wisdom it is unlikely that any existed by the name of wisdom. The figure of wisdom in the OT never came to be regarded as a deity independent of the Lord although some such expressions occur in Proverbs 8. These have often been taken as an adumbration of Christ. Wisdom did attain a degree of personification, with features which were by no means abstract. Wisdom should not be regarded as God but it does belong to God; it is one of his attributes. Wisdom has a personal existence in the living word of the NT, but wisdom is not the Logos herself (Delitzsch, Proverbs, p. 183). That Wisdom is personified as a woman in Proverbs 1-9 is partly explained by the fact that the noun is feminine. There the Lady Wisdom is contrasted with the woman Folly who is personified sin. Note the studied contrast of Proverbs 9:4-6 and Proverbs 9:16-18. This personification of wisdom is not found outside these chapters.

Wisdom for man is not only to make one humanly wise, but also to lead him to fear the Lord, for this is the beginning of all wisdom (Job 28:28). True wisdom for man involves knowing the Holy One. So, men are to listen to the wisdom of God with attentive ears (Proverbs 2:2). In fact, inner happiness only comes when man attains this wisdom (Proverbs 3:13) through a strenuous search (Proverbs 2:4), which is actually a search for God himself (Proverbs 2:5). Skeptics will never find this wisdom and will never know the full meaning of life (Proverbs 14:6f.). In the great poem of Job 28 wisdom in this special biblical sense is practically defined as trust in God and the avoidance of sin. (Cf. the emphasis on *hokmā* as referring to moral wisdom in contrast to sinful folly in R. L. Harris, "Proverbs," in WBC, pp. 553-54.)

**Ortlund - Wisdom** is skill, expertise, competence that understands how life really works, how to achieve successful and even beautiful results. We see a picture of wisdom in Exodus 35:31, where the word translated "**wisdom**" in Proverbs 1:2 is used for the skill of an artist adorning the tabernacle. We see wisdom in Jeremiah 10:9 where the expertise of goldsmiths is called "the work of **skilled** (Ed: Hebrew = adjective *chakām* derived from noun *chokmah*) men," or wise men. We see **wisdom** in Psalm 107:27 for the

know-how of sailors, who use the winds and tides to make their way through the sea to their destination. Whether craftsmanship working with the materials of life or seamanship steering through the currents of life, so to speak, **wisdom** understands how real life can work well. **Wisdom** knows better than to walk onto the football field and hope the game will go well somehow. **wisdom** draws up a game plan that will score more touchdowns than the opponents because that plan takes into account not only the rules of the game but also psychology and timing and strategy and everything it takes to win. **That is wisdom.** (Preaching the Word: Proverbs—Wisdom that Works)

**Spiritual wisdom** is godly **wisdom** (contrasted with worldly wisdom - study and make a list of the contrasts in Jas 3:13-18 and 1Cor 1:19 through 1Cor 2:13) and involves living life in the light of the revelation of God's Will in His Word and applying this knowledge to specific situations. Biblical **wisdom** is definable as skill for living. God's plan to redeem us destroyed the **wisdom** of the worldly wise men (1Cor 1:19). In fact, human wisdom can never comprehend God's plan for salvation (1Cor 1:21). Paul was not bound by the limits of human wisdom because the Holy Spirit conveyed **spiritual wisdom** through him (1Cor 2:13) and we possess the same indwelling Spirit beloved!

**Wisdom** is the insight into the true nature of things. Knowledge is the mental possession of powers of perceiving objects, wisdom is the power of right reasoning concerning them and forming right decisions accordingly.

**Wisdom** is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding.

**Wisdom** is the art of being successful, of forming the correct plan to gain the desired results. Its seat is the heart, the centre of moral and intellectual decision

**Wisdom** emphasizes understanding of ultimate things—such as life and death, God and man, righteousness and sin, heaven and hell, eternity and time.

**Wisdom** is mental excellence in its highest and fullest sense (Vincent).

**Spurgeon** - Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.

**Chokmah** can refer to technical skills or special abilities in fashioning something. The artisan was considered to be endowed with special abilities given to him by God Ex 35:31. **Wisdom** is seen in the skill of technical work in making garments for the high priest (Ex 28:3), craftsmanship in metal work (Ex 31:3, 6), as well as the execution of battle tactics (Isa 10:13). **Wisdom** is required from government leaders and heads of state for administration (Dt 34:9; 2Sa14:20), including pagan leaders as well as Israelites (Ezek 28:5). The Messiah demonstrates wisdom and discernment in his function as leader of His people (Isa 11:2). To act wisely means to carry out right principles. A wise workman works according to the right principles of his craft, producing a quality product. Morally, a wise person (enabled by the Holy Spirit, not by a fleshly driven legalism!) lives out the revealed principles of right and wrong, which reflect the character of God.

**Vance Havner** - If you lack knowledge, go to school. If you lack wisdom, get on your knees! Knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom is the proper use of knowledge.

**James Draper** - Wisdom is the skill to live in a way that is pleasing to God. It is not simply information in our heads. It is information that we put to use—where we live, where we work, and where we play. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, of wisdom. That is the starting point. Fools despise wisdom and instruction. We must choose either to live in the power of God, under the discipline of his Word, or to live foolishly. The world offers no hope, no solution, no encouragement. God says, "I want you to have wisdom, the skill to experience life as it ought to be experienced." The choice is up to us.

**Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary** - The biblical concept of wisdom is quite different from the classical view of wisdom, which sought through philosophy and human rational thought to determine the mysteries of existence and the universe. The first principle of biblical wisdom is that people should humble themselves before God in reverence and worship, obedient to His commands. This idea is found especially in the Wisdom Literature: the books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. In the Old Testament, the best example of a "wise man" is King Solomon (1Ki 10:4,6, 7, 8). And yet the same book that heaps such lavish, warm, and glowing praise upon Solomon for his reputed wisdom (1Ki 4:29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34) also points out how Solomon's heart turned away from the Lord (1Ki 11:1-13)." (Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

From Solomon's life example, clearly "**spiritual wisdom**" is no guarantee that one will walk worthy, but needs to be affect our heart decisions in order to be practical.

**THOUGHT** - How are you doing in this area? Are you like "wise" King Solomon, filled with "spiritual wisdom" and yet choosing to walk in a manner counter to God's clearly revealed will? Bible study won't do you much

good unless it transforms your thinking and your walk. True spiritual wisdom must affect our daily life. Wisdom and practical intelligence must go together.

**NAS Usage:** skill (5), skill\* (1), wisdom (143), wisely (3), wits' (1). **Chokmah** - 145v and **41x in Proverbs!** - Ex. 28:3; 31:3, 6; 35:26, 31, 35; 36:1-2; Deut. 4:6; 34:9; 2 Sam. 14:20; 20:22; 1Ki. 2:6; 3:28; 4:29-30, 34; 5:12; 7:14; 10:4, 6-8, 23-24; 11:41; 1Chr. 28:21; 2Chr. 1:10-12; 9:3, 5-7, 22-23; Job 4:21; 11:6; Job 12:2, 12-13; 13:5; 15:8; 26:3; 28:12, 18, 20, 28; 32:7, 13; 33:33; 38:36-37; Job 39:17; Ps. 37:30; 49:3; 51:6; 90:12; 104:24; 107:27; 111:10; Pr. 1:2, 7, Pr 1:20; 2:2, 6, 10; 3:13, 19; 4:5, 7, 11; 5:1; 7:4; 8:1, 11, 12; 9:1, 10; 10:13, Pr 10:23, 31; 11:2; 13:10; 14:6, 8, 33; 15:33; 16:16; 17:16, 24; 18:4; 21:30; Pr 23:23; 24:3, 7, 14; 28:26; 29:3, 15; 30:3; 31:26; Eccl. 1:13, 16-18; 2:3, Eccl 2:9, 12-13, 21, 26; 7:10-12, 19, 23, 25; 8:1, 16; 9:10, 13, 15-16, 18; 10:1, 10; Isa. 10:13; 11:2; 29:14; 33:6; 47:10; Jer. 8:9; 9:23; 10:12; 49:7; 51:15; Ezek. 28:4-5, 7, 12, 17; Da 1:4, 17, 20

**Below are all the uses of chokmah in Proverbs.** A fruitful exercise would be to observe (especially to interrogate the passages using the "5W's and H" questions ) each use of wisdom in Proverbs and make a note about what is associated with wisdom. In this way you could compile your own, personal "working definition" of wisdom. I think it might be an investment that could yield fruit all the remainder of your days!

Pr 1:2 To know **wisdom** and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding,

Pr 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise **wisdom** and instruction.

Pr 1:20 **Wisdom** shouts in the street, She lifts her voice in the square;

Pr 2:2 Make your ear attentive to **wisdom**, Incline your heart to understanding;

Pr 2:6 For the LORD gives **wisdom**; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Pr 2:10 For **wisdom** will enter your heart And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

Pr 3:13 How blessed is the man who finds **wisdom** And the man who gains understanding.

Pr 3:19 The LORD by **wisdom** founded the earth, By understanding He established the heavens.

Pr 4:5 Acquire **wisdom**! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

Pr 4:7 "The beginning of **wisdom** is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.

Pr 4:11 I have directed you in the way of **wisdom**; I have led you in upright paths.

Pr 5:1 My son, give attention to my **wisdom**, Incline your ear to my understanding;

Pr 7:4 Say to **wisdom**, "You are my sister," And call understanding your intimate friend;

Pr 8:1 Does not **wisdom** call, And understanding lift up her voice?

Pr 8:11 "For **wisdom** is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her.

Pr 8:12 "I, **wisdom**, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and discretion.

Pr 9:1 **Wisdom** has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;

Pr 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of **wisdom**, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Pr 10:13 On the lips of the discerning, **wisdom** is found, But a rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding.

Pr 10:23 Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, And so is **wisdom** to a man of understanding.

Pr 10:31 The mouth of the righteous flows with **wisdom**, But the perverted tongue will be cut out.

Pr 11:2 When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is **wisdom**.

Pr 13:10 Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But **wisdom** is with those who receive counsel.

Pr 14:6 A scoffer seeks **wisdom** and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.

Pr 14:8 The **wisdom** of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.

Pr 14:33 **Wisdom** rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But in the hearts of fools it is made known.

Pr 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction for **wisdom**, And before honor comes humility.

Pr 16:16 How much better it is to get **wisdom** than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.

Pr 17:16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy **wisdom**, When he has no sense?

Pr 17:24 **Wisdom** is in the presence of the one who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Pr 18:4 The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; The fountain of **wisdom** is a bubbling brook.

Pr 21:30 There is no **wisdom** and no understanding And no counsel against the LORD.

Pr 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get **wisdom** and instruction and understanding.

Pr 24:3 By **wisdom** a house is built, And by understanding it is established;

Pr 24:7 **Wisdom** is too exalted for a fool, He does not open his mouth in the gate.

Pr 24:14 Know that **wisdom** is thus for your soul; If you find it, then there will be a future, And your hope will not be cut off.

Pr 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks **wisely** will be delivered.

Pr 29:3 A man who loves **wisdom** makes his father glad, But he who keeps company with harlots wastes his wealth.

Pr 29:15 The rod and reproof give **wisdom**, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

Pr 30:3 Neither have I learned **wisdom**, Nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy One.

Pr 31:26 She opens her mouth in **wisdom**, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

**Some quotes on wisdom** (from Complete Gathered Gold - John Blanchard - excellent resource)...

Knowledge leads us from the simple to the complex; wisdom leads us from the complex to the simple. - Anon.

True wisdom is a divine revelation. - George Barlow

Wisdom has never made a bigot, but learning has. - Josh Billings

Wisdom gives a balance to character. - John Blanchard

Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. - John Calvin

This is our wisdom, to be learners to the end. - John Calvin

To search for wisdom apart from Christ means not simply foolhardiness but utter insanity. - John Calvin

True wisdom consists in being wise according to the law of God. - John Calvin

Wisdom is not the growth of human genius. It must be sought from above. - John Calvin

Wisdom and the will of God are intimately related... Nothing is more vital for practical knowledge of the purpose of God than wisdom. - Sinclair Ferguson

Heavenly wisdom is better than worldly wealth, and to be preferred before it. - Matthew Henry

It is better to get wisdom than gold. Gold is another's, wisdom is our own; gold is for the body and time, wisdom for the soul and eternity. - Matthew Henry

Modesty is the badge of wisdom. - Matthew Henry

Such is the degeneracy of human nature that there is no true wisdom to be found with any but those who are born again and who, through grace, partake of the divine nature. -

Matthew Henry

He who has a constant longing for wisdom will persistently pray for it. - D. Edmond Hiebert

Surely the essence of wisdom is that before we begin to act at all, or attempt to please God, we should discover what it is that God has to say about the matter. - D. Martyn Lloyd Jones

Wisdom opens the eyes both to the glories of heaven and to the hollowness of earth. J. A. Motyer

Not until we have become humble and teachable, standing in awe of God's holiness and sovereignty... acknowledging our own littleness, distrusting our own thoughts, and willing to have our minds turned upside down, can divine wisdom become ours. - J. I. Packer

Wisdom is God-centred. - Michael Parsons

Wisdom in ruling is justice; wisdom in speech is discretion; wisdom in conduct is prudence; wisdom in evaluation is discernment. - George SeEVERS

To know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is the highest principle and perfection of man. This attainment, infinitely above all others, constitutes true wisdom. -

Charles Simeon

We can be certain that God wants us to be wise, just as we are sure that he wants us not to sin. - R. C. Sproul

Conviction of ignorance is the doorstep to the temple of wisdom. - C. H. Spurgeon

The sublimity of wisdom is to do those things living which are to be desired when dying. - Jeremy Taylor

The wisest person in the world is the person who knows the most about God. - A. W. Tozer

The true test of wisdom is works, not words. - Curtis Vaughan

If the Lord Jesus Christ is a stranger to you, the best you can hope for is to become a philosopher, like Socrates of old. But apart from Christ there is no wisdom. - Spiros Zodhiates

Wisdom, the wisdom of God, is not something that is acquired by man, but something that is bestowed by God upon his elect. It is a divine endowment and not a human acquisition. - Spiros Zodhiates

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**BEYOND INFORMATION** ("We wired and tired!") - An investment company's full-page ad in the Wall Street Journal began with these words: "**Information** is everywhere. **Insight** is all too rare. For **insight** goes beyond **information** to discern underlying truths." Today, we are long on information and short on insight. Television offers scores of channels. Encyclopedias and world atlases are on compact disks (CDs) (**Ed**: Devotional written in 1996, but today information is [too] readily available on Internet = Wikipedia). Online databases give us the temperature in Hong Kong and the baseball score in Birmingham. **We're wired and tired** from trying to grasp the meaning of all we know.

Years ago, a friend encouraged me to read a chapter from Proverbs each day. One chapter each day takes me through this marvelous book of God's wisdom every month. "You can get knowledge in college," my friend said, "but wisdom comes from God." Here's what Almighty God promises when we seek His wisdom: "If you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding...then you will...find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Pr. 2:3-6). One chapter of Proverbs every day. Try it this month and see how God's Word will give you the wisdom to transform information into insight. -- David C. McCasland([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

(Ed: **THOUGHT** - While the "One Chapter a Day" is commendable, I prefer one verse or one group of verses of Proverbs a day. That way your focus is not how much of the Word you get through but how much of the Word gets through you! You are much more likely to remember the smaller "bits and bytes" than an entire chapter. And Proverbs is one of those books that is like a gold mine shaft that needs to be worked to get the deep riches therein!)

#### THINKING IT THROUGH

- Why would someone not want to be wise? (Pr. 1:7-**note**).
- What happens to those who live foolishly? (Pr 1:31-32).
- What are some benefits of wisdom? (Pr 1:33; 2:6-11).

**You can get knowledge in college,  
but wisdom comes from God**

**INSTRUCTION:  
"CHILD REARING"**

**Instruction** ([04148](#))(**musar** [word study] from **yāsār** = chasten literally with blows or figuratively with words, to instruct, rebuke)

means discipline, chastening, or correction! God's chastening is always for purposes of instruction, and should not be ignored or resented.

**Musar** is used in Proverbs 3:11 "My son, do not reject the **discipline** of the LORD, Or loathe His reproof." Musar is something our flesh tends to reject because it speaks of the painful process of chastening which is necessary if we are to garner godly wisdom. The writer of Hebrews speaks to our "natural" push back against discipline writing...

You have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE **DISCIPLINE** OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE **DISCIPLINES**, AND HE SCOURGES (metaphorical description of what was literally one of the most severe forms of punishment in ancient Rome) EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES....(11) All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. (Heb 12:5-6-note, Heb 12:11- note)

**Harris - Instruction**, properly "chastisement," signifying moral training, admonition, then good habits, the practical side of wisdom. (Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary)

**Musar** is a technical term for instruction in the school of wisdom. Instruction is characterized by reverence or fear of the Lord (Pr 15:33). Wisdom results from listening to this instruction (Pr 19:20). Discipline takes effort (Pr 23:12, 23). Proverbs also speaks specifically of parental instruction as something to be closely followed (Pr 1:8; 4:1; 13:1). Failure to listen to a father's instruction results in ignorance (Pr 19:27ff).

**See:**

- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Discipline](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Discipline \(1\)](#) [Discipline \(2\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Discipline](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Discipline \(2\)](#) [Discipline](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Discipline](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Discipline](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Discipline](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Discipline](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Discipline](#)
- [When, why, and how does the Lord God discipline us when we sin?](#)

**NET Note** - The noun **musar** has a three-fold range of meanings: (1) physical or parental: "discipline; chastisement" (2) verbal: "warning; exhortation" and (3) moral: "training; instruction". Its parallelism with **wisdom** suggests that it refers to moral training or instruction that the Book of Proverbs offers to its readers. This instruction consists of **wisdom** acquired by observing the consequences of foolish actions in others and developing the ability to control the natural inclination to folly (Ed: For believers only possible as we rely on the Holy Spirit's enablement! cp Ro 8:13). This sometimes comes through experiencing chastisement from God.

**Musar** is translated in the **Septuagint** with the noun **paideia** which means to provide instruction with the intent of forming proper habits of behavior. It was used in Greek culture for training, rearing and guiding a child to maturity. **Paideia** is a broad term, signifying whatever parents and teachers do to train, correct, cultivate, and educate children in order to help them develop and mature as they ought. Wayne Detzler writes that paideia "moves from education to correction and finally embraces the concept of punishment. This idea is quite unpopular, because many Christians confuse salvation with sentimentality. God does not tolerate sin among Christians, but rather disciplines them as a good father would (Heb. 12:5-11-note). In fact, if a Christian is comfortable and undisciplined, there is cause to doubt that he truly is a believer!" (Detzler, Wayne E: New Testament Words in Today's Language. Victor. 1986)

**John Phillips** - The word translated "**instruction**" in Proverbs 1:2 means "admonition" or "discipline" and is sometimes translated "chastisement." There can be little recognition of truth without discipline. Only a disciplined mind can see the pros and cons of an issue and be willing to learn by correction.

**Charles Ryrie** gives a pithy description of **instruction** - Training by word (Pr 24:32) or rod (Pr 23:13).

Israel was guilty of not accepting discipline (instruction), correction or chastening (**Am 1?**) (Jer 2:30, 7:28, 17:23; 32:33; 35:13) Accepting Musar brings blessing = "Behold, how happy (blessed) is the man whom God reproves, so do not despise the **discipline** (musar) of the Almighty." (Job 5:17) In a parallel passage we read "My son, do not despise the LORD's **discipline** or be weary of his

reproof." (Pr 3:11, cp Heb 12:5-11-note)

In a well known passage Isaiah says "But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the **chastisement** (musar) that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed." (Isa 53:5)

**NAS Usage:** chastening (3), chastise (1), correction (3), discipline (18), disciplines (1), instruction (20), punishment (2), reproof (1), warning (1). **Musar** - 50v -Pr. 1:2, 3, 7, 8; Pr 3:11; 4:1, 13; 5:12, 23; 6:23; 7:22; 8:10, 33; 10:17; 12:1; 13:1, 18, 24; Pr 15:5, 10, 32, 33; 16:22; 19:20, 27; 22:15; 23:12, 13, 23; 24:32; Deut. 11:2; Job 5:17; 20:3; 33:16; 36:10; Ps. 50:17; Isa. 26:16; 53:5; Jer. 2:30; 5:3; 7:28; 10:8; 17:23; 30:14; Jer 32:33; 35:13; Ezek 5:15; Hos 5:2; Zeph 3:2, 7

#### **Musar 4x in Proverbs 1, 30x in Proverbs...**

Pr 1:2 To know wisdom and **instruction**, To discern the sayings of understanding,

Pr 1:3 To receive **instruction** in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;

Pr 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and **instruction**.

Pr 1:8 Hear, my son, your father's **instruction** And do not forsake your mother's teaching;

Pr 3:11 My son, do not reject the **discipline** of the LORD Or loathe His reproof,

Pr 4:1 Hear, O sons, the **instruction** of a father, And give attention that you may gain understanding,

Pr 4:13 Take hold of **instruction**; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.

Pr 5:12 And you say, "How I have hated **instruction**! And my heart spurned reproof!

Pr 5:23 He will die for lack of **instruction**, And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.

Pr 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for **discipline** are the way of life

Pr 7:22 Suddenly he follows her As an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as one in fetters to the **discipline** of a fool,

Pr 8:10 "Take my **instruction** and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold.

Pr 8:33 "Heed **instruction** and be wise, And do not neglect it.

Pr 10:17 He is on the path of life who heeds **instruction**, But he who ignores reproof goes astray.

Pr 12:1 Whoever loves **discipline** loves knowledge, But he who hates reproof is stupid.

Pr 13:1 A wise son accepts his father's **discipline**, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Pr 13:18 Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects **discipline**, But he who regards reproof will be honored.

Pr 13:24 He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him **disciplines** him diligently.

Pr 15:5 A fool rejects his father's **discipline**, But he who regards reproof is sensible.

Pr 15:10 Grievous **punishment** is for him who forsakes the way; He who hates reproof will die.

Pr 15:32 He who neglects **discipline** despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.

Pr 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the **instruction** for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.

Pr 16:22 Understanding is a fountain of life to one who has it, But the **discipline** of fools is folly.

Pr 19:20 Listen to counsel and accept **discipline**, That you may be wise the rest of your days.

Pr 19:27 Cease listening, my son, to **discipline**, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Pr 22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of **discipline** will remove it far from him.

Pr 23:12 Apply your heart to **discipline** And your ears to words of knowledge.

Pr 23:13 Do not hold back **discipline** from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.

Pr 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and **instruction** and understanding.

Pr 24:32 When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received **instruction**.

**To discern the sayings of understanding** (NET = to discern wise counsel) - This is the second purpose of the Book of Proverbs, which is to compare and to make proper evaluation of the sayings of the wise. To "compare" implies we need to read and re-read (ponder) the wise sayings in order to be able to compare them accurately and fruitfully.

More literally the Hebrew reads "**to discern words of discernment**" which the [NET Note](#) says "refers to the ability (1) to distinguish truth from falsehood or (2) to understand wise sayings, such as in Proverbs."

**Discern** (0995)(bin/biyn [word study]) means to understand or perceive. **Bin/biyn** conveys the same idea as our word discrimination. It entails the idea of making a distinction as in 1Ki 3:9 where Solomon ask God for the ability "to **discern** (bin/biyn) between good and evil". Many of the OT uses of **bin/biyn** are translated "**understanding**," an understanding which is the result of comparative "study" or "mental separation".

God has absolutely perfect discernment and understanding - see 1Chr 28:9, Job 28:23, Ps 139:2.

**Roy Zuck** - The word בִּין (**bin/biyn**) means basically "to distinguish, to separate." From this is derived the common meaning, "to discern, to see distinctions, to perceive." In the causative Hiphil form, בִּין means "to cause to discern, to cause to perceive." According to this verb, teaching is not simply imparting facts (though it certainly includes that), but it is helping others acquire the ability or skill to discern. Gabriel, for example, caused Daniel to understand (בִּין) the vision of the ram and the male goat (Da 8:16). When Ezra opened God's Word before the people, the Levites caused the people to understand or perceive it (Neh 8:7-9). Jojarib and Elnathan, "men of discernment" (מְבִינִים, Ezra 8:16), were teachers. The Levites were teachers—men who helped others discern the things of God (2Chr 35:3). And some of them, including Chenaniah, were music teachers; they helped others understand and discern music (1Chr. 15:22). Real perception into spiritual matters comes only from God ("the Almighty giveth them understanding," Job 32:8), and such insight comes, only in accordance with His Word (Ps 119:109). Believers need spiritual insight and perception from the Lord so that they may keep His law (Ps. 119:34), learn His commandments (Ps 119:73), know His testimonies (Ps 119:125), and live (Ps. 119:144). Teaching, then, is helping others grow in spiritual perception so that as a result, they may live for God. It is striking that in some verses the verb בִּין is followed by two accusatives—one the person, and the other the subject matter (see Ps. 119:27; Isa 28:9; Da 10:14). In other words, according to these verses both pupils and content are to be "taught." God helps others have perception and discernment, but it is with reference to divine content—His written revelation. (Bibliotheca Sacra. Hebrew Words for "Teach")

**TWOT** - The verb **bin/biyn** refers to knowledge which is superior to the mere gathering of data....yāda generally describes the process whereby one gains knowledge through experience with objects and circumstances. bîn is a power of judgment and perceptive insight and is demonstrated in the use of knowledge.

**Renn** - bin/biyn also means "understand" in the sense of "realize," or "perceive." Here the element of rational perception is prominent. General references to this process include those in 2Sa 12:19; Neh 13: 7; Job 13: 1; Pr 14: 8; Isa. 40:21; Da 8:17; 9:2. "Perceiving" the call of God is noted in 1Sa. 3:8. Realizing the error of one's ways is indicated in Job 6:24; Ps 19:12. (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words)

**John MacArthur** - Jay Adams points out that the word **bin/biyn** "is related to the noun *bayin*, which means 'interval' or 'space between,' and the preposition *ben*, 'between.' In essence it means to separate things from one another at their points of difference in order to distinguish them." **Discernment**, then, is a synonym for **discrimination**....So **discernment** is the process of making careful distinctions in our thinking about truth. The discerning person is the one who draws a clear contrast between truth and error. **Discernment** is black-and-white thinking—the conscious refusal to color every issue in shades of gray. No one can be truly discerning without developing skill in separating divine truth from error (**Ed: And how better to hone this skill than to "eat" and mediate (see discussion) on the Proverbs! (cf uses of bin/biyn in Ps 119:27, 95) Are you periodically reading the Proverbs? If 'Yes,' then the next question is are you "speed reading" them? Or are you pausing to ponder them, chewing and tasting the savory morsels of truth with your "spiritual palate" that they might be totally "digested" into your inner being, the Spirit using the truths gleaned to renew your mind (cp Eph 4:23-note, 2Cor 3:18-note, Ro 12:2-note)? Instead of the "proverbial" recommendation of "Read one chapter of Proverbs every day of the month, so that at the end of the month you will have read the entire book," you might consider reading one single proverb a day, writing it down and then pondering it throughout the day! While reading a chapter a day is commendable, I fear many "thru the Bible reading programs" are much like swallowing a choice cut of filet mignon without chewing or savoring each bite!**). (Fool's Gold)

**Discern** (Webster) - To separate by the eye, or by the understanding. Hence, To distinguish; to see the difference between two or more things; to discriminate; as, to discern the blossom-buds from the leaf-buds of plants. For example bin/biyn describes discerning the destiny of the wicked, and Dt 32:29; Jer. 23:20 (= "understand"),

**Perceive** (Webster) - To have knowledge or receive impressions of external objects through the medium or instrumentality of the senses or bodily organs; as, to perceive light or color; to perceive the cold of ice or the taste of honey. 2 To know; to understand; to

observe.

A person can **perceive** (discern, understand) with senses -- For example (all examples use **bin/biyn**), with his eyes he can discern (Pr 17:24), with his ears he can understand words (Pr 29:19, Job 13:1), with touch or "feeling" ("before your pots can **feel** [discern] the thorns" Ps 58:9), discernment can be sensed thru taste (Job 6:30). It is possible to hear without perceiving - For example, the prophet Daniel "heard but could not **understand** (bin/biyn)" (Da 12:8). Similarly "none of the wicked (ungodly, unregenerate) will **understand** (bin/biyn), but those who have insight will **understand** (bin/biyn)" (Da 12:10-note, cp Pr 29:7).

**NET Note** - The term **bin/biyn** refers to **the ability to make distinctions between things**. This is illustrated by its derivatives: The related preposition means "between" and the related noun means "space between." So the verb refers to the ability to discern between moral options.

In the Qal stem **bin/biyn** can also mean "to pay attention" or "to consider closely." (see Dt 32:7 = consider, Ps 5:1 [note](#)). The psalmist writes "until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end." (Ps 73:17-[note](#))

In Deut 32:10 we see a different meaning where the Lord **'cared** (NET = "taught" = bin/biyn; interesting that the Lxx = **paideia**) for him (Israel)."

**David** asks "Who can **discern** (Lxx = **suniem**) his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults." (Psalm 19:12)

Failure to "understand" God and His demands for right living is a culpable action tantamount to rebellion (cf. Isa. 1:3; 6:9; 56:11); as is the failure to "understand" justice (Pr 28:5; 29:7).

**Bin/biyn** - 161 verses -

Gen. 41:33, 39; Deut. 1:13; 4:6; 32:7, 10, 29; 1 Sam. 3:8; 16:18; 2 Sam. 12:19; 1 Ki. 3:9, 11-12, 21; 1 Chr. 15:22; 25:7-8; 27:32; 28:9; 2 Chr. 11:23; 26:5; 2Chr 34:12; 35:3; Ezr. 8:15-16; Neh. 8:2-3, 7-9, 12; 10:28; 13:7; Job 6:24, 30; Job 9:11; 11:11; 13:1; 14:21; 15:9; 18:2; 23:5, 8, 15; 26:14; 28:23; 30:20; Job 31:1; 32:8-9, 12; 36:29; 37:14; 38:18, 20; 42:3; Ps. 5:1; 19:12; 28:5; Ps 32:9; 33:15; 37:10; 49:20; 50:22; Ps 58:9; 73:17; 82:5; 92:6; 94:7-8; 107:43; Ps 119:27, 34, 73, 95, 100, 104, 125, 130, 144, 169; 139:2; Pr. 1:2, 5, 6, Pr 2:5, 9; 7:7; 8:5, 9; 10:13; 14:6, 8, 15, 33; 15:14; 16:21; 17:10, 24, 28; Pr 18:15; 19:25; 20:24; 23:1; 24:12; 28:2, 5, 7, 11; 29:7, 19; Eccl. 9:11; Isa. 1:3; 3:3; 5:21; 6:9-10; 10:13; 14:16; 28:9, 19; 29:14, 16; 32:4; 40:14; Isa 40:21; 43:10, 18; 44:18; 52:15; 56:11; 57:1; Jer. 2:10; 4:22; 9:12, 17; Jer 23:20; 30:24; 49:7; Dan. 1:4, 17; 8:5, 16-17, 23, 27; 9:2, 22-23; 10:1, 11-12, Da 10:14; 11:30, 33, 37; 12:8, 10; Hos. 4:14; 14:9; Mic. 4:12

Job 14:21 (**Context:** Job is speaking of death and the after life in Sheol - Job 14: "His sons achieve honor, but he does not know it; Or they become insignificant, but he does not **perceive** (bin/biyn) it. 22 "But his body pains him, And he mourns only for himself."

**Comment:** The parallelism between "**know**" and "**perceive**" stress the point that in death a man does not realize what is happening here in the present life. In this verse Job is expressing the common view of life beyond death, namely, that in Sheol there is no contact with the living, only separation, but in Sheol there is a conscious awareness of the dreary existence.

Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could **lgaze** (bin/biyn; Lxx = suniem = bring together > ability to comprehend, to understand thoroughly!) at a virgin?

**Below are the 29 uses of bin/biyn in Proverbs - take some time to study them (e.g., in Pr 28:5 what do you learn about who has spiritual discernment? This would make an interesting Sunday School class, simply observing what is associated with bin/biyn. Be sure to examine the context to help you accurately observe and interpret these verses.** Note also the prevalence of bin/biyn in Psalm 119 - this would make an interesting study. Note that several times bin/biyn is used as a prayer asking God to give understanding - eg, Ps 119:169, et al)...

Proverbs 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction, To **discern** the sayings of understanding,

Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of **understanding** will acquire wise counsel,

Proverbs 1:6 To **understand** a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles.

Proverbs 2:5 Then (Begg question "When?" see Pr 2:4) you will **discern** the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God.

**Comment:** **Bin/biyn** refers to ability to grasp, discern or be sensitive to what it means to fear the LORD.

Proverbs 2:9 Then you will **discern** righteousness and justice And equity and every good course.

Proverbs 7:7 And I saw among the naive, And **discerned** among the youths A young man lacking sense,

Proverbs 8:5 "O naive ones, understand prudence; And, O fools, **understand** wisdom.

**Comment:** Here "understand" is a command - a call is for the simple to understand what wisdom is, not just to gain it.

Proverbs 8:9 "They are all straightforward to him who **understands**, And right to those who find knowledge.

Proverbs 10:13 On the lips of the **discerning**, wisdom is found, But a rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding.

Proverbs 14:6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has **understanding**.

Proverbs 14:8 The wisdom of the sensible is to **understand** his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.

Proverbs 14:15 The naive believes everything, But the sensible man **considers** (discerns) his steps.

**NET Note:** The contrast is with the simpleton and the shrewd. The simpleton is the young person who is untrained morally or intellectually, and therefore gullible. The shrewd one is the prudent person, the one who has the ability to make critical discriminations.

Proverbs 14:33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has **understanding**, But in the hearts of fools it is made known.

Proverbs 15:14 The mind of the **intelligent** seeks knowledge (NET = The discerning heart seeks knowledge), But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

Proverbs 16:21 The wise in heart will be called **understanding (discerning)**, And sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.

Proverbs 17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has **understanding (discerning)** Than a hundred blows into a fool.

Proverbs 17:24 Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has **understanding (discerning)**, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Proverbs 17:28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered **prudent (discerning)**.

Proverbs 18:15 The mind of the **prudent (discerning)** acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Proverbs 19:25 Strike a scoffer and the naive may become shrewd, But reprove one who has **understanding (discerning)** and he will gain knowledge.

Proverbs 20:24 Man's steps are ordained by the LORD, How then can man **understand** his way?

Proverbs 23:1 When you sit down to dine with a ruler, **Consider carefully** what is before you,

Proverbs 24:12 If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not **consider** it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?

Proverbs 28:2 By the transgression of a land many are its princes, But by a man of **understanding** and knowledge, so it endures.

Proverbs 28:5 Evil men do not **understand** justice, But those who seek the LORD **understand** all things.

**NET Note** - The contrast (and the difference) is between the wicked and those who seek the LORD. Originally the idea of seeking the LORD meant to obtain an oracle (2Sa 21:1), but then it came to mean devotion to God - seeking to learn and do his will. Only people who are interested in doing the LORD's will can fully **understand** justice. Without that standard, legal activity can become self-serving.

Proverbs 28:7 He who keeps the law is a **discerning** son, But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.

Proverbs 28:11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has **understanding** (discerning) sees through him.

Proverbs 29:7 The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, The wicked does not **understand** such concern.

Proverbs 29:19 A slave will not be instructed by words alone; For though he **understands**, there will be no response.

**Here is a practical illustration of the meaning of bin/biyn** - Joseph told Pharaoh (Context = Pharaoh's dream beginning in Ge 41:1ff)...

"Now let Pharaoh look for a man **discerning** (bin/biyn) and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt." (Ge 41:33)

**Wenstrom Comments** - **Bin/biyn** refers to the power of judgment and perceptive insight and is manifested in the use of knowledge. Joseph is recommending to Pharaoh that he search for a man who has discernment in the sense that this man must have the ability to judge and have perceptive insight and can apply the knowledge gained from his interpretation of his dreams. Pharaoh's dreams and Joseph's interpretation were a revelation of God's will for the nation of Egypt during the next fourteen years and so Joseph is recommending to Pharaoh that he search for someone who has the spiritual discernment to act in accordance with this revelation. (**Ed**: It comes as no surprise that Pharaoh then determined that this man with discernment was the same one who had interpreted Pharaoh's dream! Read Ge 41:39, 40, where "discerning" is bin/biyn.)

**H. Wayne House** has a practical comment on **bin/biyn** - In Old Testament Hebrew, this word communicates the ideas of discernment, perception, and insight. Behind this word stands the concept of an ability to perceive what is right and what is wrong in a given situation. Solomon, for example, used this word in his prayer for wisdom to rule Israel. He asks for understanding "that I may discern (bin) between good and evil." What a contrast to our wishy-washy ideas of morality, values, and ethics today! Though the 60s battle cry "everything is relative" is not parroted much in classrooms today, it has become the insidious premise behind our society's sliding scale of "right" and "wrong." We live in an age of adjustable morality, and Christians are not exempt! (Living Wisely A Foolish World)

## SAYINGS OF UNDERSTANDING

**Understanding** (0998) (**binah**) means "understanding, insight, discernment, i.e., a good sense or wisdom to respond properly to the LORD and his Torah (Dt 4:6), (2) understand, i.e., to be given a revelation as well as its meaning (Da 10:1); (3) understand, i.e., skillfully react to life situations (1Ch 12:32."

**Binah** "carries strong moral and religious connotations. In Job 28:28, the act of turning away from evil was said to be understanding and was based on a prior proper discernment of what was evil. A lack of this kind of understanding was morally culpable and resulted in sin and even drove away God's compassion for persons who did not have it (Isa. 27:11). Happily, understanding as a moral or religious entity can be acquired (Pr 4:5, 7) and even increased (Isa. 29:24) by seeking after it diligently. The understanding that God desires has a cognitive dimension, therefore, as further illustrated when the author of Proverbs spoke of words of "**understanding**" (Pr 1:2). The understanding and discernment that is the object of all knowing is the knowledge of the Holy One (Pr 9:10). **Understanding** is to mark God's people. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that by means of **understanding**, God made all His created order (cf. Ps. 136:5). God has graciously endowed human beings with the ability of **understanding** and comprehension, but this faculty is not infallible, and, therefore, we are to ask God for guidance at all times (Pr 3:5). Our own ability of **understanding** should, however, function to give us discernment, for instance, in showing a proper attitude toward seeking the riches of this world (Pr 23:4). Our **understanding** is also the ability that enables us to understand languages (Isa. 33:19), literature, visions, and dreams (Da 1:20-note). It is the ability that decodes the symbols of communication for us. The writer of Proverbs personifies understanding along with wisdom in the famous wisdom chapter of Proverbs (Pr 2:3; 8:14)." (Complete Word Study Dictionary)

The **NIV** translates **binah** as **insight**, which **Raymond Ortlund** explains by recalling the difference between Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, the former having "insight" that far superseded the latter. **Ortlund** explains

You know how a client would walk into Holmes's apartment at 221B Baker Street and Sherlock Holmes could take one look and know nineteen things about him, and it was always "Elementary, my dear Watson." Dr. Watson saw the same person, but not with the same **insight**. This word "**insight**" means that the non-obvious can become obvious to you. The immature might not see what you see. They might even misunderstand you. This happens often between parents and children. But, parents, it is your role to be the Sherlock Holmes of your family. Don't surrender that to your kids. They don't have enough **insight** yet. They need yours.

**Hubbard - Understanding**" (Pr 1:2, 5, 6) is the ability to look to the heart of an issue and to discern the differences at stake in the choices being weighed;

**NAS Usage:** clearly(1), consideration(1), discernment(3), truth(1), understand(1), understanding(29), understands(1), understood(1). **Binah** - 38 v with 14 uses in Proverbs =Proverbs 1:2; 2:3; 3:5; 4:1, 5, 7; 7:4; 8:14; 9:6, 10; 16:16; Pr 23:4, 23; 30:2; Deut. 4:6; 1Chr. 12:32; 22:12; 2Chr. 2:12-13; Job 20:3; Job 28:12, 20, 28; 34:16; 38:4, 36; 39:17, 26; Isa. 11:2; 27:11; 29:14, 24; Isa 33:19; Jer. 23:20; Dan. 1:20; 8:15; 9:22; 10:1

### Proverbs 1:3 To receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity;

BGT Proverbs 1:3 δ ἔασθα τε στροφὴς ἁγίων σοφίας τε δικαιοσύνην ἀληθῆ καὶ κρμα κατευθύνειν

LXE Proverbs 1:3 to receive also hard saying, and to understand true justice, and how to direct judgement;

KJV Proverbs 1:3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

NET Proverbs 1:3 To receive moral instruction in skillful living, in righteousness, justice, and equity.

CSB Proverbs 1:3 for receiving wise instruction in righteousness, justice, and integrity;

ESV Proverbs 1:3 to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity;

NIV Proverbs 1:3 for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair;

NLT Proverbs 1:3 Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair.

NRS Proverbs 1:3 for gaining instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity;

NJB Proverbs 1:3 for acquiring a disciplined insight, uprightness, justice and fair dealing;

NAB Proverbs 1:3 May receive training in wise conduct, in what is right, just and honest;

YLT Proverbs 1:3 For receiving the instruction of wisdom, Righteousness, judgment, and uprightness,

GWN Proverbs 1:3 to acquire the discipline of wise behavior- righteousness and justice and fairness-

BBE Proverbs 1:3 To be trained in the ways of wisdom, in righteousness and judging truly and straight behaviour:

RSV Proverbs 1:3 receive instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity;

NKJ Proverbs 1:3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, Justice, judgment, and equity;

ASV Proverbs 1:3 To receive instruction in wise dealing, In righteousness and justice and equity;

- **receive** - Pr 2:9; 8:10,11; Job 22:22
- **equity** - 1Ki 3:28

### Related Passages:

Micah 6:8+ (**JUSTICE**) He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to **do justice**, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

Proverbs 2:9 (NOTE SAME 3 ATTRIBUTES AS IN Pr 1:3) Then (WHEN? cf Pr 2:1-8) you will discern **righteousness** and **justice** And **equity** and every good course.

## INSTRUCTION OF WISDOM FOR WISE LIVING

To receive instruction ([musar](#)) in wise behavior ([sakal/sākhāl](#)), righteousness ([tsedeq](#)), justice ([mishpat](#)) and equity ([meshar](#)) - Note the **KJV** has "justice, and judgment, and equity." In other words it translates the Hebrew word [tsedeq](#) as **justice** instead of **righteousness** (like most of the translations render it) and ([mishpat](#)) as **judgment** instead of **justice** (like most of the translations render it), which shows the importance of comparing translations if you have the time. **Receive** (laqach) means to acquire something worth having and parallels the verb "treasure up" in Pr 2:1.

**NET Note** - The **instruction** ([musar](#)) "has a three-fold range of meanings: (1) physical or parental: "discipline; chastisement" (2) verbal: "warning; exhortation" and (3) moral: "training; instruction"....This instruction consists of wisdom acquired by observing the consequences of foolish actions in others and developing the ability to control the natural inclination to folly. This sometimes comes through experiencing chastisement from God. Wise behavior is literally "discipline of prudence," describing the results of a self-disciplined life.

**Matthew Poole** on receive instruction - willingly to receive the counsels of others, which is a good step to wisdom, and a part of it.

**H. Mears** - "Receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity" (Proverbs 1:3KJV). This is the true college of spirit education of the self, "for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young" (Proverbs 1:4). Plain common sense is needed in life. Don't be a fool!

**To receive** (03947)(**laqach**) means to take, grasp, acquire something worth having, take hold of, as Noah reached out and "took hold of," the dove (Ge 8:9). **Laqach** means to recognize the value of something and to seize or snatch it no matter the cost. This implies we must be ready, willing and able (enabled by the Spirit), to grasp God's Word. **THOUGHT** - **Does this describe you (me)?** It is interesting that the **Septuagint** translators choose the verb **dechomai** (in middle voice = reflexive = we initiate and participate in effects of our reception) to translate **laqach**, because **dechomai** conveys the sense of receiving God's instruction with a favorable attitude. **Dechomai** means that we accept with deliberate and ready reception God's offer of divine instruction, etc. We welcome His Word (and Him) as our Teacher and Friend as one would warmly welcome a guest into one's home, readily receiving His Truths with open arms, minds, and hearts, even going beyond normally expected gracious hospitality.

**THOUGHT** - May God grant us grace to welcome His Word as an honored guest, giving it the special attention it deserves. Amen.

**Ortlund** adds that the "word **receive** is the key that unlocks the door. The Bible says, "Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive (**Ed**: This is the same verb **dechomai** described above) the word implanted, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21-note). That simple humility (**Ed**: I would add, a humility preceded by a "**putting aside**" of unholy things that hinder the intake of the holy Word), that openness, is how we gain velocity in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity—all so beautiful and powerful.

**Laqach** is used 908 times in the OT and 19 times in Proverbs...

Pr 1:3 To **receive** instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity;

Pr 1:19 So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence; **It takes** away the life of its possessors.

Pr 2:1 My son, if you will **receive** my words And treasure my commandments within you,

Pr 4:10 Hear, my son, and **accept** my sayings And the years of your life will be many.

Pr 6:25+ Do not desire her beauty (that means you have seen it) in your heart (the control center of your life! Run quickly to Pr 4:23+), Nor let her **capture** (**Lxx = sunarpazo = to seize suddenly and violently! Take hold of forcibly! To seize and carry clean away! It was used to mean seize with the mind -- that is where her beauty makes its first assault -- on our mind = a desire, an [epithumia](#), a strong lust is created! All you men reading, don't miss how powerful is the lure of [sexual immorality](#) be it pornography or open fornication. Beware! And this applies to young and old men - I am almost 77 and I "get it"!!!**) you with her eyelids. (The **Septuagint** is poignant - "Let not the desire [[epithumia](#)] of beauty **OVERCOME** [[nikao](#) = be victorious over, prevail, conquer] thee!!! Woe! Men, don't be naive or blaise or indifferent or prideful! We are in a battle for the "castles" of our hearts!)

Pr 7:20 He has **taken** a bag of money with him, At the full moon he will come home."

Pr 8:10 "**Take** (not a suggestion but a command!) my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold.

Pr 9:7 He who corrects a scoffer **gets** dishonor for himself, And he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself.

Pr 10:8 The wise of heart will **receive** commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined.

Pr 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise **wins** souls.

Pr 17:23 A wicked man **receives** a bribe from the bosom To pervert the ways of justice.

Pr 20:16 **Take** (command) his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for foreigners, hold him in

pledge.

Pr 21:11 When the scoffer is punished, the naive becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he **receives** knowledge.

Pr 22:25 Or you will learn his ways And **find** a snare (**Lxx = brochos = a noose, with epiballo = to throw a noose on someone to catch him and restrain him!**) for yourself.

Pr 22:27 If you have nothing with which to pay, Why should he **take** your bed from under you?

Pr 24:11 Deliver those who are **being taken** (Lxx = ago = in present passive = continually being led) away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.

Pr 24:32 When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and **received** instruction.

Pr 27:13 **Take** (command) his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for an adulterous woman hold him in pledge.

Pr 31:16 She considers a field and **buys** it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

Remember that **instruction** is the Hebrew word **musar**, which conveys the sense of child rearing, discipline and even chastisement, something from which our flesh tends to "shy away." However we dare not do so, because later Solomon warns us "My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD, Or loathe His reproof, For whom the LORD loves He reproves, even as a father, the son in whom he delights." (Pr 3:11-12, cp Heb 12:5-11-note). So what advantage do we glean from ready reception of **musar**? We experience it as a tangible manifestation of our Father's love for us as His dear son or daughter!

**THOUGHT** - Could there be any reward greater in life, then to be assured of the almighty Father's love? I think not! May the Spirit grant us the desire and power (Php 2:13NLT+) to rightly, readily receive His instruction. Amen.

**To receive instruction - NET** = "To receive moral instruction in skillful living." **Amplified** = "Receive instruction in wise dealing and the discipline of wise thoughtfulness." **ESV** = "to receive instruction in wise dealing." **Berkley** = "to receive the instruction of prudence."

**Instruction** (04148) (**musar**) is translated in the **Septuagint** with the noun **strophe**, which literally means "a turning" and metaphorically refers to **subtlety**. The exact sense in the context of Proverbs is not easy to discern but could allude to sayings or words which can be difficult to understand or perceive at first glance, but which are sayings that are artful and delicate, so to speak. This meaning would imply that it will take some effort on our part to glean the precious nuggets of gold in vast storehouses of Proverbs.

**THOUGHT** - While it is commendable to read a chapter of Proverbs a day, doing so would make it difficult, if not impossible, to truly glean the subtle truths therein. So let us slow down. God grant that we take time to [pause and ponder](#) these wise sayings as if our life depended on them (it does)! Amen.

**HCSB** on wise behavior (**CSB** = wise instruction) "is literally "the discipline of prudence." Prudence is skill or cleverness; a talent for insight, observation, or scrutiny; practical wisdom that leads to success....This cleverness is morally guided by righteousness (agreement with God's directives), justice (restoration of what is right), and integrity (what is straight, right, and fair). (Borrow [HCSB Study Bible](#))

**Wise behavior** (07919) ([sakal/sākhāl](#)) means to act with insight, to be prudent, to give insight, to teach, to prosper, to consider, to ponder, to understand, to act prudently, to act with devotion. The primary meaning of the word is to be prudent. It is fascinating that the first use in Scripture in Ge 3:6 is in the description of the sin of Adam and Eve who saw that "**the tree was desirable to make one wise** (sakal)!" In marked contrast to that "wisdom" (which ultimately brought death to their spirit and their body), here Solomon describes wise sayings (proverbs) that can give life and health to our spirit, soul and body. **Sakal** refers to wise actions, the behavior that comes from applying the lessons taught in the proverbs and is the fruit of a disciplined life.

**NET NOTE** - The basic meaning of שָׂכַל is "to be prudent, circumspect," and the Hiphil stem means "to give attention to, consider, ponder; have insight, understanding" (BDB 968 s.v. שָׂכַל). It is a synonym of חֲכָמָה (khokhmah, "wisdom"), but while חֲכָמָה focuses on living skillfully, שָׂכַל (sakhal) focuses on acting prudently. The word can also focus on the results of acting prudently: to have success (e.g., Isa 52:12). Elsewhere, the term describes the prudent actions of Abigail in contrast to her foolish husband Nabal (1 Sam 25).

**THOUGHT** - Which category of wisdom would you rather possess? Which one are you (be honest!) pursuing?

**Sakal is used 61 times in the OT, and 13 times in Proverbs** - Pr. 1:3; 10:5, 19; 14:35; 15:24; 16:20, 23; 17:2, 8; 19:14; 21:11,

12, 16 (**THOUGHT:** Take a moment. Grab a pen and your notebook. Pray for the Spirit's guidance. Read through each of the uses of sakal below in Proverbs and make a list of the truths you observe regarding WISE BEHAVIOR. I think you will be richly rewarded for this exercise!); Ge. 3:6; Deut. 29:9; 32:29; Jos. 1:7-8; 1 Sam. 18:5, 14-15, 30; 1 Ki. 2:3; 2Ki 18:7; 1 Chr. 28:19; 2 Chr. 30:22; Neh. 8:13; 9:20; Job 22:2; 34:27, Job 34:35; Ps. 2:10; 14:2; 32:8; 36:3; 41:1; 53:2; 64:9; 94:8; 101:2; 106:7; Ps 119:99; Isa. 41:20; 44:18; 52:13; Jer. 3:15; 9:24; 10:21; 20:11; 23:5; Isa 50:9; Dan. 1:4, 17; 9:13, 22, 25; 11:33, 35; 12:3, 10; Amos 5:13

Pr 1:3 To receive instruction in **wise behavior**, Righteousness, justice and equity;

Pr 10:5 He who gathers in summer is a son who **acts wisely**, But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

Pr 10:19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is **wise**.

Pr 14:35 The king's favor is toward a servant who **acts wisely**, But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.

Pr 15:24 The path of life leads upward for the **wise** That he may keep away from Sheol below.

Pr 16:20 He who **gives attention** to the word will find good, And blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

Pr 16:23 The heart of the wise **instructs** his mouth And adds persuasiveness to his lips.

Pr 17:2 A servant who **acts wisely** will rule over a son who acts shamefully, And will share in the inheritance among brothers.

Pr 17:8 A bribe is a charm in the sight of its owner; Wherever he turns, he **prosperes**.

Pr 19:14 House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, But a **prudent** wife is from the LORD.

Pr 21:11 When the scoffer is punished, the naive becomes **wise**; But when the wise is **instructed**, he receives knowledge.

Pr 21:12 The righteous one **considers** the house of the wicked, Turning the wicked to ruin.

Pr 21:16 A man who wanders from the way of **understanding** Will rest in the assembly of the dead.

**POSB** - A wise person is characterized by three traits - (1) **Justice** or what is right: this is the word used of scales that are true and accurate, that conform to the standard (Dt 25:15). Doing what is right is conforming to God's standard, what is right in His sight. (2) **Judgment** or what is just: this legal term is used of the verdict or decision of a judge and refers to the proper ruling or determination according to the law. Its application here is for us to follow God's law in our decisions as well as in our dealings with others. (3) **Equity** or what is fair: comes from a root word that means to be straight or even. It means that we should be upright in all that we do. These three attributes summarize the character and actions of God.

**Righteousness** (noun)(06664)([tsedeq](#) from root "**sdq**" - to be straight, norm) the basic idea is that which conforms to an ethical or moral standard. **Tsedeq** is noun meaning a right relation to an ethical or legal standard. **Tsedeq** describes conduct that conforms to a standard. Elsewhere it is used in a concrete sense to refer to commercial weights and measures that conform to a standard (Dt 25:15). In the moral realm it refers to "righteous" conduct that conforms to God's law. **Gilbrant** - The idea of "what is right" is seen in Pr 1:3, as one of the words for what the study of the biblical proverbs should enable a person to be. **W E Vine** - Exegetes have spilled much ink in an attempt to understand contextually the words *šedeq* and *šedāqā*. The conclusions of the researchers indicate a twofold significance. On the one hand, the relationships among people and of a man to his God can be described as *šedeq*, supposing the parties are faithful to each other's expectations. It is a relational word. ([see more](#))

Solomon does not clearly distinguish positional from experiential **righteousness**, but the context of "instruction in wise behavior" would suggest it is practical day to day righteous living, doing (in thought, word, deed) what is right (enabled by the Spirit and the Word) before God and before men. Of course the only way one can carry out practical righteousness is by possessing positional righteousness, the "Abraham way," -- "Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned (imputed, placed on his spiritual "bank account") it to him as **righteousness**." (Ge 15:6+) It is by believing the Gospel (as Abraham did - see Gal 3:8+) "for it ([GOSPEL](#)) is the power ([dunamis](#) - SUPERNATURAL POWER) of God for salvation ([soteria](#)) to everyone who believes ([pisteuo](#)), to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the **righteousness** of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE **RIGHTEOUS** man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." (Ro 1:16-17+) Then enabled by His Spirit we live out the Gospel before a dead and dying world, praying that our "righteous" life (not perfection but direction) will cause spiritually dead men and women to ask us about the hope (Hope sure, not hope so!) that is within us (1Pe 3:15+)(See also [Three Tenses of Salvation](#); Progressive Sanctification)

**Justice** (04941)([mishpat/mispat](#) from **shaphat** = to judge, govern) is a masculine noun used over 400x in the OT and has general meanings including a judgment, a legal decision, a legal case, a claim, proper, rectitude. **NET Note** - The noun מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat,

“justice, judgment”) refers to the ability to make a decision that is just (e.g., Dt 16:18; 1Ki 3:28). From this legal background, the term came to mean one’s right or precedent. The person with prudence will make decisions that are just and right. **Vine** writes that [mishpat/mispat](#) “has two main senses; the first deals with the act of sitting as a judge, hearing a case, and rendering a proper verdict. Eccl. 12:14 is one such occurrence. Mishpat can also refer to the “rights” belonging to someone (Ex 23:6). This second sense carries several nuances: the sphere in which things are in proper relationship to one’s claims (Ge 18:19—first occurrence); a judicial verdict (Dt. 17:9); the statement of the case for the accused (Nu 27:5); and an established ordinance (Exod. 21:1). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

**Easton's Bible Dictionary** writes that justice “is rendering to every one that which is his due. It has been distinguished from equity in this respect, that while justice means merely the doing what positive law demands, equity means the doing of what is fair and right in every separate case.”

**ISBE on human justice** - Justice had primarily to do with conduct in relation to others, especially with regard to the rights of others. It is applied to business, where just weights and measures are demanded (Lev 19:35,36; Dt 25:13-16; Am 8:5; Prov 11:1; 16:11; Ezek 45:9,10). It is demanded in courts, where the rights of rich and poor, Israelite and sojourner, are equally to be regarded. Neither station nor bribe nor popular clamor shall influence judge or witness. “Justice, justice shalt thou follow” (Dt 16:20 m; compare 16:18-20; Ex 23:1-3,6-9). In general this justice is contrasted with that wickedness which “feared not God, and regarded not man” (Lk 18:2).

In a larger sense justice is not only giving to others their rights, but involves the active duty of establishing their rights. So Israel waits upon God’s justice or cries out: “The justice due to me (literally, “my justice”) is passed away from my God” (Isa 40:27). Yahweh is to show her to be in the right as over against the nations. Justice here becomes mercy. To “seek justice” means to “relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isa 1:17; compare 11:4; Jer 22:15,16; Ps 82:2-4). The same idea appears in Dt 24:12,13; Ps 37:21,26; 112:4-6, where the translation is “righteous” instead of “just.”

In this conception of justice the full meaning of the New Testament is not yet reached. It does not mean sinlessness or moral perfection. Job knows the sin in his heart (Job 13:23,26; 7:21), and yet speaks of himself as a just or righteous man (12:4; 13:18). The Psalmist confidently depends upon the righteousness of God though he knows that no man is righteous in God’s sight (Ps 143:1,2; compare 7:8; 18:20-24). It is not a lack of humility or dependence upon God when the Psalmist asks to be judged according to his righteousness. In relation to God, the just, or righteous, man is the one who holds to God and trusts in Him (Ps 33:18-22). This is not the later Judaistic legalism with its merit and reward, where God’s justice is simply a matter of giving each man what he has earned.

The word “justice” does not occur in the New Testament, and in most cases where we find “just” in the King James Version it is changed to “righteous” in the American Standard Revised Version. The idea of justice or righteousness (remembering that these are essentially the same) becomes more spiritual and ethical in the New Testament. It is a matter of character, and God’s own spirit is the standard (1 Jn 3:7; Mt 5:48). The mere give-and-take justice is not enough. We are to be merciful, and that to all. The ideal is righteousness, not rights. As Holtzmann says, “The keynote of the Sermon on the Mount is justitia and not jus.”

**Mishpat - The attribute of justice in all correct personal civil administration is emphasized** This justice is primarily an attribute of God, all true mišpāt finding its source in God himself and therefore carrying with it his demand. “When therefore the Scripture speaks of the mišpāt of God, as it frequently does, the word has a particular shade of meaning and that is not so much just statutes of God as the just claims of God. God, who is the Lord, can demand and He does demand” (Koehler, OT Theology, pp. 205–206). All the right (justice, authority, etc.) there is is his, “because Jehovah is the God of justice” (Isa 30:18; cf. Gen 18:25). God loves mišpāt in this sense (Ps 37:28). Psalm 36:6 in kēṭīb reads, “Thy mišpāt (singular) is a great abyss.” (b) **mišpāt, as justice, i.e. rightness rooted in God’s character, ought to be an attribute of man in general and of judicial process among them** (Ps 106:37). Wise men speak it (Ps 37:30) and think it (Pr 12:5) and God requires it of them (Mic 6:8). The righteous enjoy it (Pr 21:15) and righteous magistrates employ it in judgment (Mic 3:1; cf. Pr 29:4). (Online [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**Equity** (04339)(**meshar** from [yashar](#) = to be smooth, straight or right) means evenness, uprightness, rightness, smoothness, equity, level path.

**NET NOTE** - The Hebrew noun translated “**equity**” comes from the root יָשַׁר ([yashar](#)) which has the basic idea of “upright, straight, right.” It refers to activity that is morally upright and straight, that is, on the proper moral path. Elsewhere it is used in a concrete sense to describe cows walking straight down a path without turning right or left (1Sa 6:12). Wisdom literature often uses the motif of

the straight path to describe a morally "straight" life.

**Gilbrant** - The primary meaning of the noun is "straightness," or "evenness." It is frequently used metaphorically. The prime nuance of the metaphor is "ease" of an action. "The way of the just is straight," which means level and smooth, bringing happiness and peace to the person (Isa. 26:7). Wine is said to "go down smoothly," easily, as part of its tempting nature (Pr. 23:31). To say so means that wine follows a smooth, unobstructed path. A path "paved with love" (S.S. 3:10) is one that is straight and smooth, i.e., sincere, honest and acceptable. From this idea of evenness and ease comes the notion of "peace and friendship" from *mêshârîm*, such as concord between nations (Da 11:6-note). In the covenant relationship with God, humans are supposed to walk in peace, righteousness and joy (Ro. 14:17-note), a life whose burden is light (Matt. 11:28ff), not one of struggle, strife and weariness. The concept of "justice" also emerges from *mêshârîm*. The justice of the judge who decides rightly (Ps. 99:4-note) and that which is just (Pr. 1:3; 8:6; Ps. 9:8; 17:2; 58:1) appear in the wisdom literature of Israel. Certainly, judgment which is "straight" means that which is correct, just, right and proper. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**NAS Usage:** equity(8), peaceful arrangement(1), right things(1), rightly(1), sincerity(1), smooth(1), smoothly(2), things that are upright(1), uprightly(1), uprightness(1), what is right(1). **Meshar** - 19 v - 1Chr. 29:17; Ps. 9:8; 17:2; 58:1; 75:2; 96:10; 98:9; 99:4; Pr. 1:3; 2:9; 8:6; 23:16, 31; Song 1:4; 7:9; Isa. 26:7; 33:15; 45:19; Da 11:6

Pr 1:3 To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and **equity**;

Pr 2:9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice And **equity** and every good course.

Pr 8:6 "Listen, for I will speak noble things; And the opening of my lips will reveal **right things**.

Pr 23:16 And my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak **what is right**.

Pr 23:31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down **smoothly**;

**Charles Bridges** - We are directed to acquire a disciplined and prudent life, as a complete rule of doing what is right and just and fair. These include sound principles and their practical application in our lives. ([Exposition of the Book of Proverbs](#))

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**Henry Morris - the instruction of wisdom.** Seven mental attributes are mentioned in Proverbs 1:3-5. The Biblical meaning of these can be summarized roughly as follows:

1. "Knowledge" (synonymous with "science"): awareness of facts.
2. "Understanding:" comprehension of meaning and interrelationships of facts.
3. "Instruction" (same as "correction"): reception of knowledge and understanding.
4. "Discretion" (i.e., "thought"): ingenuity in planning use of facts.
5. "Learning:" absorption and retention of facts and their use.
6. "Wisdom:" character; ability to use one's knowledge and understanding effectively in one's own life and in dealing with others.
7. "Wise counsels:" ability to convey wisdom to others; good advice. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

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### **Biblical Illustrator - Judgment and equity**

"Judgment" is used for discerning right from wrong; for the law, manner, or rule of it; for punishment or execution of judgment. "Equity" in Hebrew means, straight ways, that go on foreright, and even, like plains; when men go not uphill and downhill in their actions, but proceed in an even course. It signifies also a thing right in God's or man's eyes, which they approve as just and equal. Some understand by equity moderation, that we use not the extremity of the law, nor do all that we may. Others, integrity of mind in working and discerning. The doctrines suggested are--

1. Matters of practice must not be perceived only, but received. There is a piercing of truth into the understanding, and receiving of it into the judgment.
2. Knowledge is ordinarily received from others.
3. A spiritual wisdom is required to guide all our actions.
4. Every cue's right must be preserved.
5. Men must study to know how to judge of interests.
6. Extremity of justice is not always to be used; moderation sometimes is to be exercised. (Francis Taylor.)

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**Do the Right Thing** - Management expert Peter Drucker once wrote that too often people focus on **efficiency** (doing things right), instead of on **effectiveness** (doing the right thing). "There are few things less pleasing to the Lord, and less productive," Drucker says, "than an engineering department that rapidly turns out beautiful blueprints for the wrong product. Working on the right things is

what makes... work effective.” Those are wise words for anyone seeking business success, and for those trying to live a good life.

How can we be sure we are doing the right thing—that which is morally correct and pleasing to God—instead of doing the wrong thing in an efficient way? Solomon wrote his proverbs so that his son would “receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity.” Or, as one translation puts it, to acquire “a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair” (Proverbs 1:3NIV). Through His Word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God will teach us what is right and enable us to do it. Our most important task is doing what is grounded in “justice, judgment, and equity.” Today, by God’s wisdom and power, let’s do the right thing. —David McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lead me, Lord, in tender mercy,  
Leave me not to walk alone;  
Let Your wisdom guide me ever,  
For I dare not trust my own.  
—Reed

**Be wise—do right**

#### Proverbs 1:4 To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion

- **Prudence** - Pr 1:22,23; 8:5; 9:4-6; Ps 19:7; 119:130; Isaiah 35:8
- **Naive...youth** - Pr 7:7-24; 8:17,32; Ps 34:11; 119:9; Eccl 11:9,10; 12:1; 2Ti 2:22; Titus 2:6

**NET** = To impart shrewdness to the morally naive, and a discerning plan to the young person.

### ANOTHER PURPOSE FOR THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

**To give (nathan)** means to present to deliver, give, place, set up, lay, make, do, allow, permit. "To give" as used here in Pr 1:4 is the most frequent sense of this verb. **Nathan** describes the process through which an object or a matter is set in motion or actuated. And so to cause something to come to someone is tantamount to giving it to them. Nathan can also mean to cause or to effect, to occasion (= “to do”), as in Pr 10:10. This verb is found almost 2000 times in the OT and is used 33 times in the book of Proverbs -

Pr 1:4 To **give** prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion,

Pr 1:20 Wisdom shouts in the street, She **lifts** her voice in the square;

Pr 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, **Lift** your voice for understanding;

Pr 2:6 For the LORD **gives** wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Pr 3:28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will**give** it,” When you have it with you.

Pr 3:34 Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He **gives** grace to the afflicted.

Pr 4:2 For I **give** you sound teaching; Do not abandon my instruction.

Pr 4:9 “She **will place** on your head a garland of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty.”

Pr 5:9 Or you **will give** your vigor to others And your years to the cruel one;

Pr 6:4 **Give** no sleep to your eyes, Nor slumber to your eyelids;

Pr 6:31 But when he is found, he must repay sevenfold; He **must give** all the substance of his house.

Pr 8:1 Does not wisdom call, And understanding **lift** up her voice?

Pr 9:9 **Give** instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.

Pr 10:10 He who winks the eye **causes** trouble, And a babbling fool will be ruined.

Pr 10:24 What the wicked fears will come upon him, But the desire of the righteous **will be granted**.

Pr 12:12 The wicked man desires the booty of evil men, But the root of the righteous **yields** fruit.

Pr 13:10 Through insolence **comes** nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

Pr 13:15 Good understanding **produces** favor, But the way of the treacherous is hard.

Pr 21:26 All day long he is craving, While the righteous **gives** and does not hold back.

Pr 22:9 He who is generous will be blessed, For he **gives** some of his food to the poor.

Pr 22:16 He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself Or who **gives** to the rich, will only come to poverty.

Pr 23:26 **Give** (a command, not a suggestion!) me your heart, my son, And let your eyes delight in my ways.

Pr 23:31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it **sparkles** in the cup, When it goes down smoothly;

Pr 26:8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling, So is he who **gives** honor to a fool.

Pr 28:27 He who **gives** to the poor will never want, But he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.

Pr 29:15 The rod and reproof **give** wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

Pr 29:25 The fear of man **brings** a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

Pr 30:8 Keep deception and lies far from me, **Give** me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion,

Pr 31:3 Do not **give** your strength to women, Or your ways to that which destroys kings.

Pr 31:6 **Give** strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to him whose life is bitter.

Pr 31:15 She rises also while it is still night And **gives** food to her household And portions to her maidens.

Pr 31:24 She makes linen garments and sells them, And **supplies** belts to the tradesmen.

Pr 31:31 **Give** her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.

**Naive** (06612) (pethi [word study] from pathah = to be spacious, wide, open) means simplicity, simple, naive, pertaining to persons that are easily deceived or persuaded, showing lack of wisdom and understanding, yet having some capacity to change this condition. Marked by unaffected simplicity. Deficient in godly wisdom often connoting credulousness and unchecked innocence. One who is gullible, easily susceptible to good or bad influence, weak-willed, irresponsible, but still correctable.

Such individuals are in serious need of **prudence** (shrewdness in a positive sense).

**John Phillips** - The word translated "**simple**" (naive) **means** "artless, guileless, unsuspecting." Some people are so gullible that they believe everything they are told. They are easy prey for the con man. Solomon wanted us to be prepared to meet such deceivers. Eve in her guileless innocence was no match for the old serpent who appeared before her in disguise; he was persuasive but full of malice and malignity. His mind, created for the universe, was narrowed by sin to a diabolical cunning. However Eve had one weapon the devil feared. Eve had the Word of God, which would have rendered her invincible, had she relied on it. All she needed to say in response to each temptation was "Thus saith the Lord." Solomon wanted to put this same almighty Word into the hands of the simple. A mastery of the book of Proverbs will go far toward equipping even the most guileless for life's treacheries."

**John Trapp** on **prudence** (subtily)- Serpentine subtily, {Ge 3:1} sacred sagacity, a sharp wit, a deep reach, a Spirit that "searches all things, yea, the deep things of God," {1Co 2:10} and transforms a man "into the same image from glory to glory." {2Co 3:18-note}

**Prudence** (06195) (ormah) i

**Craftily** (06195) **ormah** is derived from **arom** = be shrewd or crafty. **Arum** [06175] is the passive participle of '**arom** [06191], a verb which means to be smooth, cunning, or crafty and **arum** is used in Genesis 3:1+ to describe the wiles devil which plunged the world into sin and death! **Ormah** can have a positive and a negative meaning. In Pr 1:4+, it speaks of good judgment or good sense. The **Septuagint** translates **ormah** with the noun **panourgia** which strictly speaking means capability for every work and in the NT is used primarily in a negative sense to describe cunning, craftiness, or trickery (Lk 20:23+; 1Co 3:19+; 2Co 4:2+; 2Co 11:3+; Eph 4:14+). **Parourgia** is also used in a negative sense with the nuance of craftiness or cunning of the Gibeonites in Joshua 9:4+ but is used with a positive nuance here in Pr 1:4+ and again in Pr 8:5.

The **Septuagint** translates **ormah** with the adjective **akakos** which means innocent, guileless, simple (Ro 16:18+).

As noted the root verb **aram** is translated "crafty" in Job 5:12; 15:5. God does not want to make us crafty, but He does want us to be

equipped to deal with those who are.

**Ormah** - 5v - translated with the negative meaning as craftily (Ex 21:14, Joshua 9:4) and with the positive meaning prudence (Pr 1:4; 8:5, 12).

Pr 1:4 To give **prudence** to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion,

Pr 8:5 "O naive ones, understand **prudence**; And, O fools, understand wisdom.

Pr 8:12 "I, wisdom, dwell with **prudence**, And I find knowledge and discretion.

**Prudence** (Webster) - the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason; skill and good judgment in the use of resources; caution or circumspection as to danger or risk. Prudence is "Wisdom applied to practice." (Johnson) Prudence implies caution in deliberating and consulting on the most suitable means to accomplish valuable purposes and the exercise of sagacity in discerning and selecting them. Prudence differs from wisdom in this, that prudence implies more caution and reserve than wisdom, or is exercised more in foreseeing and avoiding evil, than in devising and executing that which is good. "It is sometimes mere caution or circumspection. Prudence is principally in reference to actions to be done, and due means, order, season and method of doing or not doing." (Hale).

#### **Raymond Ortlund** comments on **prudence**

Do you like that word? I don't. It seems so Victorian. It reminds me of the Beatles' White Album and "Dear Prudence":

Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?

Dear Prudence, greet the brand new day

The sun is up, the sky is blue

It's beautiful and so are you

Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?

She needed to have some fun! Is there another translation of this Hebrew word? Yes, there is: "shrewdness" (NRSV). I like that word. And it is faithful to the Hebrew text. Shrewdness is a good kind of cunning. In this world we need that. Shrewdness is tactics that succeed when so much is on the line.

**Charles Bridges** - Here also the **naive**, so readily deluded (Pr 14:15; Ezekiel 14:20), learn about **prudence**, which is so necessary in order to discriminate between truth and error (1Thessalonians 5:21) and to guard against false teachers (Psalm 17:4; 1 John 4:1). It is especially the young who are directed to this book, as their undisciplined ardor is wasted, and their minds are at the mercy of the opinions of the world all around them. They are in great need of some settled guiding principles for their lives. Here they find knowledge and discretion, which is a religion not of imagination, impulse, or sentiment, but the sound practical energy of scriptural truth.

**To the youth knowledge and discretion** - The youth (**na'ar** - 05288) refers to a boy, lad, youth, servant, attendant. Generally **na'ar** is a youngster between weaning and especially marriageable young manhood. One who in his youthful immaturity has not yet experienced the world and needs experiential **knowledge** and **discretion** (mezimmah), the ability to form plans based on knowledge.

The noun **na'ar** is used in 220 verses in the OT and seven times in Proverbs...

Pr 1:4 To give prudence to the naive, To the **youth** knowledge and discretion,

Pr 7:7 And I saw among the naive, And discerned among the youths A **young man** lacking sense,

Pr 20:11 It is by his deeds that a **lad** distinguishes himself If his conduct is pure and right.

Pr 22:6 Train up a **child** in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Pr 22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a **child**; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.

Pr 23:13 Do not hold back discipline from the **child**, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.

Pr 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a **child** who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

**Knowledge** ([01847](#)) (See study of daat)

**Ortlund** on **knowledge** - What does everyone need to know? The very thing our popular theories deny, namely, that there is an

inescapable link between deed and consequence. We think we can create our own designer lives, even new selves, by force of raw choice. But the truth is, reality is not made-to-order. We cannot make it up as we go. We were born into a preexisting order that God created long ago. We need to know what that order is and how it works in relationships, in finances, in sex, in every area of life, so that we can stop shooting ourselves in the foot. If we know, we can adjust, and we can thrive.

**Discretion** (04209)(**mezimmah** from **zamam** = to consider, purpose, devise) means purpose, discretion, device. Most of the OT uses refer to the negative sense = evil plans or thoughts (Pr 12:2, 14:17, 24:8) which are contrary to what God desires for men. **Discretion** refers to the ability to make proper decisions. **Discretion** is that "discernment which enables a person to judge critically of what is correct and proper, united with caution; nice discernment and judgment, directed by circumspection, and primarily regarding one's own conduct. Liberty or power of acting without other control than one's own judgment; as, the management of affairs was left to the, discretion of the prince; he is left to his own discretion." (Webster 1828). In several uses **mezimmah** refers to **plan or purpose**, that which a person sets before himself as an object to be reached or accomplished (Job 42:2; Jer 23:20; 30:24; 51:11).

The **Septuagint** translates **mezimmah** with **aisthesis**, which Paul prays will be an attribute which governs the abounding love of the saints at Philippi (Php 1:9-note). **Aisthesis** refers to the capacity to understand referring not so much to an intellectual acuteness but to a moral sensitiveness. It thus speaks of moral perception, insight, and the practical application of knowledge--the deep knowledge (in the context of the letter to the Philippians) Paul had already mentioned. **Aisthesis** therefore is more of an immediate knowledge than that arrived at by reasoning. It describes the capacity to perceive clearly and hence to understand the real nature of something. It is the capacity to discern and therefore understand what is not readily comprehensible. It refers to a moral action of recognizing distinctions and making a decision about behavior. The English dictionary states that **discernment** is the power to see what is not evident to the average mind and stresses accuracy as in reading character or motives. The idea is to detect with the senses and in the Philippians (and applicable to the Proverbs) speaks of a believer's "spiritual senses" being "fine tuned" (not judgmental but also not gullible - instead discriminating, able to see the difference between two or more things).

**W E Vine** - "purpose; evil device; evil thoughts; discretion." This noun occurs 19 times. The word means "purpose" in Job 42:2: "I know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of time can be thwarted" (RSV). **Mezimmah** refers to "evil device" in Jer. 11:15: "What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many...." In Job 21:27 the word is used to mean "evil thoughts," and in Pr. 1:4 the word is used for "discretion."

**NAS Usage:** devises evil(1), discretion(5), evil devices(1), intent(1), plans(1), plot(1), plots(1), purpose(2), purposes(1), schemer\*(1), thoughts(1), vile deeds(1), wicked schemes(1), wickedly(1).

**Mezimmah** - 19v - Job 21:27; Job 42:2; Ps. 10:2, 4; 21:11; 37:7; 139:20; Pr. 1:4; 2:11; 3:21; 5:2; 8:12; Pr 12:2; Pr 14:17; 24:8; Jer. 11:15; 23:20; 30:24; 51:11

Pr 1:4 To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and **discretion**,

Pr 2:11 **Discretion** will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,

Pr 3:21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and **discretion**,

Pr 5:2 That you may observe **discretion** And your lips may reserve knowledge.

Pr 8:12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and **discretion**.

Pr 12:2 A good man will obtain favor from the LORD, But He will condemn a man who **devises evil**.

Pr 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of **evil devices** is hated.

Pr 24:8 One who **plans** to do evil, Men will call a schemer.

**Waltke** - Wisdom and knowledge are inseparable, for mastery of life's experience demands knowledge of the divine moral order, the nexus between cause and consequence. Knowledge is a term co-relative with and inseparable from the sage's words (Pr 23:12) and instruction (Pr 1:7-note; Pr 19:27), discretion (Pr 1:4; 8:12) and competence (or understanding, Pr 2:6, 10), as well as wisdom (2:6, 10-11; 14:6) and insight (Pr 9:10).

**Ortlund** on discretion - That is the *caginess* that sees through the temptations coming at us every day, for example, through advertising. God wants to give us the deep character that can't be fooled anymore. He can help us outfox our temptations.

Why Prudence Isn't a Bad Word Scripture: Proverbs 1:4

Introduction: In our microwave, drive-through, 60-second society, we want things quickly. Some churches are now even offering "express services" for busy weekenders—worship services guaranteed not to exceed 40 minutes. Well, there is one book of the Bible, believe it or not, that provides wisdom in quick, bite-sized chunks. Drive-through wisdom. Microwave wisdom, in quick, fast

chunks. It is the book of Proverbs. A “proverb” has been described as a heavenly rule for earthly living. It is when the wit of one becomes the wisdom of many. The ability to distill and condense great truths in simple, quotable statements makes for unique literature, and everyone from Benjamin Franklin (“Poor Richard”) to Yogi Berra has tried his hand at it. In Proverbs 1:4, we’re told that one of the results of studying the book of Proverbs will be the acquisition of “prudence.” In recent years, “prudence” has conjured images of prim and proper old ladies, or doddering, prunish old men. The related words, “prude” and “prudish,” have even worse connotations. But the dictionary defines “prudence” as “the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason; shrewdness in the management of affairs; good judgement in the use of resources.” Since this is a quality most of us badly need, I would like to tell you that this word occurs 31 times in the Bible (NKJV), half of them (15 times) in the Book of Proverbs, where we learn:

1. Prudent people are like cats—they know that some things are best covered up. “But a prudent man covers shame” (Prov. 12:16). The NRSV says “ignore an insult.” Matthew Henry said, “It is kindness to ourselves to make light of injuries and affronts, instead of making the worst of them.” Most of us are too sensitive, too touchy, and too easily offended. It’s often better to laugh off a criticism and complaint, to have a “duck’s back” attitude about the rudeness of other people. Prudent people don’t take themselves too seriously.

2. Prudent people give cautious answers (Prov. 12:23). The NCV says “they don’t tell everything they know.” Jesus often withheld information, giving only partial or concealed answers. He wasn’t being dishonest, but prudent. We don’t have to say everything we know. Very often the wisest people give the shortest and quietest answers.

3. Prudent people think ahead (Prov. 14:8 NLT). “[The prudent] look ahead to see what is coming.” Most of us make spot decisions, without thinking through the implications. We make an impulse purchase, then suffer financial stress later when the bill comes in. We join a team or club without considering how much of our time will be demanded. One of the earmarks of prudence is to “look before we leap.”

4. Prudent people have a healthy skepticism. They don’t believe everything they hear (Prov. 14:15). Most of us have learned through sad experience not to put too much stock in the promises of politicians during the election season. We need to practice the same cautious listening when it comes to what we’re being told by the media and in the colleges and universities. Sometimes the experts and professors are still seeking for wisdom when the janitors and cooks have found it long ago.

5. Prudent people handle correction well (Prov. 15:5). When was the last time you felt defensive and offended? Perhaps your husband or wife made a suggestion about your behavior or appearance? Perhaps a co-worker or supervisor offered some unsolicited advice. Wise people listen to criticism, discarding what is invalid and heeding the rest.

6. Prudent people study (Prov. 18:15) “The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge.” Prudent people turn off the television, and open the bookcase. They take classes and courses. They become personal students of the Scriptures.

7. Prudent people take precautions. (Prov. 22:3 and 27:12). They don’t live in fear, but they fasten their seatbelt, establish an emergency fund, monitor their investments, do maintenance on their homes and cars, and guard against “the evil day.”

**Conclusions:** According to Proverbs 1:1–4, we develop prudence by studying the Proverbs. Since there are 31 chapters, it almost seems that God intended for us to read one chapter a day. Since today is the first day of the month, why not ask the Lord to develop within you a more prudent mind and heart. Begin today with Proverbs 1, and read a chapter from this book each day, reading carefully, perhaps comparing one translation with another, and underlining the verses that most impress you. Memorize and meditate on the Proverbs of Solomon. And by the time October rolls around, you’ll be a wiser and more prudent person. (Borrow [Nelson's annual preacher's sourcebook 2002](#))

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### **William Wilberforce - ‘I love your considering and treating me as a friend’**

‘A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.’  
Proverbs 1:5

Let me assure you that you give me great pleasure by telling me unreservedly any doubts you may entertain of the propriety of my principles or conduct. I love your considering and treating me as a friend, and I trust you will never have reason to regret your having so done, either in relation to your benefit or your comfort. In stating my suspicions that I had not sufficiently endeavoured to impress on my children, and that you were scarcely enough aware of the force of the dictum that Christians were to be a peculiar people, I scarcely need assure you that I think the commands, ‘Provide things honest in the sight of all men, whatever things are lovely, whatsoever of good report,’ etc., clearly prove that so far from being needlessly singular, we never ought to be so, but for some special and good reason.

Again, I am aware of what you suggest that, in our days, in which the number of those who profess a stricter kind of religion than the

world of soi-disant Christians in general, there is danger lest a party spirit should creep in with its usual effects and evils. Against this, therefore, we should be on the watch. And yet, though not enlisting ourselves in a party, we ought, as I think you will admit, to assign considerable weight to any opinions or practices which have been sanctioned by the authority of good men in general.

FOR MEDITATION: It was Philip Doddridge who wrote: 'If a criminal, condemned by human laws, has but the least shadow of hope that he may escape, he is all attention to it. If there be a friend who he thinks can help him, with what strong importunity does he entreat the interposition of that friend?' This casts into sharp relief the idea that we are to cherish a friend who cares deeply about our welfare. In the Christian life, God raises up companions for us who can dispense the cordials of friendship. (365 Days with William Wilberforce)

### Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel

- **wise** - Pr 9:9; 12:1; Job 34:10,16,34; Ps 119:98-100; 1Corinthians 10:15
- **a man of understanding** - 1Samuel 25:32,33; 2Chronicles 25:16)

**Living Bible** = I want those already wise to become wiser and become leaders by exploring the depths of meaning in these nuggets of truth."

**NET** = **Let** the wise also hear and gain instruction, and **let** the discerning acquire guidance! (Note that translating with "**Let** him hear" conveys more accurately the sense of advice or counsel than does the translation "He will hear.")

**ESV** = **Let** the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance,

### WISE SAYINGS FOR THE WISE!

**A wise man will hear and increase in learning** (ESV renders it more like an "invitation" = "*Let the wise hear*") - Wisdom is not an arrival but a journey in this present life, until we come face to face with our Lord Jesus Christ, Wisdom personified (1Cor 1:30) While Pr 1:4 was addressed to the naive and youthful, this passage is for the wise. Solomon's point is that even the wise can become wiser, indicating that spiritual wisdom is for all, whether they be babes in the Lord or mature believers. Note the requirement here -- whether one is wise or not, he must **hear** these words. One wonders if reading the proverbs out loud might not even be beneficial? Clearly if we would be wise, we must listen to God. We must give His Word an attentive ear, with a heart ready to obey what is heard. A casual, "speed reading" of Proverbs, flying through a chapter a day for 31 days is not likely to result in any significant **increase in learning**. Why is this so important for all of us, young or old in the Lord? As Ortlund says "God wants to give every one of us deep character. That is the first of his two purposes in this book. His second purpose is straight thinking."

**James Draper** adds that "The wise man listens with his heart as well as his ears. Jesus continually spoke of people who had ears to hear but did not hear (**Ed**: See Mt 13:13, 16, Mk 8:17, 18). If we want wisdom, if we want to live skillfully, with fulfillment, purpose, direction, and satisfaction, we must listen to God....Wisdom never comes to the lazy, careless, or casual person. It is a pursuit that calls for diligent energy to be expended. It calls for persistence of effort. If we are going to be wise, something will be required of us. We must make a genuine commitment to God if we want to experience his wisdom in our lives. (Proverbs Commentary)

**Charles Bridges** - For a truly wise man is not a person who has attained everything, but one who knows that he has not attained and is pressing on to perfection (Philippians 3:12). David, while aware of many attainments, always sought after higher light (Psalm 119:98-100). Indeed, the most abundant stores would soon run down if they were not constantly replenished. Listening is the way to acquire knowledge. Let the wise listen. Jethro instructed Moses (Ex 18:17-26), our Lord his disciples (Mt 13:11-16; Jn 16:12-13). Peter instructed his fellow apostles (Acts 11:2-18). Priscilla and Aquila explained to Apollos "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:24-26). Indeed, we must be listeners if we want to be teachers. As Bishop Hall once wrote, "He gathers who listens; he spends who teaches. If we spend before we gather, we will soon become bankrupt." The more we learn, the more we feel we need to learn, and the more willing we are to listen and add to [our] learning (compare Pr 9:9; 18:15).

**John Phillips** - Apollos is the classic New Testament example of such a man (Acts 18:24-28). Although he was well-versed in Scripture and a gifted orator, he was still teachable. When he first came to Corinth he only knew about John's baptism and was ignorant of the believer's baptism based on the Lord's ordinance, so he was quite willing to allow Priscilla and Aquila to explain truth to him in an area where he was deficient. Apollos allowed this godly couple to teach him the way of God more perfectly. Often successful preachers are not very teachable. When challenged on a point, they sometimes dig in their heels and defend their beliefs, right or wrong. A wise man will never be too sophisticated to learn, even from someone who has not had all his educational, social, or natural advantages.

**Hear** (08985)(**shama**) is used 1072 times in the OT with 30 uses in the Proverbs. The most famous use of this word is to introduce the **Shema**, "Hear, O, Israel," followed by the content of what the Israelites are to understand about the Lord their God and how they are to respond to Him (Dt. 6:4) Inherent in the call to hear is the idea of paying attention to what is spoken (cp "Heed" Pr 8:33) and also obeying what is heard, so that what is heard is not as they say "In one ear and out the other." (A modern "proverb"; cp James 1:22-note = "**prove** yourselves **doers** of the word, and not merely **hearers** who delude themselves.").

**Waltke** says that to **hear** in the book of Proverbs "signifies to give one's ear to the speaker's words externally and to obey them inwardly."

**John Trapp** - Hearing and seeing are by Aristotle called "the learned senses," because by these doors learning, yea, life, entereth into the soul. {Isa 55:3}

**Shama** - the 30 uses in Proverbs - note all words in **red** are commands (not suggestions!)...

Pr 1:5 A wise man will **hear** and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,

Pr 1:8 **Hear**, my son, your father's instruction And do not forsake your mother's teaching;

Pr 1:33 "But he who **listens** to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil."

Pr 4:1 **Hear**, O sons, the instruction of a father, And give attention that you may gain understanding,

Pr 4:10 **Hear**, my son, and accept my sayings And the years of your life will be many.

Pr 5:7 Now then, my sons, **listen** to me And do not depart from the words of my mouth.

Pr 5:13 "I have not **listened** to the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!

Pr 7:24 Now therefore, my sons, **listen** to me, And pay attention to the words of my mouth.

Pr 8:6 "**Listen**, for I will speak noble things; And the opening of my lips will reveal right things.

Pr 8:32 "Now therefore, O sons, **listen** to me, For blessed are they who keep my ways.

Pr 8:33 "**Heed** instruction and be wise, And do not neglect it.

Pr 8:34 "Blessed is the man who **listens** to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts.

Pr 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who **listens** to counsel.

Pr 13:1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline, But a scoffer does not **listen** to rebuke.

Pr 13:8 The ransom of a man's life is his wealth, But the poor **hears** no rebuke.

Pr 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked, But He **hears** the prayer of the righteous. (cp Ps 66:18)

Pr 15:31 He whose ear **listens** to the life-giving reproof Will dwell among the wise.

Pr 15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who **listens** to reproof acquires understanding.

Pr 18:13 He who gives an answer before he **hears**, It is folly and shame to him.

Pr 19:20 **Listen** to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.

Pr 19:27 **Cease** (chadal) **listening** (shama) my son, to discipline, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Pr 20:12 The **hearing** ear and the seeing eye, The LORD has made both of them.

Pr 21:28 A false witness will perish, But the man who **listens** to the truth will speak forever.

Pr 22:17 Incline your ear and **hear** the words of the wise, And apply your mind to my knowledge;

Pr 23:19 **Listen**, my son, and be wise, And direct your heart in the way.

Pr 23:22 **Listen** to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.

Pr 25:10 Or he who **hears** it will reproach you, And the evil report about you will not pass away.

Pr 25:12 Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise reprover to **alisting** ear.

Pr 28:9 He who turns away his ear from **listening** to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination. (cp 1Pe 3:7)

Pr 29:24 He who is a partner with a thief hates his own life; He **hears** the oath but tells nothing.

**Increase in learning** - **John Trapp** says "Hearing and seeing are by Aristotle called "the learned senses," because by these doors **learning**, yea, **life**, enters into the soul. {Isa 55:3}... Only ponder and apply what you hear. Jesus said "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides." (Mark 4:24)

**William MacDonald** - The essential difference between the **wise man** and **the fool** in the book of Proverbs is that the wise man will hear and the fool won't. It isn't a question of the fool's mental capacity. Actually he may have unusual intellectual ability. But he just cannot be told anything. He labors under the fatal delusion that his knowledge is infinite and his judgments are infallible. If his friends try to counsel him, they receive scorn for their efforts. They watch him trying to escape the inevitable results of sinful and stupid actions, but they are helpless to avert the crash. And so he goes on from one crisis to another. Now his finances are a disaster. Now his personal life is in shambles. Now his business totters on the edge of chaos. But he rationalizes that life is giving him a bad deal. It never occurs to him that he is his own worst enemy. He is generous in dispensing advice to others, oblivious of his inability to run his own life. A compulsive talker, he holds forth with the aplomb of an oracle. The wise man is made of better stuff. He realizes that everyone's mental wires have been somewhat crossed by the Fall. He knows that others can sometimes see aspects of a problem that he has overlooked. He is willing to acknowledge that his memory may be faulty at times. He is teachable, welcoming any input that will help him make the right decisions. Actually he solicits the advice of others because he knows that "in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Pr. 11:14). Like everyone else, he sometimes makes mistakes. But he has this saving virtue that he learns from his mistakes and makes every failure a springboard to success. He is grateful for a deserved rebuke and is willing to say, "I was wrong. I am sorry." Wise children submit to parental discipline; fools rebel. **Wise** young people obey the scriptural precepts concerning moral purity; **fools** do their own thing. **Wise** adults judge everything by whether it is well-pleasing to the Lord; **fools** act according to what pleases themselves. **And so it is that the wise grow wiser, and the fools are stuck fast in the rut of their own folly.** (Truths to Live By-Daily Devotional)

**Learning** ([03948](#))(**leqah/leqach** from **laqach** = to take, grasp) can mean teaching (Dt 32:2, Pr 16:21, 23, Isa 29:24) or learning which is "grasping" with the mind (Pr 1:5, 4:2, Pr 9:9). In Pr 7:21 it refers to persuasive words, words that hold power to change one's behavior. **Laqah** embraces "comprehension of truth well enough to teach it."

**Walter Kaiser** - As with the root meaning (of leqach) "take, seize," the "grasping" is with the mind and hence "perceiving" is the nuance prominent in this derivative. Note some of the words with which it is paired: **bînâ** "understanding" (Isa 29:24), **ākām** "wisdom" (Pr 1:5; 9:9) and **tôrâ** "instruction, law" (Pr 4:2). In Pr 7:21 **leqah/leqach** means "the persuasiveness" of a harlot. But in Pr 16:21 the word is used in a good sense of a teacher's persuasiveness. (TWOT)

**Leqah** - 9v - Dt. 32:2; Job 11:4; Pr. 1:5; 4:2; 7:21; 9:9; 16:21, 23; Isa. 29:24. **NAS Usage:** instruction(1), learning(2), persuasions(1), persuasiveness(2), teaching(3).

Pr 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in **learning**. And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,

Pr 4:2 For I give you sound **teaching**; Do not abandon my instruction.

Pr 7:21 With her many **persuasions** she entices him; With her flattering lips she seduces him.

Pr 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his **learning**.

Pr 16:21 The wise in heart will be called understanding, And sweetness of speech increases **persuasiveness**.

Pr 16:23 The heart of the wise instructs his mouth And adds **persuasiveness** to his lips.

**Man of understanding** - the discerning = NET, NIV, the one who understands = ESV. The noun is **bin/biyn**. (transliterated nābôn). These individuals possess "the ability to understand the words of insight (Pr 1:2b), or they are potentially capable of possessing it." (Waltke)

**Acquire** ([07069](#))(**qanah**) means to get, to buy, to purchase, to acquire, to possess (Ge 25:10, 47:19). It describes buying, acquiring various things and is used of acquiring wisdom (Pr 4:5, Pr 4:7) and in this passage acquiring **wise counsel**. Note that another sense of qanah is to create (Pr 8:22, Creator/Possessor - Ge 14:19, 22), which results in some lexicons giving this meaning a separate entry. Vine discusses the meaning of "to create."

**NET Note** explains - There are two roots קָנָה (qanah) in Hebrew, one meaning "to possess," and the other meaning "to create." The earlier English versions did not know of the second root, but suspected in certain places that a meaning like that was necessary (e.g., Ge 4:1; 14:19; Deut 32:6). Ugaritic confirmed that it was indeed another root. The older versions have the translation "**possess**" (in Pr 8:22) because otherwise it sounds like God lacked wisdom and therefore created it at the beginning. They wanted to avoid saying that wisdom was not eternal. Arius liked the idea of Christ as the wisdom of God and so chose the translation "create." Athanasius translated it, "constituted me as the head of creation." The verb occurs twelve times in Proverbs with the meaning of "to acquire"; but the Greek and the Syriac versions have the meaning "create." Although the idea is that wisdom existed

before creation, the parallel ideas in these verses ("appointed," "given birth") argue for the translation of "create" or "establish" (R. N. Whybray, "Proverbs 8:22-31 and Its Supposed Prototypes," VT 15 [1965]: 504-14; and W. A. Irwin, "Where Will Wisdom Be Found?" JBL 80 [1961]: 133-42).

**Swanson** divides Strong's number **07069** into two groups - (1) קָנָה (**qānāh**: (qal) buy, get, purchase, i.e., acquire possessions with the exchange of money or bartered goods (Ge 25:10; 47:19), (nif) be bought (Jer 32:15; 32:43); (hif) acquire (Zec 13:5) (2) קָנָה (**qānāh**: (**qal**) create, bring forth, i.e., create an object of a similar kind, as a figurative extension of giving birth to a baby (Pr 8:22), **Qanah** is used of One Bringing Forth, Creator, i.e., a title of God (Ge 14:19, 22; Dt 32:6), note: in these contexts the creation of objects of a different class or kind; (**qal**) give birth, formally, create, i.e., produce and give birth to a baby, as a normal birthing process (Ge 4:1; Ps 139:13)

**Vine** - **qanah** (7069, קָנָה), "to get, acquire, create, buy." The first occurrence of **qanah** in the Old Testament is in Ge 4:1 (where) **qanah** expresses a basic meaning of God's "creating" or "bringing into being," so Eve is really saying, "I have **created** a man-child with the help of the Lord." This meaning is confirmed in Ge 14:19, 22 where both verses refer to God as "Creator (Possessor) of heaven and earth". In Dt. 32:6, God is called the "father" Who "created" Israel; a father begets or "creates," rather than "acquires" children. In the Wisdom version of the Creation story (Pr. 8:22-36), Wisdom herself states that "the Lord created me at the beginning of his work". "Possessed" is surely not as appropriate in such a context. When the Psalmist says to God, "Thou didst form my inward parts" (Ps. 139:13, RSV) he surely meant "create" (JB). **Qanah** is used several times to express God's redeeming activity in behalf of Israel, again reflecting "creativity" rather than "purchase." Ex. 15:16 is better translated, "Thy people...whom thou hast created," rather than "thou hast purchased" (RSV). (Cp Ps. 74:2; 78:54). The meaning "to buy" is expressed by **qanah** frequently in contexts where one person makes a purchase agreement with another. The word is used to refer to "buying" a slave (Ex. 21:2) and land (Ge 47:20).

**Qanah** is translated in the **Septuagint** (in Pr 1:5) with the verb **ktaomai**, which means to get, procure, obtain or acquire something for oneself by purchase for a price (Acts 1:18; 8:20; 22:28) or otherwise.

**NAS Usage:** acquire(6), acquired(1), acquires(2), bought(20), buy(23), buyer(4), buying(2), buys(1), formed(1), gain acquisition(1), gained(1), get(3), gets(1), gotten(1), owner(1), possessed(1), possessor(2), purchased(3), purchaser(3), recover(1), redeemed(1), sold(1), surely buy(2).

**Qanah** - 75v - Gen. 4:1; 14:19, Ge 14:22; 25:10; 33:19; 39:1; 47:19-20, 22-23; 49:30; 50:13; Exod. 15:16; 21:2; Lev. 22:11; 25:14-15, 28, 30, 44-45, 50; 27:24; Deut. 28:68; 32:6; Jos. 24:32; Ruth 4:4-5, 8-10; 2 Sam. 12:3; 24:21, 24; 1 Ki. 16:24; 2 Ki. 12:12; 22:6; 1 Chr. 21:24; 2 Chr. 34:11; Neh. 5:8, 16; Ps. 74:2; 78:54; 139:13; Pr. 1:5; 4:5, Pr 4:7; 8:22; 15:32; 16:16; 17:16; 18:15; 19:8; 20:14; 23:23; Eccl. 2:7; Isa. 1:3; 11:11; 24:2; 43:24; Jer. 13:1-2, 4; 19:1; 32:7-9, 15, 25, 43-44; Ezek. 7:12; Amos 8:6; Zech. 11:5; 13:5

There are 11 uses of **qanah** in Proverbs - words in **red** are commands, not suggestions...

Pr 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding **will acquire** wise counsel,

Pr 4:5 **Acquire** wisdom! **Acquire** understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

Pr 4:7 "The beginning of wisdom is: **Acquire** wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.

Pr 8:22 "The LORD **possessed** me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.

Pr 15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof **acquires** understanding.

Pr 16:16 How much better it is to **get** wisdom than gold! And to **get** understanding is to be chosen above silver.

Pr 17:16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to **buy** wisdom, When he has no sense?

Pr 18:15 The mind of the prudent **acquires** knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Pr 19:8 He who **gets** wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good.

Pr 20:14 "Bad, bad," says the **buyer**, But when he goes his way, then he boasts.

Pr 23:23 **Buy** truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding.

**Wise counsel** (08458)(**tachbulah**) may originally have referred to the steering of a ship and in all of the OT uses refers to discernment to "steer a right course" (through life). Tachbulah means accurate guidance. Ryrie - "Literally, steerings; i.e., the discernment to steer a right course through life." Thus the **Amplified** renders Pr 1:5 "The wise also will hear and increase in learning, and the person of understanding will acquire skill and attain to sound counsel [so that he may be able to steer his course rightly]"

The **Septuagint** translates **tachbulah** with the noun **kubernesis** (1Cor 12:28) which means "literally, the skill with which a pilot guides a ship; figuratively, of leadership skill administrative ability, gift of leadership, managerial skill." (Friberg).

**Tachbulah** - 6v - Job 37:12; Pr 1:5; 11:14; 12:5; 20:18; 24:6 translated in NAS as counsels(1), guidance(2), wise counsel(1), wise guidance(2).

Pr 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire **wise counsel**,

Pr 11:14 Where there is no **guidance** the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Pr 12:5 The thoughts of the righteous are just, But the **counsels** of the wicked are deceitful.

Pr 20:18 Prepare plans by consultation, And make war by **wise guidance**.

Pr 24:6 For by **wise guidance** you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory.

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**Nulla dies sine linea - J R Miller** - The wise man never ceases to be a learner. He never gets to a point where he feels satisfied with his attainments. Many a man, who starts out with great promise in early life, by and by loses his energy and fails of his early hope, because in the elation of his first successes he stopped learning, and then growth was at an end, and when growth stops decay begins. An old artist had for his motto: "*Nulla dies sine linea*" (No day without a line). Every day he would add one line, at least, to his knowledge and attainment. There could be no better motto for any life, young or old. **Every day we should learn something we did not know before, add some new fact to our store of knowledge. Every day we should get some new lesson into our life, learn at some point to live better.** This applies to secular life - there should be daily progress in the business or profession we pursue. It also needs to apply to spiritual life - no day should be without its added line of likeness to Christ (cp Peter's charge in 2Pe 3:18)

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#### John Butler - A WISE MAN Proverbs 1:5

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels" (Proverbs 1:5).

The world calls a lot of people wise who are not wise at all but are rather stupid in that which matters the most in life. The world's standards are not as high as God's standards. Our text describes a truly wise man. Three features of the truly wise man are given in our text.

#### FIRST—THE LISTENING MAN

"A wise man will hear." Wisdom begins with the ear. A wise man will listen more than talk. Most people use their mouth more than their ears. Someone has said that we have two ears and only one mouth which tells us the intended relationship of talk to listening. Of course it makes a big difference in what you are listening to. If all you listen to is the liberal news media, you will not know what is going on in the world in truth. If all you listen to is the secular world you will think that spiritual things are not of any value. If all you listen to is the sports world, you will think that nothing is so important as achievement in sports. A wise man will not only listen but he will listen to Divine truth and as a result will prosper his way and bless his eternity.

#### SECOND—THE LEARNING MAN

"A wise man ... will increase learning." The wise man seeks and will learn more. He will pay attention in class; he will not skip school or quit school so he does not have to study anymore; and he will be in church regularly in order to learn from the Word of God (today a person will have a difficult time finding a church that teaches the Scriptures). The reason so many stay in a state of ignorance is that they do not listen to much wisdom, and, therefore, do not learn the way of life well. Many do not "increase learning." They think they know it all and cease learning. This attitude shows up too often at church. Some think that they have learned it all spiritually, and no longer study and read the Scriptures. You never get to the place where you can afford to cease the study of the Word of God. Your learning will cease when you cease studying the Scripture.

#### THIRD—THE LED MAN

"A man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels" (Proverbs 1:5). The "man of understanding" is the wise man. The words translated "wise counsels" refers to directing and managing a ship on the right course. Therefore, the wise man will direct and manage his ship of life on the right course. Many lives are like shipwrecks in the storms of life. They do not and have not listened to good counsel from the Word of God and therefore when they face an emergency they flounder about not knowing or having a clue as to which way to turn. But the man who listens to wisdom will have a successful voyage in life. Wisdom involves both the Written

Word and especially the Living Word. Jesus is our wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30) and He will lead us in the right paths of life. ([Butler's Sermon Starters](#))

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## Henry Blackaby - Wisdom

Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance. Proverbs 1:5

Most of us want all we can get out of life. After all, we only have one life to live! Unless we are wise in our decision making, however, we could waste the one life we have. Solomon said that a wise person is continually learning more. The more he learns, the more a wise person realizes how much is left to discover. The more knowledge she gains, the more a wise person understands her potential and the more she has to give to others. On the other hand, there are some who try to get by with the least amount of learning possible. In school, they put in only enough effort to get by. They never read or study anything they don't have to. They rarely ask questions. They are indifferent to what is happening around them. Solomon called these people fools.

A wise person seeks out the company of wise people (Proverbs 13:20). She reads, asks questions, and seizes opportunities to learn more about the wonders of life. Make it a habit while you are young to spend time with the wisest people you know. Observe their lives and ask them lots of questions. Be sure to spend time listening and not doing all the talking yourself. The knowledge you gain will enable you to live your life to the maximum. Don't live life as a fool. Life is far too important to live carelessly. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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**LISTEN AND LEARN** - A person who read one of my articles in Our Daily Bread disagreed with something I said. So she wrote and asked for an explanation. After receiving my letter, she responded, "Thank you for your answer. It was information that I didn't know. I just took for granted what I had learned in childhood. But it is a poor day when one doesn't learn something new—so at 84 I am still learning." A willingness to learn is a mark of growth and wisdom. Proverbs 1:5 states, "**A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel.**" The Hebrew word for **learning** in this verse means "a taking in." If we desire to grow in our knowledge of God and learn to please Him, we need not fear discarding old ideas and taking in new ones that more adequately explain the Scriptures. People who are seeking wisdom will welcome new ideas. They will test them by the truths of the Bible, either to confirm what they already believe or to enlarge their knowledge and understanding. We must be open to God's truth as He teaches us through His Word and the people around us. Are we listening, testing, and learning? -- Dennis J. De Haan

Think About It - When was the last time you admitted you were wrong?

Why is it so hard to do? What have you learned recently from another believer?

**To make room for wisdom,  
get rid of pride.**

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**WISE COUNSEL** - I'll never forget Jake. His legs seemed too thin and spindly to hold him against the current of the river. His patched and discolored waders looked older than he was. His fishing vest was tattered and held together with safety pins; his ancient hat was battered and sweat-stained; his antiquated fly rod was scarred and taped. I watched as he worked his way upstream to a patch of quiet water and began to cast. Then I took notice! He was fishing the same water I had fished earlier in the day and catching trout where I had caught none. Here was a man who could teach me a thing or two. All I had to do was ask. We gain insight when we listen to those who have gone before and who know more than we do—insight we miss when our pride stands in the way. We're able to learn from others when we humble ourselves and acknowledge how little we know. Willingness to learn is a mark of those who are truly wise.

Consider our Lord as a young boy, "sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). Proverbs 1:5 says that "**a wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel.**" Let's ask questions of those who've spent their lives seeking God's wisdom. —David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

There's so much wisdom to be learned,  
So many ways for me to grow,  
Lord, I would listen like a child,  
And learn what You would have me know.  
—K. De Haan

**If you think you know everything,**

## Proverbs 1:6 To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles

- **proverb**- Matthew 13:10-17,51,52; Mark 4:11,34; Acts 8:30,31
- **figure** - Ecclesiastes 12:11
- **riddles** - Ps 49:4; 78:2; Matthew 13:34,35; Hebrews 5:14; 2 Peter 3:16

**KJV** - To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

**NET** - To discern the meaning of a proverb and a parable, the sayings of the wise and their riddles.

**Solomon** continues to explain the purpose for writing the Book of Proverbs. The [NET Note](#) adds that here he "introduces the fifth purpose of the book. It focuses on the benefits of proverbs from the perspective of the reader. By studying proverbs the reader will discern the hermeneutical key to understanding more and more proverbs."

**To understand** - see **bin/biyn**. Waltke points out that "The repetition of to **understand** (**bin/biyn** first used in Pr 1:2) underscores the necessity of grasping the meaning of words to enter into the truth and again implies that this skill is learned through the exercise of study."

The **Septuagint** translates **bin/biyn** with the verb **noeo** which means to perceive or to grasp something on the basis of careful thought and so to gain insight. as the basic meaning of direct one's mind to something and thus means more than just take a glance at. It means to perceive with the mind, to apprehend, to ponder (= weigh in one's mind, think especially quietly, soberly and deeply). It means to consider well, to reflect on with insight, or to think over a matter carefully. The idea is to grasp or comprehend something on the basis of careful thought. Noeo is translated "**consider**" in 2Ti 2:7-note and means to fix one's mind upon, to think about carefully, to give careful examination with a view to discerning and arriving at a judgment or conclusion. The idea is to ponder or examine attentively or deliberately. The NIV translates noeo in 2Ti 2:7 as **reflect**, which conveys the picture of an unhurried consideration of something, even meditating on the truth.

**Pulpit Commentary** - To understand a proverb. This verse carries on the idea which is stated in Pr 1:5. The end of the wise and intelligent man's increase in learning and prudence is that he may be thus enabled to understand other proverbs. (**Ed**: This reminds me of the principle in John 7:17 where Jesus declared that "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." Here we see the key is not just knowing God's will but doing God's will. The thought is if anyone does the will of God, he will be able to judge the authority of Jesus' teaching. See also Mk 4:12, Lk 8:10)

**Figure** ([04426](#))(**melitsah**) refers "to a literary style, literary device, or genre, a parable, a taunting song, a mocking expression, an aphorism." (Baker). Melitsah means "allusive expression; enigma" in general, and "proverb, parable" in particular." ([NET Note](#)) Swanson adds that melitsah is "allusive saying, parable, i.e., a saying or proverb that is difficult to understand, requiring wisdom to unravel the true meaning, possibly implying that the saying undeciphered mocks or taunts the hearer (Pr 1:6). (It can also mean) ridiculing sayings, mockery, scoffing words, i.e., words of derision and ridicule (Hab 2:6-note)

The **Septuagint** translate it with the adjective **skoteinos** which literally means "in the dark" and figuratively refers to that which is full of darkness. The idea here in Pr 1:6 seems to be that which is obscure (cf "dark saying" as in Ps 78:2 referring to a more enigmatic saying). **Melitsah** is used only one other time (Hab 2:6).

**John Phillips** - In Solomon's day the oriental people loved riddles. There was for instance the famous riddle of the sphinx. When anyone passed by, the sphinx asked him, "What has one voice, and yet becomes four-footed and two-footed and three-footed?" According to mythology the sphinx ate any traveler who could not give the correct answer. In a Greek legend Oedipus passed that way and gave the correct answer: "Man crawls on all fours as a baby, walks upright in the prime of life, and uses a staff in old age." The sphinx was so enraged by his answer that she threw herself to her death from the rock on which she lived outside the city of Thebes. Hopefully the riddles propounded to Solomon were of a more serious nature.

**Riddles** ([02420](#))(**chidah**) means an enigmatic, perplexing saying or question. The meaning is obscure or hidden. **Dark sayings** (KJV) used of Samson's riddle (Jdg. 14:12ff), of the Queen of Sheba's tests (1Ki 10:1) and indeed of anything enigmatic, which needs interpreting.

[NET Note](#) - The sayings of the wise often take the form of riddles that must be discerned.

**John Trapp** says they are "**Dark** to those that are acute obtusi, that have not their "senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb 5:14) If the law be dark to any, the fault is not in the lawgiver, but in those that should better understand it."

**Derek Kidner** - So the secondary purpose of Proverbs (**Ed**: Especially these "dark sayings" or riddles) is to introduce the reader to a style of teaching that provokes his thought, getting under his skin by thrusts of wit, paradox, common sense and teasing symbolism, in preference to the preacher's tactic of frontal assault.

**NAS Usage**: dark sayings(2), difficult questions(2), insinuations(1), intrigue(1), riddle(10), riddles(1).

**Chidah** - 17 v - Nu 12:8; Jdg. 14:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; 1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1; Ps. 49:4; 78:2; Pr. 1:6; Ezek. 17:2; Da 8:23; Hab. 2:6

**Charles Bridges** - The wise man (Solomon) himself expounded his sayings and riddles of the wise to the delight and instruction of his royal pupil (1Ki 10:1-5 where "difficult question" is chidah). So to the teachable listener (**Ed**: And I would add the one who **obeys** what he learns) the deep things of God will be revealed (1Cor 2:9-13). Hence the value of the minister of God who is the divinely appointed means to build up our faith (Eph 4:11-15; 1Th 3:10). The church might have been spared many heresies if men had not followed unsound judgments but instead had honored God's messengers and humbly sought instruction from him (Mal 2:7-note).

**Roehrs** - Wisdom is going to be taught in parabolic forms which are designed to arouse interest, but which also require concentrated and unprejudiced thinking if their content is not to remain enigmatical

**Ortlund** sums on the principle in Pr 1:6 - Picture it this way. As we come to the book of Proverbs, we are approaching a community of wisdom, a group of people standing around talking together, men and women, who are Yoda-smart. We beginners sidle up to this circle of amazing people. We see, there in the circle of "the wise," Solomon and Isaiah and Paul and Augustine and Luther and other remarkable people we have known personally and admired. We start listening to the conversation going on inside that circle. We overhear words and concepts we do not understand at first, so we have to stick with it to catch on. But as we do, we begin to leave behind our shallow entertainment mindset with its effortless, pat answers that in fact have always failed us. As we listen to the wise, we grow. We, even we, become profound people too. The final reason for this, of course, is not us, and not even them. According to Pr 1:7-note, God is there. The wise are letting God be God to them.

### Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction

- **fear** - Pr 9:10; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10; 112:1; Eccl 12:13
- **beginning...but** - Pr 1:22,29,30; 5:12,13; 15:5; 18:2; John 3:18-21; Romans 1:28

### THE THEME OF PROVERBS: THE FEAR OF THE LORD

- Click here for Proverbs 1:7 commentary on a separate page.

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### Walter Kaiser - Love God or Fear Him? - from [Hard Sayings](#)

Wouldn't it be better if the author just said that we are to love God rather than commending our fear of him? Why is fearing God mentioned so frequently in the Bible? The phrase is used so frequently that cross-referencing all the instances here has been avoided in the interests of space.

The term to fear can describe everything from dread (Deut 1:29) or being terrified (Jon 1:10) to standing in awe (1 Kings 3:28) and having reverence (Lev 19:3). When used of the Lord, it encapsulates both aspects of the term, a shrinking back in recognition of the difference or holiness of God and the drawing close in awe and worship. To fear the Lord is not to experience a dread that paralyzes all action, but neither is it just a polite respect. It is an attitude of both reluctance and adoration that results in a willingness to do what God says. The fear of the Lord, then, is absolutely necessary if we are even to begin on the right foot in learning, living or worshipping.

The problem with saying that loving God is enough is that this informs us as to what the proper emotion should be, but it says nothing, in and of itself, as to what we should do about expressing that love. It also leaves the important aspect of the holiness and difference of God's nature and character untouched and without a response.

But with the fear of the Lord there is a foundation for wisdom, discipline, learning and life. It expresses itself in a hatred of evil (Prov 8:13) and demonstrates its presence by its willingness to be obedient (Gen 22:12).

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## Henry Blackaby - Fear

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Proverbs 1:7

We often read in the Bible the phrase “do not be afraid,” yet here Solomon is saying that fear is a good thing; fear is where knowledge begins. How can that be? Since all truth ultimately comes from God, the only way to understand the great truths of life is for God to show them to you. God chooses to give his wisdom to those who fear, or have reverence, for him. Reverence for God comes when you realize who you are compared to who he is.

Spend a few minutes thinking about what God is like. He is powerful: he created an entire universe from nothing! He is all-knowing: he is aware of your every action, your every mood, your hopes and dreams, your every thought. He is timeless: he has always existed, and he always will. He created time: he is not bound by it as we are. It's really too amazing to grasp, isn't it? Equally as incredible is the knowledge that God loves us more than we could ever understand. So complete is his love for us that he gave up his only Son to be humiliated, tortured, and murdered to pay for our sin. It seems inconceivable that he longs for a close personal relationship with each of us—the very creatures who sent Jesus to the cross. This knowledge ought to make us tremble, not in the fear that God would hurt us, but in reverence of his magnificence.

When we begin to understand who God is, what he has done for us, and what he is really like, we have started on the path to wisdom. Solomon said it best: only a fool would refuse such an opportunity, for to be wise is to know God. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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## David Jeremiah - FATHER-SON TALKS

PROVERBS 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Mark Twain is given credit for the following remark: “When I was a boy of fourteen my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.” If that were a true record of a young man's awakening to wisdom, Mark Twain would not be the first to whom it happened. Many a young man has listened to advice from his father and discounted it—until the day he needed it. Then it turned out to be more wisdom than advice.

One of the oldest father-son talks in history is recorded in the Book of Proverbs. Solomon, the world's wisest man in his day (and likely in ours), used his throne as king of Israel to dispense his wise sayings to his subjects and to those who came from afar to sit at his feet and learn. Solomon was known throughout the surrounding nations for processing uncanny wisdom, discernment, and insight.

The principles of wisdom will work for anyone who puts them to use. But it is only those who fear the Lord who will want to practice them over a lifetime. (Borrow [Sanctuary : finding moments of refuge in the presence of God](#))

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## A W Pink - “The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom.” —Proverbs 1:7

HAPPY the soul that has been awed by a view of God's majesty, that has had a vision of God's awful greatness, His ineffable holiness, His perfect righteousness, His irresistible power, His sovereign grace. Does someone say, “But it is only the unsaved, those outside of Christ, who need to fear God?” Then the sufficient answer is that the saved, those who are in Christ, are admonished to work out their own salvation with “fear and trembling.” Time was when it was the general custom to speak of a believer as a “God-fearing man.” That such an appellation has become nearly extinct only serves to show whither we have drifted. Nevertheless, it still stands written, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him” (Psalm 103:13).

When we speak of godly fear, of course we do not mean a servile fear, such as prevails among the heathen in connection with their gods. No, we mean that spirit which Jehovah is pledged to bless, that spirit to which the prophet referred when he said, “To this man will I (the Lord) look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa. 66:2). It was this the apostle had in view when he wrote, “Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (1 Pet. 2:17). And nothing will foster this godly fear like a recognition of the Sovereign Majesty of God.

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Proverbs 1:8 **Hear**, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching;

- My son - Pr 1:10,15; 2:1; 3:1; 7:1; Mt 9:2,22

- **hear** - Pr 4:1-4; 5:1,2; 6:20; 30:17; 31:1; Lev 19:3; Deut 21:18-21; 1Sa 2:25; 2Ti 1:5

**ESV Study Bible** notes that Pr 1:8-9:18 is "A Father's Invitation to Wisdom. This section describes the two paths implied in Pr 1:7(**note**): the wise (grounded in the fear of the Lord) and the foolish (despising such wisdom and instruction). The appeal opens, like most of the paternal addresses, with a personal address and an encouragement to heed the instruction as a prized and beneficial possession (Pr 1:8-9)."

It is notable that the **fear of the LORD** (Pr 1:7-**note**) follows and is thus closely associated with reverencing and honoring parents.

**Apologetics Study Bible** - Proverbs sees parents as agents through which God's wisdom comes to a child. These exhortations presuppose that the parents' instruction reflects God's truth.

**Wiersbe** offers some wise words - "The Bible is the basic textbook in the home. It was once the basic textbook in the educational system, but even if that were still true, the Bible in the school can't replace the Bible in the home. I note that many modern parents sacrifice time and money to help their children excel in music, sports, and social activities; I trust they're even more concerned that their children excel in knowing and obeying the Word of God."

**Unger** on Pr 1:8-19 - Home discipline is a moral safeguard against a life of crime.

**MacArthur** adds that Pr 1:8-9:18 "prepare the reader for the **actual proverbs** that begin in Pr 10:1ff."

**Hear** (**shama** - see Pr 1:5 where you will notice that **hear** or **listen** are frequent commands in Proverbs!) - Not a suggestion but a command we all need to hear and heed (daily)! [NET Note](#) adds that this is "an urgent exhortation which expects immediate compliance with parental instruction." **When the Father disciplines us, do we give immediate compliance?**

In the **Septuagint (Lxx)** the verb **akouo** (hear) is in the **present imperative**, which calls for all of God's children to continually be hearers who heed! (contrast heedless hearers - James 1:22-note) Beloved, we all fail short, but we need to confess, repent, forget what lies behind and move toward the goal of Christ likeness enabled by the Spirit (Phil 3:13, 14-note, Gal 5:16-note).

**Father's** (01)(**ab**) is used 26 times in Proverbs - Pr. 1:8; 3:12; 4:1, 3; 6:20; 10:1; 13:1; Pr 15:5, 20; Pr 17:6, 21, 25; Pr 19:13, 14, 26; 20:20; 22:28; 23:22, 24, 25; Pr 27:10; 28:7, 24; Pr 29:3; 30:11, 17.

**Instruction** is **musar** (**see note**) which speaks of child rearing, chastening and discipline and is translated in the Lxx with **paideia** which refers to providing guidance for responsible living, something every father should strive to accomplish with his children.

**My son** - Here Solomon speaks as a father to his son. **My son** - 23x in Proverbs - Pr. 1:8, 10, Pr 1:15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1, 20; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1; 19:27; 23:15, Pr 23:19, 26; 24:13, 21; 27:11; 31:2 cp Solomon's admonition in Eccl. 12:12;

**Henry Morris** - In the first nine chapters of Proverbs--the section written for Solomon. There are seventeen specific lessons (Proverbs 1:8,10,15; 2:1; 3:1,11,21; 4:1,10,20; 5:1,7; 6:1,20; 7:1,24; 8:32), each beginning with either "my son," or "hear ye children," always emphasizing the importance of heeding the words of the teachings.

**Ryrie** - Pr 1:8-9:18 The first major section of the book records discourses on wisdom in which the student is encouraged to consider and compare the ways of the foolish and the ways of the wise

**Ortlund** - Every dad needs to have some talks with his son during the critical teen years. That is the environment that shaped this wisdom originally. Now, embedded in the Biblical book of Proverbs, it speaks to us all. But a dad is looking his boy straight in the eye and saying, "Son, here's the kind of world you're going to be living in every day of your life. Here's what you can expect. And here's what you have to do about it." That is a wise dad. He is not shielding his boy from the real world. He is telling him about it in advance, but in a way that will help his son rather than degrade him. He does not take his son to see a gangster movie, which is fantasy anyway. He tells his son the truth.

[NET Note](#) - It is likely that collections of proverbs grew up in the royal courts and were designed for the training of the youthful prince. But once the collection was included in the canon, the term "son" would be expanded to mean a disciple, for all the people were to learn wisdom when young. It would not be limited to sons alone but would include daughters—as the expression "the children of (בְּנֵי, béne) Israel" (including males and females) clearly shows. Several passages in the Mishnah and Talmud record instructions to teach daughters the Mosaic law so that they will be righteous and avoid sin as well.

**Waltke** - Adolescence, according to Erickson, is the quest for a sense of identity. The son and the gullible (Pr 1:4, 5) stand on the threshold of full adulthood. The time is at hand when the son and the gullible (Pr 1:4-5) must make a decisive stand for the godly parents' and sages' world-and-life views and values. Two conflicting worldviews make their appeal, "of Wisdom/Folly, Good/Pseudo-Good, Life/Death," and one must choose between them, for there is no third way...The two worldviews are also represented by the

repeated metaphors of two ways (Pr 1:10-19; 4:14-19) and of two houses (Pr 2:18-19; 9:1-16, 13-18). The father's way leads to life, but the way of evil men to death. The house of the foolish woman is the entrance chamber to death; Wisdom's house is the place of life.

**Do not forsake** (05203)(**natash**) means to leave, forsake, permit and is used only 3x in Proverbs (Pr 1:8, 6:20, 17:14). The idea of this Hebrew verb is to leave someone, something or some situation unattended and uncared for. The **Lxx** translates **natash** with the verb **apothéo** which literally means to push aside, thrust away from or push off. Figuratively as used here it means to reject, repudiate, refuse to listen to, to cast away or to put away from one's self (used to describe Israel repudiating God in the OT - Acts 7:39).

**Mother's teaching** - **Waltke** comments that "The admonition places the father and mother on equal footing as the child's pedagogues (cf. Ex 20:12; 21:15, 17; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 21:18-21; 31:12)." **Mother** (Heb = em) is used 14x in Proverbs - Pr. 1:8; 4:3; 6:20; 10:1; 15:20; 19:26; 20:20; 23:22, 25; 28:24; 29:15; Pr 30:11, 17; 31:1.

See **John Piper's** message - [Do Not Forsake Your Mother's Teaching](#)

**Hubbard** - That both parents are mentioned is a tribute to the prominent role of Israel's mothers.

**Disciple's Study Bible** - The first and most important classroom in the school of life is the home. Both **father** and **mother** are expected to assume responsibility for training and nurturing the minds of children. Though school and church might contribute significantly to the process of education, no outside agency can equal the influence of parents as an educative force. Note that the words of the wisdom writer are addressed to the son rather than to the parents. The learner has a responsibility for attending to parental instruction.

**Teaching** (08451)(**torah** from **yarah** = to shoot, throw) means direction, instruction, law. While **torah** is translated as law 5x in Proverbs, more often it is translated teaching (8x). The **NET Note** says that "in Proverbs the noun often means "instruction" or "moral direction" rather than "law". It is related to **yarah** = "to point or, show the way" in the Hiphil. Instruction attempts to point a person in the right direction (e.g., Ge 46:28 where the root **yarah** is translated "to point out the way"). **Teaching** implies a person of authority passing on moral guidelines.

**Waltke** points out the importance of this passage to youths in a nation who ultimately will impact the integrity of nation - "When the moral fiber of a nation is not formed by this sort of catechesis, society unravels and anarchy ensues (see Pr 29:18-note)."

**Buzzell** - Since parents in ideal Jewish homes taught their children God's Law (cf. Dt. 6:4-7), the same word (**tôrâh**) was used both for the Law and for instruction in it. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**Torah** is used 13 times in Proverbs...

Pr 1:8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction And do not forsake your mother's **teaching**;

Pr 3:1 My son, do not forget my **teaching**, But let your heart keep my commandments;

Pr 4:2 For I give you sound **teaching**; Do not abandon my instruction.

Pr 6:20 My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the **teaching** of your mother;

Pr 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp and the **teaching** is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life

Pr 7:2 Keep my commandments and live, And my **teaching** as the apple of your eye.

Pr 13:14 The **teaching** of the wise is a fountain of life, To turn aside from the snares of death.

Pr 28:4 Those who forsake the **law** praise the wicked, But those who keep the **law** strive with them.

Pr 28:7 He who keeps the **law** is a discerning son, But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.

Pr 28:9 He who turns away his ear from listening to the **law**, Even his prayer is an abomination.

Pr 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the **law**.

Pr 31:26 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the **teaching** of kindness is on her tongue.

**Bridges** - The young must note that the fear of the LORD is linked with respecting parents. God speaks here through the mouth of a parent or teacher, blending paternal tenderness with his divine authority—my son. The command supposes the godly character of parents and recognizes the responsibility of both parents. Children are rational creatures. Instruction, not blind submission, must be inculcated. Listen ... do not forsake. Timothy was brought up to respect his mother's teaching (2Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15). The same

reciprocal obligation binds the spiritual father to his children. Such was the apostolic ministry to the churches of Philippi and Thessalonica. Humility, tenderness, fellowship, and willing submission formed the basis of Christian love and happiness (Philippians 4:9-19; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-13).

**John Piper** comments on the **family terms in Proverbs** (**son** occurs 56x, **father** occurs 27x, **mother** occurs 14x) - God ordained the family not just to be fruitful and fill the earth with people, but to fill the earth with instructed people and taught people. The family is the place where the next generation is born and where the next generation learns how to live. ([Sermon](#))

**IVP Background Commentary** - The call to listen to the instructions of one's parents stands as a corollary to the law requiring children to honor their father and mother (Ex 20:12). Thus the wisdom of mothers, who generally served as a child's first teacher, is equated with that of fathers. The saying also contrasts with similar statements in the Teaching of Ptah-Hotep and the Words of Ahiqar that only mention a son attending to the words of his "father."

**William Arnot - Filial love an ornament of beauty** - It seems an instinct of humanity to put ornaments upon the person. It does not rank high among the exercises of the human faculties, yet it is quite above the reach of all inferior creatures. Ornaments on the fallen, like many other innocent things, become the occasions of sin, but they are not in their own nature evil. To deck with external beauty that which is morally corrupt within is a cheat which men practice on themselves and others, but adornment of the person, modest in measure and adopted instinctively by an innate sense of propriety, is conducive to virtue and consistent with Scripture.

**Moral qualities are the true adornments of a human being. All the graces of the Spirit are lovely: but here the foremost of relative duties, a child's reverential regard for a parent, is recommended as an ornament of surpassing beauty.** Love, obey, cherish, reverence your parents. This is in God's sight of great price. These ornaments will not be out of date when time has run its course. The moral laws of God have avenging sanctions even in the powers of nature. Godliness is profitable unto all things. The first commandment is fruitful even in this life, and the second is like it--like it in its holy character, like it in its glad results. "Honour thy father and thy mother," this is an ornament of solid gold. Unlike the watering of superficial accomplishments, the more rudely it is rubbed the more brightly it glows.

**Thomas Constable** - The two ways (paths) introduced in Pr 1:7-note stretch out before the reader (cf. Matt. 7:13-14-note). In this section Solomon spoke to his son guiding him into God's way. "My son" was and is a customary way of addressing a disciple. "It derives from the idea that parents are primarily responsible for moral instruction (Pr 4:3-4; Dt 6:7)." The frequent recurrence of the phrase "my son" in this part of Proverbs indicates that the instruction specially suited a young person. This person's life lay in front of him, and he faced major decisions that would set the course of his life from then on. Though the whole Book of Proverbs gives help to youths, Proverbs 1-7 can be of particular benefit to them.

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**Mother's Influence** - It is my conviction that many a mother will occupy a higher position in God's kingdom than many prominent Christian leaders whom we might expect to find in places of greater honor. Think of some of the great men of the Bible like Moses, Samuel, and Timothy. Where would they have been had it not been for their praying, Spirit-led mothers? Think of Augustine, John Newton, and the zealous Wesleys; their names may never have lighted the pages of history had it not been for the blessed influence of godly mothers! The simple prayers from our infant lips were but echoes from our mother's heart. Can we ever forget the soft caresses of those hands of blessing on our heads as we knelt by our beds? Can we fail to remember her night vigils, her seasons of intercession, her well-marked Bible, and her words of admonition? Her actions spoke eloquently of Him who taught us of the greater love of God. What a tragedy to neglect the counsel of a godly mother! What eternal consequences to reject her God! **If you have wandered from her teaching, turn to Christ before it is too late and make sure of meeting her in heaven.** "Do not forsake the law of your mother" (Pr 1:8). - Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

When Mother prayed, she found sweet rest,  
When Mother prayed, her soul was blest;  
Her heart and mind on Christ were stayed,  
And God was there when Mother prayed!  
—Anon.

**A thousand men may build a city,  
but it takes a mother to make a home.**

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**CARDBOARD KIDS** - When Mike Wood began to advertise his sign company, he didn't know how useful his work would become. Some of his signs were life-size cardboard pictures of kids, which he put close to the street. Besides advertising his business, the signs had another effect. Motorists thought the cutouts were real children and began to drop their speed. Now Mike sells the cardboard kids to parents who want to slow down speeding drivers in their area. Mike said, "We truly hope that some of our

standups help to control speeding in neighborhoods around the country.” Parents work at protecting their children from physical danger. But there are other dangers as well. Solomon, the writer of Proverbs 1, was concerned about the people who would pose spiritual danger to his son. He warned him about those who would entice him to do evil (Pr 1:10-14) and told him, “Do not walk in the way with them, keep your foot from their path; for their feet run to evil” (Pr 1:15-16). We need to protect our children by teaching them God’s Word and training them to avoid evil influences. Busy streets are hazardous for our children, but the enticement of taking an evil path is far more dangerous. --Anne Cetas (([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Children are a heritage,  
A gift from God above;  
He asks you to protect and care  
And nourish them with love.  
—Hess

**Tomorrow’s world will be shaped  
by what we teach our children today**

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**IN HONOR OF BARKING DOGS** - In the jungles of eastern Sri Lanka, 15 soldiers of a government commando unit were saved by two dogs adopted as mascots. According to a news report, the soldiers were completing a 10-mile hike when their dogs sensed danger. Running ahead toward a water hole where the unit planned to rest, the dogs suddenly began barking and circling the area. The troops searched carefully and found 12 buried grenades attached to a taut wire trigger. It’s intriguing to think about those two jungle mascots whose senses were tuned to the smell of danger. **The soldiers escaped serious injury and even death because they listened to those barking dogs. It’s disturbing to realize, however, that sometimes we are apt to give less credibility and attention to more faithful protectors. How many times have we resented a father’s warnings or a mother’s advice? How often have we grown tired of pastoral pleadings or a fellow believer’s caution?** Yet, how wise and loving is our God! He sends His messengers to whisper, to plead, and sometimes to howl about hidden dangers, which can do grave harm to our physical and spiritual lives. Let’s be wise and listen to the warnings. --Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Think About It

Do I resent being told what to do? Why? Who are some wise people I can learn from? When have I listened to someone’s warning and avoided a problem?

**If you want to be wise,  
listen to wise people  
(Ed: And regularly read the Book of Proverbs!)**

**Proverbs 1:9 Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head And ornaments about your neck**

- **they** Pr 3:22; 4:9; 6:20,21; 1 Timothy 2:9,10; 1 Peter 3:3,4
- **ornament** Genesis 41:42; Song of Solomon 1:10; 4:9; Isaiah 3:19; Ezekiel 16:11; Daniel 5:7,16,29

**NET** - For they will be like an elegant garland on your head, and like pendants around your neck.

**They** - **instruction** and **teaching** of Pr 1:8 are themselves the adornments!

**A graceful wreath** (more literally a "garland of grace") is a **metaphor** which speaks of a victor’s wreath and in Pr 4:9 garland stands in parallel with “a crown of beauty.”

"A man’s wisdom makes his face to shine." {Eccl 8:1}

**Matthew Poole** - This will make thee amiable and honourable in the sight of God and of men; whereas the forsaking of those good counsels will make thee contemptible.

**John Trapp** - Neither gold nor precious stone so glitters, said Plato, as the prudent mind of a pious person. Nothing so beautifies as grace doth. Moses and Joseph were "fair to God," {Acts 7:20} and favored of all men. A crown of gold, a chain of pearl, are no such ornaments as are here commended.

**Waltke** - Perseverance in Israel's wisdom heritage adorns the son with a wreath on his head and a chain around his neck, symbols of honor and life that can hardly be disregarded....The **metaphor** (wreath, ornaments) points to the reality of parading and reciting the teaching. This prominent advertisement to spectators, like a wedding band, is the best defense against the seductress.

**Bible Knowledge Commentary** - Heeding parental instruction would give them an attractiveness of life and position. They would be honored. The implied contrast is that disobedience and rebellion lead to dishonor.

**Wiersbe** - The parents' desire is that the children obey what they have learned, so that God's truth will become a lovely ornament to beautify their lives, like a crown on a king or a necklace on a queen. Paul told Christian servants to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:10-note), which simply means to make the Bible beautiful to others by living a godly life. Peter exhorted Christian wives to win their lost husbands by focusing on the imperishable beauty of Christian character rather than the artificial beauty of man-made glamour (1Peter 3:3-4-note).

**John Phillips** has an interesting note - The reference in Proverbs 1:9 to the neck is interesting. The submissive neck, the neck that bows to authority, is set in contrast to the stiff neck, the symbol of pride and rebellion. Solomon's own son Rehoboam did not learn to be submissive. He had scarcely seated himself on the throne when the northern tribes sent a delegation asking for an end to the tyrannies started during Solomon's reign. In return they promised loyalty to the throne of David. Believing his authority was being called into question, Rehoboam ignored the advice of elder statesmen who had served his father and who unanimously told him to accede to the demands of the people. Instead he listened to his young companions who urged upon him "the divine right of kings." So this foolish young man tried to browbeat the delegation and threatened their tribes with vengeance. As a result he lost half his kingdom (1Ki 12:1-19)....The stiff-necked Rehoboam sported a royal diadem, but he won no garlands for his brow. The chain of high office was his, but he did not wear chains of honor around his neck.

**Grace** (02580) (**chen** from **chanan** = to show favor) means Favor, grace, charm, graciousness, kindness, beauty, pleasantness, attractiveness, loveliness, acceptance, affectionate regard. Chen denotes the quality of something that makes it pleasing and attractive to others and so wins their favor. **Chen** is a quality which makes a person pleasant and agreeable, e.g., a gracious and charming person. The first use of **chen** describes God bestowing (unmerited) favor on Noah (Ge 6:8) and 43x occurs as "*matsa chen*" = "find favor in the eyes of" conveying a sense of acceptance or preference in a more general manner.

**Chen** - 67v -

Gen. 6:8; 18:3; Ge 19:19; 30:27; 32:5; 33:8, 10, 15; 34:11; 39:4, 21; 47:25, 29; 50:4; Exod. 3:21; 11:3; 12:36; 33:12-13, 16-17; 34:9; Num. 11:11, 15; 32:5; Deut. 24:1; Jdg. 6:17; Ruth 2:2, 10, 13; 1 Sam. 1:18; 16:22; 20:3, 29; 25:8; 27:5; 2Sa 14:22; 15:25; 16:4; 1 Ki. 11:19; Est. 2:15, 17; 5:2, 8; 7:3; 8:5; Ps. 45:2; 84:11; Pr. 1:9; 3:4, 22, 34; 4:9; 5:19; 11:16; 13:15; 17:8; 22:1, Pr 22:11; 28:23; 31:30; Eccl. 9:11; 10:12; Jer. 31:2; Nah. 3:4; Zech. 4:7; 12:10

Pr 1:9 Indeed, they are a **graceful** wreath to your head And ornaments about your neck.

Pr 3:4 So you will find **favor** and good reputation In the sight of God and man.

Pr 3:22 So they will be life to your soul And **adornment** to your neck.

Pr 3:34 Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives **grace** to the afflicted.

Pr 4:9 "She will place on your head a garland of **grace**; She will present you with a crown of beauty."

Pr 5:19 As a loving hind and a **graceful** doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love.

Pr 11:16 A **gracious** woman attains honor, And ruthless men attain riches.

Pr 13:15 Good understanding produces **favor**, But the way of the treacherous is hard.

Pr 17:8 A bribe is a **charm** in the sight of its owner; Wherever he turns, he prospers.

Pr 22:1 A good name is to be more desired than great wealth, **Favor** is better than silver and gold.

Pr 22:11 He who loves purity of heart And whose speech is **gracious**, the king is his friend.

Pr 28:23 He who rebukes a man will afterward find more **favor** Than he who flatters with the tongue.

Pr 31:30 **Charm** is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

**Ortlund** - He is saying, "If you'll listen to me, my wisdom will make you attractive." Why are most people not in church on a Sunday morning? Because they do not see churches as attractive. But here is what God wants us to see. He did not make us for mediocrity. He made us for glory. And he gets us there through wisdom. God's wisdom is beautiful, impressive.

**Ornaments around your neck** - This was a mark of prestige. In the practical section of Romans (12-16), Paul calls for saints to "**put on** the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision** for the flesh in regard to its lusts." (Ro 13:14-note) (Red = command).

**Hubbard** - What the fools despise (Pr 1:7-note) is a source of elegance, delight, and beauty. No yoke pictured here. No back-to-the-wall, nose-to-the-grindstone kind of clenched-jaw obedience. The teacher knows better than that, as did the psalmist (Ps. 1:2-note). To fear God and to act on that fear as it was compressed into the fiber of parental instruction is to be graced with eye-catching beauty like the chains or necklace that adorned the **beloved** in the Song (Song 4:9-note).

**Ortlund** - We take off the rags of pettiness, and we put on the humility of Jesus, which is winsome. Anyone can sniff out the difference between someone who is proud and self-important and someone who is kind and sincere—and which one is esteemed? Our Father is offering to put his glory upon us. A big part of the spreading power of the gospel is the wisdom God puts on believers and on their church.

**Jon Courson** - In his Song, Solomon will refer to chains of gold on the neck of his beloved (Song of Solomon 1:10-note). Thus, the wisdom that a child gleans from his parents can beautify his own life.

**IVP Background Commentary** - The words of the father and mother, which embody the wisdom of the society, can become a decorative wreath for the son's head and a chain or necklace of office. Just as a champion is adorned with a garland of victory and a newly appointed official is given the chain and vestments of his office, so too is the attentive son assured of prosperity and a stable life (see Pr 4:1-6).

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### **G Campbell Morgan - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.—Prov. 1.9**

In these words we have a declaration of the fundamental principle of Hebrew wisdom, that is philosophy. This book is one of the three Wisdom books in the Old Testament. The others are Job and Ecclesiastes. The first six verses of this chapter reveal the purpose of the book. It was written to teach wisdom, and that rather in its application to life, than in theory. It consists of—(z) A series of addresses on wisdom delivered by a father to his son; (2) Two collections of Proverbs; and (3) Two discourses in the realm of Wisdom, one by Agar, the other by Lemuel. Throughout, the purpose is practical, rather than theoretical. Here, after the introduction or preface, and before the series of addresses, the theory is stated in one inclusive definition. It is of importance to any study of this book that this fundamental and inclusive definition should be rightly apprehended; and in order to that, we halt with the word rendered beginning. In the King James Version we find a marginal alternative suggested, viz. "the principal part," and the English and American revisers margin-ally suggest "the chief part." Why this reading was relegated to the margin remains a mystery, for there is no doubt that this is the real meaning of the Hebrew word. The other truth emerges later (g. ro). The fundamental fact, then, is that in all knowledge, all understanding of life, all interpretation thereof, the fear of Jehovah is the principal thing, the chief part, the central light, apart from which the mind of man gropes in darkness, and misses the way. Whether in prosperity or adversity, in light or in darkness, in life or in death, in order to intelligent apprehension, and true conduct, there must be the fear of Jehovah. That is the sum total of wisdom. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

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**William Arnot - Filial Love a Blossom of Beauty** - IT seems an instinct of humanity to put **ornaments** upon the person. It is greatly modified in its development by circumstances, but it is certainly a uniform tendency of our nature. It does not rank high among the exercises of the human faculties, yet it is quite above the reach of all inferior creatures. The propensity is fully developed in tribes that lie lowest in the scale of humanity; yet no germ of it can be traced in species that form the culminating point in the brute creation. By so many and so various marks may be known the abrupt and absolute separation between men who have fallen the lowest, and other sentient beings that occupy the summit of their scale.

**Ornaments** on the fallen, like many other innocent things, become the occasions of sin, but they are not in their own nature evil. It is probable that the pleasure which we derive from them springs originally from some association with moral qualities. There is some connection between sensible beauty and moral goodness, although the instances of deception are so numerous as to deprive that connection of all value as a rule of life. To deck with external beauty that which is morally corrupt within, is a cheat which men practise on themselves and others; but adornment of the person, modest in measure, and adopted instinctively by an innate sense of propriety, is conducive to virtue, and consistent with Scripture.

**Ornaments**, however, are mentioned here not for their own sakes, either to commend or forbid them, but as a form of expression to convey emphatically the truth that moral qualities, after all, are the true adornments of a human being. All the graces of the Spirit are lovely; but here the foremost of relative duties, a child's reverential regard for a parent, is recommended as an ornament of surpassing beauty. Young men and young women, put that ornament on your heads—twine that chain of gold around your necks! These jewels from heaven, set deep within your souls, and glancing at every turn through the transparency of an unaffected life, will do more to make your persons attractive than all the diamonds that ever decked a queen.

The world and its history teem with types of heaven. Beauty, and the love that fastens on it, are types, and they have their antitypes on high. The ransomed Church is the bride of the Lamb, and she is adorned for her husband. When the adorning is complete, she is all glorious, and the King greatly desires her beauty. When he presents unto himself a church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, then shall he see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Put on now, O son! daughter! put on these beautiful garments; love, obey, cherish, reverence your parents. These are in God's sight of great price. They are valued not only by the spiritually minded disciples of Jesus, but even by every man of sense around you. They are thought becoming by all but fools. These ornaments will not be out of date when time has run its course. They will be worn on the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, when the fashion of this world shall have passed away.

Over against this beaming beauty, of similar shape and size, a dark shadow stands. Whithersoever that comely body turns, this ghastly specter follows it. It is a daughter, emerging into womanhood, with ruddy cheek and sparkling eye—with beads on her neck and bracelets on her arms—who has so crushed a mother's heart by constantly trampling down its desires, that the disconsolate mother never utters now the reproof which she knows would be despised. Personal beauty, aided by costly ornaments, cannot make that creature gainly. The deformity within will make itself felt through all the finery. The evil spirit that possesses the heart will glance from the eye, and tinkle on the tongue, in spite of every effort to act the angel. Every mind that retains in any measure a healthful moral tone, will, in close contact with such a character, infallibly be sensible of a discord. Felt repulsive, she will be repelled. The disobedient daughter will gravitate down to the companionship of those who, having no sense of harmony, recoil not from a spirit out of tune. She is miserable, and knows not what ails her. She has broken that commandment which holds a promise in its hand, and been thrown over on the barbs of the counterpart curse. Those who see her impaled alive there, should learn that the moral laws of God have avenging sanctions, even in the powers of nature. Godliness is profitable unto all things. The first commandment is fruitful, even in this life; and the second is like it: like it in its heavenly origin—like it in its holy character—like it in its glad results. Honor thy father and thy mother;—this is an ornament of solid gold. Unlike the gilding of superficial accomplishments, the more rudely it is rubbed, the more brightly it glows.

#### Proverbs 1:10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent

- Pr 7:21-23; 13:20; 20:19; Genesis 39:7-13; Judges 16:16-21; Ps 1:1; Ps 50:18; Romans 16:18; Ephesians 5:11

### THE FIRST WARNING

**My son** - The parents first words of warning. **My son** - 23x in Proverbs - Pr. 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, Pr 3:11, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1, 20; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1; 19:27; 23:15, 19, 26; 24:13, Pr 24:21; 27:11; 31:2 cp Solomon's admonition in Eccl. 12:12;

**If sinners entice you** (If they attempt to persuade you) - Are not we all a bit surprised that Solomon used **"if"** instead of **"when"**? Temptation is the common lot of all of Adam's fallen race. It therefore behooves us to be forewarned and forearmed (**filled with the Word, filled with the Spirit**) so that we "do not consent!" To reiterate, it's not a question of "if" but "when!"

Since we are all **sinners**, this passage begs the question of specifically to whom is Solomon referring? **Ortlund** explains that "The structure of this Hebrew noun suggests habitual, chronic sinners (**Ed**: As an aside a habitual sinner is by definition not a believer. Believers sin but it is not their customary, continual practice). In the extreme, this kind of person is a professional criminal, like the bad guys in The Godfather. Bullying is how some people make their way through the world. The key to this human profile is anyone who gets ahead by his own devices, anyone who is out for number one. They are the "sinners" of whom we must be aware. They are out there. You will encounter them."

**Sinners** - This word occurs 44 times in the **NAS** - Ge. 13:13; 1Sa 15:18; Ps 1:1, 5; 25:8; 26:9; 51:13; Ps 104:35; Pr 1:10; 13:21; 23:17; Isa. 1:28; 13:9; 33:14; Amos 9:10. Take time to read through these OT uses of sinners and you will note that all except two uses (see if you agree) undoubtedly refer to unbelievers. Here are the other 2 uses in Proverbs...

Pr 13:21 Adversity pursues **sinners**, But the righteous will be rewarded with prosperity.

Pr 23:17 Do not let your heart envy **sinners**, But live in the fear of the LORD always.

One of the best Biblical examples of Pr 1:10 is Potiphar's wife's attempts to lure Joseph into adultery - Read Ge 39:1-23. What did Joseph do? Read Ge 39:12. Why did Joseph do it? Read Ge 39:9. What does this passage in essence describe? Joseph **held** a healthy, holy fear of God and this firm belief **held** him in his hour of temptation. **Do you hold fast to a healthy, holy fear of God, so that when the winds of affliction, adversity or temptation blow, you might be held fast as was Joseph?**

**Charles Bridges** - Almost as soon as Satan became an apostate, he became a tempter. And he is very successful in training his servants in this work (16:29; Genesis 11:4; Numbers 31:16; Isaiah 56:12). **If sinners entice you.** This is no uncertain contingency. Do not give in to them. Giving in constitutes the sin. Eve consented before she picked the fruit. David gave in before he sinned (2Sa 11:2-4). But Joseph resisted and was saved. When you are tempted, do not blame God, or even the devil. The worst the devil can do is to tempt us; he cannot force us to sin. When he has presented his most subtle arguments, we choose to give in or to resist.

**Ryrie describes the contrast** - The way of sinners is attractive (Pr 1:10-14), but it leads to destruction (Pr 1:15-19). You may gain the world but lose your soul (Mark 8:36).

**Sinners** (02400)(**chatta**) is derived from **chata** which means "to miss." Sinners is an archery term which meant "to fall short, miss the mark." (Jdg 20:16 ).The mark is the will and plan of God as revealed in Scripture. Sin is the transgression of the Law. It is whatever misses the will of God for man doctrinally or morally.

**Chatta** is translated in Pr 1:10 in the **Septuagint** with the adjective **asebes** which means ungodly, godless, violating the norm for a proper relation to God.

The **NET Note** adds that in view of the fact that "the related verb is used once of sling-shot throwers who miss the mark (Jdg 20:16-note), the idea of sin is often explained as "missing the moral mark". But the term should not be restricted to the idea of a sin of ignorance or simply falling short of the moral ideal. Its meaning is more likely seen in the related Akkadian term "to revolt, rebel." It is active rebellion against authority. It is used here in reference to a gang of robbers."

**Matthew Henry** - How industrious wicked people are to seduce others into the paths of the destroyer. Sinners love company in sin; the angels that fell were tempters almost as soon as they were sinners. **They do not threaten or argue, but entice with flattery and fair speech; with a bait they draw the unwary young man to the hook..** But they are mistaken if they think that by bringing others to partake with them in their guilt, and to be bound, as it were, in the bond with them, they shall have the less to pay themselves, for they will have so much the more to answer for. (Matthew Henry.)

**Enticement** is tantamount to **temptation**. Temptation will come at all of us. But remember that the temptation, no matter how powerful, is not a sin! Don't be deceived. Do not "consent" to the temptation. By the Spirit we can resist the temptation and put to death the deeds of the body (Ro 8:13), including the temptations that come from without and appeal to the fallen flesh within. James reminds us that...

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone, but each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. ( Jas 1:13-15-note )

**Note:** The father is warning the son which stresses that the son is responsible to avoid the tempter's snare. God gives us clear warning (and the empowering of His Spirit), but we still have to make the personal choice to turn away from evil every time the sinners attempt to ensnare us! God's provision is balanced by our responsibility.

**Entice** (066601)(**pathah**) means to persuade or entice a person to sin.**Entice** means to attract artfully or adroitly or by arousing hope or desire and suggests drawing by artful or adroit means. The idea is to lead astray from one's true course.

In Ge 9:27 **pathah** means to be wide, to enlarge, to be spacious or to be open, to extend territory. The**TWOT** adds that "The basic verb idea is "be open, spacious, wide," and might relate to the immature or simple one who is **open to all kinds of enticement**, not having developed a discriminating judgment as to what is right or wrong." One source adds that pathah is related to the word for "inexperienced."

**Fearn** - The intensive active form, piel, is used, rendering a meaning 'when those seasoned in sin use every trick of their trade to pull you into their path....'

**Webster's** definition of **entice** - To incite or instigate, by exciting hope or desire; usually in a bad sense; as, to entice one to evil. Hence, to seduce; to lead astray; to induce to sin, by promises or persuasions. To tempt; to incite; to urge or lead astray.

**Pathah** is used with a similar meaning in Delilah's enticement of Samson (Jdg 14:15, 16:5) to which Samson consented, costing him his divinely given supernatural power and ultimately his life. **The enticement may look good for a moment, but can lead to despair for a lifetime!** The **Septuagint** translates **pathah** with the verb **planao** which means to deceive or lead astray. Planao literally conveys the picture of one who is made to wander and to go astray (active sense) or be led astray (passive sense as of sheep in Mt 18:12-13).

In Hosea 2:14, **pathah** is alludes to Yahweh's enticing or alluring His wayward people back into an intimate relationship with Himself, even as a lover would do to his beloved whom he is courting and wooing for her hand in marriage.

**Pathah** in 1Ki 22:20-22 (2Chr 18:19-20) describes Jehovah using a spirit to entice Ahab. TWOT refers to this as an "Another arresting usage of enticement is what happens when a man refuses to follow God's direction. He is enticed to do wrong to his ultimate hurt, a discipline or judgment for rejecting the Lord." (For further discussion of this somewhat disturbing passage see [Why did God use a lying spirit to deceive Ahab?](#)) **Ryrie** adds that "The Lord permitted a deceiving spirit to control the prophets and give Ahab the wrong advice. Nonetheless, Ahab made a responsible choice, having been warned of the truth by Micaiah." (Ryrie Study Bible).

**NAS Usage** - Usage: allure(1), became...enticed(1), deceive(2), deceived(5), entice(9), enticed(1), entices(1), persuaded(1), prevailed(2), seduces(1), silly(1), simple(1).

**Pathah** - 24v - Ex. 22:16; Dt. 11:16; Jdg. 14:15; 16:5; 2Sa. 3:25; 1Ki. 22:20, 21, 22; 2Chr. 18:19ff; Job 5:2; 31:9, 27; Ps. 78:36; Pr. 1:10; 16:29; 24:28; 25:15; Jer. 20:7, 10; Ezek. 14:9; Hos. 2:14; 7:11. Here is a use that parallels Proverbs 1:10...

Deut 11:16 "Beware that your hearts are not **deceived**, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them.

Pr 1:10 My son, if sinners **entice** you, Do not consent.

Pr 16:29 A man of violence **entices** his neighbor And leads him in a way that is not good.

Pr 24:28 Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, And do not **deceive** with your lips.

Pr 25:15 By forbearance a ruler may be **persuaded**, And a soft tongue breaks the bone.

Pr 1:10-18 speaks practically to the tragic rise of gang activity, particularly among young people in the inner cities. O, how those simple ones need to hear and heed this warning, lest it cost them their life!

Said a boy to his sister one day, "I want the spirit to look sin right in the face when it comes to me, and say, 'Begone.'" "Yes," replied the sister, "and one thing more you want; you want God's spectacles to see sin and know it when it comes, for it does not always show its colours." (R. Newton, D.D.)

**Do not consent** - Do not be willing. Do not acquiesce (accept, comply, or submit tacitly or passively). Do not yield to the temptation. Do not accept the "invitation." Do not yield your will to anyone except God! When they do their best to seduce and lead you astray, keep your will bent away from their path.

**Matthew Henry** - (The warning here) is the same that St. Peter gave to his new converts, (Acts 2:40).

**Consent** (014)(**abah**) means to be willing, to be acquiescent, to yield, to desire (want), to agree to demands. The idea is one is making a choice of their will to accept and consent to a situation, request or demand, which the implication that they will obey and/or submit. In this passage the call would be "Do not yield your will to anyone except God!"

**Baker** - Its primary meaning is to be positively inclined to respond to some authority or petition. The word is used to signify willingness or desire (Gen. 24:5, 8; Jdg. 19:25; 2Chr. 21:7; Isa. 30:15); agreement in principle (Jdg. 11:17; 1Kgs. 20:8); consent to authority (Job 39:9; Isa. 1:19); yielding, as to sin (Dt. 13:9; Pr. 1:10); and, by extension, to be content (Pr 6:35; Eccl 7:8).

**NAS Usage:** consent(5), obey(1), refuse\*(1), refused\*(1), satisfied(1), unwilling\*(3), want(1), willing(23), would(16), would...accept(1), yield(1).

**Abah** - 52v -Gen. 24:5, 8; Ex 10:27; Lev. 26:21; Deut. 1:26; 2:30; 10:10; 13:8; 23:5; 25:7; 29:20; Jos 24:10; Jdg. 11:17; 19:10, 25; 20:13; 1 Sam. 15:9; 22:17; 26:23; 31:4; 2Sam. 2:21; 6:10; 12:17; 13:14, 16, 25; 14:29; 23:16f; 1Ki. 20:8; 22:49; 2Ki. 8:19; 13:23; 24:4; 1Chr. 10:4; 11:18-19; 19:19; 2Chr. 21:7; Job 39:9; Ps. 81:11; Pr. 1:10, 25, 30; 6:35; Isa. 1:19; 28:12; 30:9, 15; 42:24; Ezek. 3:7; 20:8

Pr 1:10 My son, if sinners entice you, **Do not consent**.

Pr 1:25 And you neglected all my counsel And **did not want** my reproof;

Pr 1:30 "They **would not accept** my counsel, They spurned all my reproof.

Pr 6:35 He will not accept any ransom, Nor will he **be satisfied** though you give many gifts.

My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them. Proverbs 1:10

When you read this proverb, do you think, Oh, sinners won't entice me; I don't even hang out with sinners. In the Bible, sinners refers to anyone who is not actively obeying God. That means the enticing may not come from the drug dealer in the alley or the prostitute on the street corner; it may come through an invitation from your best friend. These invitations can be exciting and tempting, but be careful! They may also lead to great harm. Others may make choices without considering God's standards; that holds potential for disaster! Proverbs warns that the end for people who ignore God in their decisions is destruction. If you allow yourself to be lured into sin strictly for the thrill of the moment, you will also suffer the consequences. Don't be fooled! Mistakes made in your youth can haunt you for the rest of your life. You may ask for and receive forgiveness, but the consequences of your choices could last a lifetime.

So what should you do? God holds the perspective of eternity, not just the present. He knows what's in your best interest. Trust his Holy Spirit to alert you to dangerous invitations. Ask God daily for the strength to say no, even to your best friend. A final caution: if you have friends who constantly seek to persuade you into activities that don't honor God, these are not friends at all. The Bible calls them sinners. Don't give in to them, and don't spend time with them. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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### Stay Away from Trouble By Pastor Al Detter

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 1:10–19

INTRODUCTION: Scripture warns us against keeping the wrong company.

1. When the Wrong Crowd Pressures You to Do Wrong, Don't Accept Their Invitation (vv. 10–14).
  - A. Pressure (vv. 11–14). Notice the recurrence of "us" and "we." Peer pressure is not a new phenomenon!
  - B. Plot (vv. 11–12). The wrong crowds know exactly what they will do, and it's not pretty!
  - C. Purse (vv. 13–14). This type of crowd entices you based on what will be gained by doing evil.
2. Stay Away from the Wrong Crowd (vv. 15–19).
  - A. Their Agenda Is Evil (v. 16).
  - B. They Are Oblivious to Danger (v. 17).
  - C. They Destroy Their Own Lives (vv. 18–19).

**CONCLUSION:** What kind of company are you keeping around you? Parents, do you set a high standard for your children's choice of friends?

### Proverbs 1:11 If they say, "Come with us. Let us lie in wait for blood. Let us ambush the innocent without cause

- **let us lie** - Pr 1:16; 12:6; 30:14; Ps 56:6; 64:5,6; Jer 5:26; Mic 7:2; Acts 23:15; 25:3
- **let us ambush** - Pr 1:18; Ps 10:8-10; 17:12; 35:7; Jer 11:19; 18:18-20; Mt 26:3,4; Jn 15:25

**Amplified** - If they say, Come with us; let us lie in wait [to shed] blood, let us ambush the innocent without cause [and show that his piety is in vain];

**HCSB** - If they say-- "Come with us! Let's set an ambush and kill someone. Let's attack some innocent person just for fun!

### THE LURE IS CAST Proverbs 1:11-14

Solomon now vividly imagines what these sinners might say to entice the son (Pr 1:11-14), the very thing he had warned of in Pr 1:10. He quickly follows with the admonition to not "travel down that road with them," (Pr 1:15), explaining why the road of sinners is so dangerous (Pr 1:16-19).

**John Trapp** - The dragon bites the elephant's ear, and thence sucks his blood; because he knows that to be the only place that he cannot reach with his trunk to defend. So deal the red dragon and his angels: "with good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple" {Ro 16:18}

We see this played out in the young man lured into immorality...

With her many persuasions she **entices** him; With her flattering lips she **seduces** him. (Pr 7:21)

**Matthew Henry** - To enforce the caution in Pr 1:10, he represents the fallacious reasonings which sinners use in their enticements, and the arts of wheedling which they have for the beguiling of unstable souls.

**Come with us** - This is innocent enough, but it's very "innocence" is part of the lure. The sinners are baiting the hook! A good "come back" to their "come with us" is "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD!" (Isa 2:3-note).

**"With us"** (not with me) implies that there is a group enticing the young son, which speaks of the the intimidating force of peer pressure on the impressionable individual. This is often the way to entice those who lack wisdom.

**John MacArthur** - The intimidating force of peer pressure is often the way to entice those who lack wisdom.

**Deffinbaugh** on what evil men offer (by way of enticement) - Group acceptance and identity; Promise of material gain/Excitement and sense of power

The innocent invitation quickly turns murderous! As **Temper Longman** says "The parents are warning the son, in other words, against the attraction that the violent gang represents, because under the surface the attraction is deceptive. They look like they will pillage others, but in the outcome, it is they who will be pillaged."

**Lie in wait** (0693) (arab) means to hide to attack and harm others. Arab is used for planning murder (Dt 19:11), kidnapping (Jdg 21:20), or seduction (Pr 23:28). To **lie in wait** refers to waiting in a concealed place, lying hidden from their victim, but this will come back on their own head in Pr 1:18. **NET Note** - "Lie in wait" could denote resolve ("We will lie in wait!") or exhortation ("Let us lie in wait!"). These sinners are either expressing their determination to carry out a violent plan or they are trying to entice the lad to participate with them.

The psalmist uses **arab** to describe the wicked (Ps 10:4) man

He **lurks** (arab) in a hiding place as a lion in his lair; He **lurks** (arab) to catch the afflicted; He catches the afflicted when he draws him into his net. (Ps 10:9, cp Ps 59:3)

**NAS Usage:** ambush(15), ambushes(2), lay in wait(3), lie in ambush(1), lie in wait(7), lies in wait(1), lurked(1), lurks(4), lying in ambush(1), lying in wait(3), set an ambush(2), waited in ambush(1).

**Arab** - 39 v -Deut. 19:11; Jos. 8:2, 4, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21; Jdg. 9:25, 32, 34, 43; 16:2, 9, 12; 20:29, 33, 36-38; 21:20; 1Sa 15:5; 22:8, 13; 2Chr. 20:22; Ezr. 8:31; Job 31:9; Ps. 10:9; 59:3; Pr. 1:11, 18; 7:12; 12:6; 23:28; 24:15; Jer. 51:12; Lam. 3:10; Lam 4:19; Mic. 7:2

Pr 1:11 If they say, "Come with us, Let us lie in wait for blood, Let us ambush the innocent without cause;

Pr 1:18 But they lie in wait for their own blood; They ambush their own lives.

Pr 7:12 She is now in the streets, now in the squares, And **lurks** by every corner.

Pr 12:6 The words of the wicked **lie in wait** for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.

Pr 23:28 Surely she **lurks** as a robber, And increases the faithless among men.

Pr 24:15 Do not **lie in wait**, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not destroy his resting place;

**Fearn** - The motivation is violence for violence's sake, with the financial benefits of secondary concern. There is illicit pleasure in dominating and intimidating the innocent. How descriptive of the spirit of the age in which we live! We do well to remember it was violence that evoked God's destruction in the days of Noah (Gen. 6:11).

**Charles Bridges** - The **enticement** here was to deeds of robbery and blood—covetousness leading to murder. Most fiendish was the cruelty of the plot. The innocent was to be murdered without cause (Ge 4:8, Ps. 10:8)—swallowed up alive and whole—like Korah and his company; going down into the pit in their full strength (Nu 16:33). The invitation was seemingly harmless—"Only come, **come with us**." But soon the demand rises "Cast in thy lot with us. The spoil is sure. There is no one to prevent us or to accuse us (But see Ge 4:10, 2Ki 9:26). Precious substance will be found, when our victim is destroyed (Comp. Mt. 21:38). Precious substance! they say. But how can that be substance at all, which belongs only to a world of shadows? (Ps 39:6) Much more, how can the fruit of robbery be precious with the curse of God? (Pr 21:6, Ps. 62:9, 10)

Not that this horrible plot is usually propounded at first. But step by step—unless the Lord graciously restrains—it may come to this at last. Seldom indeed is the first temptation so broad. But the cover and varnish is here taken off, to show what sin is in its nature, character, and its certain end. What young man, but would shudder and start away from the wickedness, if presented to his

imagination alone? But this is the history of many a deluded sinner, hurried on by the influence of company to lengths of sin that he had never contemplated. Other enticements are prepared for the amiable and the uninitiated, just entering into life; less fearful and obvious, and therefore more really dangerous. For what “advantage does Satan get of us by our ignorance of his devices!” (2Cor 2:11)

Is it safe then to trust in our good resolutions or principles? No—Walk not in the way with them. The invitation is—**Come with us**. The warning is—Refrain thy foot from their path. (Pr 4:14, 15. Compare Psalm 1:1) Avoid parleying with them. No one becomes a profligate at once.<sup>10</sup> But “Bad company corrupts good morals.” (1Cor 15:33) The conscience—once tender—becomes less sensitive by every compliance. Who of us can stop himself once he starts on the down-hill path? One sin prepares for another—yea, even pleads for it—no it even makes another sin necessary to keep the first sin concealed (**Ed**: How often we see follow our first sin with a second sin such lying about our first sin!). Witness David committed murder to hide his adultery, and for its covering charged it upon the providence of God. (Committing murder in a vain attempt to hide his adultery - 2Sa 11:4, 17, 25)

Again then, we repeat with all earnestness—Refrain. The path may be strewed with flowers, but it is a path of evil—perhaps of blood (Pr 1:16, Isa. 59:7. A very apt illustration of the total depravity of man in the perverted use of the members of his body.—Ro 3:15).

**Every step on Satan’s ground,  
deprives us of the security of the promises of God.**

Often ruin has followed by not refraining from the first step. The only safety is in flight. (Ge 39:10, 12, 1Cor 6:18, 2Ti 2:22) Run then into “thy hiding-place, and behind thy shield,” and boldly bid thy tempter “depart from thee.” (Ps. 119:114, 115. Cp. Mt. 4:10) Awful is the thought—There is not one sin that the best of God’s saints will not commit if they trust in themselves. “Stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear.” (Ro 11:20)

**Lane** -They make it sound easy (Pr 1:11) and look tough (Pr 1:12); they offer lucrative rewards (Pr 1:13), not least a place in the gang (Pr 1:14). The youth who has been finding parental control constricting ‘pictures himself a person to be reckoned with instead of patronized and kept in his place, and above all accepted as one of the gang’ (Kidner). An offer he can’t refuse! How up-to-date it all is! There is nothing new about gangs of youths graduating into vice-rings and incorporated crime. Here is how it all begins — with a macho appeal and tempting offer to one who has been kept down and kept short. The task of today’s parents is not so dissimilar to that facing parents in ancient Israel.

#### **Proverbs 1:12 Let us swallow them alive like Sheol, Even whole, as those who go down to the pit**

- **swallow** Ps 35:25; 56:1,2; 57:3; 124:3; Jeremiah 51:34; Lamentations 2:5,16; Micah 3:2,3
- **as those** Ps 5:9; Romans 3:13
- **whole** Nu 16:30-33; 26:10; Ps 28:1; 143:7)

**Amplified** - Let us swallow them up alive as does Sheol (the place of the dead), and whole, as those who go down into the pit [of the dead];

**NET** - We will swallow them alive like Sheol, those full of vigor like those going down to the Pit.

**Let us swallow them alive like Sheol** - This passage pictures these sinners encouraging the naive son to carry out violence simply for the pleasure of it! O my, the depths to which depravity can plummet! ([Nave's topic - depravity](#)). Solomon compares their destructive words (and presumably their actions) with the abode which pictures the end of life (and the end of usefulness) on earth! As an aside, always be alert to the little prepositions “**like**” and “**as**” (both are used in Pr 1:12NAS) for they serve to introduce a figure of speech, specifically a **Simile**. Pause and ponder these “sign posts,” which your Teacher the Spirit will use to help you understand the passage in a deeper way! (cp 1Cor 2:10-12) But be careful, for figures of speech can mislead the unwary reader into some fanciful (inaccurate) interpretations (**See Some Guidelines for figuring out figurative language**). Although a passage may have a “figure,” we do well to remember that the figure of speech always has one (Spirit intended) literal meaning (whether we are able to discern the meaning or not!)

[Korah's rebellion](#) against God resulted in he and his whole family being **swallowed alive** - Read and be warned by the words of Nu 16:24-31, 32!

**MacArthur** - The wicked devise a plot of deception in which the innocent are captured and victimized like one who is taken by death itself—as with Joseph (Ge 37:20ff.), Jeremiah (Jer 38:6-13), and Daniel (Da 6:16, 17-note).

**Sheol** ([07585](#))(**she'ol**) is the underworld or the place to which people descend at death. The grave, death, the depths, the nether

world, the underworld. Sheol was viewed as the place where departed spirits went after death. Sheol was envisioned as a dark region within the earth, the entrance to which was the grave with its steep slopes (cf. Ps 88:4-6). In Job 14:13-22, Job expressed the common view of life beyond death, namely, that in Sheol there is no contact with the living, only separation, but in Sheol there is a conscious awareness of the dreary existence. In Jonah 2:3 Jonah pictures himself in the belly of Sheol, its very center - in other words he is as good as dead. In Ps 22:6 Sheol, the underworld, the place of the dead, is personified as David's enemy. [Abaddon](#) is used as a name for Sheol in Ps 88:11. In Ps 143:3 "dark places" is a synonym for Sheol, pictured as a dark place located deep in the ground. In the ancient Israelite view he joined his deceased ancestors in Sheol. In Isaiah 7:11, the phrase "Make it as deep as Sheol or make it high upwards" words suggest that Ahaz can feel free to go beyond the bounds of ordinary human experience. The phrase "path of life" stands in contrast to death/Sheol in Pr 2:18-19; 5:5-6; 15:24. Sheol, the place of death, is sometimes depicted as a raging sea (see Ps 18:4, 15-16). Sheol is the land of the dead localized in Hebrew thought in the earth's core or the grave. "Sheol" in the Bible can be used four different ways: the grave, the realm of the departed [wicked] spirits or Hell, death in general, or a place of extreme danger (one that will lead to the grave if God does not intervene). (**Note:** Many of these comments on Sheol are summarized from over 100 comments on "Sheol" in the very helpful resource, [NET Note](#)).

In Hebrew thought, **Sheol** is the proper name of the subterranean world which was regarded as the land of the dead. In ancient Canaanite thought Death was a powerful god whose appetite was never satisfied. In the OT Sheol/Death, though not deified, is personified as greedy and as having a voracious appetite. See Pr 30:15-16; Isa 5:14. According to the OT, those who descend into the realm of death/Sheol are cut off from God's mighty deeds and from the worshiping covenant community that experiences divine intervention (Ps 30:9; 88:10-12; Isa 38:18). The Hebrew term שְׁחַת (shakhat, "pit" = not same Hebrew word used in Pr 1:12-see below) is often used as a title for Sheol (see Ps 16:10, 49:9 - decay = pit; Ps 55:24; 103:4 = pit of destruction, where our physical body decays).

In Dt 32:22, **Sheol** refers here not to hell and hell-fire - a much later concept - but to the innermost parts of the earth, as low down as one could get. The parallel with "the foundations of the mountains" makes this clear (cf. Ps 9:17; 16:10; 139:8; Isa 14:9, 15; Amos 9:2).

In Job **Sheol** is a land from which there is no return (Job 10:21, 7:9). It is a place of darkness and gloom (Job 10:21-22), a place where the dead lie hidden (Job 14:13); as a place appointed for all no matter what their standing on earth might have been (Job 30:23).

In Pr 9:18 "in the depths of Sheol" (לְבִמְקוֹת שְׁחַת, bé'imqē shé'ol) is a parallelism which stresses that those who turn to this way of life are ignorant and doomed. It may signal a literal death lying ahead in the not too distant future, but it is more likely an analogy. The point is that the life of folly, a life of undisciplined, immoral, riotous living, runs counter to God's appeal for wisdom and leads to ruin. That is the broad way that leads to destruction.

In Pr 15:11 "Sheol and Abaddon" (שְׁחַת וְאַבְדּוֹן, shé'ol va'adon); as in ASV, NASB, NRSV; cf. KJV "Hell and destruction"; NAB "the nether world and the abyss." These terms represent the remote underworld and all the mighty powers that reside there (e.g., Pr 27:20; Job 26:6; Ps 139:8; Amos 9:2; Rev 9:11). The LORD knows everything about this remote region.

In Pr 23:14 the term שְׁחַת (shé'ol, "Sheol") in this context probably means "death" (so NIV, NCV, NLT) and not the realm of the departed (wicked) spirits (cf. NAB "the nether world"). In the wisdom of other lands, Ahiqar 6:82 says, "If I strike you, my son, you will not die." The idea is that discipline helps the child to a full life; if the child dies prematurely, it would be more than likely a consequence of not being trained by discipline. In the book of Proverbs the "death" mentioned here could be social as well as physical.

**Sheol** is equivalent to the term [Hades](#) in the NT (Acts 2:27) and is distinct from the NT term [Gehenna](#), the second death, the lake of fire, that place where even Sheol (Hades) will be thrown (Rev 20:14-15-[note](#)) In the OT, Hades was known as Sheol. It is the place where the unrighteous will reside (Luke 10:15; 16:23; Rev 20:13-14-[note](#)), a place of torment, especially as one knows that he is separated from God (cp Lk 16:23).

**Vine - she'ol** (שְׁחַת, 7585), "place of the dead." Sha'al seems to be the basis for an important noun in the Old Testament, **she'ol**. Found 65 times in the Hebrew Bible, **she'ol** refers to the netherworld or the underground cavern to which all buried dead go. Often incorrectly translated "hell" in the KJV, **she'ol** was not understood to be a place of punishment, but simply the ultimate resting place of all mankind (Ge 37:35). Thus, it was thought to be the land of no return (Job 16:22; 17:14-16). It was a place to be dreaded, not only because it meant the end of physical life on earth, but also because there was no praise of God there (Ps 6:5). Deliverance from it was a blessing (Ps 30:3). In Ps 49:14, "death will shepherd them," where death itself is personified as a shepherd that will lead them like a flock of helpless, unsuspecting sheep to Sheol, the underworld, the land of the dead.

**Robert Morey** - It is universally recognized by modern Talmudic scholars that **she'ol** never meant the grave or unconsciousness in rabbinic literature. Ginzburg states that in rabbinic writings one finds a consistent conviction that "there exists after this world a

condition of happiness or unhappiness for an individual.” Guttman adds, “The Talmud, like the Apocryphal literature, knows of a kind of intermediate state of the soul between death and resurrection; true retribution will be dispensed only after the resurrection of the body. But along with this, we also find the fate in a retribution coming immediately after death and in a life of blessedness for the soul in the beyond.”<sup>8</sup> The rabbinic tradition before, during, and after the time of Christ describes the soul departing the body and descending into Sheol at death. (Midrash: Gen. 96, 908; Bab. Tal. Shah 589; 777–779: Enoch 103:7, etc.) The rabbis consistently pictured both the righteous and the wicked as conscious after death. (Midrash: Gen. 409, 516; Num. 733; Ecc. 83, 229; Bab. Tal. Shah 777–779; PT Mo’ed Katan 111.5, 826, Yebamoth XVI.3, 15c, Bereshith Rabba c. 7, Vayyakin Rabba XVIII.1; Kohelith Rabb 1.15, ed., Rom. 6a; Ruth Rabba 111.3, 6c, etc.) The evidence is so overwhelming that the classic Princeton theologian, Charles Hodge, stated, “That the Jews believed in a conscious life after death is beyond dispute. The annihilationists have never discovered any evidence that the majority of Jews believed that the soul was extinguished at death. There is no conflict in the rabbinic literature over this issue. (Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature, pp. 43, 44.) The KJV translates Sheol as “hell” 31 times, “grave” 31 times, and “pit” three times. Because of this inconsistency of translation, such groups as the Adventists, Armstrongites, and Jehovah’s Witnesses have taught that Sheol means the grave. All the [conditional immortalists](#) have traditionally capitalized on the KJV’s translation of Sheol as the “grave.” For example, in The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers (Vol. I, pp. 162 and 298), Froom emphatically stated that both Sheol and Hades meant the grave. It is to be regretted that even some modern versions have carried on the tradition of translating Sheol as grave. **Robert Morey** comments that “During the intertestamental period, the Jewish concept of Sheol had progressed to the stage where it was believed that Sheol had two distinct compartments, or sections. One section was a place of torment to which the wicked went while the other was a place of conscious bliss, often called “Abraham’s bosom” or “paradise,” to which the righteous were carried by angels. The rabbis even discussed how many angels it took to carry the righteous to Abraham’s bosom (Sources: A. Edersheim, The Life and Time of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1962), Vol. II, pp. 279–281, 791–796. For further sources in rabbinic literature, see: Midrash: Gen. 68; Ex. 48; Lev. 405; 55:80; Ecc. 197. Bab. Tal.: Ber. 173; Shah. 589; ER 129.). The rabbinic understanding of Sheol is the basis for Christ’s illustration in Luke 16:19–31. While only the rich man was directly said to be “in Hades” (v. 23), the phrase “Abraham’s bosom” to which the angels carried Lazarus (vv. 22, 23) must be interpreted as the section of Hades reserved for the righteous. The dialogue between the rich man and Lazarus is an echo of multiple stories in which such dialogues were described. Thus, initially, the first occurrence of Hades in the New Testament refers to a concept of an afterlife which had evolved beyond the Old Testament concept of Sheol and reflected, the progress of understanding which had been accomplished during the period between Malachi and Matthew. (Death and the Afterlife)

**NET Note** - “The noun שְׁאוֹל (shé’ol) can mean (1) “death,” cf. NCV; (2) “the grave,” cf. KJV, NIV, NLT (3) “Sheol” as the realm of departed spirits, cf. NAB “the nether world,” and (4) “**extreme danger.**” Here it is parallel to the noun בּוֹר (vor, “the Pit”) so it is the grave or more likely “Sheol” (cf. ASV, NRSV). Elsewhere Sheol is personified as having an insatiable appetite and swallowing people alive as they descend to their death (e.g., Nu 16:30, 33; Isa 5:14; Hab 2:5). In ancient Near Eastern literature, the grave is often personified in similar manner, e.g., in Ugaritic mythological texts Mot (= “death”) is referred to as “the great swallower.””

**Erwin Lutzer** has an excellent summary of **Sheol** in his book [One Minute After You Die \(borrow book\)](#):

The most important word in the Old Testament that speaks of the afterlife is the Hebrew word sheol, which occurs sixty-five times in the Old Testament. In the King James Version of the Bible it is translated “hell” thirty-one times, “grave” thirty-one times, and “pit” three times. This inconsistency in translation has caused some to be confused regarding what sheol really means.

First, we must remember that elsewhere in the Bible, sheol is clearly distinguished from hell (I’ll comment more on this later). And second, just because it is sometimes translated “grave,” this does not mean that it refers only to the literal grave. Some people who believe that it refers to the grave and nothing more assume that when we die, we just die like a dog; i.e., since our bodies have died, our existence has ended.

Not so. Of course, sheol can be translated “grave” in some contexts, because the word includes the concept of the grave. But what seems clear is that the writers of the Old Testament believed that to go to sheol was not only to go to the grave but also to experience a conscious afterlife.

There is a Hebrew word that can only be translated “grave”—kever—but the writers often preferred the word sheol because it encompassed the region of departed spirits who were conscious, either in bliss or torment. The word sheol never means just a physical grave.

For the purpose of greater clarity, more recent translations of the Bible sometimes do not attempt to use an English equivalent to translate sheol. They simply let the Hebrew word stand as it is. For example, in the very first use of the word in the Old Testament, the New American Standard Bible quotes Jacob as saying, “Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son” (Genesis 37:35).

So here are some facts we should know in order to understand what the Old Testament means by the word

sheol.

First, there is a clear distinction between the grave, where the body rests, and sheol, where the spirits of the dead gather. Although graves are usually in shallow earth or even above the earth, sheol is always thought of as down under, somewhere in a hollow part of the earth. Isaiah writes that when the king is overthrown, "Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come; it arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth; it raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones" (Isaiah 14:9; see also verse 10). Sheol is not impersonal; it is a place of activity.

Second, sheol is often spoken of as a shadowy place of darkness, a place that is not a part of this existence. Another prophet, Ezekiel, says that Tyre will be "[brought] down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit [sheol], so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living" (Ezekiel 26:20).

Job speaks of the inhabitants of sheol as in pain. "The departed spirits tremble under the waters and their inhabitants. Naked is Sheol before Him, and Abaddon has no covering" (Job 26:5–6).

Third, after death one can be united with his ancestors in sheol. Jacob went down into sheol and was "gathered to his people" (Genesis 49:33). Abraham was assured by the Lord that he would go down to his fathers in peace (Genesis 15:15). Some have interpreted this as simply a reference to the fact that the bones of a particular family were often buried together. But the clear implication is that there would be a reunion of some kind in the world beyond.

That the word sheol refers to the realm of departed spirits seems unmistakable. What seems equally clear is that those who entered this region did not all have the same experience. For some, it was a region of gloom; but for others, it was a place where they would dwell with God.

Asaph, the author of many of the psalms, wrote, "Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. With Your counsel You will guide me, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth" (Psalm 73:23–25). He expected to see the glory of God at death; indeed, he speaks about heaven.

Fourth, there are hints in the Old Testament that sheol has different regions. Both the wicked and the righteous are said to go to sheol. Jacob went into sheol, but so did rebellious people, such as Korah and Dathan. This explains why there is a "lower region." The Lord says, "For a fire is kindled in My anger, and burns to the lowest part of Sheol, and consumes the earth with its yield, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains" (Deuteronomy 32:22).

The reason there are two different realms in sheol is best explained by remembering that sheol has two different kinds of inhabitants. "This is the way of those who are foolish.... As sheep they are appointed for Sheol; death shall be their shepherd; and the upright shall rule over them in the morning, and their form shall be for Sheol to consume so that they have no habitation. But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me" (Psalm 49:13–15). Other Old Testament passages make a similar contrast (Job 24:19; Psalms 9:17; 16:10; 31:17; 55:15).

Perhaps one of the clearest expressions of immortality in the Old Testament comes from the book of Daniel. "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). Daniel not only believed that there were two classes of people who would live either in bliss or contempt, but that their bodies would also arise someday. This is an explicit reference to the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

The Old Testament makes a sharp distinction between the wicked and the righteous, with the clear implication that they have separate destinies in the afterlife. Though this division of sheol is not expressly stated, later rabbis clearly taught that sheol has two compartments.

Sheol, then, is a general term for the nether world, the region of departed spirits. As the scholar B. B. Warfield wrote, "Israel from the beginning of its recorded history cherished the most settled conviction of the persistence of the soul in life after death.... The body is laid in the grave and the soul departs for sheol." Here the righteous and the wicked enter, though when they arrive, they do not have the same experience.

If the door to the afterlife is open but a crack in the Old Testament, it is thrown wide open in the New. Here we have detailed descriptions of both the righteous and the unbelievers after death. Based on this information, we

are better able to answer the question of what we can expect one minute after we have breathed our last.  
(From Lutzer's book which I highly recommend [One Minute After You Die -- borrow book](#))

### See Dictionary Articles:

- [Sheol in Baker's Evangelical Dictionary](#)
- [Sheol in Holman's Dictionary](#)
- [NET Bible articles](#)
- [What is the Difference Between Sheol, Hades, Hell, etc?](#)
- [Where did OT Believers go when they died?](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Sheol](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Sheol](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Sheol](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Sheol](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Sheol](#)

**Sheol** - 64v all translated "Sheol" -

Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Num. 16:30, 33; Deut. 32:22; 1 Sam. 2:6; 2Sam. 22:6; 1 Ki. 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 11:8; 14:13; 17:13, 16; Job 21:13; 24:19; 26:6; Ps. 6:5; 9:17; 16:10; 18:5; 30:3; 31:17; 49:14-15; Ps 55:15; 86:13; 88:3; 89:48; 116:3; 139:8; 141:7; Pr. 1:12; 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; Pr 15:11, 24; 23:14; 27:20; 30:16; Eccl. 9:10; Song 8:6; Isa. 5:14; 7:11; Isa 14:9, 11, 15; 28:15, 18; 38:10, 18; 57:9; Ezek. 31:15-17; 32:21, 27; Hos 13:14; Amos 9:2; Jon. 2:2; Hab. 2:5. **Notice the important rhetorical question** - What man can live and not see death?

Can he deliver his soul from the power of **Sheol**?[Selah]. (Ps 89:48)

Pr 1:12 Let us swallow them alive like **Sheol**, Even whole, as those who go down to the pit;

Pr 5:5 Her feet go down to death, Her steps take hold of **Sheol**.

Pr 7:27 Her house is the way to **Sheol**, Descending to the chambers of death.

Pr 9:18 But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of **Sheol**.

Pr 15:11 **Sheol** and [Abaddon](#) lie open before the LORD, How much more the hearts of men!

Pr 15:24 The path of life leads upward for the wise That he may keep away from **Sheol** below.

Pr 23:14 You shall strike him with the rod And rescue his soul from **Sheol**.

Pr 27:20 **Sheol** and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.

Pr 30:16 **Sheol**, and the barren womb, Earth that is never satisfied with water, And fire that never says, "Enough."

**Matthew Henry** - These bloody men would do this as greedily as the hungry lion devours the lamb. If it be objected, "The remains of the murdered will betray the murderers;" they answer, "No danger of that; we will swallow them whole as those that are buried." Who could imagine that human nature should degenerate so far that it should ever be a pleasure to one man to destroy another!

**Waltke** makes the point that "The speech is obviously fictitious, for, as Meinhold notes, enticers would hardly use these condemning, unvarnished signals that expose, not cover, their deeds as vile. However, although the father gives their invitation the roar of a lion to repulse the son, he also invests it with the subtlety of a serpent. Aitken comments, "Its allurements are not far to seek: excitement (Pr 1:11-12), easy money (Pr 1:13), and the camaraderie of being one of the gang (Pr 1:14).

**Even whole as those who go down to the Pit** - When a person dies, not just a part of them dies, but their entirety (the "whole") dies. And they go to Sheol, here called the "**Pit**." (Heb = bor, used again in Pr 5:15 = cistern, Pr 28:17 = death in NAS, ESV). The Lxx translates pit (bor) with the noun ge which means earth or ground, which is fitting as we were formed from dust of the ground (ground = adamah in Ge 2:7) and "to dust you shall return." (Ge 3:19)!

**Whole** (08549)(**tamin**) is used 85x in the OT and usually means blameless (as God made David's way in Ps 18:32-note), integrity (Ps 15:2-note), or perfect (the Law of the LORD - Ps 19:7-note), but in this context means entire, that which constitutes the total sum (an undivided unit so to speak), the totality of an object (as in Lev 3:9; Ezek 15:5).

## Proverbs 1:13 We will find all kinds of precious wealth, We will fill our houses with spoil

- Pr 1:19; Job 24:2,3; Isaiah 10:13,14; Jeremiah 22:16,17; Nahum 2:12; Haggai 2:9; Luke 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:9,10; Revelation 18:9-16

This is the promise of "good news" by the gang members to the son, but ultimately it is a lie (sin is always deceptive! Heb 3:13 **note on sin's deceitful nature**) as the father warns in Pr 1:19!

**MacArthur** - This is the enlisting of the innocent without full disclosure of intent. Abundant spoil is promised by this outright robbery, which is made to appear easy and safe for the thieves and murderers.

**Paul** repeats the warning to his young disciple **Timothy** (applicable to all of us who are disciples of Christ)...

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1Ti 6:9-10-note)

**Spoil** "denotes the spoils, the booty, that one takes from a conquered enemy....Sinners love wealth and use people; saints love people and use wealth to help others." (Waltke)

## Proverbs 1:14 Throw in your lot with us, We shall all have one purse,"

**NET** - Join with us! We will all share equally in what we steal."

**Amplified** - Throw in your lot with us [they insist] and be a sworn brother and comrade; let us all have one purse in common—

**NET Note** - "Throw in your lot with us." This is a figurative expression (hypocatastasis) urging the naive to join their life of crime and divide their loot equally. The noun גֹּרָל (goral, "lot") can refer to (1) lot thrown for decision-making processes, e.g., choosing the scapegoat (Lev 16:8), discovering a guilty party (Jonah 1:7) or allocating property (Josh 18:6); (2) allotted portion (Josh 15:1) and (3) allotted fate or future destiny (Pr 1:14; Dan 12:13; see BDB 174 s.v.). **Here the criminals urged the lad to share their life.**

**Bridges** - the demand to engage in action soon follows: "Throw in your lot with us." The sensitive conscience becomes more compliant every time it gives in. Who can stop himself once he starts on this downhill path? One sin makes way for another. David committed murder to hide his adultery (2Samuel 11:4, 17, 25). The only safe course of action is to flee temptation. There is not one sin that the best of God's saints will not commit if they trust in themselves (Romans 11:20).

**All have one purse** - Promise of "'fair shares for all." (McKane)

The peer pressure continues, now "sweetened" by the promise of a share in the filthy lucre!

**John Trapp** - How much better is a wallet with which we can use to beg from door to door, than is such a cursed hoard of evil gotten goods!

As Solomon states later...

Ill-gotten gains do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death. (Pr 10:2)

## Proverbs 1:15 My son, do not walk in the way with them. Keep your feet from their path

- **walk** Pr 4:14,15; 9:6; 13:20; Ps 1:1; 26:4,5; 2Cor 6:17
- **Keep from** - Pr 4:27; 5:8; Ps 119:101; Jer 14:10)

### THE WAY OF WICKED BRINGS DESTRUCTION

Pr 1:15-19

After presenting an example of the wicked words with which his son might be enticed into a lifestyle of sin (Pr 1:10-18), the father

now explains the painful pangs associated with following the passing pleasure of the path of the perverted.

**Alexander Pope** poetically explains why the father's warning is so critical

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien (demeanor),  
as to be hated needs but to be seen.  
But seen too oft, too familiar that face,  
we first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Compare similar descriptions...

Pr 4:14 Do not enter the **path** of the wicked And do not proceed in the **way** of evil men. 15 Avoid it, do not pass by it; Turn away from it and pass on.

Ps 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the **path of sinners**, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! (**Ed**: It follows "How miserable, how agonizing is the life of he who walks in the path of sinners.")

2Cor 6:14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?:15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty. **IN LIGHT OF THESE GREAT TRUTHS...**

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2Cor 7:1- [note](#))

**My son** - 23x in Proverbs - Pr. 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1, 20; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1; 19:27; 23:15, 19, 26; 24:13, 21; 27:11; 31:2 cp Solomon's admonition in Eccl. 12:12;

**Do not walk** - The father directly counters the enticing invitation of the sinners in Pr 1:11.

**Way** (see derek below) and **Path** - These two words are prominent in Proverbs as shown by multiple occurrences

**Way** = Pr 1:15, 19, 31; 2:8, 12, 13, 15, 20; 3:6, 17, 23, 31; 4:11, 14, 19, 26; 5:6, 8, 21; Pr 6:6, 23; Pr 7:8, 25, 27; 8:2, 13, 20, 22, 32; 9:6; 10:9, 29; 11:5; 12:15, 26, 28; Pr 13:6, 15; 14:2, 8, 12, 14; 15:9, 10, 19; 16:2, 7, 9, 17, 25, 29, 31; Pr 17:23; 19:3; 20:14, 24; 21:2, 8, 16, 29; 22:5f, 25; 23:19, 26; 25:26; Pr 28:10; 29:15, 27; 30:19, 20; 31:3, 27

**Path** = Pr. 1:15; 2:8, 13, 15, Pr 1:19, 20; 3:6, 17; 4:11, 14, 18, 26; 5:6, 21; 7:25; 8:2, 20; 9:15; 10:17; Pr 12:28; 15:19, 24;

**Way** and **path** in the same passage = Pr 1:15, Pr 2:8, Pr 2:13, Pr 2:15, Pr 2:20, Pr 3:6, Pr 3:17, Pr 4:11, Pr 4:14, Pr 4:26, Pr 5:6, Pr 5:21, Pr 7:25, Pr 8:2, Pr 8:20, Pr 12:28, Pr 15:19

**Temper Longman** comments on Solomon's repeated use of **path** in Proverbs - Throughout the first part of Proverbs, the **path** is a pervasive metaphor culminating in Pr 9. Everyone is walking on a **path**, or perhaps, better said, on one of two types of path, a straight path or a crooked path. "**Path**" (derek is the main Hebrew term, but there are a host of near synonyms) refers to one's life. Even today, it is common to refer to life as a journey. **Path** implies a current point of origin (where one is in life now), a destination, and key transitional moments (forks in the road or an encounter, as we are now discussing). In fact, two paths are open. One is "crooked" (Pr 2:15) and "dark" (Pr 2:13). Danger lurks on this path (Pr 1:10-15; 2:12-15). These dangers include traps and snares that can foul up one's walk on the proper path of life. The dark path represents one's behavior in this life, and it culminates not in life but in death.

In Mt 7:13-14-note, Jesus reminds us that two paths run through life, one path leads to eternal life and the other to eternal death. Which have you chosen to tread?

**John Phillips** - Two "ways" run through history. The **way of Cain** runs via the judgment of the flood, past the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues, by way of the murder of Christ, to the lake of fire. It is the way of the world, the flesh, and the devil. It has its roll call of colorful characters, consummate villains, and giant intellects. Its sidewalks are lined with establishments offering power, pleasure, prosperity, promotion, and even piety. Its grand capital is Babylon; its most popular resort is Vanity Fair; its final destination

is Hell. **The other way** is the way of Abel, Seth, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, David, and Christ. It runs by Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and Golgotha to glory. Those fleeing the City of Destruction look for the Celestial City and go home by the way of the cross. This way has a roll call of giants (Hebrews 11). Its steep slopes are not wanting in attractions: at the place of prayer, the table of the Lord, and the daily quiet time, the Lord of that way draws especially near to His own. Its grand capital is the new Jerusalem; its most popular resorts are the local church and the house of the "Interpreter"; its end is an eternity of bliss.

**Way** (01870) (**derek** from **darak** = to walk or tread ~ speaks of the path traveled) means a path, journey, way, which can be literal (Nu 22:23) but is more often used figuratively as a metaphor referring to the pathways of one's life (course or conduct of life as well as the consequences of that conduct). Figuratively **derek** is used of the pattern of life (Pr 3:6); the obedient life (Dt. 8:6); the righteous life (2Sa 22:22; Jer. 5:4); the wicked life (1Ki 22:52).

**Waltke - Derek** ("way" or "highway") occurs about 710 times in the Old Testament, 75 times in Proverbs, and 30 times in Proverbs 1-9

**Keep your feet from their path** - The feet follow the heart. So guard your heart well (Pr 4:23-note), that you might be able to direct your feet well! "Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil." (Pr 4:27). "**Keep from**" (Heb - mana = withhold, hold back, with nuances of to deny, to refuse, to deprive, to cause one's self not to possess some object or state) is translated in the Lxx with **ekklino**, which is in the form of an urgent command (**aurist imperative**), to keep away from, steer clear, avoid, turn away from their path by turning away from their wicked words (Pr 1:11-14)!

**John MacArthur** makes an excellent point that "Sin must be rejected at the first temptation (cf. Ps 119:114, 115; Jas 1:15) by refusing even the association that can lead to sin (cf. Ps 1:1-6). Avoid the beginnings of sin (see Pr 4:14)."

**Path** (05410) (**nethibah**) refers to a pathway, a road, a navigable pass.. Figuratively it refers to manner or conduct, specifically the way of life of a person as in the use in Pr 1:15. (cp Job 34:11; Ps 16:11; 17:4; 25:4; 119:9).

#### Proverbs 1:16 For their feet run to evil and they hasten to shed blood

- Pr 4:16; 6:18; Isaiah 59:7

**HCSB** - because their feet run toward trouble and they hurry to commit murder.

As an aside, this passage is good description of our modern morally decaying society!

**Their feet** - A way of describing their whole being pursuing evil. "The term "feet" is a synecdoche of the part (= their feet) for the whole person (= they), stressing the eagerness of the robbers." ([NET Note](#)).

**Run...hasten** - Describe their eagerness to sin!

**H A Ironside** - If you venture first to "walk" in their way, you will soon be "running" with them. Nor can you plead ignorance in the day of your spiritual and moral breakdown; for God's Word casts a light on your way, revealing the trap and warning you against the treacherous wiles of the devil.

**John Phillips** - The days of Noah and Lot have returned. The earth is again filled with violence. Pornography is a multibillion-dollar business. Perversion is mildly regarded as an alternate lifestyle. Proverbs warns us to beware of the companionship of those who are involved in this violence, pornography, and perversion. God desires His people to raise their voices in protest against the sins of this age, which is ripening fast for judgment.

**For** (because) - Always be alert to this **term of explanation**, asking what is the writer explaining? In this **context**, the father is explaining to his son why he must stay away from these wicked men. Ultimately justice will prevail. What a picture - running and hastening to evil and bloodshed (see Pr 4:16, 6:18, Ro 3:15-16-note), not realizing that it will cost them their life (Pr 1:18, cp Pr 7:23-note). They are masters of self deceit and deep depravity and must be avoided at all costs!

**Evil** (07451) (**ra**) means bad, distress, misery, injury, calamity. Ra has a range of meanings in the OT, and refers to that which is not morally pure or good according to a proper standard. It refers to that which is undesirable or that which can bring harm or injury. **Ra** can denote evil men (Job 35:12; cf. Ps. 10:15), evil words (Pr. 15:26), evil thoughts (Ge 6:5), evil actions (Dt. 17:5, Neh. 13:17). The **Septuagint** translates **ra** with the noun **kakia** which describes a quality of wickedness and thus in a moral sense means depravity, vice or baseness.

**NET Note** - The noun רָע (ra') has a four-fold range of meanings: (1) "pain, harm" (Pr 3:30), (2) "calamity, disaster" (Pr 13:21), (3)

“distress, misery” (14:32) and (4) “moral evil” (Pr 8:13). The parallelism with “swift to shed blood” suggests it means “to inflict harm, injury.”

**Ra** in Proverbs - Pr. 1:16; 2:12, Pr 2:14; 3:7; 4:27; 5:14; 6:14, 24; 8:13; 11:15; 12:20, 21; 13:17, 19; 14:16, Pr 14:22; 15:26; 16:6, 17; 17:11; 19:23; 20:8, 22, 30; 21:10, 12; 28:5, 10; Pr 29:6; 31:12; Eccl. 8:9; 9:3

### Proverbs 1:17 Indeed, it is useless to spread the baited net In the sight of any bird

- **Useless** - Pr 7:23; Job 35:11

**NET Note** - This means either: (1) Spreading a net in view of birds is futile because birds will avoid the trap; but the wicked are so blind that they fail to see danger; or (2) it does not matter if a net is spread because birds are so hungry they will eat anyway and be trapped; the wicked act in a similar way.

**MacArthur** favors the #1 interpretation - It would be ineffective to set up a net for catching a bird in full view of the bird. Taken with Pr 1:18, this analogy means that the sinner sets up his trap for the innocent in secret, but in the end the trap is sprung on him (Pr 1:19).

**Miller** favors #2 interpretation - Although rather unclear, “the most plausible interpretation of Pr 1:17” (Whybray, 1994) is that they are being likened to greedy birds blind to a net laid out in plain sight for trapping them.

**Useless** (02600) (**hinmam**) means without cause (for no reason - wounds of a drunk in Pr 23:29; Ps 35:7, 119:161), for nothing (freely, for free - giving up something without compensation - Job 1:9 = without an ulterior motive; Job 2:3 without justification; Ge 29:15; Ex 21:2, Nu 11:5, Isa 52:3. Cf. Latin *gratis*, English *gratuitously*), in vain (to no avail - Ezek 6:10). The Lxx translates **hinmam** with the adjective *kenos* meaning empty, without any basis, without any effect, in vain, foolish (Jas 2:20).

**NAS Usage:** free(1), nothing(4), useless(1), uselessly(1), vain(2), which cost(1), which cost me nothing(1), which costs(1), which costs me nothing(1), without a cause(2), without cause(17), without pay(1), without payment(1).

**Chinmam** - 31v with 6 uses in Proverbs = Pr. 1:11, 17; 3:30; 23:29; 24:28; 26:2 Ge. 29:15; Ex. 21:2, 11; Num. 11:5; 1 Sam. 19:5; 25:31; 2 Sam. 24:24; 1Ki. 2:31; 1Chr. 21:24; Job 1:9; 2:3; 9:17; 22:6; Ps. 35:7, 19; 69:4; 109:3; 119:161; ; Isa. 52:3, 5; Jer. 22:13; Lam. 3:52; Ezek. 6:10; 14:23; Mal. 1:10

This is a proverb in itself and speaks of the absurd practice of trying to set a trap for a bird while he is watching you set the trap! Indeed, birds are wiser than wicked men created in the image of God! What a tragic travesty! Read similar comparisons of seemingly intelligent men and dumb beasts in Isaiah 1:3 and Jeremiah 8:7! Does God's Word not rightly humble us with such apt comparisons! O, how foolish we are when we traverse the path of willful, presumptive sins!

**Charles Bridges** - The sight of danger leads to the avoidance of danger. Instinct directs the bird, reason the man. Yet man is so infatuated with sin that in his pride he will not do what the bird does by instinct. She flies away from the net that she has seen being spread out, but man rushes into it. These men sought to kill others but ended up waylay[ing] only themselves.

**Sid Buzzell** - These gangsters, more stupid than birds, not only see the trap; they even set it for themselves! They lie in wait to shed others' blood, but they themselves are caught in their own trap (cf. Pr 1:32; 26:27; 28:10).

**Waltke** - The wise son with his father's help is now able to deconstruct the trap of words set by the sinners. Like every flying creature, the wise son will take flight, for they spread their net in his full view. By their own admission they want to ambush an innocent man; they are without excuse, for they flaunt their injustice.

### Proverbs 1:18 But they lie in wait for their own blood; They ambush their own lives

- Pr 5:22,23; 9:17,18; 28:17; Esther 7:10; Ps 7:14-16; 9:16; 55:23; Mt 27:4,5

**YOU WILL REAP  
WHAT YOU SOW!  
(Sin is Self Destructive)**

The way of the wicked is like darkness;

They do not know over what they stumble. (Pr 4:19)

**But** - Always be alert for this strategic **word of contrast** (See discussion of why and how to observe terms of contrast), which usually makes a striking change in the direction of the text, in this case contrasting the ones ("the sinner's stupidity" - Waltke) who lie in wait for gain with the real truth that they are lying in wait for loss! O, how sin loves to lie and paint a picture of pleasure and gain, both of which are lost in an instant and for eternity to the one who never repents and places their faith in the Messiah!

**Wiersbe** - When you disobey God by harming others, you only harm yourself (Pr 1:18-19). You're free to take what you want from life, but eventually you'll have to pay for it, and the price you pay is higher than the value you gain. You end up sacrificing the permanent for the immediate, and that's a bad investment....when you disobey God by harming others, you only harm yourself.

**Their own blood** (cp Ps 55:23, Pr 28:17) - Here we see the wages for shedding blood, which the **sinner**s had so arrogantly (and wantonly) spoken of with enticing descriptions in Pr 1:11, 16.

**NET Note** - They think that they are going to shed innocent blood, but in their blindness they do not realize that it is their own blood they shed. Their greed will lead to their destruction. This is an example of ironic poetic justice. They do not intend to destroy themselves; but this is what they accomplish.

**Bridges** - These men thirsted for their neighbor's blood. But in the end they laid wait for their own. They lurked privily (in secret) for the innocent without cause. But it proved to be lurking privily (in secret) for their own lives. (Pr 1:11 with Pr 1:18. Comp. Job 18:8, Hab 2:10)

**They ambush their own life** (literally "souls") (cp Pr 9:17-18, Ps 9:16-note, Ps 7:14-16-note) - Solomon later amplifies the truth that what one reaps sorrow when he sows sin, writing "His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin. He will die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray." (Pr 5:22-23-note) **Haman** is a perfect OT example of this principle (Esther 7:10). **Judas** is the NT example of a man who ambushed his own life (read Mt 27:4,5).

#### Proverbs 1:19 So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence; It takes away the life of its possessors

- **everyone** - Pr 15:27; 23:3,4; 2 Samuel 18:11-13; 2 Kings 5:20-27; Jeremiah 22:17-19; Micah 2:1-3; Micah 3:10-12; Habakkuk 2:9; Acts 8:19,20; 1Ti 3:3; 1Ti 6:9,10; James 5:1-4; 2Peter 2:3,14-16
- **takes away** - Job 31:39; Eccl 5:13)

**Young's Literal** - So are the paths of every gainer of dishonest gain ( all who are greedy for greed), The life of its owners it taketh.

Ill-gotten gains do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death. (Pr 10:2)

**So** (Heb = ken) means thus and is most often translated **therefore** - always be alert **term of conclusion**, asking at least what is being concluded (why?, why now?, etc)? Hubbard explains that "Pr 1:19 is a general conclusion to the subject of bad company as verse 10 is a general introduction."

The nation of Israel failed to read, hear and heed Solomon's wise words - read the descriptions of the massive breakdown of social order in Hos 4:2, Micah 2:1-2-note, Isa 1:23-note. Beloved, we need to pray desperately for revival in America for Solomon's words are becoming a reality in our nation even as they did in ancient Israel. Flesh is still **flesh** whether it be in the Old Testament times or the Church Age! We need to hear and heed these wise sayings, before God's hand of judgment falls on our nation, even as it finally fell upon Israel!

**Ways** (0734)(**orach**) means a path, a way (Jdg 5:6, Isa 33:8), figuratively it means a manner or conduct, the path of an individual or course of life (Job 6:18); the characteristics of a lifestyle, good or evil (Ps. 16:11); righteousness or judgment (Pr. 2:13).

Uses of **Orach** in Proverbs - Pr 1:19; 2:8, 13, 15, 19-20; 3:6; 4:14, 18; 5:6; 8:20; 9:15; 10:17; 12:28; Pr 15:10, 19, 24; 17:23; 22:25;

**Radmacher**- These words conclude the story and introduce a theme that the following passages develop further: the study of wisdom is a matter of life and death.

**Everyone** - This is all inclusive. No exception clauses. The violent may seem powerful, successful, rich, etc, in this life, but certainly not in the life to come (Reminds me of Asaph's human perception in Ps 73:2-3 versus God's reality in Ps 73:17-20-note)! The "*proverb*" is true - "Crime does not pay!" (That is the wages which crime pays are ultimately and eternally not wages one would desire!)

**It takes away the life of its possessors** - Solomon presumably an old, experienced man later wrote "There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches being hoarded by their owner to his hurt." (Eccl 5:13)

**NET Note** - Greed takes away the life of those who live by greed (e.g., Pr 15:27; 26:27).

**Wiersbe** - They rejected the eternal treasures of wisdom (Pr 3:14-16; 16:16) for the cheap trinkets of this world, and they lost their souls in the bargain.

**Bridges** reminds us that "Ahab and his guilty partner, in plotting the destruction of their innocent victim, worked out their own ruin (1Kings 21:4-24).—Little did Haman, when bent upon the murder of Mordecai; (Esther 7:9.) or Judas when "seeking opportunity to betray his Master," (Mt. 26:14-16; 27:3-5) see that they were digging a pit for themselves. (Ps. 7:15, 16; 9:15, 16) Yet the sinner, would he but use his own eyes, might see hell at the end of his path (Mt 7:13). But sin is self-delusive—self-destructive. So are the ways—such the end—of greedy, often murderous gain. (Comp. Job 31:39, 40, Jer. 22:17-19, Mic 3:10-12. 'How great a cheat is wickedness! It ensnares the ensnarers, and murders the murderers; holds a dark lantern in one hand, while with the other it discharges silently a pistol into our bosoms.'—Jermin. (Dr. M.) My son—once more hear thy Father's instruction—"Flee these things." (Pr 1:8, with 1Ti 6:9-11)

**IT TAKES AWAY THE LIFE** - In an article for Newsweek, David Gates wrote: "It's the nature of addiction to sneak up on you in apparently harmless increments: during the initial stages, life would be about right if you could just add on that two-car garage. Toward the middle, it seems a little hard if you can't have a Lexus and Boxster in it. Near the end you've got a Learjet and life is still intolerable.—Newsweek, July 29, 2002, p. 37

#### Proverbs 1:20 Wisdom shouts in the street, She lifts her voice in the square

- **Wisdom** (Heb. *Wisdoms*, that is, excellent wisdom) - Matthew 13:54; Luke 11:49; 1Corinthians 1:24,30; Colossians 2:3
- **Shouts** - Pr 8:1-5; 9:3; John 7:37

### WISDOM'S PURSUIT AND APPEAL

Pr 1:20-23

**Duane Garrett** - This section, the first direct appeal by personified Wisdom, has a chiastic structure.

A Introduction: an appeal for listeners (Pr 1:20-21)

B Address to the untutored, scoffers, and fools (Pr 1:22)

C Declaration of disclosure (Pr 1:23)

D Reason for the announcement (Pr 1:24-25)

E Announcement of derisive judgment (Pr 1:26-28)

D' Reason for the announcement (Pr 1:29-30)

C' Declaration of retribution (Pr 1:31)

B' Fate of the untutored and fools (Pr 1:32)

A' Conclusion: an appeal for a hearer (Pr 1:33)

**Wisdom** (See **chokmah** from verb **chakam** = to be wise) is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. **Wisdom** is the ability to see something from God's viewpoint. **Wisdom** is "God's character in the many practical affairs of life."

**Wisdom shouts...she lifts her voice** - **Wisdom** is personified as a woman (as in Pr 3:15-18, Pr 8:1-3, 9:1-12) who gives a "ringing cry" which would be audible to all who have ears to hear. Her cry is in two parts - In Pr 1:22-27 (cp Pr 8:4-31) she tells what she has done (cp Pr 8:4-31). In the second part, she tells what the future holds for those who do not heed her words (Pr 1:28-33, cp Pr 8:34-36) Contrast this woman with the **strange woman** in Pr 2:16.

**NET Note** - The noun חִכְמָה (*chokmah*, "wisdom") is the abstract feminine plural form. It probably functions as a plural of intensity, stressing the all-embracing, elevated wisdom (W. McKane, Proverbs). As in Pr 8:1-9:11, Wisdom is personified as a righteous

woman in Pr 1:20-33.

Note that an "it" (wisdom) becomes a "she" and as **Hayford** says **wisdom** "is not only personified, but characterized as a communicating person, not a cold abstraction."

**Wisdom** herself warns those who reject her (Pr 1:22, 24f, 29f) by describing the consequences of their decision. Faced with disaster, they may realize wisdom's value, but it will be too late, for they will not be able to find her (Pr 1:26ff) and will suffer the consequences of their naive and foolish behavior (Pr 1:31), and die (Pr 1:32). Unlike the first poem, therefore, these verses address those who are confirmed in their rebellion. Wisdom speaks as a prophet, warning scoffers of the consequences of their attitude. As the prophets repeatedly warned the nations that their sin would lead them into destruction, so Wisdom warns fools that their sin would lead to their death. Wisdom thus stands, not as a teacher, but as a prophet, a teacher spurned. (Complete Biblical Library Commentary)

In Pr 1:20-21 we see Wisdom personified as a prophet (one who speaks forth) speaking in the locales people would be gathered to hear her. Her prophetic message (Pr 1:22ff) was ignored, even rejected, in a manner similar to how the OT prophets to Israel were treated.

**Carson** adds that "The image of the prophet helps to convey the urgency of wisdom's challenge to people who are in a critical situation. She speaks as if it is too late, as prophets often do in order to jolt people into a response before it really is too late. The beginning (Pr 1:22) and the end (Pr 1:32-33) summarize her lament, her warning and her promise. Love and hate (Pr 1:22) are here shown to be commitments of the will as well as emotions, as is regularly the case in Proverbs and elsewhere in Scripture."

**ESV Study Bible** - The call of wisdom prefigures the call of the gospel, which contains the wisdom of God (1Cor. 1:18-25; 2:6-10).

**Shouts** ((07442)(**ranan**) means to give a ringing cry and is also used of Wisdom crying out in Pr 8:3 (cp shout for joy, sing joyfully in Pr 29:6). The Lxx uses **humneo** which means to sing aloud, picturing Wisdom as continually (present tense) singing a beautiful song.

**Lifts her voice** - literally "she gives her voice" which means she shouts loudly. No hearing aids needed. Only a hearing, heeding heart!

**In the street...in the square** - **The square** refers to open areas usually inside the city gate, areas that were open to the public. Wisdom is not some secret knowledge. Wisdom does not restrict her shouts to a select few, but makes these life changing truths available to all, that no one would be left "untouched, untold, unwarned, unled." So not only was Wisdom giving a *pressing* invitation (shouts...lifts her voice) but also a *public* invitation. Wisdom is like the prophets who would preach in public places (cf. 1Ki. 13:1ff; Jer 26:2), delivering her discourse in the streets, squares and gates of the city.

As **Adrian Rogers** says "**wisdom** is not lackadaisical about this thing; it's not a take-it-or-leave-it type of attitude. Wisdom is speaking with a tear in her voice. There's a sense of urgency; there's a sense of emergency. Wisdom is pressing her invitation. She's lifting up her voice, she's crying."

**NET Note** on **square** - The word רֶחֱבֹת (rékhovot, "plazas") refers to the wide plazas or broad open spaces near the gate where all the people assembled. The personification of wisdom as a woman crying out in this place would be a vivid picture of the public appeal to all who pass by.

**Charles Bridges** - Pr 1:20-23 A Father's instruction has warned us against enticement. Wisdom's voice now invites us to her school. And if there be danger in listening to the counsel of Satan; not less is there in slighting the invitations of God. For it is God the Saviour here before us—the Personal Wisdom of God, in all the plenitude of his Divine power, authority, and grace. And a glowing picture it is. Witness this great "Apostle"—this heavenly preacher—full of yearning love to sinners—not only in the synagogue and in the temple—but crying without in the streets—in the chief place of concourse—in the opening of the gates. The simple and the scorner—each loving his own way—the fools—ignorant only because they hate knowledge—these are the objects of his compassionate remonstrance—How long? A stimulating example for his servants to be "instant in season, out of season," with their Master's energy and earnestness in "plucking the brands out of the fire!" And who shall censure this standard of Divine devotedness?

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**COMMON SENSE** - Voltaire said, "Common sense is not so common." He was right! (**Ed:** And like Solomon he failed to follow his own "proverb" - see my addendum below) In a society that has grown increasingly litigious, we are inundated with warnings on products, mostly because some people lack common sense. Just read the following instructions. On a hair dryer: Do not use while sleeping. On an iron: Do not iron clothes on body. On a chainsaw: Do not attempt to stop chain with your hand. Common sense can be learned from experience or the teaching we receive from those we trust. But God's Word is the best source of all to develop discernment and good judgment. Three words echo throughout the book of Proverbs: wisdom, knowledge, understanding. God has

packed this book with common sense. Proverbs 11:12 advises restraint: "A man of understanding holds his peace." Proverbs 17:27 warns: "He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit." Proverbs 20:13 is practical: "Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty." To get more common sense, consult God's Word—the source of wisdom—daily. --C H Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### To Gain A Heart Of Wisdom:

- Ask God for it (James 1:5).
- Read regularly from the Proverbs.
- Seek out godly counsel (Pr 11:14; 15:22; 19:20).

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**Addendum on Voltaire's lack of "common sense"** - Voltaire, the noted French infidel and one of the most fertile and talented writers of his time, used his pen to retard and demolish Christianity. Of Christ, Voltaire said, "Curse the wretch!" He once boasted, "In 20 years Christ will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear." Shortly after his death the very house in which he printed his foul literature became the depot of the Geneva Bible Society. The nurse who attended Voltaire said, "For all the wealth in Europe I would not see another infidel die." The physician, Trochim, waiting up with Voltaire at his death said that he cried out most desperately: "I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth (Ed: "Only half?") if you will give me six months' life. Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me. O Christ! O Jesus Christ!" [Borrow [Last words of saints and sinners](#) by Herbert Lockyer]

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### James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - WISDOM'S CRY PROVERBS 1:20–26

In this cry we hear the voice of Him who is the "Wisdom of God." It is—

1. An Open Cry. "She crieth in the chief places of concourse."
2. A Pitiful Cry. "How long, ye simple ones?"
3. A Reproving Cry. "How long will fools hate wisdom?"
4. An Inviting Cry. "Turn ye."
5. A Merciful Cry. "Behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you," etc.
6. A Rejected Cry. "I have called, and ye have refused."
7. A Mocking Cry. "I will mock when your fear cometh."

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### James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - WISDOM'S CALL Proverbs 1:20–29

The book of Proverbs is said to "Represent the very science of practical philosophy." It is divided into two sections; Chapters 1–9, WISDOM'S WAYS, and chapters 10–31, WISDOM'S WORDS. These words "The fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of knowledge" (v. 7) may be taken as the keynote of the book. They occur thirteen times. These Proverbs are literally "Comparisons" in practical "parables." The WISDOM personified here (8:12) stands for the highest intellectual sagacity, and the purest moral character, and finds its perfect fulfilment in the Person and Character of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "The Wisdom of God," and who is "made of God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption." In this cry of Wisdom, let us hear the cry of Christ. We can hear in it the voice of—

**I.—COMPASSION.** "Wisdom crieth without ... in the streets, in the openings of the gates" (v. 20). The message is for the "man in the street," as well as the ruler at the gates. It is the compassionate cry of infinite mercy and fulness (John 7:37). This voice seeks to ring in every street, city, and county. It is the cry of God's Evangel to a perishing world. Three classes are addressed—the "Simple," the "Scorner," and the "Fool." The weak, the wayward, and the worthless: He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners.

**II.—REPROOF.** "He crieth ... how long, ye simple ones ... Turn you at my reproof" (vv. 22–23). These three classes are typical. (1). The SIMPLE are rebuked for being easily led; yielding themselves thoughtlessly to the influence of others, and not taking time to "Stand still, and ask for the good old paths." They are the willing dupes, in mind and heart, to unprincipled or ungodly men. (2). The SCORNER is reproved for his delight in scorning! Taking pleasure in ungodliness is about the climax of human guilt. Such glory in their shame, for the sake of a fetid applause, they receive from a corrupt humanity. (3). The FOOL is charged with "hating knowledge!" At enmity with Wisdom. He loves the darkness rather than the light, which is abundant proof of his madness. He hates Wisdom, because it is opposed to his supreme folly. Such are the attitudes of many toward Christ.

**III.—ENTREATY.** "Turn ye at my reproof" (v. 23). Wisdom, like Christ, calls, and entreats, but will not compel. "Turn ye." The responsibility is with the hearer. He appeals to the will: to the reason. "Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord." Regeneration is the work of the Spirit, but conversion—turning about—is the work of man. "Repent, and be converted," is His command. "Turn ye! turn ye, for Why will ye die?" Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life. Your face is away from Him who is

the Way, the Truth, and the Life; turn you at My reproof.

**IV.—PROMISE.** “Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, and I will make known my words unto you”(v. 23). He will meet the real need of the Simple, the Scorned, and the Fool, by imparting to them His own regenerating Spirit, and making them to receive and understand His precious, soul-satisfying words. He promises, not to change their circumstances, but to transform their character. God’s law is perfect, and so is His remedy for the silly, sneering, sinful souls of men. Salvation is of the Lord.

**V.—LAMENTATION.** “I have called, and ye refused ... and would none of my reproof” (vv. 24–25). This is the language of wounded love, like that in Matt. 23:37. His “call” was refused, His “stretched out hand” was disregarded, His “counsel” was set at naught. His “reproof” they would have none of. His “Call,” His “Counsel,” His “Entreaty,” and His “Reproof” had been alike fruitless, because of the stupidity and hardness of their heart. He willeth not the death of any, but how sad that many should prefer death to life.

**VI.—JUDGMENT.** “Because ... ye refused ... I also will laugh at your calamity.” “I will mock when your fear cometh,” etc (vv. 26–29). There is nothing more certain than this, that fear cometh upon all the ungodly sooner or later. Those who have wilfully rejected His call of Mercy, will find their Call of Fear rejected. Christ had His Calamity on the Cross, the Christ-despiser will have his when He sees Him on His Throne. The depths of the horrors of perdition may partly explain the depths of the horrors of the Crucifixion. Here deep calleth unto deep. Man’s crowning crime is: that he hates the knowledge of God, and chooses not His fear (v. 29). Behold now is the day of Salvation; now is the seed-time of eternal life. In vain shall we call upon Him in the winter of Judgment, if we neglect the summer of His Grace and Mercy.

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#### John MacArthur - [How to Study the Bible](#) - Proverbs 1:20–33

If you do not have the Word of God as the base of your life, as the orientation for your behavior, as the solid foundation upon which you live—then there is no real base. In Proverbs chapter 1, beginning in verse 20, the writer says, “Wisdom crieth outside; she uttereth her voice in the streets.” Then in verse 22: “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scoffers delight in their scoffing, and fools hate knowledge.” It says they turned a deaf ear and refused to hear (v. 24). Listen, wisdom is available (vv. 23, 25, 33). Give attention to it, or reap the consequences.

What I’m trying to get you to see is how important it is to study the Word of God. It’s the foundation of everything. A judge wrote me and asked, “What does the Bible say about what is right in a court of law?” A doctor asked, “What does the Bible say about what is right in terms of how we discipline our children?” Other doctors have written and asked, “What does the Bible say about abortion? What does the Bible say about euthanasia? What does the Bible say about how people are to be treated in certain psychological and psychiatric situations?” The Word of God is the standard! We can’t live our lives the way they ought to be lived unless we have the knowledge of God’s Word within us. So it’s imperative that we be students of His Word.

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#### Charles Wood - Weeping Wisdom Proverbs 1:20–33

##### Introduction:

We talk so much about obeying the Bible, but we do not always do much about it. We really ought to do more in actual practice because the Bible itself calls upon us to do so.

##### I. Wisdom Weeping (vv. 20, 21)

- A. Wisdom identified
  - 1. Personified—viewed as if human
  - 2. Actually found fully in the person of Christ
  - 3. Comes through prophets and teachers
  - 4. True wisdom is recorded for us in the Word—the Bible
- B. Wisdom located
  - 1. Out in the open: nothing necessary in divine wisdom is ever hidden
  - 2. Wisdom is where people are
    - a. The message is clearer than we like to admit
    - b. Most people know more than they like to admit

##### II. Wisdom Warning (vv. 22–31)

- A. Warning sounded (vv. 22, 23)
  - 1. How long?
    - a. Will the simple (those ignorant through carelessness or indifference) love simplicity

- b. Will the scoffers (those who hold things in derision) delight in scoffing
- c. Will fools (those who hate knowledge because of its restraints) hate knowledge
- 2. Call to repentance—"Turn and be helped"
  - a. Turn when reproved (put self under my reproof)
  - b. Be helped—if you will repent
    - 1) I will pour out My spirit upon you
    - 2) I will make known My words unto you (If we turn to God He will give us what we need to know and do. The usual reason for our confusion is failure to do right.)
- B. Warning strengthened (vv. 24–31)
  - 1. Refusal (vv. 24, 25)
    - a. I have called and reached out
      - 1) By preachers, etc.
      - 2) God has tried to get His message across
    - b. I have been refused and disregarded (general tendency, especially among young, to disregard wisdom and instruction)
  - 2. Reaction (vv. 26–28)
    - a. I will hold you in derision in time of need. (This is not as crass as it seems. He traces the reaction of wisdom as the results of rejection begin to work themselves out. Notice the strong words.)
    - b. When they call in time of deep need, there is no answer because judgment is already falling
  - 3. Ruin (vv. 29–31)
    - a. Fools have made their own choices (calamity is the result of their own ways). We often blame God for what we have done
    - b. Fools have rejected attempts to help them
    - c. Fools will get back the results of their own foolish choices and perverse ways
      - 1) Both in this life and the life to come
      - 2) Sowing and reaping prominent here

### III. Wisdom Weighing (vv. 32, 33)

- A. Fools
  - 1. Destruction and ruin
    - a. Their own choices destroy them (destroy themselves)
    - b. Their own prosperity becomes their downfall (carelessness, unconcern, carnal security produced by worldly success)
    - c. Rebellion against God chief cause
  - 2. They end up where they were heading
- B. Wise men
  - 1. Security and spiritual peace
    - a. Listeners shall dwell safely (confidently)
    - b. Listeners shall have quiet from fear of evil (note stress on freedom from fear)
  - 2. They end up where God has been leading them

**Conclusion:** Wisdom continues to cry out—only in stronger and fuller form—the Word of God. Men, including Christian men, continue to ignore the cries and appeals of wisdom. Men especially turn away from the teaching of the Word.

There is always a balance beam. Every individual can climb on one side or the other. Will you hear, heed and follow, or will you close your eyes and ears and go your own way? The ultimate outcome is up to you. Throughout time and eternity you will reap the fruit of the decision you make now regarding wisdom. (Sermon Outlines on the Book of Proverbs)

**Proverbs 1:21 At the head of the noisy streets she cries out; At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings**

- Pr 9:3; Matthew 10:27; 13:2; John 18:20; Acts 5:20

**Streets** and **square** in Pr 1:20 and **head of the noisy street** and **gates in the city** here indicate the universal availability of her message.

**Noisy streets** refer "to the busy, bustling place where the street branches off from the gate complex." (NN)

**In the city** refers to "the area of the entrance just inside the gate complex, the business area. In an ancient Near Eastern city, business dealings and judicial proceedings would both take place in this area." (NN)

**At the entrance of the gates of the city** - This was a place where judgments were carried out, as would prove the case for those who rejected wisdom (Pr 1:26, 27; 31; see Ge 38:14, Ru 3:11).

**MacDonald** - And so it is that our Lord calls to the race of men wherever they pass by:

Where cross the crowded ways of life,  
Where sound the cries of race and clan,  
Above the noise of selfish strife,  
We hear Thy voice, O Son of Man!  
—Frank Mason North

**Proverbs 1:22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing and fools hate knowledge?"**

- **How long** - Pr 6:9; Exodus 10:3; 16:28; Numbers 14:27; Matthew 17:17
- **Naive (simple)** - Pr 7:7; 9:4-6,16-18; Ps 94:8; Matthew 9:13; 11:29,30; 23:37; Luke 19:42; Revelation 22:17
- **Scoffers** - Pr 3:34; 14:6; 15:12; 19:29; 21:11; Job 34:7; Ps 1:1; 2 Peter 3:3
- **Fools** - Pr 1:7-note, Pr 1:29; 5:12; John 3:20

## WISDOM BEGINS HER "SERMON"

**How long?** - This poignant phrase is one that God surely must have spoken to most of us at some point in our lives, at least those of us who have been entrapped by some recurrent sin. Indeed, "how long" will we persist in that sin which so easily entangles us? (cp Jer 4:14, 21, 12:4).

**Hubbard** - "How long" sounds like a psalm of complaint (Ps. 6:3), but is a device used in Proverbs as well to register strong dissatisfaction (see 6:9; 23:35). It is not a true question but an implied statement: You have had long enough; you should have answered my call by now.

This question "**how long?**" is found 54x in Scripture - Ex. 10:3, 7; 16:28; Nu 14:11, 27; 24:22; Jos 18:3; 1Sa. 1:14; 16:1; 2Sa. 2:26; 19:34; 1Ki. 18:21; Neh. 2:6; Job 8:2; Job 18:2; 19:2; Ps. 4:2; 6:3; 13:1-2; 35:17; 62:3; 74:9-10; 79:5; 80:4; 82:2; Ps 89:46; 90:13; 94:3; Pr. 1:22; 6:9; Isa. 6:11; Jer. 4:14, 21; 12:4; 13:27; Jer 23:26; 31:22; 47:5-6; Dan. 8:13; 12:6; Hos. 8:5; Hab. 1:2; 2:6; Zech. 1:12; Zech 2:2; Matt. 17:17; Mk. 9:19, 21; Lk. 9:41; Jn. 10:24; Rev. 6:10

**How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded** - This direct "quotation" of Wisdom emphasizes "she" has empathy and concern mixed with reproof for the simple and in Pr 1:33 her promise is specific and encouraging. **Simple ones, are you (am I) listening?** The implication of the time phrase **how long** is that Wisdom has spoken in the past but has produced no results in the **naive** who persist in their **simple-minded** state. They should have responded to the call of Wisdom by now. Clearly these naive ones are past the age of accountability, and as shown in the following passages, will be held responsible for not hearing and heeding Wisdom's plaintive plea..

This reproof is the first sign that this particular poem does not contain an invitation, but an indictment. (Complete Biblical Library Commentary)

**H A Ironside** - Contrasting with the call of the wicked, the next section (Pr 1:20-23) gives the cry of Wisdom. Throughout the first nine chapters of Proverbs Wisdom is personified. She is ever seeking to turn the steps of the young man from the door of folly and ignorance to the temple of knowledge and blessing. In these verses she is presented as one crying in public places, eagerly seeking to attract the attention of the passersby. In the marts of commerce, at the gates of justice, in the centers of population, among the idlers on the streets she pleads with the simple to obey her voice. She is not always met by positive refusal, but by what is far more common and equally as dangerous: procrastination. She cries, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?" But there is no response. Others definitely refuse to listen to Wisdom's voice. Scornfully rejecting her testimony, they delight in their fancied independence of mind and demonstrate their true character by their hatred of knowledge.

**MacDonald** - The simple are naive, impressionable people who are open to all kinds of influences, both good and bad; here their instability seems to be leading them in the wrong direction. Scorners are those who treat wise counsel with contempt; nothing is sacred or serious to them. Fools are those who senselessly refuse instruction; they are conceited and opinionated in their ignorance.

**Waltke** - "**Love**" designates the emotional feeling of strongly desiring something that flows out of one's perceptions and as a result causes one to go after (Jer. 2:25b), seek (Pr. 8:17 [Q]), run after (Isa. 1:23), cleave (Dt. 11:22; 30:20; Pr. 18:24), and continue faithful to the loved person or thing. Instead of a disposition to acquire consciously and/or retain the LORD and his revealed wisdom, they yearn with passionate desire to remain uncommitted and open to alluring sin. (NICOT - Proverbs)

Notice the categories Wisdom addresses - **naive, simple-minded, scoffers, fools**. Each of these groups is satisfied with their life as it is and have no desire to listen to the reason of Wisdom.

**J Vernon McGee** - **Simplicity is stupidity**. She asks, "How long will you be stupid?" A young man (who is in his twenties now) told me he had been on drugs for three years. He kept repeating, "Oh, how stupid I was, Dr. McGee." Well, here is the question: How long are you going to be stupid? When are you coming to the school of wisdom?

**Warren Wiersbe** - "To whom does Wisdom speak? To three classes of sinners: the simple ones, the scorers (scoffers, mockers, NIV), and the fools (Proverbs 1:22). The **simple** are naive people who believe anything (Proverbs 14:15) but examine nothing. They're gullible and easily led astray. **Scorners** think they know everything (Proverbs 21:24) and laugh at the things that are really important. While the simple one has a blank look on his face, the scorner wears a sneer. **Fools** are people who are ignorant of truth because they're dull and stubborn. Their problem isn't a low IQ or poor education; their problem is a lack of spiritual desire to seek and find God's wisdom. **Fools** enjoy their foolishness but don't know how foolish they are! The outlook of fools is purely materialistic and humanistic. They hate knowledge and have no interest in things eternal."

**Naive** (06612) (**pethi** from **pathah** = to be spacious, wide, open) means simplicity, simple, naive, pertaining to persons that are easily deceived or persuaded, showing lack of wisdom and understanding, yet having some capacity to change this condition. Marked by unaffected simplicity. Deficient in godly wisdom often connoting credulousness and unchecked innocence. One who is gullible, easily susceptible to good or bad influence, weak-willed, irresponsible, but still correctable.

Observation of the uses of **naive (simple, folly)** in the passages below will give you a good sense of the character and conduct of these individuals.

**Pethi** is used in a neutral sense and the context determines whether the term is being used in a derogatory or a commendable way. "Simple ones" are characterized in the Book of Psalms by a humble dependence upon God and his resources." However, in general in Proverbs the **naive** individual is one without moral direction but with an inclination to evil.

**NET Note** - **Pethi** means "simple; open-minded" in the sense of being open and easily influenced by either wisdom or folly. The simpleton is easily enticed and misled (Pr 1:32; 7:7; 9:6; 22:3; 27:12); believes everything, including bad counsel (Pr 14:15); lacks moral prudence (Pr 8:5; 19:25); needs discernment (Pr 21:11); but is capable of learning (Pr 9:4, 16). The related verb (**pathah**) means "to be wide open; open-minded; enticed, deceived". The term describes one easily persuaded and gullible, open to any influence, good or bad (cf. NLT "the simple-minded"). This is the "wide-eyed youth" who is headed for trouble unless he listens to the counsel of wisdom.

**Pethi** "conveys the idea of "simple ones" or "young, naive ones," with the associated concepts of being inexperienced, easily seduced, but needing instruction and capable of learning. The word **pethi** describes someone who is ignorant or oblivious. Unlike the fool, a simple person has the ability to learn (Pr 21:11). They are inexperienced, naïve, but open to instruction. (Pr 1:4) The simple learns from observing what happens to the mocker (Pr 19:25)

**Pethi** - 18v in **NAS** - **Usage** - folly(1), naive(12), naive ones(2), simple(3).

Psalm 19:7-note The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the **simple**. (Lxx = **nepios** = young child, minor, figuratively, of adults unspoiled by worldly learning - childlike, innocent, simple people).

Psalm 116:6 The LORD preserves the **simple**; I was brought low, and He saved me.

Psalm 119:130 The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

**Comment:** These naive ones are teachable. As Leupold says they "keep their heart open to [the Word's] beneficial influences" (Leupold, Ps, 852).

Proverbs 1:4 To give prudence to the **naive**, To the youth knowledge and discretion,

Proverbs 1:22 "How long, O **naive ones**, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge?

Proverbs 1:32 "For the waywardness of the **naive** will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them.

Proverbs 7:7 And I saw among the **naïve**, And discerned among the youths A young man lacking sense,

Proverbs 8:5 "O **naïve** ones, understand prudence; And, O fools, understand wisdom.

Proverbs 9:4 "Whoever is **naïve**, let him turn in here!" To him who lacks understanding she says,

Proverbs 9:6 "Forsake your **folly** and live, And proceed in the way of understanding."

Proverbs 9:16 "Whoever is **naïve**, let him turn in here," And to him who lacks understanding she says,

Proverbs 14:15 The **naïve** believes everything, But the sensible man considers his steps.

Proverbs 14:18 The **naïve** inherit foolishness, But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.

Proverbs 19:25 Strike a scoffer and the **naïve** may become shrewd, But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.

Proverbs 21:11 When the scoffer is punished, the **naïve** becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

Proverbs 22:3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the **naïve** go on, and are punished for it.

Proverbs 27:12 A prudent man sees evil and hides himself, The **naïve** proceed and pay the penalty.

Ezekiel 45:20 "Thus you shall do on the seventh day of the month for everyone who goes astray or **isnaïve**; so you shall make atonement for the house.

**Adrian Rogers** - Now, who are simple? Well, the word simple here comes from a root word that means, "open." He's just a person open to everything. He is easily led. He's simple. He's what we would call today gullible. Or, he's careless. He does not stop to think things through. And, I suppose most of the people in America would just be characterized as simple. They never stop to think about the great issues of life. People yesterday—what do they call that?...These people out there, they're not all bad people, wicked people, in that sense. They're just saying, "We want to have a blast; we want to have a good time," and they never stop to think—they don't think things through. They don't. They don't say, "Well, does this honor God? Does it dishonor God?" or, "Would God bless this? Can God smile upon us?" They just don't think serious thoughts. To them, life is a party, one great big continual party. It means, the person who doesn't have the ability to see the future.

Pr 22:3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the naïve go on, and are punished for it.

**Scoffers** (scorners, mockers) ([03887](#))(**lis/luts**) means to scorn, to boast, to mock, to deride, to imitate. They talk big using words that show no respect, and make sport or fun of (mocking) something or someone (Pr 9:12). **Scorn** reflects open dislike and disrespect or derision often mixed with indignation. To **scoff** is to show contempt by derisive acts or language and stresses insolence, disrespect, or incredulity as motivating the derision.

**NET Note** - They are cynical and defiant freethinkers who ridicule the righteous and all for which they stand (e.g., Ps 1:1).

**Lits/lus** - 26v - Gen. 42:23; 2Chr. 32:31; Job 16:20; 33:23; Ps. 1:1; 119:51; Pr. 1:22; 3:34; 9:7, 8, 12; 13:1; 14:6, 9; 15:12; 19:25, 28, 29; 20:1; 21:11, 24; 22:10; 24:9; Isa. 28:22; 29:20; 43:27

Pr 1:22 "How long, O naïve ones, will you love being simple-minded? And **scoffers** delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge?

Pr 3:34 Though He **scoffs** at the **scoffers**, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted.

Pr 9:7 He who corrects a **scoffer** gets dishonor for himself, And he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself.

Pr 9:8 Do not reprove a **scoffer**, or he will hate you, Reprove a wise man and he will love you.

Pr 9:12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself, And if you **scoff**, you alone will bear it.

Pr 13:1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline, But a **scoffer** does not listen to rebuke.

Pr 14:6 A **scoffer** seeks wisdom and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.

Pr 14:9 Fools **mock** at sin, But among the upright there is good will.

Pr 15:12 A **scoffer** does not love one who reproves him, He will not go to the wise.

Pr 19:25 Strike a **scoffer** and the naïve may become shrewd, But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.

Pr 19:28 A rascally witness **makes a mockery** of justice, And the mouth of the wicked spreads iniquity.

Pr 19:29 Judgments are prepared for **scoffers**, And blows for the back of fools.

Pr 20:1 Wine is a **mock**er, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.

Pr 21:11 When the **scoffer** is punished, the naive becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

Pr 21:24 "Proud," "Haughty," "**Scoffer**," are his names, Who acts with insolent pride.

Pr 22:10 Drive out the **scoffer**, and contention will go out, Even strife and dishonor will cease.

Pr 24:9 The devising of folly is sin, And the **scoffer** is an abomination to men.

**They delight themselves in scoffing** - **Delight** (chamad) means they take pleasure in scoffing and do so even with a sense of selfish desire (it speaks of coveting as in Ge 3:6; **Chamad** also conveys this negative sense in Pr 6:25, 12:12).

**Fools hate knowledge** - **Knowledge** is the Hebrew word **daath** which describes knowledge gained in various ways by the senses = not just a bookish collection of information but is experiential knowledge of the Living God. The **Septuagint** translates daath with the Greek noun **aisthesis** (from **aisthánomai** = to apprehend by the senses, speaks of spiritual perception) refers to the capacity to understand and refers not so much to intellectual acuteness but to a moral sensitiveness. Aisthesis describes the capacity to perceive clearly and hence to understand the real nature of something. Aisthesis refers to a moral action of recognizing distinctions and making a decision about behavior. The fact that fools shun such knowledge helps us understand why the Bible calls them fools!

**Fool** (03684)(**kesil/kecil**) is a stupid fellow, a morally insensitive dullard, whether it be in spiritual, intellectual, or moral matters. These are stupid people who are totally confident in own wisdom, thinking they have it all figured out without God's assistance. **Swanson** adds that **kesil** refers to (1) foolishness, stupidity, insolence, i.e., the state of being in complete lack of understanding, implying rebellion (Pr 10:1); (2) fool, insolent person, i.e., one completely lacking understanding, implying to be a rebel against standard or person (Pr 10:18).

**Vine** - The **kesil** is "insolent" in religion and "stupid or dull" in wise living (living out a religion he professes)....They have knowledge of God but do not properly evaluate or understand what they know...(In Proverbs the fool) rejects the claims and teachings of wisdom. However, in the Bible wisdom is the practical outworking of one's religion. Therefore, even in these contexts there is a clear connotation of insolence in religion.

**Kesil** -69v with **most uses in Proverbs** - Ps. 49:10; 92:6; 94:8; Pr. 1:22, 32; 3:35; 8:5; 10:1, 18, Pr 10:23; 12:23; 13:16, 19, 20; 14:7, 8, 16, 24, 33; 15:2, 7, 14, 20; 17:10, 12, Pr 17:16, 21, 24, 25; 18:2, 6, 7; 19:1, 10, 13, 29; 21:20; 23:9; 26:1, 3, 4, 5; Pr28:26; 29:11, 20; Eccl. 2:14-16; 4:5, 13; 5:1, 3-4; 6:8; 7:4-6, 9; 9:17; 10:2, 12, 15.

**Read through these uses of kesil in Proverbs for a more complete Biblical understanding of a fool - e.g., they are complacent, they will be destroyed, etc (Pr 1:32). Then read Torrey's description of Fools - [Fools](#)**

Pr 1:22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge?

Pr 1:32 "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them.

Pr 3:35 The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.

Pr 8:5 "O naive ones, understand prudence; And, O fools, understand wisdom.

Pr 10:1 The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.

Pr 10:18 He who conceals hatred has lying lips, And he who spreads slander is a fool.

Pr 10:23 Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, And so is wisdom to a man of understanding.

Pr 12:23 A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the heart of fools proclaims folly.

Pr 13:16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool displays folly.

Pr 13:19 Desire realized is sweet to the soul, But it is an abomination to fools to turn away from evil.

Pr 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Pr 14:7 Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge.

Pr 14:8 The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.

Pr 14:16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.

Pr 14:24 The crown of the wise is their riches, But the folly of fools is foolishness.

Pr 14:33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But in the hearts of fools it is made known.

Pr 15:2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly.

Pr 15:7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge, But the hearts of fools are not so.

Pr 15:14 The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

Pr 15:20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

Pr 17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding Than a hundred blows into a fool.

Pr 17:12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.

Pr 17:16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, When he has no sense?

Pr 17:21 He who sires a fool does so to his sorrow, And the father of a fool has no joy.

Pr 17:24 Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Pr 17:25 A foolish son is a grief to his father And bitterness to her who bore him.

Pr 18:2 A fool does not delight in understanding, But only in revealing his own mind.

Pr 18:6 A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.

Pr 18:7 A fool's mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul.

Pr 19:1 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity Than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool.

Pr 19:10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool; Much less for a slave to rule over princes.

Pr 19:13 A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.

Pr 19:29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And blows for the back of fools.

Pr 21:20 There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man swallows it up.

Pr 23:9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Pr 26:1 Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest, So honor is not fitting for a fool.

Pr 26:3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.

Pr 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Or you will also be like him.

Pr 26:5 Answer a fool as his folly deserves, That he not be wise in his own eyes.

Pr 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

Pr 29:11 A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.

Pr 29:20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

See [Fool in Baker's Evangelical Dictionary](#)

**Hate** (08130)(**sane**) means to detest, abhor, loathe, be hostile, have a feeling of open hostility and intense dislike (Ge 37:4), to be unwilling, the opposite of to love (ahab, 0157). To be an enemy with open hostility and strife toward another (Pr 29:24)

**Sane** can refer to hating God or people (cp Ex 20:5), of God hating the one "who loves violence" (Ps 11:5, 5:5 cp 6 things the LORD hates - Pr 6:16) and of God hating the abominable acts people do for their so-called gods (Dt 12:31). David hated his enemies (2Sa 5:8). Cities of refuge were available to one who killed his neighbor but not with hatred (Dt 4:42), unlike Absalom who hated and killed his brother Amnon (2Sa 13:22). Saints are to hate those who hate God (Ps 139:21, cp 2Chr 19:2), but are not to "hate your fellow countryman" (Lev 19:17). Ps 119 describes some of the things believers are to hate (Ps 119:104, 113, 128, 163-note). Solomon saw the futility of this passing world and "hated life...and the fruit of my labor!" (Eccl 2:17-18) In the last OT use God says "I hate divorce." (Mal 2:17-note)

**Vine** says "**Sane** represents an emotion ranging from intense "hatred" to the much weaker "set against" and is used of persons and things (including ideas, words, inanimate objects). The strong sense of the word typifies the emotion of jealousy; and therefore,

sane' is the feeling Joseph's brothers experienced because their father preferred him (Gen. 37:4; cf. v. 11). This "hatred" increased when Joseph reported his dreams (Gen. 37:8). Obviously, the word covers emotion ranging from "bitter disdain" to outright "hatred," for in Gen. 37:18ff. the brothers plotted Joseph's death and achieved his removal.

**Sane** is translated in the Lxx by **miseo** which means to dislike strongly, to have a strong aversion to or to detest.

**Hate (Webster)** - to feel extreme enmity toward, to have intense hostility and aversion usually deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury; extreme dislike, antipathy, loathing. To dislike greatly; to have a great aversion to. In Scripture, it signifies to love less. "If any man come to me, and hate not father and mother," etc, Luke 14:26; "He that spares the rod, hates his son. Pr 13:24, cp Mal 1:3-note). **See also Topical Concordance** - [Hate](#); [Wikipedia- Hatred](#)

**Spurgeon** illustrates **hatred** - When Venice was in the hands of the Austrians, those alien tyrants swarmed in every quarter; but the Venetians hated them to the last degree, and showed their enmity upon all occasions. When the Austrian officers sat down at any of the tables in the square of St. Mark, where the Venetians delight on summer evenings to eat their ices and drink their coffee, the company would immediately rise and retire, showing by their withdrawal that they abhorred their oppressors. After this fashion will every true Christian treat his inbred sins; he will not be happy under their power, nor tolerate their dominion, nor show them favor. If he cannot expel them, he will not indulge them.

**NAS Usage** - detest(1), enemy(3), enmity(1), foes(1), hate(78), hated(28), hated her intensely(1), hates(19), hating(2), hatred(1), turned against(1), turns against(2), unloved(7).

**Sane** - 139v - Note frequency in Psalms (40x), Proverbs (25x), Deut (18x) - Ge. 24:60; 26:27; 29:31, 33; 37:4-5, 8; Ex. 1:10; 18:21; 20:5; 23:5; Lev. 19:17; 26:17; Num. 10:35; Dt 4:42; 5:9; 7:10, 15; 12:31; 16:22; 19:4, 6, 11; 21:15, 16,17; 22:13, 16; Dt 24:3; 30:7; 32:41; 33:11; Jos. 20:5; Jdg. 11:7; 14:16; 15:2; 2Sa. 5:8; 2Sa 13:15, 22; 19:6; 22:18, 41; 1Ki. 22:8; 2Chr. 1:11; 18:7; 19:2; Esther 9:1, Esther 9:5, 16; Job 8:22; 31:29; 34:17; Ps 5:5; 9:13; 11:5; 18:17, 40; 21:8; 25:19; Ps 26:5; 31:6; 34:21; 35:19; 36:2; 38:19; 41:7; 44:7, 10; 45:7; 50:17; 55:12; Ps 68:1; 69:4, 14; 81:15; 83:2; 86:17; 89:23; 97:10; 101:3; 105:25; 106:10, Ps 106:41; 118:7; 119:104, 113, 128, 163; 120:6; 129:5; 139:21-22; Pr. 1:22, 29; Pr 5:12; 6:16; 8:13, 36; 9:8; 11:15; 12:1; 13:5, 24; 14:17, 20; 15:10, 27; Pr 19:7; 25:17, 21; 26:24, 28; 27:6; 28:16; 29:10, 24; 30:23; Eccl. 2:17-18; Eccl 3:8; Isa. 1:14; 60:15; 61:8; 66:5; Jer. 12:8; 44:4; Ezek. 16:27, 37; Ezek 23:28; 35:6; Hos. 9:15; Amos 5:10, 15, 21; 6:8; Mic. 3:2; Zech. 8:17; Mal 1:3; 2:16

**Sane** is used 25 times in Proverbs where it is used in both a negative and positive sense (Pr 8:13, 13:5, etc). **Study the uses to see what we should hate, what we should strive to not hate and some to the "after shocks" associated with hatred!**

Pr 1:22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools **hate** knowledge?

Pr 1:29 Because they **hated** knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD.

Pr 5:12 And you say, "How I have **hated** instruction! And my heart spurned reproof!

Pr 6:16 There are six things which the LORD **hates**, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:

Pr 8:13 "The fear of the LORD is to **hate** evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.

Pr 8:36 "But he who sins against me injures himself; All those who **hate** me love death."

Pr 9:8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will **hate** you, Reprove a wise man and he will love you.

Pr 11:15 He who is guarantor for a stranger will surely suffer for it, But he who **hates** being a guarantor is secure.

Pr 12:1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who **hates** reproof is stupid.

Pr 13:5 A righteous man **hates** falsehood, But a wicked man acts disgustingly and shamefully.

Pr 13:24 He who withholds his rod **hates** his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

Pr 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is **hated**.

Pr 14:20 The poor is **hated** even by his neighbor, But those who love the rich are many.

Pr 15:10 Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the way; He who **hates** reproof will die.

Pr 15:27 He who profits illicitly troubles his own house, But he who **hates** bribes will live.

Pr 19:7 All the brothers of a poor man **hate** him; How much more do his friends abandon him! He pursues them with words, but they are gone.

Pr 25:17 Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, Or he will become weary of you and **hate** you.

Pr 25:21 If your **enemy** is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

Pr 26:24 He who **hates** disguises it with his lips, But he lays up deceit in his heart.

Pr 26:28 A lying tongue **hates** those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

Pr 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an **enemy**.

Pr 28:16 A leader who is a great oppressor lacks understanding, But he who **hates** unjust gain will prolong his days.

Pr 29:10 Men of bloodshed **hate** the blameless, But the upright are concerned for his life.

Pr 29:24 He who is a partner with a thief **hates** his own life; He hears the oath but tells nothing.

Pr 30:23 Under an **unloved** woman when she gets a husband, And a maidservant when she supplants her mistress.

**Proverbs 1:23 "Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you"**

- **Turn** - Isaiah 55:1-3,6,7; Jeremiah 3:14; Ezekiel 18:27-30; 33:11; Hosea 14:1; Acts 3:19; Acts 26:20
- **my reproof** - Pr 1:25,30; 6:23; 10:17; 12:1; 29:1; Ps 145:1; Rev 3:19
- **behold** - Isaiah 32:15; 45:8; Joel 2:28; Zechariah 12:10; Luke 11:13; John 7:36,37; Acts 2:36-38; Revelation 3:16-18

## **REPENT WHEN REPROVED**

**Turn** ([07726](#))(**shub**) means to turn back, to repent. The basic meaning of **shub** is movement back to the point of departure (cp Rev 2:4).

**Wisdom's** invitation to **turn** (or return) is similar to the plea of the prophets (Hos. 3:6; 14:1-2). To turn (repent) calls for a deliberate choice of one's will. **Repentance** means "to turn" from sin to God (2Cor 7:10, beautifully illustrated in 1Th 1:9**note**)

To **turn** is a decision which we must personally make but it is also a gift of God. In other words to turn or to repent is not something we can conger up in our own heart. The Bible teaches that "the kindness of God leads you to repentance" (Ro 2:4**note**, cp 2Ti 2:25**note**). In Acts 11:18 "God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

**John Trapp** said it well - 'Repentance with man is the changing of his will; repentance with God is the willing of a change.'

If one truly turns or repents, there will be evidence (**fruit** or **good deeds**, eg Gal 5:22-23**note**) in their life which testifies to the authenticity of the repentance.. As John the Baptist said "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance." (Mt 3:8) Paul declared men must "repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance." (Acts 26:20).

**See also more in depth discussion** of repentance in the Greek word studies on...

- Repent - Metanoeo
- Repentance - Metanoia

**Repentance** implies, (1) a knowledge of sin. (2) conviction of sin (3) a turning from it, with grief and hatred, unto God.

**Thomas Manton** - 'Whoever delays his repentance does in effect pawn his soul with the devil.

**Thomas Watson** - By delay of repentance, sin strengthens, and the heart hardens. The longer ice freezeth, the harder it is to be broken.

**Thomas Fuller** - You cannot repent too soon, because you do not know how soon it may be too late.

**Thomas Brooks** - 'Though true repentance is never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true.

'It is an old saying, "Repentance is never too late; but it is a true saying, Repentance is never too soon."

**Henry Smith** - 'If thou hast fallen into sin through violent temptations, seek speedily for repentance for it, recovery out of it, and reformation from it.'

To **repent** does not convey the most accurate sense to many people because one of the most common English dictionary definitions is "be sorry again" -- John did not call on the people to be sorry, but to have a complete change in their mental attitudes which would manifest itself in a changed conduct.

Repentance is to leave  
The sins I loved before,  
And show that I in earnest grieve  
By doing so no more.

**Reproof** ([08433](#))(**tokeha/tokachath**) means "rebuke, a correction, a reproof, an argument. The primary thrust of this word is that of correcting some wrong. It is employed to express the concept of rebuking (Pr. 15:10); judgment (Hos. 5:9); reckoning (2Kgs. 19:3); or the argument of a claim (Job 13:6; Hab. 2:1-note)." (Baker) **NET Note** says **tokachath** "is used in all kinds of disputes including rebuking, arguing, reasoning, admonishing, and chiding. The term is broad enough to include here warning and rebuke. Cf. KJV, NAB, NRSV "reproof"; TEV "when I reprimand you"; CEV "correct you." **Tokachath** is translated in the Lxx with **elegchos** (derived from **elegcho** = bring to the light, expose, convict) refers to the inner conviction of the heart whereby one knows that God, heaven, hell, sin, and forgiveness are just as real as rocks and trees. . **Elegchos** is the word "**reproof**" in 2Ti 3:16-note. God's Word brings **reproof** and is a good (and necessary) thing for sinners (all of us!) who are so prone to wander (See Pr 6:23-note)

**Reproof (Webster)** - Blame expressed to the face; censure for a fault; an act or expression of rebuke or censure.

Where is **reproof** found? God's Word > 2Ti3:16-note ("profitable for teaching, for reproof") and as we are trained we grow in righteousness and His Spirit enables us to be adequate for whatever He calls us to do for His Kingdom.

**NAS Usage:** argument(1), arguments(2), chastened(1), rebuke(1), rebukes(2), reproof(14), reproofs(2), reproofed(1).

**Tokachath** - 24v - Job 13:6; Job 23:4; Ps. 38:14; 39:11; 73:14; Pr. 1:23, 25, 30; 3:11; 5:12; 6:23; 10:17; Pr 12:1; 13:18; 15:5, 10, 31, 32; 27:5; 29:1, 15; Ezek. 5:15; 25:17; Hab. 2:1

Pr 1:23 "Turn to my **reproof**, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

Pr 1:25 And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my **reproof**;

Pr 1:30 "They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my **reproof**.

Pr 3:11 My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His **reproof**,

Pr 5:12 And you say, "How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned **reproof**!

Pr 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And **reproofs** for discipline are the way of life

Pr 10:17 He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who ignores **reproof** goes astray.

Pr 12:1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who hates **reproof** is stupid.

Pr 13:18 Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline, But he who regards **reproof** will be honored.

Pr 15:5 A fool rejects his father's discipline, But he who regards **reproof** is sensible.

Pr 15:10 Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the way; He who hates **reproof** will die.

Pr 15:31 He whose ear listens to the life-giving **reproof** Will dwell among the wise.

Pr 15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to **reproof** acquires understanding.

Pr 27:5 Better is open **rebuke** Than love that is concealed.

Pr 29:1 A man who hardens his neck after much **reproof** Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.

Pr 29:15 The rod and **reproof** give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

**Behold** ([hinneh](#)) is an interjection which calls attention to the text, specifically calling for the reader's special attention.

**Spurgeon** says that "**behold** is a word of wonder, intended to excite admiration. Whenever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation."

**I will pour out my spirit** - "wisdom" though personified initially as a woman is clearly speaking of God Himself.

**Pour out** ([naba](#)) means to flow, to spring, to bubble up. The picture is not just a "drop" (so to speak) but of an abundant impartation of His spirit.

**Naba** - 10 v - Ps. 19:2; 59:7; Ps 78:2; Ps 94:4; Ps 119:171; Ps 145:7; Pr. 1:23; 15:2, 28; 18:4

Pr 1:23 "Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

Pr 15:2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly.

Pr 15:28 The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

Pr 18:4 The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.

**My spirit** - "Whether of wisdom personified, or of Christ, a Divine Agent." (Jamieson) If the former, the idea is that wisdom's spirit will flow or gush forth on those who make the volitional choice to turn. Some suggest there may be allusion to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Isa 44:3, Joel 2:28-29)

**Hubbard** says that if they repent "they will receive wisdom's own "spirit" poured out on them (the language is similar to Joel 2:28) and thus be empowered to carry out the implications of the turning and to know more fully what wisdom wants to teach them. Note the close connection between "spirit" and "words"—a connection sound theology has always made in refusing to choose one above the other or to play them against each other."

While most do not see "**spirit**" here as the Holy Spirit (see exceptions below), certainly He is not completely absent in this passage linking **spirit** and **word** and real **life** even as Jesus did in John 6...

It is the **Spirit** who gives **life**; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are **spirit** and are **life**. (John 6:63)

**MacDonald** - The word "**spirit**" here probably means "thoughts" or "mind." While it is true that Christ pours out the Holy Spirit on those who answer His call, this truth was not as clearly stated in the OT as it is in the NT.

**I will make my words known to you** - To **turn** to reproof is the wise move, for here we see that by doing so, wisdom (her "spirit") promises to increase the knowledge of those who **turn**. We see a similar principle in Ps 25:14-[note](#) "The secret of the LORD is for those who **fear** Him, And He will make them **know** His covenant." Those who fear will gain an intimacy with God and His covenant, even as those who turn will gain in intimacy through increasing experiential knowing (knowledge).

Solomon is presenting us a striking contrast - blessing and knowledge of God for repenters versus judgment and calamity coming like a storm for all who fail to repent!

**Wiersbe** - Wisdom can see judgment coming and she wants sinners to escape it. What a wonderful offer she makes to those who will hear: the gift of the Spirit of God and the Word of God (Pr 1:23).

The commentaries below favor **spirit** as referring to the Holy Spirit...

**Henry Morris** comments - Compare Joel 2:28, cited in Acts 2:17 as referring to God the Holy Spirit. Thus, "wisdom" in Proverbs, though personified initially as a wise mother in Israel, is also clearly speaking of, and as, God Himself (Proverbs 8). ([Proverbs Comments in Defender's Study Bible](#))

**William Arnot** - It is to those who turn that the promise of the Spirit is addressed. These two reciprocate. The Spirit poured out arrests a sinner, and turns him; then, as he turns, he gets more of the Spirit poured out. The sovereignty of God and the duty of men are both alike real; and each has its own place in the well-ordered covenant. It is true, that unless a man turn, he will not get God's Spirit poured out; and it is also true, that unless he get God's Spirit poured out, he will not turn. When the dead is recalled to life, the blood, sent circling through the system, sets the valves of the heart a-beating; and the valves of the heart, by their beating, send the life-blood circling throughout the frame. It would be in vain to inquire what was the point in the reciprocating series to which the life-giving impulse was first applied. The mysteries of the human spirit are deeper still than those of the body. The way of God, in the regeneration of man, is past finding out. One part of it he keeps near himself, concealed by the clouds and darkness that surround his throne; another part of it he

has clearly revealed to our understandings, and pressed on our hearts. His immediate part is to pour out the Spirit; our immediate part is to turn at his reproof. If, instead of simply doing our part, we presumptuously intrude into his, we shall attain neither. If we reverently regard the promise, and diligently obey the command, we shall get and do—we shall do and get. We shall get the Spirit, enabling us to turn; and turn, in order to get more of the Spirit. The command is given, not to make the promise unnecessary, but to send us to it for help. The promise is given, not to supersede the command, but to encourage us in the effort to obey. Turn at his reproof, and hope in his promise; hope in his promise, and turn at his reproof. ([Proverbs 1:23 A Revival](#))

**Charles Bridges** - God calls him to turn at his reproof. He cannot turn himself. But, I will pour out my Spirit as a living fountain upon you. He cannot see his way. But, I will make known my words unto you. 'I offer thee both my word outwardly to your ears, and a plentiful measure of my Spirit inwardly to your heart, to make that word effectual to you.' Do you plead that God reckons with you for an inability, which you cannot help—innate without your consent? This is Satan's argument of delusion. He at once answers the charge, by offering to you present, suitable, and sufficient relief. He meets you on your way to condemnation with the promise of free and full forgiveness.<sup>6</sup> Your plea will be of force, when you have gone to him, and found him wanting, The power indeed is of Him. But he hath said—"Ask, and it shall be given you." If then your helplessness is a real grievance, bring it to him with an honest desire to be rid of it. If you have never prayed, now is the time for prayer. If you cannot pray—at least make the effort. Stretch out the withered hand in the obedience of faith.<sup>8</sup> If your heart be hard—your convictions faint—your resolutions unsteady—all is provided in the promise—I will pour out my Spirit upon you. Move, then, and act in dependence upon the Almighty Mover and Agent. Christian experience explains a mystery unfathomable to human reason. It harmonizes man's energy and God's grace. There is no straitening—no exclusion—with God. His promises with one mouth assure a welcome to the willing heart. If it cannot move, cannot his Spirit compel—point—draw it to the Saviour? Yea, in the desire to turn, hath not the Saviour already touched it, and drawn it to himself? ([Proverbs Commentary](#))

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### **The Boy in the Rafters - Robert Morgan - Borrow** [From this verse : 365 inspiring stories about the power of God's word](#)

Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. Proverbs 1:23

From the time he was a child, Harry Ironside read the Bible through at least once a year. By age 14, he had read it 14 times. In 1888, he attended D. L. Moody's campaign in Los Angeles. Hazzard's Pavilion was packed, so Harry clambered up the girders and sat in the rafters. "Lord," he prayed, moved by the thousands below, "help me some day to preach to crowds like this, and lead souls to Christ."

But Harry had never given his own heart to Christ, and his ardor quickly cooled. Soon he was dabbling in "the devil's blandishments" and indulging in "the follies of the world." On a Thursday night in February, 1890, he attended a loud party. As he moved toward the drinks, he felt uncomfortable with himself. Suddenly a Scripture passage flashed to his mind—Proverbs 1:23: "Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you."

It was a sword through his soul, and he instantly saw himself as a guilty, self-willed rebel. The friends surrounding him seemed suddenly different, like people laughing at the edge of a precipice, their eyes closed, just a step from eternal death in the chasm below.

Harry hurried home. It was past midnight, and he removed his shoes, thinking he could slip in quietly; but his worried mother was not asleep. He whispered an apology, then rushed to his room and fell on his knees crying, "Lord, save me!" He turned in his Bible to Romans 3, then to John 3, poring over each verse. "God," he prayed at last, "I take Thee at Thy Word. I believe that Thou dost now save my soul because I trust in the Lord Jesus Christ."

In later years, Harry became a well-known Bible teacher and the pastor of the church established by the man he had watched from the rafters—the Moody Memorial Church of Chicago.

Today's Suggested Reading Proverbs 1:23–28

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### **C Ridley Pearson - Whitsun Day**

"I will pour out My Spirit unto you."—1:23.

**Interpretation.**—Who is the speaker? Christ, "the Wisdom of God." A Person it must be. For how could an attribute be represented as acting an independent part? "If these words (it has been well said) express not a Person, and that a Divine Person, Holy Scripture gives us no due apprehension of anything whatever." Who is it that pours out the Holy Spirit but He who said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John 7:37, 39)? As here He says, "Turn you at My reproof," etc., so there, tacitly reproving

them for seeking to quench their soul-thirst at earthly pools, He exhorts them to turn to Him, and they shall have abundant supplies of "living water." The addresses of Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs touch closely upon the discourses of Christ in the Gospel of St. John.

**Illustrations.**—At the reproof uttered by St. Peter on the day of Pentecost many turned to the Lord, and He poured out His Spirit unto them, according to the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28). From the world before the Flood (Gen. 6:3), and from the Jews resisting God's reproof (Isa. 63:10), the Holy Spirit was withdrawn, as it will be from Christians on whom it is bestowed in larger measure (2 Cor. 3:8) and as a covenant blessing (1 Cor. 12:13), if they utterly reject or grieve Him beyond forgiveness (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19).

**Application.**—The promise is connected with a command: "Turn you at My reproof." But I may say, "How can I turn?" So might the man with the withered hand have asked, "How can I stretch it forth?" He made the effort, and found the power given. My first step, then, must be, would I obtain the proffered grace, to exert my own will in breaking loose from evil habits. The reproof which these call down from God's Word, and ministers, and conscience, has entered into my ear. Let it also operate upon my life. Let me do what I can, and I shall be enabled to do more. The command is given, not to make the promise unnecessary, but to send us to it for help. The promise is given, not to supersede the command, but to encourage us in the effort to obey. When we turn at His reproof, He will pour out His Spirit. When He pours it out we shall turn. Experience proves this truth, which to human reason seems like reasoning in a circle. It was attested on the day of Pentecost, and I, even I, may make proof of it if I will. There has been ever since within the Christian Church a pouring forth of the Spirit through various conduits, the ordained means of grace. Let me avail myself of these, at the same time turning away from sin and turning to Jesus, and doubtless I shall be daily renewed in my heart, and the saving truths of the Gospel will be made known unto me.

#### Proverbs 1:24 "Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;

- **I called** - Isaiah 50:2; 65:12; 66:4; Jeremiah 7:13; Ezekiel 8:18; Zechariah 7:11,12; Matthew 22:5,6; Matthew 23:37,38; Hebrews 12:25,26
- **stretched** - Ps 31:20; Acts 4:30; Romans 10:21

### ATTITUDES HAVE CONSEQUENCES

Pr 1:24-31

**Because** - This word introduces the principle that rejection of God's offer (Pr 1:23 - refused, paid no attention, neglected, did not want - Pr 1:24-25) will reap consequences (Pr 1:26-27) Beloved, we can't blame God for our calamity if we reject His Word. We have no excuse.

**I called and you refused** - Clearly this implies they heard. They simply did not like what they heard. Unrighteous men do not like to hear God's righteous Word. The Lxx explains what they refused to do by translating **refused** (Heb = maen, 03985) with the verb **hupakouo** (preceded by an absolute, not relative, negation! They absolutely refused to listen!) which literally means to listen under with attentiveness and to respond positively to what is heard. The sense is that one understands and responds accordingly. **Hupakouo** implies an inward attitude of respect and honor, as well as external acts of obedience. Hupakouo means to obey on the basis of having paid attention to. This they adamantly refused to do.

**Brenton's** English translation of the Greek (**Septuagint**) reads "Since I called, and ye did not hearken; and I spoke at length, and ye gave no heed."

**I stretched out my hand** - Figuratively speaking, this gesture conveys an the appeal for the recipient of the gesture to approach. Jamieson states this depicts "Earnestness, especially in beseeching, is denoted by the figure (compare Job 11:13; Ps 68:31; 88:9)."

### THE GREAT TRAGEDY!

**No one paid attention** (07181) (**qashab**) refers to the activity of hearing with emphasis either on paying close attention to what is said or to obeying (heeding what is heard - not "in one ear and out the other.") 1Sa 15:22 gives us a good sense of this verb where God says "to obey is better than sacrifice and to **heed** (qashab) than the fat of rams." Qashab was used to mean "prick up", as one would their ears, sharpening them like an alert animal! Dogs heed their masters, but these men pay no attention to the wise words which speak of eternal life!

Have you ever seen a small petulant child push away a loving parent's offer of food? That's in effect what these fools are doing!

These self-centered, irresponsible individuals refuse to fear God and thus to be enlightened and blessed by wisdom. They are like Israel of whom God says...

Isa 65:2 "I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts, (Quoted by Paul in Ro 10:21-note).

This section reminds one of Jehovah's question to His petulant people in Micah 6:3-note.

Their failure of sinners to give attention to divine wisdom recalls Jesus' woeful words to Jerusalem just before His crucifixion...

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often **WOULD I** have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and **YE WOULD NOT!** (Mt 24:37)

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## REJECTION Proverbs 1:24–33 - James Bolick

INTRODUCTION. Men by the score are ignoring God's mercy, and His call, but they are without excuse. Someday they will reap what they have sown.

### I. MAN HAS NO EXCUSE TO REJECT GOD.

- A. Because God loves, and the Bible declares His love. Read Rom. 5:6, 8; John 3:16.
- B. Because God calls men through His Word and by His Spirit. Prov. 1:24; Matt. 11:28–30; Rom. 10:17.

### II. MAN'S REJECTION OF GOD.

- A. Man refuses God's love and mercy. Prov. 1:24.
- B. Man disregards God's hand. Prov. 1:25.
- C. Man sets at nought the counsel of God. Prov. 1:25.

### III. GOD'S REJECTION OF MAN. Prov. 1:26–28.

- A. God says, "I will laugh at your calamity."
- B. God says, "I will mock when your fear cometh."
- C. God says, "I will not answer when you call."
- D. How can God do this? Read Prov. 1:29–31.

## Proverbs 1:25 And you neglected all my counsel and did not want my reproof;

- **You** - Pr 1:30; 2Chr 36:16; Ps 107:11; Luke 7:30
- **Want** - Pr 1:30; 5:12; 12:1; Ps 81:11)

**Carson** - They were unwilling to listen to rebuke and advice—the negative and the positive complement each other.

**Neglected** (06544)(**para**) means to let go; to let alone. "It can refer to unkempt hair of the head (Lev 10:6) or lack of moral restraint: "to let things run free" (Ex 32:25; Pr 28:19). Here it means "to avoid, neglect" the offer of wisdom." (NN)

**All** - Not just a portion but **all** of God's **counsel** was rejected as of no value! This statement speaks volumes about the depravity of an unregenerate heart and its inveterate hostility toward God and His Word! (cp Col 1:21-note, Ro 5:10-note)

**My counsel** (06098)(**etsah**) refers to advice or counsel.

**Counsel** (Webster) - Advice; opinion, or instruction, given upon request or otherwise, for directing the judgment or conduct of another; opinion given upon deliberation or consultation.

**Advice** (Webster) - an opinion recommended, or offered, as worthy to be followed; recommendation regarding a decision or course of conduct

**NAS Usage:** advice(11), consultation(2), counsel(52), counselor\*(1), counselors\*(1), counsels(1), designs(1), plan(8), plans(2), purpose(6), scheme(1), schemes(1), strategy(1).

Deut. 32:28; Jdg. 20:7; 2 Sam. 15:31, 34; 16:20, 23; 17:7, 14, 23; 1Ki. 1:12; 12:8, 1K 12:13-14; 2Ki. 18:20; 1Chr. 12:19; 2Chr. 10:8, 13-14; 22:5; 25:16; Ezra 4:5; Ezra 10:3, 8; Neh. 4:15; Job 5:13; 10:3; 12:13; 18:7; 21:16; 22:18; 29:21; Job 38:2; 42:3; Ps. 1:1; 13:2; 14:6; 20:4; 33:10-11; 73:24; 106:13, 43; 107:11; Ps 119:24; Pr. 1:25, 30; 8:14; 12:15; 19:20-21; 20:5, 18; 21:30; 27:9; Isa 5:19; 8:10; 11:2; 14:26; 16:3; 19:3, 11, 17; 25:1; 28:29; 29:15; 30:1; Isa 36:5; 40:13; 44:26; 46:10-11; 47:13; Jer. 18:18, 23; 19:7; 32:19; 49:7, 20, 30; 50:45; Ezek. 7:26; 11:2; Hos. 10:6; Mic. 4:12; Zech. 6:13

Pr 1:25 And you neglected all my **counsel** And did not want my reproof;

Pr 1:30 "They would not accept my **counsel**, They spurned all my reproof.

Pr 8:14 "**Counsel** is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine.

Pr 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to **counsel**.

Pr 19:20 Listen to **counsel** and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.

Pr 19:21 Many plans are in a man's heart, But the **counsel** of the LORD will stand.

Pr 20:5 A **plan** in the heart of a man is like deep water, But a man of understanding draws it out.

Pr 20:18 Prepare plans by **consultation**, And make war by wise guidance.

Pr 21:30 There is no wisdom and no understanding And no **counsel** against the LORD.

Pr 27:9 Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's **counsel** is sweet to his friend.

**Want** (**accept** in Pr 1:30) ([014](#))(**abah**) - same verb used by gang trying to get the son to consent to evil deeds (Pr 1:10). They were **not willing** to listen to God's Word of reproof. **Do you know individuals like that? You have gently reproved with godly wisdom and they steadfastly refuse to accept it? I have a younger son who sadly fits this description to a "T."**

**Reproof** ([08433](#))(**tokeha/tokachath**) is translated in the Lxx with **elegchos** (derived from **elegcho** = bring to the light, expose, convict) refers to the inner conviction of the heart whereby one knows that God, heaven, hell, sin, and forgiveness are just as real as rocks and trees. . **Elegchos** is the word "**reproof**" in 2Ti 3:16-note. God's Word brings **reproof** and is a good (and necessary) thing for sinners (all of us!) who are so prone to wander (See Pr 6:23-note)

**MacDonald** - What makes man's stubborn refusal so irrational is that God's commandments and warnings are for man's good, not for God's. This is illustrated in a story which D. G. Barnhouse told. A small child squeezed past the metal railing that kept spectators six feet from the lions' cage at the Washington Zoo. When her grandfather ordered her to come out, she backed away teasingly. A waiting lion grabbed her, dragged her into the cage, and mangled her to death. **According to Barnhouse the lesson is this:** "God has given us commandments and principles that are for our good; God never gives us a commandment because He is arbitrary or because He doesn't want us to have fun. God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," not because He is jealous of His own position and prerogatives, but because He knows that if we put anything, anything before Him, it will hurt us. If we understand the principle behind this fact, we can also understand why God chastens us. "Whom the Lord loves, He chastens" (Heb. 12:6-note). He doesn't want us to back into a lion, for there is a lion, the devil, seeking whom he may devour (1Pe 5:8-note)."

**Proverbs 1:26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes**

- Judges 10:14; Ps 2:4; 37:13; Luke 14:24

**COMING  
CALAMITY  
ANNOUNCED**

Pr 1:26-28

God is not being mean or vindictive. He spoke the Truth, but they refused to receive it. Now those who delighted in mocking, will suffer the wages of their mockery and God will "mock" them!

**H A Ironside** - To those who reject her cry, Wisdom addresses a warning of coming **calamity**, when it will be too late to heed her gracious invitation. It must be evident to all how similar this call of Wisdom is to the Gospel call, with its attendant warning of coming

judgment if it is rejected (Ro 1:16,17, 18-note). It is the Old Testament way of saying, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7-8-note). The principle abides whether applied to sinners or saints. But surely in Wisdom's cry the "ministry of reconciliation" may be readily recognized (2Cor 5:18-19-note). It is "God beseeching, man refusing / To be made forever glad."

**Laugh...mock** - "In their extreme distress He will not only refuse help, but aggravate it by derision." (Jamieson)

**Kidner** - *I ... will laugh* is not an expression of personal heartlessness, but of the absurdity of choosing folly, the complete vindication of wisdom, and the incontestable fitness of the disaster.

**NET Note** - Laughing at the consequences of the fool's rejection of wisdom does convey hardness against the fool; it reveals the folly of rejecting wisdom (e.g., Ps 2:4-note). It vindicates wisdom and the appropriateness of the disaster

**CBL** - This may seem petty, but it simply means that they will reap what they have sown; that is, by rejecting Wisdom's teaching they cut themselves off from her help. Even if they were to hear her words at that point, they would sound like mockery, like most good advice given too late. Similarly, God's mockery of the mutinous nations (Ps. 2:4ff-note) does not indicate personal spite or malice, but his judgment upon their sin of rebellion.

**William MacDonald** - Does this mean that the Lord will actually laugh when disaster falls on the ungodly, as suggested here and in Psalm 2:4? If we think of the laughter as containing any trace of cruelty, malice, or vindictiveness, then the answer is clearly "No." Rather we should think of this laughter in a figurative way. In idiomatic language, it expresses how ludicrous and ridiculous it is for a mere man to defy the Omnipotent Sovereign, as if a gnat should defy a blast furnace. And there may also be this thought: A man may laugh at Wisdom's commandments or treat them as if they didn't exist; but when that man is reaping the harvest of his folly, the commandments still stand unmoved, and to the scorner, at least, they seem to be having the last laugh—the laugh of poetic justice.

**Calamity** (0343)(ed) means distress. This Hebrew word (ed) often refers to final, life-ending calamity (Pr 6:15, 24:22). The Lxx translates **ed** with the noun **apoleia** which means utter and hopeless loss of all that gives worth to existence. The more common sense of **apoleia** is as a description of the destruction which one experiences, when instead of becoming what he might have become by redemption through the blood of Christ (new creature/creation in Christ - 2Cor 5:17), he is ruined ("spiritually bankrupt", in a state of "eternal disrepair") suffering loss of value or usefulness (ultimately usefulness to God - this is sad beyond words and even as I write this note tears well up in my eyes for the plight of these men and women, created in the image of God.) Think of the picture of a once beautiful edifice which has suffered the ravages of time and circumstances and all that one sees is the useless, collapsed, disintegrated remains. To reject wisdom for a lifetime is to end up rejected by God for eternity!

**NAS Usage:** calamity(17), destruction(1), disaster(6).

**Ed** - 22v - Dt 32:35; 2Sam 22:19; Job 18:12; 21:17, 30; 30:12; 31:3, 23; Ps. 18:18; Pr. 1:26, 27; 6:15; 17:5; 24:22; 27:10; Jer. 18:17; 46:21; 48:16; 49:8, 32; Ezek. 35:5; Obad 1:13

Pr 1:26 I will also laugh at your **calamity**; I will mock when your dread comes,

Pr 1:27 When your dread comes like a storm And your **calamity** comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.

Pr 6:15 Therefore his **calamity** will come suddenly; Instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing.

Pr 17:5 He who mocks the poor taunts his Maker; He who rejoices at **calamity** will not go unpunished.

Pr 24:22 For their **calamity** will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin that comes from both of them?

Pr 27:10 Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your **calamity**; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.

**Dread** (06343)(See study on **pachad**)

**Dear Believer in Jesus Christ, Harry Ironside has a word of warning for us** -Nor must we think only of the warning to the unconverted. Paul the apostle wrote to those who are secure eternally: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17-note). It is true of saints as of sinners that we reap what we sow. The believer cannot take his own way with impunity. If he turns away from the house of Wisdom to pursue the path of folly, he too will hear the mocking laugh of that Wisdom which he had dared to despise. The chastisement of the Lord must invariably follow departure from the ways of Christ.

**Proverbs 1:27 When your dread comes like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.**

- **Dread** - Pr 3:25,26; 10:24,25; Ps 69:22-28; Luke 21:26,34,35; 1 Thessalonians 5:3; Revelation 6:15-17
- **Like** - Ps 58:9; Isaiah 17:13; Nahum 1:3
- **distress** - Luke 21:23-25; Romans 2:9)

## THE COMING STORM!

**When** (mentioned twice) - Not "if" but "when!" Indeed, "Payday, Someday!" Wrath is coming to those who reject wisdom and reproof!

**Dread** ([06343](#)) (See study on **pachad**) refers to fear, terror, panic. It is a strong emotion of fear or terror!

**Like a storm** ([See Wikipedia discussion](#)) - The **simile** needs little explanation as we have all experienced sudden, terrifying thunderstorms with lightning strikes too close for comfort! The Hebrew word for **storm** (sufah) is often used in similes to describe sudden devastation (Isa 5:28; Hos 8:7; Amos 1:14).

**Calamity** (see above for Heb = **ed**) conveys a number of thoughts such as destruction, ruin, disaster, distress, vengeance, trouble, misfortune, doom, terror, downfall, peril.

**Like a whirlwind** - If you've ever been trapped in a **whirlwind** ([See Wikipedia article and pictures](#)), you understand this **simile**. The violent wind moves furiously around in a circle, raising and whirling dust, leaves, etc. Jamieson says here their fate is "compared to a whirlwind, as to fatal rapidity." If you ever experienced a tornado bearing down, with the sound like a locomotive, then you can begin to grasp the horror of this picture to those who reject Wisdom's plea.

**NET Note** - The term "whirlwind" (NAB, NIV, NRSV; cf. TEV, NLT "storm") refers to a devastating storm and is related to the verb שׁוּא (sho', "to crash into ruins"; see BDB 996 s.v. שׁוּאָה). Disaster will come swiftly and crush them like a devastating whirlwind. **Heb "like a storm."** The noun סוּפָה (sufah, "storm") is often used in similes to describe sudden devastation (Isa 5:28; Hos 8:7; Amos 1:14). **Heb "distress and trouble."** The nouns "distress and trouble" mean almost the same thing so they may form a hendiadys. The two similar sounding terms צוּקָה (tsuqah) and צָרָה (tsarah) also form a wordplay (paronomasia) which also links them together.

**When distress and anguish come upon you** - He reiterates that this event is not an "if" but a "when!" It is coming upon them, because of their rejection of God's Truth and ultimately rejection of His Son (cp 1Th 1:10 - "the wrath to come.")

**Distress** ([06869](#)) (**tsarah**) from **tsar** = literally a narrow, confining space, figuratively dire straits from which escape is difficult) is a noun which depicts tightness (figuratively trouble) and implies great strain or stress psychologically and spiritually (as in Ge 42:21). The root word deals with harassment and torment engendered by an enemy and thus speaks of adversity, affliction, tribulation, trouble. Tsarah is used to describe the cursing to Israel for disobedience (Dt 31:17, 21 = troubles).

**See also study on related verb tsarar.**

The **Lxx** translates **tsarah** with **thlipsis** which literally means a pressing together and figuratively speaks of suffering brought on by outside circumstances. **Thlipsis** is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). Thlipsis described the pressing together of grapes. It conveyed the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally thlipsis. Thlipsis thus refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty. That is the "fruit" these men will reap for rejecting God's gracious gesture of stretching out His hand (Pr 1:24).

One of most famous uses is the "time of Jacob's **distress**" (Je30:7 KJV = the time of Jacob's trouble; Lxx = thlipsis). Both Jeremiah and Daniel are alluding to the last 3.5 yrs of Daniel's 70th week which will be for Israel (and the world) a "time of distress (trouble; Lxx = thlipsis)"

Jonah calling out from stomach of fish Jonah 2:2. God is to be cried out to in distress (2Chr 20:9, cp Neh 9:27). God delivers His people from **tsarah** (Ge 35:3; 1Sa 10:19, 26:24, 2Sa 4:9, 1Ki 1:29, Job 5:19; Ps. 9:9).

**NAS Usage:** affliction(1), anguish(2), distress(34), distresses(1), trouble(22), troubles(11).

**Tsarah** - 70v - **Note the numerous uses in Psalms - this would make a great study, observing the circumstances and actions associated with tsarah, for the sweet psalmist David often found himself in "dire straits." It would be beneficial for us to see how David responded, for all of us are either in or will soon enter dire straits because we live in a broken, fallen world!-**

Ge. 35:3; 42:21; Dt. 31:17, 21; Jdg. 10:14; 1Sam. 10:19; 26:24; 2Sam. 4:9; 1Ki. 1:29; 2Ki. 19:3; 2Chr. 15:6; 20:9; Neh. 9:27, 37; Job 5:19; 27:9; Ps 9:9; 10:1; 20:1; 22:11; 25:17, 22; 31:7; 34:6, 17; 37:39; 46:1; 50:15; Ps 54:7; 71:20; 77:2; 78:49; 81:7; 86:7; 91:15; 116:3; 120:1; 138:7; 142:2; Ps 143:11; Pr. 1:27; 11:8; 12:13; 21:23; 24:10; 25:19; Isa. 8:22; 30:6; Isa 33:2; 37:3; 46:7; 63:9; 65:16; Jer. 4:31; 6:24; 14:8; 15:11; 16:19; 30:7; Jer 49:24; 50:43; Dan. 12:1; Obad. 1:12, 14; Jon. 2:2; Nah. 1:7, 9; Hab. 3:16; Zeph. 1:15; Zech. 10:11

Pr 1:27 When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.

Pr 11:8 The righteous is delivered from trouble, But the wicked takes his place.

Pr 12:13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble.

Pr 21:23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles.

Pr 24:10 If you are slack in the day of distress, Your strength is limited.

Pr 25:19 Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot Is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.

### Proverbs 1:28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently but they will not find me"

- **They will** - Genesis 6:3; Job 27:9; 35:12; Ps 18:41; Isaiah 1:15; Jeremiah 11:11; 14:12; Ezekiel 8:18; Micah 3:4; Zechariah 7:13; Matthew 7:22,23; 25:10-12; Luke 13:25-28; James 4:3
- **Will seek** - Ps 78:34-36; Hosea 5:15; 6:1-4

## GOD'S REJECTION OF SINNERS

Pr 1:28-32

**MacArthur** - God's rejection of sinners is carefully detailed (in Pr 1:28-32). This is the aspect of God's wrath expressed in His abandonment of sinners. See Ro 1:24-28- **note**. No prayers or diligent seeking will help them (cf. Pr 8:17).

**Then** - When is **then**? Clearly in context this is when the "storm comes." Then it is too late. **Then** they will call out to Wisdom in vain! Even as God shut the door of the Ark, so too the door of opportunity for these Wisdom rejecters is finally and fully closed, resulting in their destruction! (Ge 7:16)

Note the tragic turnaround - Wisdom called to them, but they did not listen (Pr 1:24). Here they call to Wisdom, but she does not listen! We need to be aware that God does have His limit and we need to hear and heed while today is still called today. Procrastination may lead to perdition, and then it is too late to call out!

**Garrett** - The statement that fools call on her when they get into trouble is not a reference to literal prayer but a dramatic picture of fools trying to find a way out of the trouble they are in. They "call on" her in the sense that they are at last ready to listen to advice, but it is too late.

**William MacDonald** reminds us that "God's Spirit will not always strive with man (Ge 6:3). This is what gives urgency to the Gospel appeal:

Be in time! Be in time!

While the voice of Jesus calls you,

Be in time!

If in sin you longer wait,

You may find no open gate,

And your cry be just too late.

Be in time!

—Author unknown, 19th Century

**They will seek me diligently but they will not find me** - "Too little, too late" as one saying goes. A striking contrast with Pr 8:17 where Wisdom (God) says "I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me will find me." They waited too long (cp Dt

**NET Note** - Heb “look to.” The verb שָׁחַר (shakhar, “to look”) is used figuratively of intensely looking (=seeking) for deliverance out of trouble (W. L. Holladay, Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon, 366); cf. NLT “anxiously search for.” It is used elsewhere in parallelism with בָּקַשׁ (baqash, “to seek rescue”; Hos 5:15). It does not mean “to seek early” (cf. KJV) as is popularly taught due to etymological connections with the noun שָׁחַר (shakhar, “dawn”; so BDB 1007 s.v. שָׁחַר).

**Seek** (07836)(shachar) means to look for diligently. To earnestly seek (Job 7:21, 8:5, Ps 63:2, etc). To long for or strongly desire something (Pr 11:27). To search for (Job 24:5). To conjure, seeking hidden knowledge (Isa 47:11). Shachar implies eager seeking under stress (Ps 63:1; 78:34; Hos 5:15)

**NAS Usage:** diligently(1), diligently seek(1), diligently seeks(1), earnestly seek(1), searched diligently(1), seek(2), seek me diligently(1), seek you earnestly(1), seek your earnestly(1), seeking(1), seeks you diligently(1).

**Shachar** - 12v - Job 7:21; 8:5; 24:5; Ps. 63:1; 78:34; Pr. 1:28; 7:15; 8:17; 11:27; 13:24; Isa. 26:9; Hos. 5:15

**HCSB** - God patiently permits Himself to be found (Pr 8:17; cp. Dt 4:29; 2Ch 7:14; Jer 29:13), but He doesn't respond to insincere seekers (Isa 1:15; 59:2-3), and eventually it becomes too late (Jer 11:11; 14:12; Ezek 8:17-18; Hos 5:6; 2Pe 3:9-10).

**H A Ironside** - If you are reading these pages but are not saved, you should remember there is not only a world in which you can say *no* to God, the God of all grace; there is also a world in which He will say *no* to you, if you meet Him as the God of judgment. There is not only a world in which **Wisdom's cry can be despised**; there is also a world where **your cry will be despised** if you reject the message of grace. There is not only a place where you, in your folly and carelessness of heart, can **laugh at the entreaties of Wisdom**; a day will come swiftly when **Wisdom will laugh at your calamity** and mock your bitter anguish. Notice that God will not laugh at the grief of one of His creatures, however abandoned and iniquitous. That Wisdom which you now despise will then mock your hopeless wails. What can be worse for a lost soul than to have to remember, in the abyss of woe, the gospel messages once listened to indifferently and the Word of God once taken lightly? That soul will cry in despair, “Jesus died, yet I'm in Hell! He gave Himself for sinners. He provided a way of salvation for me, but I was foolish, and spurned His grace till grace was withdrawn. The door of mercy was closed, and now I am to be on the wrong side of that closed door forever!” Thus will Wisdom laugh at your calamity if you go out into eternity in your sin.

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**C Ridley Pearson** - Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me.”—Pr 1:28.

**Interpretation.**—“Then,” not till after they have been called and sought with loving solicitude. To seek “early” is to seek diligently. Thus God reproaches His people with His “rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not” (Jer. 7:13). The reproach will be turned into a ground of condemnation if not heeded. The retribution will be that they shall seek Him early, but shall not find Him.

**Illustrations.**—Esau, who had despised his birthright blessing, sought it vainly at last with tears. The Israelites, who would not hear when God spake unto them, but went against the Amorites, in vain wept before the Lord afterwards (Deut. 1:43–45). Too late did the foolish virgins knock for admission at the door they might have entered had they been in time.

**Application.**—Wisdom reiterates her invitations. But if the sinner refuse, or make excuse, or procrastinate, then, at last, judgment utters her voice. The call was tender and winning; the sentence is severe and repellant.

But who can complain of injustice? For had the truants but answered the Voice, they would have seen a Hand outstretched to beckon, to welcome them back. Yea, the very Hands that were stretched upon the cross would have been laid upon their heads in blessing. But alas! “no man regarded.” And then, when warned, by sickness or death before their eyes, by hairbreadth escapes, by many a thrilling fear, “they set at nought all His counsel.” And when to this, in love, He added the thunder of the law, the sharp remonstrances of conscience, and the touching revelation of His cross, “they would none of His reproof.”

So, at last, the terrible retribution is denounced. “Because I have called, and ye refused: therefore shall ye call upon Me, but I will not answer. Because I have stretched out My hand, but no man regarded: therefore shall ye seek Me eagerly (with outstretched, suppliant hands), but ye shall not find Me. Because ye have set at nought My counsel, I also will laugh at your calamity. Because ye would none of My reproof, I will mock when your fear cometh.”

Great God! is this true? Is this Thy Word? And am I yet spared? And does the Voice of Wisdom yet invite me? Oh, give me grace to heed, to obey that Voice! It calls me back to God, to my home in His Church, to a son's place at His table, to walk henceforth in His ways. If I have not already, I must, I will return. For how self-condemned I shall be, if, at the last, I find Him deaf to my entreaties, and learn too late that in rejecting Him I ensured my own rejection!

## Proverbs 1:29 Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD

- **Because** - Pr 1:22; 5:12; 6:23; Job 21:14,15; Ps 50:16,17; Isaiah 27:11; 30:9-12; John 3:20; Acts 7:51-54
- **Did not** - Luke 10:42; Hebrews 11:25

**Because** - introduces a second accusation of sin and reason for punishment. While most uses of "for" or "because" (used as terms of explanation) cause the reader to review the preceding context, this use directs us forward. In short wisdom gives the reasons (Pr 1:29, 30), for the judgment decreed in Pr 1:31.

**Hated knowledge** (Hebrew = **sane**, Lxx = **miseo**) - Specifically refers to moral knowledge. (See Pr 1:22).

Their hatred of knowledge (Pr 1:22, 29) reminds of Jesus' description of the unregenerate in John 3...

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil **hates** the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:19-21)

**Choose the fear of the LORD** - See Proverbs 1:7-**note**. The noun is an objective genitive; the LORD is to be the object of fear.

## Proverbs 1:30 "They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof."

- Pr 1:25; Ps 81:11; 119:111,173; Jeremiah 8:9; Luke 14:18-20

**Walter Ewell** - Even divine mercy needs human acceptance if it is to be truly redemptive, and while those who yield to wisdom's entreaties will live, the simpletons who reject her will bring about their own destruction.

**Spurned** (05006)(**naats**) means to revile, to despise, to treat with contempt, to scorn, to reject and often refers to rejecting the counsel of a wise person. Lxx translates **naats** with the verb **mukterizo** (from **mukter** = the nose) which means to turn up one's nose at something or someone and thus to treat with contempt, mock, sneer at (Gal 6:7).

**NAS Usage:** blaspheme(1), blasphemed(1), despise(3), despised(5), given(1), rejects(1), spurn(3), spurned(8), spurns(1).

**Naats** - 23v - Num. 14:11, 23; 16:30; Deut. 31:20; 32:19; 1 Sam. 2:17; 2 Sam. 12:14; Ps. 10:3, 13; 74:10, 18; 107:11; Pr. 1:30; 5:12; 15:5; Isa. 1:4; 5:24; 52:5; 60:14; Jer. 14:21; 23:17; 33:24; Lam. 2:6

**NET Notes** - The verb "spurned" (נָאַץ, na'ats) is parallel to "comply, accede to, be willing" (e.g., 1:10). This is how the morally stubborn fool acts (e.g., 15:5).

**Carson** - Pr 1:29-30 and Pr 1:31 repeat the pattern of Pr 1:23-25 and Pr 1:26-28. They lament people's deliberate refusal to commit themselves to what is right and to use their human freedom to bow down in obedience to God (Pr 1:29; cf. Pr 1:22, 32 for the stress on responsibility and choice). They warn how such human decisions have their 'natural' outworking comparable to the sense of surfeit that overcomes us when we eat too much (Pr 1:31).

## Proverbs 1:31 "So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices"

- Pr 14:14; 22:8; Job 4:8; Isaiah 3:10,11; Jeremiah 2:19; 6:19; Galatians 6:7,8

**"EATING" THEIR  
"JUST DESERTS"!**

**So** (Therefore = NET) is a **term of conclusion**, so we need to ask what is being concluded (why?, why now?, etc)?

**Eat the fruit of their own way** - This speaks of the result of their anti-God conduct (cp Isa 3:10**note**, Ezek 11:21**note**, Ro 6:21**note**) This is shorthand for God's law of sowing and reaping. It may take a while for their "fruit" to mature, but when it does,

they will find that it is rotten to the core! (Gal 6:7, 8-note, Hos 8:7). This is the ultimate punishment - God gives them over to their sinful behavior (see Ro 1:24-28- **note**; see the verb **paradidomi**)

**ESV Study Bible** - Proverbs refers to the way of wisdom and the way of foolishness as sharing this reality: each works according to its nature. A person's actions both manifest the state of the heart and also shape it further in the way a person will walk. The direction of each path indicates the end to which it is headed. Those who refuse to listen to Wisdom's reproof walk in a way that will ultimately produce for their own consumption the very fruit they offered to others: the fruit of calamity, terror, and destruction. For a similar description of the paths and their ends, see Jer. 6:16-19.

**Be satiated with their own devices** - "they will be stuffed full of their own counsel" (NET)

**Satiated** (07646)(**saba**) means to be satisfied, to be filled, to be full. **NET Note** adds that **saba** "means (1) positive: "to eat one's fill" so that one's appetite is satisfied and (2) negative: "to eat in excess" as a glutton to the point of sickness and revulsion. Fools will not only "eat" the fruit of their own way (Pr 1:31a), they will be force-fed this revolting "menu" which will make them want to vomit (Pr 1:31b) and eventually kill them (Pr 1:32).

**Their own devices** - They will be filled with their flawed counsels and plans in contrast to being filled with God's perfect law (Pr 19:7-note, cp Jer 15:16).

**Wiersbe** - When we belong to Jesus Christ and walk in His wisdom, all of creation works for us; if we rebel against His wisdom and will, things start to work against us, as Jonah discovered when he tried to run away from the Lord.

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#### **NET Notes** - Notes for 1:31

The expression "eat the fruit of" is a figurative expression (hypocatastasis) that compares the consequences of sin to agricultural growth that culminates in produce. They will suffer the consequences of their sinful actions, that is, they will "reap" what they "sow."

The words "way" (דֶּרֶךְ, derekh) and "counsel" (מוֹעֵצָה, mo'etsah) stand in strong contrast to the instruction of wisdom which gave counsel and rebuke to encourage a better way. They will bear the consequences of the course they follow and the advice they take (for that wrong advice, e.g., Ps 1:1).

Heb "to eat to one's fill." The verb שָׂבַע (sava') means (1) positive: "to eat one's fill" so that one's appetite is satisfied and (2) negative: "to eat in excess" as a glutton to the point of sickness and revulsion (BDB 959 s.v.). Fools will not only "eat" the fruit of their own way (v. 31a), they will be force-fed this revolting "menu" which will make them want to vomit (v. 31b) and eventually kill them (v. 32).

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#### **Proverbs 1:32 "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them**

BGT Proverbs 1:32 νθ ν γ ρ δ κουν νηπ ους φονευθ σονται κα ξετασμ ς σεβε ς λε

LXE Proverbs 1:32 For because they wronged the simple, they shall be slain; and an inquisition shall ruin the ungodly.

KJV Proverbs 1:32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

NET Proverbs 1:32 For the waywardness of the simpletons will kill them, and the careless ease of fools will destroy them.

CSB Proverbs 1:32 For the turning away of the inexperienced will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.

ESV Proverbs 1:32 For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them;

NIV Proverbs 1:32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;

NLT Proverbs 1:32 For simpletons turn away from me-- to death. Fools are destroyed by their own complacency.

NRS Proverbs 1:32 For waywardness kills the simple, and the complacency of fools destroys them;

- **Waywardness** - Pr 8:36; John 3:36; Hebrews 10:38,39; 12:25
- **Prosperity** - Deuteronomy 32:15-44; Ps 69:22; 92:6,7; Luke 12:16-21; 16:19-25; Hebrews 12:8; James 5:5 Jeremiah 48:11,12

## DESTRUCTION FOR THE UNRESPONSIVE

**For** - Always be alert to this **term of explanation**, asking what is the writer explaining?

Just as a seed contains the future plant, so our refusal to listen contained the seeds of our ultimate ruin. May God grant us ears to hear and a Spirit enabled heart to heed these Proverbs, for the sake of His Name. Amen.

**Moffatt** - For heedless folk fall by their own self-will, the senseless are destroyed by their indifference

**Waywardness** (KJV = "turning away") - Instead of turning to God's reproof! (Pr 1:23)

**Waywardness** (04878) (**meshubah**) means turning back, a backsliding (Hos 14:4) or apostasy. It reflects a state of rebellion against an authority. "It indicates figuratively a way of life that is fluctuating, vacillating, insecure (Pr. 1:32)." (Baker)

**Gilbrant** - Unattested elsewhere in Semitic, meshuvāh, which means "apostasy," is derived from shûv (HED #8178), "to turn." A primary concept of the noun, just as its verb, is that of change of status. Meshuvāh is usually used in the context of Israel's abandoning its covenant responsibility and turning from Yahweh. Indeed, it was the duty of certain prophets to bring forth Yahweh's legal case (rîv; HED #7662) against the people. Jeremiah 2 is a classic example of a legal argument of Yahweh being presented. Yahweh's legal claim had the implication that the Covenant could be revoked at any juncture, and the curses of the Covenant could fall upon the offending party. Indeed, Yahweh enforced the sanctions of the legal document.

Apostasy occurs in several contexts. The primary context is that of forsaking the worship of Yahweh for the worship of other gods, e.g., "Their apostasies are great.... How can I pardon you? Your children have forsaken me, and have sworn by those who are no gods" (Jer. 5:6f). Further, the abuse of the economically weak by the powerful constitutes apostasy, e.g., "... in apostasy... but my people do not know the ordinances of Yahweh... because from the least to the greatest everyone is greedy for unjust gain..." (Jer. 8:5, 7, 10). Another context is trusting in political alliances for protection rather than trusting in Yahweh, evidenced in Hos. 11. Repentance of these acts makes it possible for the Covenant to remain in place (Ezek. 36f). It is an incredible testimony to the love of Yahweh that He allows this abuse, yet is willing to forgive grotesque sins in exchange for a proper relationship of lordship which we should have with Him. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**TWOT** - meshûbâ. Backsliding, disloyalty, faithlessness. This noun appears twelve times, nine of which are in Jeremiah ([Jeremiah](#) 3:6, 8, 11, etc.). Twice it appears in Hosea: Hosea 11:7 (where "backsliding" has become a way of life) and Hosea 14:4 [H 5] which indicates that Israel may still be cured from such a lamentable condition. Only in Proverbs 1:32 is meshûbâ applied to an individual, "The 'turning away/error' of the simple shall slay them." [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#).

**Meshubah** - 12v - **NAS Usage**: apostasies(3), apostasy(2), faithless(4), faithlessness(1), turning(1), waywardness(1). Used especially in Jeremiah to describe faithless Judah (their waywardness did result in death for many and Babylonian captivity for most the ones who remained alive - Judah is an excellent "national" illustration of the danger of rejecting Wisdom)- Prov. 1:32; Jer. 2:19; Jer. 3:6; Jer. 3:8; Jer. 3:11; Jer. 3:12; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 5:6; Jer. 8:5; Jer. 14:7; Hos. 11:7; Hos. 14:4

**Will kill them** - Although this is a proverb, and therefore generally true, this statement would seem to be completely true (assuming they never repent, Pr 1:23).

**J Vernon McGee** - It is spiritual suicide to turn from Christ.

**William MacDonald** - Every man is free to make his own choices in life, but he is not free to choose the consequences of his choices. God has established certain moral principles in the world. These principles dictate the consequences for every choice. There is no way to put asunder what God has thus joined together.

**Naive** ([06612](#)) (see [pethi](#))

**Complacency** (NET = "Careless ease") ([07962](#))(**shalvah**) means quietness (state of peacefulness - Pr 17:1), ease, security, lack of anxiety. A sense of excessive complacency or unconcern. They are self-deceived by this false "peace." Complacency is a false sense of security in which some people trust (Jer 22:21).

**Webster** defines **complacency** as an often excessive and/or unjustified self-satisfaction and/or pleasure in one's status, possessions or attainments, accompanied by an unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.

**Shalvah** - 8v - Ps. 122:7; Pr. 1:32; 17:1; Jer. 22:21; Ezek. 16:49; Dan. 8:25; 11:21, 24

**Wiersbe** - Why did they refuse God's gracious offer? Pr 1:32 indicates that the "ease" (turning away) of the simple and the prosperity of the fools gave them a false assurance; they thought they would never see judgment.

**Charles Bridges** - Once again is the sinner's ruin laid at his own door. He turns away from Wisdom's voice—the voice of the pleading Saviour. He despises the only remedy. He dies a suicide. It matters nothing to what we turn. If we turn away from God, we turn from truth—from our true—our eternal—interests. And, oh! be it remembered, that every inattention—every wilful neglect—is a step towards this fearful apostasy. The word gradually becomes a burden, then a scorn. It may seem to be a prosperous way. But it is the prosperity of fools—the love of ease—indifference—ripening for destruction. The lust of it is the embrace of our deadly enemy. Who that knows his own heart will not feel it a matter—not of congratulation—but of deep and anxious prayer? "In all time of our wealth—Good Lord, deliver us!"

**Harry Ironside's life was eternally impacted by Proverbs 1:32-33** - The words of Proverbs 1:32-33 will always possess a tender and precious interest for me. It was through having learned them as a lad in the Sunday school that I was, when fourteen years of age, truly awakened by the Spirit of God to see the awful result of rejecting the call of the gospel. Unable to shake off the vivid impression of God's righteous wrath if I continued to refuse His grace, I fell down before Him confessing myself a lost, undone sinner. I found in John 3:16 the solace my conscience needed: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It was a night to be remembered forever!

**NET Notes** - Notes for 1:32

Heb "turning away" (so KJV). The term מְשׁוּבָּת (méshuvat, "turning away") refers to moral defection and apostasy (BDB 1000 s.v.; cf. ASV "backsliding"). The noun מְשׁוּבָּת ("turning away") which appears at the end of Wisdom's speech in 1:32 is from the same root as the verb תָּשׁוּבָה (tashuv, "turn!") which appears at the beginning of this speech in 1:23. This repetition of the root שׁוּב (shuv, "to turn") creates a wordplay: Because fools refuse to "turn to" wisdom (1:23), they will be destroyed by their "turning away" from wisdom (1:32). The wordplay highlights the poetic justice of their judgment. But here they have never embraced the teaching in the first place; so it means turning from the advice as opposed to turning to it.

The Hebrew verb "to kill" (הָרַג, harag) is the end of the naive who refuse to change. The word is broad enough to include murder, massacre, killing in battle, and execution. Here it is judicial execution by God, using their own foolish choices as the means to ruin.

Heb "complacency" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB "smugness." The noun שְׁלָוָה (shalvah) means (1) positively: "quietness; peace; ease" and (2) negatively: "self-sufficiency; complacency; careless security" (BDB 1017 s.v.), which is the sense here. It is "repose gained by ignoring or neglecting the serious responsibilities of life" (C. H. Toy, Proverbs [ICC], 29).

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KJV - the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

Prosperity is like salt water: the more you drink of it the thirstier you are. TALMAGE

**Proverbs 1:33 "But he who listens to me shall live securely and will be at ease from the dread of evil!"**

- **He who listens** - Pr 8:32-35; 9:11; Ps 25:12,13; 81:13; Isaiah 48:18; 55:3; Mt 17:5; Jn 10:27-29; 1Pe 1:5
- **Shall** - Pr 3:21-26; 14:26; Ps 112:7; Isaiah 26:3; Luke 21:9,19; Ro 8:35-39

## PEACE AND SECURITY FOR THE RESPONSIVE

**But** - This contrast word often signals a "change of direction," and begs the question "What is the change?" **See discussion of terms of contrast**) In the midst of wrath God remembers mercy! (Hab 3:2) Praise God for this "change of direction" which at least offers a ray of hope to those willing to repent and hear and heed.

**MacDonald** - On the plus side, the one who heeds Wisdom will live in safety and in freedom from fear. Those who are Wisdom's

disciples enjoy the good life, escaping the sufferings, sorrows, and shame that dog the footsteps of the willful and the wicked.

## NET Notes -

The noun **בטח** (**betakh**, “security”) functions as an adverbial accusative of manner: “in security.” The phrase refers to living in a permanent settled condition without fear of danger (e.g., Deut 33:12; Ps 16:9). It is the antithesis of the dread of disaster facing the fool and the simple.

The verb **שָׁאַן** (**sha’anan**) is a Palel perfect of **שָׁאַן** (**sha’an**) which means “to be at ease; to rest securely” (BDB 983 s.v. **שָׁאַן**). Elsewhere it parallels the verb “to be undisturbed” (Jer 30:10), so it means “to rest undisturbed and quiet.” The reduplicated Palel stem stresses the intensity of the idea. The perfect tense functions in the so-called “prophetic perfect” sense, emphasizing the certainty of this blessing for the wise.

The chapter begins with an admonition to receive wisdom (1–4) and then traces the benefits: the knowledge of God and his protection (5–8), moral discernment for living (9–11), protection from evil men (12–15) and immoral women (16–19), and enablement for righteous living (20–22).

**Security (0983)**(**betach** from **batach** = to trust) means security, confidence (belief that one is safe and secure - Isa 32:17, Job 24:23, Mic 2:8). In its first occurrence **betach** emphasizes the status of a city which was certain of not being attacked (Ge 34:25). All three uses in Psalms speak of God enabling us to dwell securely (Ps. 4:8; 16:9; 78:53)

**Betach** is frequently coupled with **yashab** (to dwell) conveying the idea to **dwell in safety**. See Lev 25:18, 19, 26:5, Dt 12:10, Jdg 18:7, 1Sa 12:11, 1Ki 4:25, Ps 4:8, Pr 3:29, Isa 47:8, Jer 32:37, Jer 49:31, Ezek 28:26, Ezek 34:25, Ezek 34:28, Ezek 38:8, Ezek 38:11, Ezek 38:14, Ezek 39:6, 39:26 Zep 2:15 Zec 14:11

“As a noun, it primarily means security or calm assurance (Ge 34:25; Isa. 32:17). As an adjective, it means assurance or confidence. It is primarily a positive term: to dwell in safety because of God’s protection (Lev. 25:18); to lie down safely or in security (Hos 2:18); to walk securely or assuredly (Pr. 10:9). In other instances, it is a negative term meaning to be too self-assured or careless (Ezek. 30:9; 39:6)” (Baker)

The Lxx translates “**live in security**” as “cause to dwell in hope” (**elpis**), where “**hope**” in Greek means absolute assurance of future good.

**NAS Usage:** confidence(1), safely(1), safety(6), secure(2), securely(21), security(8), unawares(1), unsuspecting(2). **Betach** - 41v - Gen. 34:25; Lev 25:18, 19, 26:5; Dt. 12:10; 33:12, 28; Jdg. 8:11; 18:7; 1Sam. 12:11; 1Ki 4:25; Job 11:18; 24:23; Ps. 4:8; 16:9; 78:53; Pr. 1:33; 3:23, 29; 10:9; Isa. 14:30; 32:17; 47:8; Jer. 23:6; 32:37; 33:16; 49:31; Ezek. 28:26; Ezek 30:9; Ezek 34:25, 27-28; Ezek 38:8, 11, 14; 39:6, 26; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 2:8; Zeph. 2:15; Zech. 14:11

Pr 1:33 “But he who listens to me shall live**securely** And will be at ease from the dread of evil.”

Pr 3:23 Then you will walk in your way **securely** And your foot will not stumble.

Pr 3:29 Do not devise harm against your neighbor, While he lives**securely** beside you.

Pr 10:9 He who walks in integrity walks**securely**, But he who perverts his ways will be found out.

**Be at ease (07599)**(**shaan**) means to be at peace, rest securely. It means to be in a secure and restful state, and thus in a relatively favorable circumstance. The Lxx translates **shaan** with the verb **hesuchazo** which means to keep still, to refrain from labor, to cease, to be quiet, to be at rest.

**Dread (06343)**(**pachad**) describes terror, fear, panic or dread often caused by the Lord (1Sa 11:7; Job 13:11; Isa. 2:10, 19, 21). **Pachad** can be a strong emotion of fear or terror or can refer to the person or thing which arouses the terror (usually the latter sense, cp Ps 31:11). **Pachad** describes the state or condition of severe distress over impending trouble. **Pachad** is used as a Name of God in Ge 31:42, 53). The Lxx translates **pachad** with **aphobos** an adverb which means securely, peacefully (Lk 1:74).

**NAS Usage:** awe(1), disaster(1), dread(20), fear(9), great(1), great fear(1), great fear where fear(1), object of dread(1), panic(1), terror(10), terrors(1), unconcerned\*(1), what(1).

**Pachad** - 48v and 12 uses refer to the **fear of God** - Gen. 31:42, 53; Ex. 15:16; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Dt 28:67; 1Sa 11:7; 1Chr 14:17; 2 Chr. 14:14; 17:10; 19:7; 20:29; Est. 8:17; Est 9:2-3; Job 3:25; 4:14; 13:11; 15:21; 21:9; 22:10; 25:2; 31:23; 39:16, 22; Ps. 14:5; 31:11; 36:1; 53:5; 64:1; 91:5; 105:38; 119:120; Pr. 1:26, 27, Pr 1:33; 3:25; Song. 3:8; Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; 24:17-18; Jer. 30:5; 48:43-44; 49:5; Lam. 3:47

**J Vernon McGee** - What an expression this is! I wonder if this could speak of our nation? We are an affluent society; we measure every man by his bank account, the home he lives in, the car he drives. Are we enjoying the prosperity of fools? Are we living in a

fool's paradise?

**Charles Bridges** - But to close with the sunshine of promise—Art thou, Reader—like God's own child—hearkening unto him? Then art thou under his cover. Thou hast already found thy place of safety, where no evil can reach thee—dwelling not only safely, but assured of safety—quiet even from fear of evil (Pr 3:21–26, Job 5:21, Psalm 91:5; 112:6, 7, Isa. 32:17–19); as Noah in the ark—in conscious security, while the world were perishing around him; (Ge 7:11–16) as David, fearless in imminent danger, because realizing a refuge in his God (Psalm 3:1–8. Compare 1 Sam. 30:6.). Yes!—even the coming day of distress and anguish brings with it no fear of evil. (Contrasting Pr 1:26, 27, Luke 21:26, Rev. 16:16–18.) “The day will burn like an oven.” Thou shalt behold the world on fire and feel thou hast lost—thou canst lose—nothing. The “day of darkness and gloominess” will be to thee a day of unclouded sunshine—the entrance into everlasting joy? (Mal. 4:1, 2, Luke 21:28, 2 Peter 3:10–13.)

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#### **F B Meyer - Proverbs 1:33 Quiet from fear of evil.**

“Whoso.” This promise is to us all. To the man in the street, as much as for those of us who have been nurtured in Christian homes.

The evil is taken out of things for those whose hearts are full of God. Nothing which God allows to come to us is really evil, except sin. Put away sin from your heart, and let it be filled with Love and Faith, and behold all things will become new. They will lose their evil semblance, because you will look at them with new eyes. Men talk against the March wind; but when they understand that it is cleansing fetid dens of fever-germs, they regard it as a blessing. Men dread change, anything unwonted or unaccustomed; but when they find that, like the transplanted fruit-tree, they will often attain a greater maturity than when left to one spot of soil, they welcome it. If you look at things apart from God, especially if you anticipate the future without Him, you have good cause for fear; but if you hearken to and obey Him, if you know and love Him, if you abide in God and God in you, you will see that the evil is not in the things or events, but in yourself. Give yourself as alms to God, and lo, all things will become clean to you.

Death shall lose its terrors, and become the Father's servant, ushering you into his presence. Pain and suffering shall but cast into relief the stars of Divine promise. Poverty will have no pangs, and storm no alarms. You shall become so habituated to find the rarest blessings associated with what men often dread most, that you will be quiet from all fear of evil, and able to look out, with serene and untroubled heart, on a sea of troubles. In fact, it is very doubtful if anything is really evil for those who love God.

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#### **James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - SAFETY AND QUIETNESS Proverbs 1:33**

1. A Great Blessing, “Dwell safely.”
  2. A Simple Condition, “Hearken unto Me.”
  3. A Happy Result, “Quiet from fear.”
  4. A Wide Offer, “Whoso.”
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**Spurgeon - Morning and evening** - Divine love is rendered conspicuous when it shines in the midst of judgments. Fair is that lone star which smiles through the rifts of the thunder clouds; bright is the oasis which blooms in the wilderness of sand; so fair and so bright is love in the midst of wrath. When the Israelites provoked the Most High by their continued idolatry, he punished them by withholding both dew and rain, so that their land was visited by a sore famine; but while he did this, he took care that his own chosen ones should be secure. If all other brooks are dry, yet shall there be one reserved for Elijah; and when that fails, God shall still preserve for him a place of sustenance; nay, not only so, the Lord had not simply one “Elijah,” but he had a remnant according to the election of grace, who were hidden by fifties in a cave, and though the whole land was subject to famine, yet these fifties in the cave were fed, and fed from Ahab's table too by His faithful, God-fearing steward, Obadiah. Let us from this draw the inference, that come what may, God's people are safe. Let convulsions shake the solid earth, let the skies themselves be rent in twain, yet amid the wreck of worlds the believer shall be as secure as in the calmest hour of rest. If God cannot save his people under heaven, he will save them in heaven. If the world becomes too hot to hold them, then heaven shall be the place of their reception and their safety. Be ye then confident, when ye hear of wars, and rumors of wars. Let no agitation distress you, but be quiet from fear of evil. Whatsoever cometh upon the earth, you, beneath the broad wings of Jehovah, shall be secure. Stay yourself upon his promise; rest in his faithfulness, and bid defiance to the blackest future, for there is nothing in it direful for you. Your sole concern should be to show forth to the world the blessedness of hearkening to the voice of wisdom.