

Proverbs Collection I: A Father's Instruction – Part 1 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 1–3

Title

1:1 Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

Preamble

- 2 To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand sayings of understanding,
3 to gain insightful instruction,
righteousness and justice and equity,
4 to give shrewdness to the simple,
knowledge and purpose to the young,
5 may the wise hear and increase learning,
and the one who understands gain direction,
6 to understand a proverb and an expression,
words of wisdom and their riddles.
7 Fear of Yahweh *is the* beginning of knowledge;
wisdom and instruction, fools despise.

A Call to Listen and Obey

- 8 My child, may you keep your father's instruction,
and do not reject your mother's teachings,
9 for they *are* a garland of favor for your head,
and pendants for your neck.

Resist the Invitation of the Gang

- 10 My child, if sinners entice you, do not consent.
11 If they say,
"Come with us!
We shall lie in wait for blood;
we shall ambush the innocent without cause.
12 Like Sheol, we will swallow them alive
and whole, like those who descend to the pit.
13 We shall find all precious wealth,
we shall fill our houses *with* booty,
14 you shall throw your lot in our midst,
there will be one purse for all of us."
15 My child, do not walk in their way.
Keep your foot from their paths,
16 for their feet run to evil,
and they hurry to shed blood,
17 for "in vain is the net scattered,
in the sight of any winged bird."
18 They lie in wait for their *own* blood.
They ambush their *own* lives.
19 Thus are the ways of all who are greedy *for* gain—
it will take the life of its possessors.

Wisdom Will Mock Those Who Mocked Her

- 20 Wisdom calls out in the streets,
in the squares she raises her voice.
21 On a busy corner she cries out,
at the entrances of the gates in the city, she speaks her sayings:
22 "How long, O simple ones, will you love simplicity?
And *how long* will scoffers delight in their scoffing,
and fools hate knowledge?
23 May you turn to my argument!
Behold, I shall pour out my spirit upon you;

- I will make my words known to you.
24 Because I called out and you refused me,
I stretched out my hand, yet there is none who heeds.
25 You have ignored all my counsel,
and my reproof you are not willing *to accept*.
26 I will also laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when panic comes *upon* you.
27 When your panic comes like a storm,
and your calamity arrives like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come upon you,
28 then they will call me, but I will not answer;
they will seek me diligently but not find me.
29 Since they hated knowledge,
and did not choose the fear of Yahweh,
30 they were not willing *to accept* my counsel,
they despised all my reproof.
31 They shall eat from the fruit of their way,
and they shall be sated from their own schemes,
32 for the waywardness of the simple ones will kill them,
and the complacency of fools will destroy them.
33 Whoever listens to me will dwell in security
and rest securely from dread and disaster.”

A Call to Seek Wisdom

- 2:1 My child, if you will receive my sayings,
and hide my commands with you,
2 *in order* to incline your ear toward wisdom,
then you shall apply your heart to understanding.
3 For if you cry out for understanding,
if you lift your voice for insight,
4 if you seek her like silver
and search her out like treasure,

Wisdom Will Give You Knowledge of God

- 5 then you will understand the fear of Yahweh,
and the knowledge of God you will find.
6 For Yahweh will give wisdom;
from his mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.
7 For the upright, he stores sound judgment,
a shield for those who walk uprightly,
8 *in order* to guard paths of justice
and keep the way of his faithful *ones*.

Wisdom Will Give You Discernment for Living

- 9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice
and uprightness—every good course—
10 for wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul.
11 Discretion will watch over you;
understanding will protect you,

Wisdom Will Guard You from the Wicked

- 12 *in order* to deliver you from the way of evil,
from a man who speaks devious things—
13 those who forsake the paths of uprightness
to walk in ways of darkness,
14 those who are happy to do evil,
for they delight in *the* deviousness of evil,

- 15 who are crooked in their ways,
and devious in their paths;

Wisdom Will Protect You from the Adulteress

- 16 *in order* to deliver you from a strange woman,
from a foreign woman *who* flatters *with* her sayings,
17 she who forsakes the partner of her youth
and has forgotten the covenant of her God,
18 for her house sinks to death,
and to the dead are her paths.
19 *Of* all who go to her, none shall return,
nor do they reach paths of life.

Wisdom Will Enable You to Live Righteously

- 20 So that you will walk on the road of those who are good,
and the paths of those who are righteous you shall keep.
21 For those who are upright will dwell *in the* land,
and those who are blameless will remain in it.
22 And those who are wicked will be cut off from the land,
and those who are treacherous will be uprooted from it.

God Addresses You as His Child

- 3:1 My child, do not forget my instruction,
and may your heart guard my commands.
2 For length of days, years of life,
and peace they shall add to you.
3 May loyal love and truth not forsake you;
bind them around your neck,
write them upon your heart.
4 And you shall find favor and good sense
in the eyes of God and humankind.
5 Trust Yahweh with all your heart;
do not lean toward your own understanding.
6 In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will straighten your paths.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear Yahweh and retreat from evil.
8 There shall be healing for your flesh,
and refreshment for your body.
9 Honor Yahweh from your substance,
and from the firstfruits of all that will come to you,
10 and your barns shall be full of plenty,
and your vats shall burst *with* new wine.
11 Do not despise the discipline of Yahweh, my child.
Do not be weary of his reproof
12 because whomever Yahweh will love, he will rebuke,
as a father delights in his son. [[Heb 12:5-11](#)]

The Many Benefits of Wisdom

- 13 Happy *is* the one who finds wisdom,
and one who obtains understanding.
14 For her income is better than the income of silver,
and her revenue than *that of* gold.
15 She is more precious than rubies,
and all your desires shall not compare with her.
16 Length of days *is* in her right hand;
in her left hand *are* riches and honor.
17 Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness,

- and all her paths *are* peace.
- 18 She is a tree of life for those who seize her;
those who take hold of her are considered happy.
- 19 Yahweh in wisdom founded the earth;
he established the heavens in understanding.
- 20 With his knowledge, depths broke open,
and clouds dropped dew.
- 21 My child, may they not escape from your sight;
may you keep sound wisdom and prudence.
- 22 They shall be life for your soul
and adornment for your neck.
- 23 Then you will walk in the confidence of your ways,
and your foot will not stumble.
- 24 If you sit down, you will not panic,
and *if* you lie down, then your sleep shall be sweet.
- 25 Do not be afraid of sudden panic,
or the storm of wickedness that will come.
- 26 Yahweh will be your confidence
and guard your foot from capture.

Heed the Commands of Wisdom

- 27 Do not withhold good from its owner
when it is in the power of your hand to do.
- 28 Do not say to your neighbor,
“Go and return and tomorrow I will give *it*,”
when it is with you.
- 29 Do not plot harm against your neighbor
who dwells in confidence beside you.
- 30 Do not quarrel with anyone without cause,
when he did not do you harm.
- 31 Do not envy a man of violence,
and do not choose any of his ways,
- 32 for he who is perverse *is* an abomination of Yahweh,
but those who are upright *are* his confidence.

Humility and Submission—the Prerequisites of Wisdom

- 33 The curse of Yahweh *is* on the house of the wicked,
and the abode of the righteous ones he blesses.
- 34 With those who scorn, he is scornful,
but to those who are humble, he gives favor. [[Jam 4:6](#); [1 Pet 5:5](#)]
- 35 They will inherit the honor of the wise,
but stubborn fools, disgrace.