

Proverbs Collection I: A Father's Instruction – Part 3 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 7–9

Wisdom Will Guard You Against the Seduction of the Adulterous Woman

- 7:1 My child, guard my sayings;
store my commandments with you.
- 2 Keep my commands and live,
and my teaching like *the* apple of your eye.
- 3 Bind them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
- 4 Say to wisdom, “you are my sister,”
and you shall call insight, “intimate friend.”
- 5 *In order* to guard yourself from an adulteress,
from the foreigner who makes her words smooth.
- 6 For at the window of my house,
through my lattice, I looked down.
- 7 And I saw among the simple,
I observed among the youth,
a young man lacking sense,
- 8 passing on the street at her corner,
and he takes the road *to* her house,
- 9 at twilight, at *the* day's evening,
in *the* midst of night and the darkness.
- 10 Then behold! A woman *comes* to meet him
with the garment of a prostitute and a secret heart.
- 11 She is loud and stubborn;
her feet do not stay at her house.
- 12 Now in the street, now in the square,
at every corner she lies in wait.
- 13 She took hold of him and kissed him.
Her face was impudent, and she said to him,
- 14 “Sacrifices of peace offerings *are* upon me;
today I completed my vows.
- 15 So I have come out to meet you,
to seek your face, and I have found you.
- 16 *With* coverings I have adorned my couch,
spreads of the linen of Egypt;
- 17 I have perfumed my bed *with* myrrh,
aloes, and cinnamon.
- 18 Come, let us take *our* fill of love making,
until the morning let us delight in love.
- 19 For there is no man in his home;
he has gone on a long journey.
- 20 The bag of money he took in his hand,
for *on* the day of the full moon he will come home.”
- 21 She persuades him with the greatness of her teachings;
with her smooth lips she compels him.
- 22 He goes after her suddenly;
like an ox to the slaughter he goes,
and like a stag to the instruction of a fool,
- 23 until an arrow pierces his entrails,
like a bird rushing into a snare,
but he does not know that it will cost him his life.
- 24 And now, my children, listen to me,
and be attentive to the sayings of my mouth.
- 25 May your heart not turn aside to her ways;
do not stray into her path.
- 26 For many slain she has laid low,
and countless *are* all of her killings.

27 The ways of Sheol *are* her house,
descending to chambers of death.

Lady Wisdom—Who She Is and What She Offers

8:1 Does not wisdom call,
and understanding raise its voice?
2 Atop the heights beside the road,
at the crossroads she stands.
3 Beside gates, before towns,
at the entrance of doors, she cries out:
4 “To you, O people, I call,
and my cry is to the children of humankind.
5 Learn prudence, O simple ones;
fools, learn intelligence.
6 Listen! For noble things I will speak,
and upright things from the opening of my lips.
7 My mouth will utter truth,
and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
8 All sayings of my mouth *are* in righteousness;
none of them are twisted and crooked.
9 All of them are straight to him who understands,
and upright to those who find knowledge.
10 Take my teaching and not silver;
may you choose knowledge rather than choice gold.
11 For wisdom is better than jewels,
and all desires shall not compare with her.
12 I, wisdom, live with prudence,
and I find knowledge and discretion.
13 The fear of Yahweh *is* hatred of evil,
pride, and arrogance and an evil way.
And I hate a mouth of perversity.
14 Advice and sound judgment are mine;
I am understanding, strength is mine.
15 By me kings reign,
and rulers decree righteousness.
16 By me rulers rule,
and nobles—all judges of righteousness.
17 I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently shall find me.
18 Fortune and glory *are* with me,
enduring wealth and righteousness.
19 My fruit is better than gold, even refined gold,
and my yield than choice silver.
20 In the way of righteousness I walk,
in the midst of paths of justice,
21 *in order* to endow those who love me *with* wealth,
and I will fill their treasuries.
22 “Yahweh created me, *the* first of his ways,
before his acts of old.
23 From eternity, I was set up from *the* first,
from the beginning of the earth.
24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth,
when there were no springs of abounding water.
25 Before mountains had been shaped,
before hills, I was brought forth.
26 When he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the first dust of the world,
27 when he established the heavens, there I *was*,

- when he drew a circle upon the face of the deep,
28 when he made skies from above,
when he founded fountains of the deep,
29 when he assigned his limits to the sea,
that waters shall not transgress his command,
when he marked the foundations of the earth,
30 I was beside him, a master workman,
and I was delighting day by day,
rejoicing before him always,
31 rejoicing in the world of his earth,
and my delight *was* with the children of humankind.
32 “And now, children, listen to me;
happy *are* those who will keep my ways.
33 Hear teaching and be wise;
do not neglect *it*.
34 Happy *is the* person who listens to me,
in order to keep watch at my doors day by day,
in order to guard the frames of my entrances.
35 For he who finds me *is* he who finds life,
and he obtains favor from Yahweh.
36 But he who misses me injures himself.
All those who hate me love death.”

Wisdom and Folly—Rivals for Your Heart

- 9:1 Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn her seven pillars.
2 She has slaughtered her slaughtering, mixed her wine,
and also set her table.
3 She has sent her servant girls, she calls
upon the wings of the high places of town,
4 “Whoever *is* simple, let him turn here.”
As for the one who lacks sense, she says to him,
5 “Come, eat with my bread;
drink with the wine I have mixed.
6 Lay aside simplicity and live;
walk in the way of understanding.”
7 He who corrects a scoffer gains abuse for himself,
and he who rebukes the wicked gets hurt.
8 Do not rebuke a scoffer, lest he hate you;
rebuke the wise and he will love you.
9 Give to a wise one and he will become more wise;
teach a righteous one and he will increase learning.
10 The start of wisdom is fear of Yahweh,
and knowledge of the Holy One, insight.
11 For by me your days shall increase,
and years of life shall multiply for you.
12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
and *if* you scoff, alone you shall bear *it*.
13 A woman of foolishness is loud,
simple, and does not know it.
14 She sits at the door of her house,
upon a throne *at the* high places of town,
15 *in order* to call to those who pass by the road,
those who go straight *on* their way:
16 “Whoever is simple, may he turn here!”
As for he who lacks sense, she says to him,
17 “Stolen waters are sweet,
and bread of secrecy is pleasant.”

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

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