

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 son, keep my words
And treasure my commandments within you.
- 2 Keep my commandments and live,
And my teaching as 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 call understanding *your* intimate friend;
- 5 That they may keep you from an adulteress,
From the foreigner who flatters with her words.
- 6 For at the window of my house
I looked out through my lattice,
- 7 And I saw among the naive,
And discerned among the youths
A young man lacking sense,
- 8 Passing through the street near her corner;
And he takes the way to her house,
- 9 In the twilight, in the evening,
In the middle of the night and *in* the darkness.
- 10 And behold, a woman *comes* to meet him,
Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart.
- 11 She is boisterous and rebellious,
Her feet do not remain at home;
- 12 *She is* now in the streets, now in the squares,
And lurks by every corner.
- 13 So she seizes him and kisses him
And with a brazen face she says to him:
- 14 "I was due to offer peace offerings;
Today I have paid my vows.
- 15 "Therefore I have come out to meet you,
To seek your presence earnestly, and I have found you.
- 16 "I have spread my couch with coverings,
With colored linens of Egypt.
- 17 "I have sprinkled my bed
With myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.
- 18 "Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning;
Let us delight ourselves with caresses.
- 19 "For my husband is not at home,
He has gone on a long journey;
- 20 He has taken a bag of money with him,
At the full moon he will come home."
- 21 With her many persuasions she entices him;
With her flattering lips she seduces him.
- 22 Suddenly he follows her
As an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as *one in* fetters to the discipline of a fool,
- 23 Until an arrow pierces through his liver;
As a bird hastens to the snare,
So he does not know that it *will cost him* his life.
- 24 Now therefore, *my* sons, listen to me,
And pay attention to the words of my mouth.
- 25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths.
- 26 For many are the victims she has cast down,
And numerous are all her slain.

27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
Descending to the chambers of death.

Lady Wisdom—Who She Is and What She Offers

8:1 Does not wisdom call,
And understanding lift up her voice?
2 On top of the heights beside the way,
Where the paths meet, she takes her stand;
3 Beside the gates, at the opening to the city,
At the entrance of the doors, she cries out:
4 “To you, O men, I call,
And my voice is to the sons of men.
5 “O naive ones, understand prudence;
And, O fools, understand wisdom.
6 “Listen, for I will speak noble things;
And the opening of my lips *will reveal* right things.
7 “For my mouth will utter truth;
And wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
8 “All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness;
There is nothing crooked or perverted in them.
9 “They are all straightforward to him who understands,
And right to those who find knowledge.
10 “Take my instruction and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choicest gold.
11 “For wisdom is better than jewels;
And all desirable things cannot compare with her.
12 “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And I find knowledge *and* discretion.
13 “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;
Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And the perverted mouth, I hate.
14 “Counsel is mine and sound wisdom;
I am understanding, power is mine.
15 “By me kings reign,
And rulers decree justice.
16 “By me princes rule, and nobles,
All who judge rightly.
17 “I love those who love me;
And those who diligently seek me will find me.
18 “Riches and honor are with me,
Enduring wealth and righteousness.
19 “My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold,
And my yield *better* than choicest silver.
20 “I walk in the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice,
21 To endow those who love me with wealth,
That I may fill their treasuries.
22 “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.
23 “From everlasting I was established,
From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.
24 “When there were no depths I was brought forth,
When there were no springs abounding with water.
25 “Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills I was brought forth;
26 While He had not yet made the earth and the fields,
Nor the first dust of the world.
27 “When He established the heavens, I was there,

- When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,
28 When He made firm the skies above,
When the springs of the deep became fixed,
29 When He set for the sea its boundary
So that the water would not transgress His command,
When He marked out the foundations of the earth;
30 Then I was beside Him, *as* a master workman;
And I was daily *His* delight,
Rejoicing always before Him,
31 Rejoicing in the world, His earth,
And *having* my delight in the sons of men.
32 “Now therefore, *O* sons, listen to me,
For blessed are they who keep my ways.
33 “Heed instruction and be wise,
And do not neglect *it*.
34 “Blessed is the man who listens to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at my doorposts.
35 “For he who finds me finds life
And obtains favor from the LORD.
36 “But he who sins against 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 out her seven pillars;
2 She has prepared her food, she has mixed her wine;
She has also set her table;
3 She has sent out her maidens, she calls
From the tops of the heights of the city:
4 “Whoever is naive, let him turn in here!”
To him who lacks understanding she says,
5 “Come, eat of my food
And drink of the wine I have mixed.
6 “Forsake *your* folly and live,
And proceed in the way of understanding.”
7 He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself,
And he who reproves a wicked man *gets* insults for himself.
8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you,
Reprove a wise man and he will love you.
9 Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning.
10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
And years of life will be added to you.
12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
And if you scoff, you alone will bear it.
13 The woman of folly is boisterous,
She is naive and knows nothing.
14 She sits at the doorway of her house,
On a seat by the high places of the city,
15 Calling to those who pass by,
Who are making their paths straight:
16 “Whoever is naive, let him turn in here,”
And to him who lacks understanding she says,
17 “Stolen water is sweet;
And bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant.”

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

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