

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

Proverbs 1–3

Title

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

Preamble

- 2 To learn wisdom and moral instruction,
and to discern wise counsel.
- 3 To receive moral instruction in skillful living,
in righteousness, justice, and equity.
- 4 To impart shrewdness to the morally naive,
and a discerning plan to the young person.
- 5 (Let the wise also hear and gain instruction,
and let the discerning acquire guidance!)
- 6 To discern the meaning of a proverb and a parable,
the sayings of the wise and their riddles.
- 7 Fearing the LORD is the beginning of moral knowledge,
but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

A Call to Listen and Obey

- 8 Listen, my child, to the instruction from your father,
and do not forsake the teaching from your mother.
- 9 For they will be like an elegant garland on your head,
and like pendants around your neck.

Resist the Invitation of the Gang

- 10 My child, if sinners try to entice you,
do not consent!
- 11 If they say, "Come with us!
We will lie in wait to shed blood;
we will ambush an innocent person capriciously.
- 12 We will swallow them alive like Sheol,
those full of vigor like those going down to the Pit.
- 13 We will seize all kinds of precious wealth;
we will fill our houses with plunder.
- 14 Join with us!
We will all share equally in what we steal."
- 15 My child, do not go down their way,
withhold yourself from their path;
- 16 for they are eager to inflict harm,
and they hasten to shed blood.
- 17 Surely it is futile to spread a net
in plain sight of any bird,
- 18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood,
they ambush their own lives!
- 19 Such are the ways of all who gain profit unjustly;
it takes away the life of those who obtain it!

Wisdom Will Mock Those Who Mocked Her

- 20 Wisdom calls out in the street,
she shouts loudly in the plazas;
- 21 at the head of the noisy streets she calls,
in the entrances of the gates in the city she utters her words:
- 22 "How long will you simpletons love naiveté?
How long will mockers delight in mockery
and fools hate knowledge?
- 23 If only you will respond to my rebuke,
then I will pour out my thoughts to you

- and I will make my words known to you.
- 24 However, because I called but you refused to listen,
because I stretched out my hand but no one paid attention,
- 25 because you neglected all my advice,
and did not comply with my rebuke,
- 26 so I myself will laugh when disaster strikes you,
I will mock when what you dread comes,
- 27 when what you dread comes like a whirlwind,
and disaster strikes you like a devastating storm,
when distressing trouble comes on you.
- 28 Then they will call to me, but I will not answer;
they will diligently seek me, but they will not find me.
- 29 Because they hated moral knowledge,
and did not choose to fear the LORD,
- 30 they did not comply with my advice,
they spurned all my rebuke.
- 31 Therefore they will eat from the fruit of their way,
and they will be stuffed full of their own counsel.
- 32 For the waywardness of the
simpletons will kill them,
and the careless ease of fools will destroy them.
- 33 But the one who listens to me will live in security,
and will be at ease from the dread of harm.

A Call to Seek Wisdom

- 2:1 My child, if you receive my words,
and store up my commands within you,
2 by making your ear attentive to wisdom,
and by turning your heart to understanding,
3 indeed, if you call out for discernment—
raise your voice for understanding—
4 if you seek it like silver,
and search for it like hidden treasure,

Wisdom Will Give You Knowledge of God

- 5 then you will understand how to fear the LORD,
and you will discover knowledge about God.
- 6 For the LORD gives wisdom,
and from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.
- 7 He stores up effective counsel for the upright,
and is like a shield for those who live with integrity,
- 8 to guard the paths of the righteous
and to protect the way of his pious ones.

Wisdom Will Give You Discernment for Living

- 9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice
and equity—every good way.
- 10 For wisdom will enter your heart,
and moral knowledge will be attractive to you.
- 11 Discretion will protect you,
understanding will guard you,

Wisdom Will Guard You from the Wicked

- 12 to deliver you from the way of the wicked,
from those speaking perversity,
13 who leave the upright paths
to walk on the dark ways,
14 who delight in doing evil,

- they rejoice in perverse evil;
15 whose paths are morally crooked,
and who are devious in their ways;

Wisdom Will Protect You from the Adulteress

- 16 to deliver you from the adulteress,
from the sexually loose woman who speaks flattering words;
17 who leaves the husband from her younger days,
and forgets her marriage covenant made before God.
18 For her house sinks down to death,
and her paths lead to the place of the departed spirits.
19 None who go in to her will return,
nor will they reach the paths of life.

Wisdom Will Enable You to Live Righteously

- 20 So you will walk in the way of good people,
and will keep on the paths of the righteous.
21 For the upright will reside in the land,
and those with integrity will remain in it,
22 but the wicked will be removed from the land,
and the treacherous will be torn away from it.

God Addresses You as His Child

- 3:1 My child, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments,
2 for they will provide a long and full life,
and they will add well-being to you.
3 Do not let truth and mercy leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Then you will find favor and good understanding,
in the sight of God and people.
5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own understanding.
6 Acknowledge him in all your ways,
and he will make your paths straight.
7 Do not be wise in your own estimation;
fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
8 This will bring healing to your body,
and refreshment to your inner self.
9 Honor the LORD from your wealth
and from the first fruits of all your crops;
10 then your barns will be filled completely,
and your vats will overflow with new wine.
11 My child, do not despise discipline from the LORD,
and do not loathe his rebuke.
12 For the LORD disciplines those he loves,
just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights. [[Heb 12:5-11](#)]

The Many Benefits of Wisdom

- 13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who obtains understanding.
14 For her benefit is more profitable than silver,
and her gain is better than gold.
15 She is more precious than rubies,
and none of the things you desire can compare with her.
16 Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

- 17 Her ways are very pleasant,
and all her paths are peaceful.
- 18 She is like a tree of life to those who obtain her,
and everyone who grasps hold of her will be blessed.
- 19 By wisdom the LORD laid the foundation of the earth;
he established the heavens by understanding.
- 20 By his knowledge the primordial sea was broken open,
and the clouds drip down dew.
- 21 My child, do not let them escape from your sight;
safeguard sound wisdom and discretion.
- 22 So they will give life to you,
and grace to adorn your neck.
- 23 Then you will walk on your way with security,
and you will not stumble.
- 24 When you lie down you will not be filled with fear;
when you lie down your sleep will be pleasant.
- 25 You will not be afraid of sudden disaster,
or when destruction overtakes the wicked;
- 26 for the LORD will be the source of your confidence,
and he will guard your foot from being caught in a trap.

Heed the Commands of Wisdom

- 27 Do not withhold good from those who need it,
when you have the ability to help.
- 28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go! Return tomorrow
and I will give it,” when you have it with you at the time.
- 29 Do not plot evil against your neighbor
when he dwells by you unsuspectingly.
- 30 Do not accuse anyone without legitimate cause,
if he has not treated you wrongly.
- 31 Do not envy a violent man,
and do not choose to imitate any of his ways;
- 32 for one who goes astray is an abomination to the LORD,
but he reveals his intimate counsel to the upright.

Humility and Submission—the Prerequisites of Wisdom

- 33 The LORD’s curse is on the household of the wicked,
but he blesses the home of the righteous.
- 34 Although he is scornful to arrogant scoffers,
yet he shows favor to the humble. [[Jam 4:6](#); [1 Pet 5:5](#)]
- 35 The wise inherit honor,
but he holds fools up to public contempt.

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