
*“Equipping believers for **growth** and **service** by encountering God through his word.”*

The Bible for Today

September 2, 2009



Proverbs:

The Preamble and Prologue

Preamble (how to read the collection/
introduction of purpose or theme):

Chapter 1:1-7

- Discussion of the importance of wisdom
- The contrasts of seeking wisdom or living a life of folly
- The admonition to choose wisdom for all one's life

Prologue of Proverbs

Prologue: (Introduction to the entire book)

Chapters 1:8-9:18

- Ten lessons of a father/ teacher to a son
- The lessons are **admonitions**: “*Cautionary advice or warning; counsel; gentle reproof*”
- Each lesson builds on the previous; climax of lessons in chapter 9—final appeals of wisdom and folly

Ten Lessons in the Prologue

1. Warning and Rebuke: 1:8-33
2. Safeguard against the Wicked: 2:1-22
- 3 & 4. The Value of Wisdom: 3:1-35
- 5 to 7. The Supremacy of Wisdom: 4:1-27
8. Warnings against Adultery, Folly, Wickedness: 5:1-6:19
9. Further Warning against Adultery: 6:20-35
10. The Unfaithful Wife and Wisdom's Call: 7:1-8:36
- Epilogue: Rival Banquets of Wisdom and Folly: 9:1-18

The Teacher and the Lessons

- The teacher gives does and don'ts, but also tries to persuade by giving reason; not just because the teacher 'says so.'
- The teacher appeals, gives advice, and tries to motivate, 'so that' youth might get wise.
- The teacher helps youth know what to do in the moment of truth/ discernment will decide one's actions.
- Repetition of the lessons brings memorization for moments of decision.

Lesson One: Warning and Rebuke: 1:8-33

Vss. 8 ff: Be careful of the wicked who seek easy money; violent crime points to a heart of greed and dishonesty.

Learn this lesson, so that it reminds the young when easy schemes come his or her way (wear the lessons; adorn oneself).

Vs 17: net for birds— ambiguous; wicked fail to see they will get caught in their own net **or** seeing the net, the wicked go ahead anyway.

Vs. 19: calculated men— violence/ ill gain is their business; they prey on healthy youthful desires-- adventuresome spirit (excitement), independence (easy money), camaraderie (friends)

Lesson One con't...

Vss 20-33: The call from Lady Wisdom

- Wisdom personified as a woman who speaks as a messenger from God-- God the creator of wisdom. She can be found **if** sought; her message is life giving— pointing to godly choices/ discernment.
- Lady Wisdom is in the market— the place where busyness of life distracts us; she speaks with intensity and rightness, **if** people will listen.
- Lady Wisdom challenges fools/ challenges their cleverness—their insight comes too late, comes with devastating force, comes when not expected, they bring on their own consequences, they can blame only themselves.

Lesson Two:

Safeguard against the Wicked: 2:1-22

The passages grouped in 2 or 3 verses. Structure is: **if** you learn...**then** you will get wise... the lessons are **to save you**... **so that** you might walk in rightness.

Vss:

1-4: seek wisdom (prerequisites); commit lessons to memory; reflect/ meditate on them (Psalm 1).

5-6/ 7-8: central text; fear of the Lord and knowledge from God; wisdom will come in all circumstances to those loyal to God.

9-11: a moral understanding will grow if the lessons are heeded.

12-15: protection from wicked/ reasoning men.

16-19: protection from a wayward life; infidelity and prostitution (lead to untimely death).

20-22: keep these lessons, so that you will walk in righteousness.

Lesson Three:

The Value of Wisdom: 3:1-35

The most religious section of Proverbs; God mentioned in the text. Two lines each, with a motivation (see vs. 1, 2)

The essence of faith (vss. 5-8):

Trusting in God brings blessing and contentment in all of life (whether in prosperity or adversity); God is sovereign and the ultimate judge of all things.

Lesson Three:

The Value of Wisdom: 3:1-35 con't...

Vss. 1-10: coupling of ideas— **love** (*hesed*) and **faithfulness** (integrity) = favor with God and people; **trust** in the Lord = straight paths/ divine direction; **tithes** and **offerings** = abundant crops (only place in the Proverbs for this concept)

Vss. 11-12: God's correction of us when needed; we may not fully understand; trust God (cf. vs.5-8; also Job)

Vss. 13-26: blessings (Mt 5:3-11); the value of wisdom leads to peace (vs. 17 key)

Vss. 27-35: Admonition and Warnings— **generosity**, **love of neighbor**; the wicked may prosper, but God is the ultimate judge.

The Bible for Today

- Help our children to become wise by teaching lessons of life; persuading them with reason.
- Seeking easy money at the expense of others will have a negative ultimate result.
- Learn to discern how healthy desires can be satisfied by poor choices.
- Pursuit of lustful sex and easy money can bring disastrous consequences; untimely death.
- Wisdom can lead to contentment in life; restful sleep.
- God can help you in **ALL** circumstances, whether in prosperity or adversity.