

Lady Wisdom and Woman Folly

Which path will you follow?

Crossroad – June 27, 2010

NOTE: Open by reading chapter 9

1) Purpose / Audience: Proverbs 1:1-7

(Attain wisdom ... lived in life ... simple & wise)

- ¹ The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:
- ² for attaining wisdom and discipline;
for understanding words of insight;
- ³ for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life,
doing what is right and just and fair;
- ⁴ for giving prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the young-
- ⁵ let the wise listen and add to their learning,
and let the discerning get guidance-
- ⁶ for understanding proverbs and parables,
the sayings and riddles of the wise.
- ⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,
but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

2) Original Audience: Proverbs 2:1-6

(father to son)

- ¹ My son, if you accept my words
and store up my commands within you,
- ² turning your ear to wisdom
and applying your heart to understanding,
- ³ and if you call out for insight
and cry aloud for understanding,
- ⁴ and if you look for it as for silver
and search for it as for hidden treasure,

⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.

⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom,
and from his mouth come knowledge and
understanding.

3) Path of Wisdom: Proverbs 4:1-13

- ¹ Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction;
pay attention and gain understanding.
- ² I give you sound learning,
so do not forsake my teaching.
- ³ When I was a boy in my father's house,
still tender, and an only child of my mother,
- ⁴ he taught me and said,
"Lay hold of my words with all your heart;
keep my commands and you will live.
- ⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding;
do not forget my words or swerve from them.
- ⁶ Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you;
love her, and she will watch over you.
- ⁷ Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom.
Though it cost all you have, ¹ get understanding.
- ⁸ Esteem her, and she will exalt you;
embrace her, and she will honor you.
- ⁹ She will set a garland of grace on your head
and present you with a crown of splendor."
- ¹⁰ Listen, my son, accept what I say,
and the years of your life will be many.
- ¹¹ I guide you in the way of wisdom
and lead you along straight paths.
- ¹² When you walk, your steps will not be hampered;
when you run, you will not stumble.
- ¹³ Hold on to instruction, do not let it go;
guard it well, for it is your life.

4) Do not leave path: Proverbs 4:15-27

- ¹⁴ Do not set foot on the path of the wicked
or walk in the way of evil men.
- ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not travel on it;
turn from it and go on your way.
- ¹⁶ For they cannot sleep till they do evil;
they are robbed of slumber till they make
someone fall.
- ¹⁷ They eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.
- ¹⁸ The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of
dawn,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.
- ¹⁹ But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
they do not know what makes them stumble.
- ²⁰ My son, pay attention to what I say;
listen closely to my words.
- ²¹ Do not let them out of your sight,
keep them within your heart;
- ²² for they are life to those who find them
and health to a man's whole body.
- ²³ Above all else, guard your heart,
for it is the wellspring of life.
- ²⁴ Put away perversity from your mouth;
keep corrupt talk far from your lips.
- ²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead,
fix your gaze directly before you.
- ²⁶ Make level paths for your feet
and take only ways that are firm.
- ²⁷ Do not swerve to the right or the left;
keep your foot from evil.

5) Path of Adulteress - Proverbs 5:1-14

- ¹ My son, pay attention to my wisdom,
listen well to my words of insight,
- ² that you may maintain discretion
and your lips may preserve knowledge.
- ³ For the lips of an adulteress drip honey,
and her speech is smoother than oil;
- ⁴ but in the end she is bitter as gall,
sharp as a double-edged sword.
- ⁵ Her feet go down to death;
her steps lead straight to the grave.
- ⁶ She gives no thought to the way of life;
her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.
- ⁷ Now then, my sons, listen to me;
do not turn aside from what I say.
- ⁸ Keep to a path far from her,
do not go near the door of her house,
- ⁹ lest you give your best strength to others
and your years to one who is cruel,
- ¹⁰ lest strangers feast on your wealth
and your toil enrich another man's house.
- ¹¹ At the end of your life you will groan,
when your flesh and body are spent.
- ¹² You will say, "How I hated discipline!
How my heart spurned correction!"
- ¹³ I would not obey my teachers
or listen to my instructors.
- ¹⁴ I have come to the brink of utter ruin
in the midst of the whole assembly." ...

6) Discipline or Death - Proverbs 5:21-25

²¹ For a man's ways are in full view of the LORD,
and he examines all his paths.

²² The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him;
the cords of his sin hold him fast.

²³ He will die for lack of discipline,
led astray by his own great folly.

**{notice: Lord sees and judges, also that the way of
adultery contrasted with Discipline!}
{Fuller picture of the adulteress and how she entices
in ch. 7 – as well as contrast to keeping commands}**

7) Seduced by the Adulteress - Proverbs 7

¹ My son, keep my words
and store up my commands within you.

² Keep my commands and you will live;
guard my teachings 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 kinsman;

⁵ they will keep you from the adulteress,
from the wayward wife with her seductive words.

⁶ At the window of my house
I looked out through the lattice.

⁷ I saw among the simple,
I noticed among the young men,
a youth who lacked judgment.

⁸ He was going down the street near her corner,
walking along in the direction of her house

⁹ at twilight, as the day was fading,
as the dark of night set in.

¹⁰ Then out came a woman to meet him,
dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent.

¹¹ (She is loud and defiant,
her feet never stay at home;

¹² now in the street, now in the squares,
at every corner she lurks.)

¹³ She took hold of him and kissed him
and with a brazen face she said:

¹⁴ "I have fellowship offerings ^[a] at home;
today I fulfilled my vows.

¹⁵ So I came out to meet you;
I looked for you and have found you!

¹⁶ I have covered my bed
with colored linens from Egypt.

¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed
with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.

¹⁸ Come, let's drink deep of love till morning;
let's enjoy ourselves with love!

¹⁹ My husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey.

²⁰ He took his purse filled with money
and will not be home till full moon."

²¹ With persuasive words she led him astray;
she seduced him with her smooth talk.

²² All at once he followed her
like an ox going to the slaughter,
like a deer stepping into a noose ^l

²³ till an arrow pierces his liver,
like a bird darting into a snare,
little knowing it will cost him his life.

²⁴ Now then, my sons, listen to me;
pay attention to what I say.

²⁵ Do not let your heart turn to her ways
or stray into her paths.

²⁶ Many are the victims she has brought down;
her slain are a mighty throng.

²⁷ Her house is a highway to the grave,
leading down to the chambers of death.

8) Called by Wisdom - Proverbs 8

¹ Does not wisdom call out?
Does not understanding raise her voice?

² On the heights along the way,
where the paths meet, she takes her stand;

³ beside the gates leading into the city,
at the entrances, she cries aloud:

⁴ "To you, O men, I call out;
I raise my voice to all mankind.

⁵ You who are simple, gain prudence;
you who are foolish, gain understanding.

⁶ Listen, for I have worthy things to say;
I open my lips to speak what is right.

⁷ My mouth speaks what is true,
for my lips detest wickedness.

⁸ All the words of my mouth are just;
none of them is crooked or perverse.

⁹ To the discerning all of them are right;
they are faultless to those who have knowledge.

¹⁰ Choose my instruction instead of silver,
knowledge rather than choice gold,

¹¹ for wisdom is more precious than rubies,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

¹² "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence;
I possess knowledge and discretion.

¹³ To fear the LORD is to hate evil;
I hate pride and arrogance,
evil behavior and perverse speech.

¹⁴ Counsel and sound judgment are mine;
I have understanding and power.

¹⁵ By me kings reign
and rulers make laws that are just;

¹⁶ by me princes govern,
and all nobles who rule on earth. ¹

¹⁷ I love those who love me,
and those who seek me find me.

¹⁸ With me are riches and honor,
enduring wealth and prosperity.

¹⁹ My fruit is better than fine gold;
what I yield surpasses choice silver.

²⁰ I walk in the way of righteousness,
along the paths of justice,

²¹ bestowing wealth on those who love me
and making their treasuries full.

***{note: greater, lasting benefit than adulteress ...
because from beginning, not temporary or fleeting}***

²² "The LORD brought me forth as the first of his
works,
before his deeds of old;

²³ I was appointed from eternity,
from the beginning, before the world began.

²⁴ When there were no oceans, I was given birth,
when there were no springs abounding with
water;

²⁵ before the mountains were settled in place,
before the hills, I was given birth,

²⁶ before he made the earth or its fields
or any of the dust of the world.

²⁷ I was there when he set the heavens in place,
when he marked out the horizon on the face of
the deep,

²⁸ when he established the clouds above
and fixed securely the fountains of the deep,

²⁹ when he gave the sea its boundary
so the waters would not overstep his command,
and when he marked out the foundations of the
earth.

³⁰ Then I was the craftsman at his side.
I was filled with delight day after day,
rejoicing always in his presence,

³¹ rejoicing in his whole world
and delighting in mankind.

³² "Now then, my sons, listen to me;
blessed are those who keep my ways.

³³ Listen to my instruction and be wise;
do not ignore it.

³⁴ Blessed is the man who listens to me,
watching daily at my doors,
waiting at my doorway.

³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life
and receives favor from the LORD.

³⁶ But whoever fails to find me harms himself;
all who hate me love death."

{ultimately wisdom is a picture of Christ – the incarnation of wisdom – and finding Him is to find God and to find life – wisdom here not preincarnate Christ or allegory of Christ, but Christ is fulfillment and embodiment of wisdom, as well as the opener of our eyes so we can see wisdom}

9) Proverbs 9 – Invitations of Wisdom and Folly

¹ Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn out its seven pillars.

² She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.

³ She has sent out her maids, and she calls
from the highest point of the city.

⁴ "Let all who are simple come in here!"
she says to those who lack judgment.

⁵ "Come, eat my food
and drink the wine I have mixed.

⁶ Leave your simple ways and you will live;
walk in the way of understanding.

⁷ "Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult;
whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse.

⁸ Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you;
rebuke a wise man and he will love you.

⁹ Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still;
teach a righteous man and he will add to his
learning.

¹⁰ "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

¹¹ For through me your days will be many,
and years will be added to your life.

¹² If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you;
if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer."

¹³ The woman Folly is loud;
she is undisciplined and without knowledge.

¹⁴ She sits at the door of her house,
on a seat at the highest point of the city,

¹⁵ calling out to those who pass by,
who go straight on their way.

¹⁶ "Let all who are simple come in here!"
she says to those who lack judgment.

¹⁷ "Stolen water is sweet;
food eaten in secret is delicious!"

¹⁸ But little do they know that the dead are there,
that her guests are in the depths of the grave.

{note: both call out, both offer food ... but one true feat the other stolen water ... one is death, one is life ... also both on high place of city – place of God – in the end it is about who we worship ... who will you serve?}

10) We come to a crossroads

- only 2 paths

- one offers immediate pleasure, promises all your desires will be met ... but only delivers death

- the other requires discipline and obedience – but it offers great reward in this life and eternal life

- the rest of Proverbs is for those who chose the path of Wisdom, and are willing to learn and live in the Fear of the Lord!