

Proverbs 9

The Fork in Life

A. Wisdom Is Waiting (Prov. 9:1-6)

B. Choose Your Side (Prov. 9:7-12)

C. Bittersweet Meal (Prov. 9:13-18)

Intro

We have been studying and comparing both women described in here. Solomon is using a personification for Wisdom and Foolish. We have been comparing and discussing about the benefits and of follow the first one and all the danger on following the second one.

This is the closing of this section of the book so Solomon does this final personification regarding Wisdom and Foolishness.

In this Proverb we will see how both are ready for you and you are now in this fork in life. This fork is not a one-time direction decision, but a constant application of wisdom or a constant drift in life.

A. Wisdom Is Waiting (Prov. 9:1-6)

We are now in this fork and at the end of the way at your right, you can see this first lady that is Wisdom.

You can see all these details:

The Way of Wisdom

¹ Wisdom has built her house,
She has hewn out her seven pillars;
² She has slaughtered her meat,
She has mixed her wine,
She has also furnished her table.
³ She has sent out her maidens,
She cries out from the highest places of the city,
⁴ "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"

As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,

⁵ "Come, eat of my bread

And drink of the wine I have mixed.

⁶ Forsake foolishness and live,

And go in the way of understanding.

Let's remember a little bit about her.

Proverbs 8 described wisdom as a woman with good character, heart, willingness to serve, and benefits for those who attend her calling. Now we can see Wisdom as a woman of generous hospitality who invites all the simples - (**Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!**).

In this proverb we can find some characteristics and details to know that she is preparing the way and preparing a warm and comfortable housing to them who attend her calling.

¹ Wisdom has built her house,

She has hewn out her seven pillars;

Built her house: Wisdom doesn't lack of anything and has everything in place waiting for the guests. We can see diligence and good character. Someone working in advance. We know God's wisdom is perfect and everything fits in the right place and the right time. God is always working ahead, and He is not attached to time nor space. God's wisdom is always in time and has prepared everything. This woman here is working and has finished her place to receive her guests.

Some people can allegorize this, and some say that this could represent the church of Christ. This figure can fit however it is just a poetic figure without any foundation so if you want to allegorize you should be clear that is not related to any direct passage and remember that we are studying a poetic book, so we need to be careful with this.

She has hewn out her seven pillars: The general idea here is that Wisdom's place is large, comfortable, open, and complete. And coming back to the allegories, some commentators have referred to some symbolic meaning in her seven pillars. Seven is the number of completeness and perfection (both physical and spiritual). It derives much of

its meaning from being tied directly to God's creation of all things. In the Jewish culture, using this number was not casual.

² She has slaughtered her meat,
She has mixed her wine,
She has also furnished her table.

Eating as a sacred act

"There are several intimate things that people do together: love, play, pray, work, and eat. Eating is a social task, which transforms the biological need into a community of intimacy and shared experience. People sit down around a table. They face each other. Someone has prepared the food with dedication and care, someone serves the food, and people pass food to each other.

Jewish tradition recognizes a meal as a time for intimacy, fellowship, and significant conversation. Kindness is the basic mood of the Jewish meal. People talk with each other about what matters. That is why the Rabbis say that if people eat together and Torah talk is not exchanged then the meal is a vain enterprise. If eating does not create the opportunity to teach and to learn then it becomes biological feeding."

³ She has sent out her maidens,
She cries out from the highest places of the city,
⁴ "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"
As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
⁵ "Come, eat of my bread
And drink of the wine I have mixed.
⁶ Forsake foolishness and live,
And go in the way of understanding.

Forsake foolishness and live: Wisdom makes the invitation, but the simple must respond. They must be willing to go in the way of Wisdom. We can see a great explanation of this in Luke.

Luke 14:16-24: ¹⁶ Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷ and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' ¹⁸ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have

me excused.' ¹⁹ And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' ²⁰ Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' ²¹ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' ²² And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' ²³ Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴ For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

B. Choose Your Side (Prov. 9:7-12)

⁷ "He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself,
And he who rebukes a wicked *man only* harms himself.

⁸ Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
Rebuke a wise *man*, and he will love you.

⁹ Give *instruction* to a wise *man*, and he will be still wiser;
Teach a just *man*, and he will increase in 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 will bear *it* alone."

Having called everyone, Wisdom now explains the folly and fruitlessness of trying to impose wisdom on the unwilling. The scoffer and wicked man won't receive wisdom and will hate the one trying to help and witness

Wiersbe says: "Fools, scoffers, and the simple like to have their own way and be told they're doing fine, but wise men and women want the truth. Teach wise people and they'll accept the truth and become wiser; try to teach fools and they'll reject the truth and become even greater fools."

I always say that when we think that we are ok, that's the moment when we are in the most vulnerable and dangerous position.

When we are trying to witness somebody, we should pray and wait for the Lord opening an opportunity. Sometimes we can *test the waters* and start little by little, but we cannot pretend to change a person by our own strength and intelligence. That's God's work. Wait and pray for the favorable opportunity.

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser:

In the other hand, the **wise and just** man will benefit from wisdom's invitation. He will accept this invitation with joy.

Matthew 13:12: ¹² For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

The wise and just loves correction as he understands that it means love and care:

Hebrews 12:5-6: ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."

Proverbs 12:1: Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction *is* stupid.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: The same principle of Proverbs 1:7 is repeated here at the end of this section. *Though Proverbs is a book that focuses on practical life, it is founded on this important principle: **wisdom begins with a right relationship with God.***

If you are wise, you are wise for yourself: Solomon reminded us that wisdom is **for yourself** first.

C. Bittersweet Meal (Prov. 9:13-18)

The Way of Folly

¹³ A foolish woman is clamorous;
She is simple, and knows nothing.

¹⁴ For she sits at the door of her house,

On a seat *by* the highest places of the city,
15 To call to those who pass by,
Who go straight on their way:
16 "Whoever *is* simple, let him turn in here";
And *as for* him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
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 hell.

Using the symbolic figure, Solomon now presented the foolish way that rejects wisdom. Folly is like a **clamorous and annoying, simple, and ignorant** trying to entice others. This your left path in your fork. You see this decadent and sad place but full of music and lights. You need to make your decision.

Clamorous: "Speaks loudly, that she may be heard; and vehemently, that persons might be moved by her persuasions.

Whoever is simple, let him turn in here: Folly imitates the call wisdom makes to the simple. Folly has her own training program to bring her victims further along their path. We discuss this in the last chapters. It tries to entice and deceive the simple person.

Stolen water is sweet: She is always trying to make *good* bad and bad good. Things gained through transgression are more **sweet** and **pleasant** than what may be rightfully obtained. At the very end that how sin looks to us.