

Proverbs 1:1-7 Outline

I. Superscription- Verse 1

A. Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, King of Israel

II. Purpose- Verse 2-6

A. General purpose

1. To know wisdom and discipline
2. To understand words of understanding

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 - a. To take hold of discipline
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1. Let the wise one hear and let him add to his acquired instruction
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D. Summary

1. To understand a proverb,
2. and an enigma, and the words of the wise and their figurative sayings

III. Motto- Verse 7

A. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge

B. But the fools despise wisdom and discipline

Proverbs 1:1-7 Outline

IV. Superscription- Verse 1

A. Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, King of Israel

V. Purpose- Verse 2-6

A. General purpose

1. To know wisdom and discipline

- a. to know- **לִדְעַת** experiential knowledge, know from experience, not just from intellect of heresay
- b. wisdom- **חִכְמָה** Skill, cf. Ex 28, general term, skill in anything, but here specifically skill in life- skill in living with laws of God's created order such as: reciprocity; freedom within form; liberty within law; love within restraint- religious and ethical state of knowing what conforms with divine reality, with truth and acting upon it, thereby enabling one to cope with enigma and adversity and to succeed.
- c. and discipline- **וּמוֹסָר** Instruction, not necessarily negative discipline- assumes an instructor who knows and a disciple who learns. Discipline in the school of wisdom.

2. To understand words of understanding **לְהַבִּין**

- a. To hear and understand, without fear of Lord, is just external hearing- understanding, insight into how the world is put together., grasping, making the connection and putting it together

B. Explained specifically- package deal, if you have wisdom, you have all the things about to be mentioned, if you don't have wisdom, you don't

1. From the Point of view of student

- a. To take hold of discipline
 - i. take hold of- **לְקַחַת** To receive with favor, to accept, to embrace.
 - ii. discipline- same word as v.2.
- b. To be prudent **הַשְׂכִּיל** Idea of
 - A) looking intently with close attention,
 - B) having insight and understanding,
 - C) acting rightly, circumspectly, accordingly and
 - D) therefore prospering and having success.
 - ii. in righteousness, **צְדָקָה** Conforming to right order, social order, community loyalty, doing right in social relationships. Notion of benevolence and charity- community minded.
 - iii. justice, **וּמִשְׁפָּט** Going beyond righteousness to establish justice, punishing tyrants and freeing oppressed.
 - iv. and uprightness **וּמִישָׁרִים** Living up to a norm, upright, straight.

2. From the Point of view of the instructor

- a. To give initiation to the simple, open minded
 - i. To give- **לְתַת** to give
 - ii. To the simple **לְפִתְאִים** To be open, uncommitted, raw youth without instruction, not low IQ, but uninstructed in morality, unaware of evil and

dangers, not yet developed moral acumen- like a green soldier just arriving in a war zone, not yet aware of the dangers and minefields (moral traps, sex traps, addiction traps). There is two stages of the simpleton: the unformed (here) and the malformed (fool). If the simpleton passes through life without commitment to wisdom, they turn into the fool.

- iii. Prudence, craftiness- עֲרָמָה Knowing where going and how to get there, knowing dangers- intentional and familiar with territory, experienced.
- b. (To give) knowledge and prudence to a child
 - i. To a child – נֶעֱר – young lad, inexperienced
 - ii. Knowledge- same word as v. 2 in noun form
 - iii. And discretion וְחֵידָתָם Shrewdness, prudence resulting from deliberation, power of devising. Scheming, thinking through Cf. 2:11; 3:21; 5:2; 8:12. root usually plural of evil schemes- negative, this form is singular and positive- like the soldier receiving basic training.

C. Admonition

- 1. Let the wise one hear and let him add to his acquired instruction
 - a. Let him hear יִשְׁמָע Same word also means to obey, the two connotations are rarely separated.
 - b. Wise one חָכָם ‘The wise’ are those who are mature, who have made a commitment to wisdom. The wise continue learning, they model learning and never stop, there is no end to the learning of the wise. No one is beyond wisdom.
 - c. And let him add- generic term
 - d. Instruction that is acquired לָקַח Cf. v.3 doctrine, teaching, that which is accepted, received.
- 2. And let the discerning one acquire counsels
 - a. The discerning one, one who understands- participle form of word used in v. 2- understanding
 - b. Counsels תְּחִבְלוֹת Direction, steering [of ship], guidance, cf. 11:14; 24:6; 20:18 and items matched there in parallelism (advisors, advice).
 - c. Let him acquire יִקְנֶה Purchase, acquire, result is ownership.

D. Summary

- 1. To understand a proverb,
 - a. To understand- same word as v. 2, 5 understand, give heed to
 - b. A proverb מִשְׁלַל Comparison or analogy for purpose of providing a model, exemplar, paradigm- comparison re: function- “truths by which you can compare your life” –Waltke, open ended illustration so we can make comparison to our life and live life accordingly

Proverbs 16:8 Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.

- 2. and an enigma, and the words of the wise and their figurative sayings
 - a. satire, enigma וּמְלִיצָה Allusive expression,
 - i. often mocking, scornful saying, cf. Hab 2:6. akin to the scoffer throughout proverbs.

- ii. But in Gen 42:23, Isa 43:27 and Job 33:23, it takes the connotation of interpreter, interpretation.
- iii. The idea is not the interpretation of the proverb, but the interpretation/application of the proverb to life.
- iv. Need wisdom to make appropriate interpretation and application to life.

Proverbs 26:7 Like a lame man's legs that hang limp is a proverb in the mouth of a fool. ^{NIV}

Proverbs 26:9 Like a thornbush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

Wisdom needed in reading proverbs- not just understanding words, but knowing when and how to apply the proverbs.

On 26:7,9 –“Proverbs like these indicate that memorizing proverbs doesn’t do the trick; in other words, mere knowledge of a proverb does not help a person navigate life well.

There is nothing wrong with knowing the proverbs, to be sure, but such knowledge is not sufficient. After all..” then quotes 15:23

Proverbs 15:23 A man finds joy in giving an apt reply-- and how good is a timely word! -Longman Provs p. 18.

- b. words of the wise ones, sayings of the wise cf. v. 5; 22:17, ch. 30-31 examples of words of the wise, note in ch. 30 he denies he has wisdom, but wisdom comes from God, that is what makes him wise.
- c. and their riddles, וְהִירָתֵם figurative sayings Riddle something locked up, perplexing, something spoken indirectly cf. IQ and ability to see metaphor, so also wisdom quotient and ability to see and apply that which is spoken indirectly. Cf. Jdg. 14:13, 18, Num 12:8.

“Running throughout Proverbs and wisdom literature in general is the idea that proverbs are not universal truths that are always relevant and rightly applied; rather, they are context-sensitive....Wise people know not only how to interpret the words on the page or the words spoken by other people but also how to interpret people themselves and, more broadly, the situation in which they find themselves.” – ibid.

Fee and Stuart stress that proverbs are not universal promises, but rather concise maxims ‘all other things being equal...’

Proverbs 22:6 Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 26:4-5 **4** Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. **5** Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.- a fool will say ‘ha, a contradiction!’ but a wise person will say, ‘there is more here than meets the eye, when should I answer a fool and why, when not and why not?’

VI. Motto- Verse 7

A. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge

- 1. Fear of the Lord יִרְאַת יְהוָה
 - a. Wisdom is God centered

- i. In Prov. the wicked live to themselves and are not mindful of God, piety, community and morality.
 - ii. Proverbs can be abused easily or misread/misused if not spiritual and spiritually sensitive.
 - iii. There are similarities between Proverbs and ANE Wisdom, but they are night and day different because Proverbs is centered in Yahweh,
 - iv. a part of a community that assumes salvation history and Torah.
 - b. The foundation of knowledge requires spiritual underpinnings.
 - i. The enlightenment is a failure because it denies the spiritual resources needed to uphold knowledge.
 - ii. Postmodernism is a failure because it seeks the spiritual resources from the wrong spirits, lying spirits.
 - c. Fear of Lord has 3 ideas:
 - i. objective revelation= law of Lord, ordinances etc. cf. Prov 2:1-5, in Psa 19 parallel to law and testimony. No fear of the Lord without objective cognitive content, not just emotion.
 - ii. spiritual response to revelation, humble acceptance of it. Prov. 15:32, 22:4, Isa 29:13 honor with lips but not hearts, lit. fear of me is rules of humans. White flag of surrender before revelation- that we see and understand with our minds and we then bow with our hearts.
 - iii. hold these truths in awe, recognize the sphere of the holy one- in 9:10 is parallel with knowledge of Holy One- reverence, awe, obedience and submission,
 - d. loving God and fearing God are not opposites, we have trouble understanding.
 - i. Dt. 6:4 ff esp v.13 Love God and fear God-
 - ii. Dt. 10:12, fear of Lord, obedience, Loving and serving God all commanded
 - iii. Josh 24:14, renewing covt. "Fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness" Parallel to serve.-
 - iv. Exod 3 both drawn toward and repulsed,
 - A) cf. Otto, both attracted to it and withdraw from it,
 - B) cf. Peter- "depart from me"
 - C) and Isa 6 Woe is me-
 - v. Exo 14:31, fear and put trust in-
 - vi. Exo 20:20, fear of Lord keeps from sinning –
 - e. "Wise living does not remove fear entirely. It consists of fearing the right things." IB.
 - f. In Prov. Fear of Lord is parallel to wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.,
 - g. contrasted with not just fools, but wicked.
- 2. Knowledge- **דַעַת** same word as above
- 3. Beginning of **רֵאשִׁית**
 - a. Cf. Isa 46:10, Eccl 7:3, Mic 1:13, Pro 4:7, 17:14, Psa 111:10, Amos 6:1, Dan 11:41, Dt 33:21, I Sam 2:29, 15:21-
 - b. not just first of many steps, the first being left behind,
 - c. but the chief part which is needed for all other parts,
 - d. like a foundation without which the whole building falls down.

- e. What alphabet is to reading, what numerals are to mathematics, so Fear of Lord is to wisdom and knowledge.
 - f. You never move beyond the fear of Lord, can never do without it.
 - g. Do not try to master and control word, but tremble before it. Always seeking to understand it, but do so by always submitting to what it says.
 - h. There is no knowledge at U of O.
- B. But the fools despise wisdom and discipline-
antithesis wise-fool, accept- despise, if you are indifferent to wisdom, you really despise wisdom and are a fool
1. wisdom and discipline- **וּמִוֶּסֶר** **חֲכָמָה** cf. above v.2 inclusio
 2. foolish ones **אִוִּלִּים**
 - a. Fool, incorrigible, intractable,
 - b. fool that will not budge, a hardened fool-
 - c. Proverbs never appeals to them to change,
 - d. rather they are proverbial in their foolishness as Proverbs appeals to the uninitiated-
 - e. different classes of fools in Proverbs.
 3. they despise **בָּזוּ**