

Proverbs 1:1-7 Outline

I. Superscription- (1)

Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, King of Israel

II. Purpose- (2-6)

A. General purpose

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

B. Explained Specifically

1. From the point of view of the student
 - a) To take hold of discipline
 - b) To be prudent in righteousness, justice, and uprightness
2. From the point of view of the teacher
 - a) To give initiation to the simple, open minded
 - b) (To give) knowledge and prudence to a child

C. Admonition/Exhortation

1. Let the wise one hear and let him add to his acquired instruction
2. And let the discerning one acquire counsels

D. Summary

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

III. Motto- (7)

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

B. But the fools despise wisdom and discipline

Proverbs 1:1-7 Detailed Outline

I. Superscription- (1)

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

II. Purpose- (2-6)

A. General purpose

1. To know wisdom and discipline

- a) To know- לִדְעַת experiential knowledge, know from experience, not just from intellect or heresy
- b) Wisdom- חֵכְמָה skill, cf. Ex. 28, general term, skill in anything, but here specifically skill in life- skill in living within the 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 בִּינָה

To hear and understand, without fear of the Lord, is just external hearing- cf. Isa. 6:9-10. Understanding, insight into how the world is put together, grasping, making the connection and putting it all 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 the student

- a) To take hold of discipline
 - (1) Take hold of- לָקַחַת To receive with favor, to accept, to embrace
 - (2) Discipline- same word as v. 2.
- b) To be prudent- הַשְׂפִּיל Four parts of the idea of prudence:
 - (a) Looking intently with close attention,
 - (b) Having insight and understanding
 - (c) Acting rightly, circumspectly, accordingly and
 - (d) Therefore prospering and having success
- (2) in righteousness- צְדָקָה conforming to right order, social order, community loyalty, doing right in social relationships. Notion of benevolence and charity- community minded.
- (3) Justice- וּמִשְׁפָּט Going beyond righteousness to establish justice, punishing tyrants and freeing the oppressed.
- (4) and uprightness- וּמִישְׁרִים Living up to a norm, upright, straight

2. From the point of view of the teacher

- a) To give initiation to the simple, open minded
 - (1) To give- לָתַתּוּ to give
 - (2) To the simple- לְפִתְאִים One who is 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 (naïve, inexperienced) 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.
 - (3) Prudence, craftiness- עֲרָמָה Knowing where one is going and how to get there, knowing dangers- intentional and familiar with the territory, experienced
- b) (To give) knowledge and prudence to a child
 - (1) To a child- לְנֶעֱר young lad, inexperienced
 - (2) Knowledge- same word (to know) as v.2 in noun form
 - (3) And discretion- וּמְזִמָּה Shrewdness, prudence resulting from deliberation, power of devising, scheming, thinking through- cf. 2:11; 3:21, 5:2, 8:12 word is typically used negatively of evil schemes in plural; this form is singular and has positive connotation- like the soldier receiving basic training

C. Admonition/Exhortation

1. Let the wise one hear and let him add to his acquired instruction

- a) Let him hear- יִשְׁמַע same word also means to obey, the two connotations are rarely separated
- b) Wise one- חֲכָמִים '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- לְקַח cf. v.3 (related word from the same root)- 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 the word used in v. 2- (understanding)
- b) Counsels- תְּחִבֵּלוֹת 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, with the result of ownership

D. Summary

1. To understand a proverb,

- a) To understand- same word as v.2,5 understand, give heed to
- b) A Proverb- מִשָּׁל שֶׁצִּיּוּף cf. 1:1, Comparison or analogy for the purpose of providing a model, exemplar, paradigm- comparison re: function- “truths by which you can compare your life”- Waltke. Open end illustration so we can make comparison to our life and live 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,
 - (1) Often mocking, scornful saying, cf. Hab. 2:6 akin to the scoffer throughout proverbs.
 - (2) But in Gen. 42:23, Isa. 43:27 and Job 33:23, it takes the connotation of interpreter, interpretation.
 - (3) The idea is not the interpretation of the proverb, but the interpretation and application of the proverb to life.
 - (4) We need wisdom to make appropriate interpretation and application to life

Proverbs 26:7 Like a lame man’s legs that hand limp is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
Proverbs 26:9 Like a thornbush in a drunkard’s hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
 Wisdom is needed in reading proverbs- not just understanding the words, but knowing when and how to apply the proverbs.
 On 26:7,9- “Proverbs like these indicate that memorizing proverbs doesn’t 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, ‘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, chs. 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- וְחִידָתָם 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 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 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.

A fool will say ‘aha, 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?’

III. Motto- (7)

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

1. Fear of the Lord- יִרְאַת יְהוָה

- a) Wisdom is God centered
 - (1) In Prov. The wicked live to themselves and are not mindful of God, piety, community and morality
 - (2) Proverbs can be abused easily or misread/misused if you are not spiritual and spiritually sensitive
 - (3) There are similarities between Proverbs and ANE wisdom, but they are night and day different because Proverbs is centered in Yahweh.
 - (4) Proverbs comes from a community that assumes salvation history and Torah
- b) The foundation of knowledge requires spiritual underpinnings.
 - (1) The enlightenment is a failure because it denies the spiritual resources needed to uphold knowledge
 - (2) Postmodernism is a failure because it seeks the spiritual resources from the wrong spirits, lying spirits
- c) Fear of the Lord has 3 ideas:
 - (1) Objective revelation = Law of the 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
 - (2) 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 then we bow with our hearts
 - (3) Hold these truths in awe, recognize the sphere of the Holy One- in 9:10 it is parallel with knowledge of the Holy One- reverence, awe, obedience and submission
- d) Loving God and fearing God are not opposites- paradox not easy to understand
 - (1) Dt. 6:4 ff. esp. v. 13- Love God and Fear God
 - (2) Dt. 10:12, Fear of the Lord, obedience, Loving and serving God are all commanded.
 - (3) Josh. 24:14- renewing the cov’t- “Fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness” (parallel to ‘serve’)
 - (4) Exo. 3 both drawn toward and repulsed
 - (a) Cf. Otto, numinous- both attracted to it and withdraw from it
 - (b) Cf. Peter- “depart from me”
 - (c) Cf. Isa. 6 “Woe is me”
 - (5) Exo. 14:31 Fear and put trust in the Lord
 - (6) Exo. 20:20 Fear of the Lord keeps us from sinning

- e) “Wise living does not remove fear entirely. It consists of fearing the right things.” IB en loc. cf. Matt. 10:28
- f) In Prov. Fear of the Lord is parallel to wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.
- g) In Prov. Fear of the Lord is contrasted with not just fools, but also the wicked.

2. Knowledge- יָדַעַת same word as above

3. Beginning of- רֵאשִׁית

- a) Cf. Isa. 46:10; Eccl. 7:3; Mic. 1:13; Prov. 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 the first of many steps, with the first step being left behind
- c) But the chief part which is needed for all other parts.
- d) Like the foundation, without which the building falls down
- e) What the alphabet is to reading, what numerals are to mathematics, so Fear of the Lord is to wisdom and knowledge.
- f) You never move beyond the fear of the Lord, can never do without it.
- g) Do not try to master and control the word, but rather tremble before it. Always seeking to understand it, but do so by always submitting to what it says.
- h) There is no knowledge without the Fear of the Lord, cf. U of O

B. But the fools despise wisdom and discipline

Antithesis- wise/fool, accept/despise- no middle option, if you are indifferent to wisdom, you really despise wisdom and therefore are a fool

1. Wisdom and discipline- חֲכָמָה וּמִוֶּסֶר cf. v.2 inclusio vv.2-7

2. Foolish ones- אֲוִילִים

- a) Fool, incorrigible, intractable
- b) Fool that will not budge, a hardened fool
- c) Proverbs never appeals to a fool to change
- d) Rather they are proverbial in their foolishness as Proverbs appeals to the uninitiated
- e) There are different classes of fools in Proverbs

3. They despise- בִּזּוּ

- a) Despise, hold in contempt to the point of rejection, to regard as unimportant or insignificant
- b) Opposite of fear, reverence יִרָא (14:2), honor כָּבֵד (I Sam 2:30) and keep [commandments] שָׁמַר (Prov. 19:16)
- c) Despising wisdom is the characteristic, almost definition, of fools, 18:3; 23:9
- d) Those who treat the Lord with contempt will themselves be despised (Mal. 1:6-7, 12; 2:9)

Proverbs 1:1-7

יִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד בֶּן-שְׁלֹמֹה מִשְׁלֵי 1
 Prop.N. msc Prop.N. msc Prop.N. msc
 Israel King of David son of Solomon proverbs of

וּמוֹסֵר חֵכְמָה לְדַעַת 2
 msa+1 fsa QInfcs
 discipline¹ wisdom² to know

בִּינָה אִמְרֵי לִהְבִּין 3
 fsa msc HiphInfcs
 understanding words of to give heed to and understand³

מוֹסֵר לְקַחַת 3⁴
 msa QInfcs
 discipline in the school of wisdom to receive, take hold of⁵

וּמִיִּשְׁרִים וּמִנְשֵׁפֹט צְדָק הַשִּׁבְלִי 6
 mpa+1 msa+1 msa HiphInfabs
 and rightness, uprightness⁷ and justice, right⁸ righteousness⁹ to be prudent¹⁰

¹ Instruction, not necessarily negative discipline- assumes an instructor who knows and a disciple who learns.

² 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.

³ To hear an understand, without fear of Lord, is just external hearing- understanding, insight into how the world is put together.

⁴ Vv. 3-4 are a merism explicating 2a from the viewpoint of the student (v.3) and of the teacher (v.4).

⁵ To receive with favor, to accept, to embrace.

⁶ Package deal, if you have wisdom, you have all of these things and vice versa, if not have wisdom...

⁷ Living up to a norm, upright, straight.

⁸ Going beyond righteousness to establish justice, punishing tyrants and freeing oppressed.

⁹ Conforming to right order, social order, community loyalty, doing right in social relationships. Notion of benevolence and charity- community minded.

¹⁰ Idea of 1. looking intently with close attention, 2. having insight and understanding, 3. acting rightly, circumspectly, accordingly and 4. therefore prospering and having success.

עֲרֻמָּה לַפְתָּאִים לָתֵת 4
 fsa mpa+ל QInfcs
 prudence, craftiness¹¹ to the simple, naïve, open minded¹² to give

וּמְזֻמָּה דַּעַת לְנֵעַר
 fsa+ו fsa msa+ל
 and discretion, prudence¹³ knowledge to a child, lad¹⁴

לִקְחָה וַיֹּסֶף חָכָם יִשְׁמַע 5
 msa HiphIpf(juss)3ms+ו msa QIpf(juss)3ms
 instruction that is acquired¹⁵ and let him add wise (one)¹⁶ let him hear¹⁷

יִקְנֶה תְּחִבֹּלוֹת וְנָבוֹן
 QIpf(juss)3ms fpa NiphPtcpsms+ו
 let him acquire¹⁸ (good, wise) counsels, direction¹⁹ and the one discerning, having understanding

מִשְׁלָל לְהִבִּין 6
 msa HiphInfcs
 proverb, parable, sentence of ethical wisdom²⁰ to give heed to and understand

וְחִידוֹתָם חֲכָמִים דְּבָרֵי וּמְלִיצָה
 fpc+3mp+ו mpa mpc fsa+ו
 and their riddles, allegorical or figurative sayings²¹ the wise (ones) words of²² and satire, enigma²³

¹¹ Knowing where going and how to get there, knowing dangers- intentional and familiar with territory, experienced.

¹² 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.

¹³ Shrewdness, prudence resulting from deliberation, power of devising. 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.

¹⁴ Young lad, inexperienced.

¹⁵ Cf. v.3 doctrine, teaching, that which is accepted, received.

¹⁶ ‘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.

¹⁷ Same word also means to obey, the two connotations are rarely separated.

¹⁸ Purchase, acquire, result is ownership.

¹⁹ Direction, steering [of ship], guidance, cf. 11:14; 24:6; 20:18 and items matched there in parallelism (advisors, advice).

²⁰ Comparison or analogy for purpose of providing a model, exemplar, paradigm- comparison re:function- “truths by which you can compare your life” –Walke, open ended illustration so we can make comparison to our life and live life accordingly

דַּעַת fsa knowledge
 רֵאשִׁית msc beginning, chief, head, primary part, first phase or step of²⁴
 יהוָה D.N. Yahweh
 יִרְאָת fsc fear, piety, respect of²⁵
 7

בָּזוּ QP3cp they despise²⁶
 אֵילִים mpa foolish (morally bad) ones²⁷
וּמוֹסֵר msa+ו and discipline
חִכְמָה fsa wisdom

²¹ 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.

²² Words of the wise, cf. 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.

²³ Allusive expression, often mocking, scornful saying, cf. Hab 2:6. akin to the scoffer throughout proverbs. But in Gen 42:23, Isa 43:27 and Job 33:23, it takes the connotation of interpreter, interpretation. The idea is not the interpretation of the proverb, but the interpretation/application of the proverb to life. Need wisdom to make appropriate interpretation and application to life. ^{NIV} **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. –cf. 26:4

²⁴ 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- not just first of many steps, the first being left behind, but the chief part which is needed for all other parts, like a foundation without which the whole building falls down. What alphabet is to reading, what numerals are to mathematics, so Fear of Lord is to wisdom and knowledge. You never move beyond the fear of Lord, can never do without it. 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. There is no knowledge at U of O.

²⁵ Cf. BDB REFS. In Prov. the wicked live to themselves and are not mindful of God, piety, community and morality. Proverbs can be abused easily or misread/misused if not spiritual and spiritually sensitive. There are similarities between Proverbs and ANE Wisdom, but they are night and day different because Proverbs is centered in Yahweh, a part of a community that assumes salvation history and Torah. The foundation of knowledge requires spiritual underpinnings. The enlightenment is a failure because it denies the spiritual resources needed to uphold knowledge. Postmodernism is a failure because it seeks the spiritual resources from the wrong spirits, lying spirits. Fear of Lord has 3 ideas: 1. 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. 2. 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. 3. 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, loving God and fearing God are not opposites, we have trouble understanding. Dt. 6:4 ff esp v.13 Love God and fear God- Dt. 10:12, fear of Lord, obedience, Loving and serving God all commanded –Josh 24:14, renewing covt. “Fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness” Parallel to serve.- Exod 3 both drawn toward and repulsed, cf. Otto, both attracted to it and withdraw from it, cf. Peter- “depart from me” and Isa 6 Woe is me- Exo 14:31, fear and put trust in- Exo 20:20, fear of Lord keeps from sinning – “Wise living does not remove fear entirely. It consists of fearing the right things.” IB. In Prov. Fear of Lord is parallel to wisdom, understanding, and knowledge., contrasted with not just fools, but wicked.

²⁶ Antithesis, fools despise wisdom and instruction

²⁷ Fool, incorrigible, intractable, fool that will not budge, a hardened fool- Proverbs never appeals to them to change, rather they are proverbial in their foolishness as Proverbs appeals to the uninitiated- different classes of fools in Proverbs.

אָבִיךָ	מוֹסֵר	בְּנִי	שְׁמַע 8
msc+2ms	msa	msc+1cs	QIpf2ms
your father	discipline of	my son	listen

אִמֶּךָ	תּוֹרַת	תַּטֵּשׁ	וְאַל-
fsc+2ms	fsc	QIpf2ms ²⁸	neg+i
your mother	Torah, law, teaching of	do abandon, forsake ²⁹	not

לְרִאשֶׁתְּךָ	הֵם	חֵן	לְוֵיֹת	כִּי 9
msc+2ms+ל	3mp	msa	fsc	conj.
to your head	(are) they	grace, favor	wreath of ³⁰	because

לְגַרְגְּרֹתֶיךָ	וְעֻנְקִים
fpc+2ms+ל	mpa+i
to your neck ³¹	and necklaces

²⁸ Vetiive, Negative of the imperative, Williams §186.

²⁹ Cf. 6:20.

³⁰ Cf. 4:9.

³¹ Cf. 3:3, 22, 6:21.

