

How to Make Life Work



WISDOM FROM PROVERBS

Proverbs 9:1-18

¹ Wisdom has built her house;
she has set up 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 servants, and she calls
from the highest point of the city,



Proverbs 9:1-18

4“Let all who are simple come to my house!”

To those who have no sense she says,

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 insight.”



Proverbs 9:1-18

7 Whoever corrects a mocker invites insults;
whoever rebukes the wicked incurs abuse.

8 Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you;
rebuke the wise and they will love you.

9 Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still;
teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.



Proverbs 9:1-18

**¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.**

**¹¹ For through wisdom 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.**



Proverbs 9:1-18

**¹³ Folly is an unruly woman;
she is simple and knows nothing.**

**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,**



Proverbs 9:1-18

¹⁶“Let all who are simple come to my house!”

To those who have no sense she says,

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 deep in the realm of the dead.**



Outline

- 1. The Invitation of Wisdom**
- 2. The Lord of Wisdom**
- 3. The Life of Wisdom**



1. The Invitation of Wisdom

Proverbs 9:1-6



1. The Invitation of Wisdom

- **Wisdom is personified as a woman (“Lady Wisdom”)**



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- **She invites the simple (naïve) to a banquet**



1. The Invitation of Wisdom

- **Wisdom is personified as a woman (“Lady Wisdom”)**
- **She invites the simple (naïve) to a banquet**
- **She promises life and insight to those who come**



1. The Invitation of Wisdom

- **A key part of Hebrew wisdom literature, Proverbs seeks to teach the young how the world works. It is filled with proverbial practical advice, based on observations about everyday life, while inviting its readers to embrace its “worldview” — wisdom rooted in God’s revelation of himself and his moral will to Israel.**





HOW TO READ PROVERBS

TREMPER LONGMAN III

“The entire book [of Proverbs] is drenched in theology. A proverbial observation becomes a thermometer of one’s relationship with Woman Wisdom [i.e. Yahweh’s wisdom personified] . . . and a command or admonition is a command or admonition that is implicitly from the Woman herself.”

—Tremper Longman

2. The Lord of Wisdom

Proverbs 9:10: *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

a. The Creator

Prov. 3:19-20: By wisdom the Lord laid the earth’s foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place; ²⁰ by his knowledge the watery depths were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

a. The Creator

Prov. 22:2: Rich and poor have this in common:

The Lord is the Maker of them all.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

**Prov. 19:21: Many are the plans in a person’s heart,
but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

Prov. 15:3: The eyes of the Lord are everywhere,
keeping watch on the wicked and the good.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

**Prov. 5:21: For your ways are in full view of the Lord,
and he examines all your paths.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

**Prov. 16:33: The lot is cast into the lap,
but its every decision is from the Lord.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

Prov. 21:1: The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will. (ESV)



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

b. The Ruler

Prov. 21:30-31: There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord.

**³¹ The horse is made ready for the day of battle,
but victory rests with the Lord.**





DAVID ATKINSON

The Message of
Proverbs

THE OLD TESTAMENT SERIES EDITOR: J. A. MOTYER

The opening section of chapter 16... focuses on the Lord, with its summary in verse 9: 'In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.' These verses are almost all 'Yahweh proverbs'. They stress God's sovereignty over human affairs (16:1); he understands human motives (16:2), and rewards those who commit to him whatever they do (16:3). The whole of creation—even the wicked—are governed by God's purposes (16:4). He will punish the proud (16:5), but turns away his punishment from those who are loving and faithful (16:6), and gives them peace (16:7).



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How much better, then, to live righteously (16:8), under the providential eye of God (16:9). There is blessing for the one who trusts in the Lord (16:20), in whose hand are the ultimate decisions of life (16:33). Such trust offers a place of safety in an uncertain world. The name of Yahweh is a strong tower which provides safety for those who seek its protection (18:19). It is the Lord's purposes which prevail (19:21), for all human faculties are the gift and creation of God (20:12), and all human steps are ordered by his providence (20:24).



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The Message of
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His light searches out the human heart (20:27) and weighs it (21:2). Not even the king is exempt (21:1). No wonder that the highest value is to do what is right and just (21:3). ‘There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord’ (21:30). Even in battle, although we can get the horse ready, ‘victory rests with the Lord’ (21:31). Every aspect of life is thus brought into touch with the faith that the Lord is Yahweh.

—David Atkinson

2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

Prov. 24:11-12: Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. ¹² If you say, “But we knew nothing about this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

**Prov. 29:26: Many seek an audience with a ruler,
but it is from the Lord that one gets justice.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

Prov. 6:16-19: There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, ¹⁹ a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

**Prov. 15:8-9: The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked,
but the prayer of the upright pleases him. ⁹ The Lord detests the way of the
wicked, but he loves those who pursue righteousness.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

Prov. 16:5: The Lord detests all the proud of heart.

Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

Prov. 17:3: The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

c. The Judge

**Prov. 22:8: Whoever sows injustice reaps calamity,
and the rod they wield in fury will be broken.**





Good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance. The smallest good act today is the capture of a strategic point from which, a few months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of. An apparently trivial indulgence in lust or anger today is the loss of a ridge or railway line or bridgehead from which the enemy may launch an attack otherwise impossible. (C. S. Lewis)

2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

d. The Refuge

**Prov. 14:26: Whoever fears the Lord has a secure fortress,
and for their children it will be a refuge.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

d. The Refuge

**Prov. 18:10: The name of the Lord is a fortified tower;
the righteous run to it and are safe.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

d. The Refuge

**Prov. 14:32: When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down,
but even in death the righteous seek refuge in God.**



2. The Lord of Wisdom

The character of “the Lord” (Yahweh) revealed in Proverbs:

d. The Refuge

Prov. 30:5: Every word of God is flawless;

he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.



3. The Life of Wisdom

Selected Proverbs



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

a. Fear the Lord

**Prov. 15:33: Wisdom's instruction is to fear the Lord,
and humility comes before honor.**



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

a. Fear the Lord

Prov. 8:13: To fear the Lord is to hate evil;

I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

a. Fear the Lord

**Prov. 19:23: The fear of the Lord leads to life;
then one rests content, untouched by trouble.**



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

b. Observe the order of the world

Prov. 24:32-34: I applied my heart to what I observed

and learned a lesson from what I saw: ³³ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

b. Observe the order of the world

**Prov. 22:3: The prudent see danger and take refuge,
but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.**



Many Things In Parables

Expository Studies

Ronald S. Wallace

The average Christian of today is not willing to put into the matter of his religion even a fraction of the perseverance, patience, and intelligent concentration that the man who knows only this present world gives towards perfecting his technical. Knowledge for his business, or even towards his hobbies.

—Ronald Wallace

3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

c. Choose the way to life

**Prov. 6:23: For this command is a lamp,
this teaching is a light,
and correction and instruction
are the way to life...**



3. The Life of Wisdom

Three key aspects to living wisely:

c. Choose the way to life

**Prov. 8:34-36: Blessed are those who listen to me,
watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.**

³⁵ For those who find me find life and receive favor from the Lord.

**³⁶ But those who fail to find me harm themselves;
all who hate me love death.**



Conclusion

How does Proverbs testify to Christ?



Conclusion

How does Proverbs testify to Christ?

The Lord of wisdom (the divine) and the life of wisdom (the human) are perfectly integrated in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God incarnate.



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*Israel's Wisdom Literature
in the Christian Life*
GRAEME GOLDSWORTHY

A N D
W I S
D O M

Christ expresses for us both the wisdom of God mediated to us as gift, and the wisdom of man in its perfect expression of a life totally in harmony with its Creator. In bringing wisdom so totally within the ambit of salvation history in Christ, the New Testament does not lose sight of the Old Testament's emphasis on wisdom which turns more to creation than salvation. God reveals to us with all wisdom and understanding the mystery of his will, which is his plan to unite all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10). The gospel, God's wisdom, is the means by which God restores the order of all things.

—Graeme Goldsworthy

Isaiah 11:1-5

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

² The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

³ and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;



Isaiah 11:1-5

⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

