

Outline of The Proverbs

A.	Proverbs 1:6-9:18: Proverbs for Solomon .
B.	Proverbs 10:1-19:19: Proverbs for all
C.	Proverbs 19:20-24:34: Proverbs for Solomon .
D.	Proverbs 25:1-26:28: Proverbs for all .
E.	Proverbs 27:1-29:27: Proverbs for Solomon
F.	Proverbs 30:1-31:31: The Words of Agur and The Words of king Lemuel.

This section (1:6-9:18) contains the **words of the wise** and appears to be instruction for a prince, or a ruler (of Israel), perhaps instruction for Solomon himself. We will see in section A of our outline, the elementary lessons in policy and running of the state and instructions how a ruler might be a representative of the LORD upon the throne in Israel. Since Solomon's name is mentioned three times throughout the book (1:1; 10:1; 25:1) a natural reading would be that the **words of the wise** are intended for him. Assumption: These are proverbs which Solomon was taught.

Verse 6b—

The words of the wise, and their dark sayings. This is likely the heading or the title for this section which will go through 9:18. We can make an assumption that this section (1:6-9:18) was intended for Solomon (and not written by Solomon), or at the least it contains **words of the wise** for any ruler or any king. But Israel seems to be in view. What can a king of Israel gain from taking heed to these words and **dark sayings** which come from the **wise**? What dangers and temptations might come upon a king on the throne of Israel? The term **dark sayings** translates also as a *riddle* or a *hard question*. Who are the wise? It is unknown. We can only speculate. Perhaps David and Bathsheba? (vs. 8). Or, it could be these are a compilation of wise sayings from other unknown sources?

Verse 7—

The fear of the LORD. The very first thing a ruler (like Solomon or one like him over all Israel) must understand is the **fear of the LORD**. The word fear means *reverence*. This concept is so important that it appears fourteen times throughout the Proverbs and five times in this first section for Solomon (1:7; 29; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10). **The LORD** is translated often as *Jehovah* or *The God in the covenant relation to the nation of Israel*. This is another indication these proverbs are meant for Israel. The name Jehovah means *The Eternal; the Immutable (Unchanging One); He Who Was, and IS, and IS TO COME*. This is the God of Israel that the king must revere.

To **fear the LORD** is the **beginning of knowledge**. Not the end of knowledge. There is always more to learn. Learning never stops. For a king or ruler like Solomon to truly know how to lead his people the **fear of the LORD** will be what guides him into *wisdom*. Proverbs 4:7 states, “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom.

On the other side of the equation are the leaders and kings who **despise wisdom and instruction**. Or, perhaps we could say rulers who have stopped learning; thinking they have all knowledge. The *words of the wise* say those kings or rulers who do not fear the LORD are **fools** (This particular Hebrew word **fools** shows up nineteen times in Proverbs). It is one who is careless or lax. It takes hard work to *get wisdom and knowledge*. Wisdom and knowledge do not come from laziness.

Verse 8—

My son. This address is found twenty-two times in the Proverbs which are specifically “for” Solomon. **Hear the instruction of thy father**. It is the idea of a teacher to a pupil. Warnings to the king are being given and we will see them over the course of our study through the Proverbs.

The father’s role is educational—maybe his duty? The word **instruction** can mean to *keep in check, to correct, and discipline*. Likewise, the *words of the wise* come also from **thy mother**. Is this section of The Proverbs written by Solomon to *his son* (Rehoboam?). That is doubtful. I tend to lean more toward the father and mother referring to David and Bathsheba. They understood first-hand the tragedy of not fearing the LORD, of not keeping oneself in check, and not observing the law. They had suffered the death of a child because of their lack of **fear of the LORD**. These are words of the wise, warning their son Solomon of the pitfalls of life as one who will lead Israel. **Forsake not the law of thy mother**. The word **law** is *Torah*. The mother lays down the law and the father instructs. That seems to be the picture. There is no reason to take son, father, and mother as figures (use the plain sense).

Verse 9—

For they (the father’s instruction and the mother’s law) *shall be an ornament of grace...chains about thy neck*. The **ornament is a garland** and the **chains** are a pendent. Each of these require the recipient to bow his head to receive them—and act of humility. This is opposed to the stiff-necked attitude of the nation of Israel (Ex. 32:9) and the pride of the people (Isaiah 3:16).

Verses 10—

My son, if sinners entice thee. The word **sinners** means to *miss the mark* (Judges 20:16, *chata*). **Consent thou not**. “Just say no.” A good example is Joseph in Potiphar’s house

(Genesis 39: 9,10). A king must say no to joining into unholy alliances with the nations surrounding him.

Verse 11—

Let us lay wait for blood. Stay away from these unholy alliances with nations who do not *fear the LORD* and who desire to go after the innocent without cause. The word **innocent** is in the singular. Laying in wait for a specific innocent one.

Verse 12, 13, 14—

Swallow them up alive going after an innocent nation and sending them all to the grave. *Consent not* don't be enticed by the **precious...spoils** (greedy of gain, vs. 19) that might be gained from invading an innocent nation and then dividing up the **one purse**. "*The Love of money is the root of all evil*" 1 Timothy 6:10.

Verse 15, 16, 17, 18, 19—

The father warns again, **My son, walk no thou in the way with them.** The point being made here is that men go on in their evil ways, though they know it will lead to their own ruin. **For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.** Before we get cocky and think those being described are losers, we should realize we are all in this state (Romans 3:9-18). [Regarding verse 17: The sight of the net does not deter the birds. They (emphatic) still go on to their capture and death. They fly into it with eyes wide open].

Being **greedy for gain** (vs. 19) is the opposite of *fearing the LORD*. The word **life** in 19 is *nephesh* which is a person's soul, referring to the taking away of a person's life.

Verse 20, 21, 22—

What is the solution? To listen to the call of **Wisdom**. **Wisdom** is not silent. Wisdom is personified (given human characteristics), and *She* is everywhere. There is no excuse for not heeding her *cry* and *her voice*. It is the king's duty to *fear the LORD* and take heed to Wisdom so that the people will follow.

Assuming we have been reading of wise words given to Solomon, what will happen to the people of Israel if they do not heed the voice of **Wisdom**? **Simple ones**, we remember in verse 4 how the *simple* were juxtaposed with the *young man*. A young man and a child may certainly be simple. Later in the *words of the wise*, the phrase *ye children* is used quite often. The Hebrew word used for *children* in Proverbs is the same word used for the *children of Israel/sons of Jacob* throughout the OT (Gen. 32:32; 34:7; 49:2, etc). The young, the simple, the child: the nation can easily be led astray.

What will happen to the people of Israel, having been led astray by their kings who become **fools** who **hate knowledge**?

Verse 23—

Turn and listen! God in his wisdom will give them a chance to turn to him. Wisdom says, **I will pour out my spirit unto you**. Later the prophet Joel prophesied that God would pour out his spirit on the nation of Israel—we saw that fulfilled in Acts 2 (Also: Ezekiel 39:29; Zechariah 1:10; Isaiah 32:15). God has been at the ready for Israel to turn to him, he has never kept his desire a secret.

Verse 24, 25—

Ye refused. Who refused? The nation of Israel. They refused to hear, even though God stretched out his hand over and over (it could be stretched out in judgment or but **no man regarded...none of my reproof** (See Isaiah 81:10-12).

Verses 26-31—

Therefore, condemnation will come upon Israel and there will be a time when **Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer** (Micah 3:4; Zechariah 7:13, etc.). They **eat of the fruit of their own way...filled with their own devices** (Isaiah 3:8-11).

Verse 32—

Slay them...destroy them. Their own turning away and foolishness will cause their calamity (Deuteronomy 32:15-29).

A Proverb of Redemption – A God of Mercy

Verse 33—

What hope is there for the nation of Israel? **But whoso hearkeneth unto me**. Listen to and heed Wisdom is all God requires of them. The result **shall be quiet from fear and evil**. Romans 8:35-39. While the Romans passage in some sense is true for all in the body of Christ, for the nation of Israel it is a great promise of the love of God that is there for the taking.

The words of the wise in chapter one we see a clear picture of both instructions for Solomon, and a prophetic view of the nation of Israel.