**Proverbs Chapter 9 (Lesson #10)**

The Fourth and Final Appeal from Lady Wisdom

By way of reminder, the book of Proverbs is broken into multiple sections. We are still in that **first section.** The first section starts inchapter 1 and goes all the way to chapter 9. In it we have **ten speeches** or **ten appeals** from a **Father to his sons**.

Also in the first section are **four appeals** or four **monologues**, where **wisdom is personified as a lady**, we will call her **lady wisdom**. Here in chapters 1-9 lady wisdom speaks to us **four separate times**.

In December , we begin the Proverbs (proper).

### In this chapter Lady Wisdom stands in stark contrast to woman folly.

### This contrast between these two ladies is meant to heighten our disgust for the one and our increase our desire and admiration of the other.

### Some general comments on Proverbs 9:

### The design and structure of this chapter is very symmetric. The chapter begins with a 6-verse invitation to the house of Lady Wisdom (1-6) and closes with a 6-verse invitation to the house of woman folly (13-18). Sandwiched between these two invitations are a 6-line call to practice humility (7-12).

### The summons from both of the ladies are very similar. Both cry out: “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” (4, 16). Both of these women make the same appeal, but for very different reasons. One desires to lift up, to turn simple from his ways, the other desires to cast the simple down to the grave, to the abode of the dead! Both of the ladies have a house, and both serve bread, but in the end they are nothing alike.

### Both make a speech to those who will listen (5-6, 17). Lady Wisdom’s call is clear and pure: “Leave your simple ways and live...” The call of the adulteress is sinful and provocative as she whispers in the ear of those who will listen: “Stolen water is sweet.” The simple reader is left to choose which lady to listen to, which lady to follow.

### These two invitations form bookends for the central portion of the text (7-12). This middle provides guidance on choosing wisely— humility! In the center are guidance that can help us stay on the path to Lady Wisdom’s house.

### This chapter marks the end of the 9-chapter section of speeches from a father and from Lady Wisdom. If we were to sum up what we have learned into a single sentence: Choose wisdom, choose life!

### OK, the stage is set, lets get running!

**lady wisdom’s invitation (9:1-6)**

**Vs 1 - Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars.**

The idea is the through craftsmanship wisdom has brought her dwelling into exitance. Wisdom has hewn seven pillars, most homes had four pillars supporting the roof, the one wisdom has erected has seven likely pointing to the divine perfection of her dwelling.

This is a large dwelling and has room for all who will turn aside!

“In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?” (Joh 14:2 ESV)

Wisdom has built her house.

**Vs 2 - She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine; she has also set her table.**

But it is more than a beautiful and spacious home, she has slaughtered animals, she has prepared a massive banquet, she has prepared a feast.

This reminds us of one of Jesus’ parables: “**1** ¶ And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, **2** “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, **3** and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. **4** Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’” (Mt 22:1-4 ESV)

She has mixed her wine, adding honey, herbs or spices to enhance the sweetness of the wine, she has set her table.

Likely the meal represent the higher moral and accompanying spiritual realities that come with by dining at Lady Wisdom’s table.

This is no doubt to be juxtaposed with woman folly who offers stolen water and bread (vs 17).

Illicit sex and easy money are water compared to the wine and meat of God’s wisdom!

The banquet is prepared, the food and drink are ready, Lady Wisdom’s table is set!

**Vs 3 - She has sent out her young women to call from the highest places in the town,**

The lady wisdom sends out her young women, her servants to call from the highest places in the town.

She sends out those with the invitation, she sends out those who beckon others to come!

She sends out her servants girls to call the uncommitted to come, they do so from the highest places come, come to Lady Wisdom’s home, come and dine at her magnificent table!

**This is an identical picture of Jesus’ parable in Matt 22!**

**Vs 4a - "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"**

Notice the **invitation is to the simple**, the invitation is to those who are currently uncommitted. The wise are in her home, the wise are at her banquet, the foolish are in the adulteress’ lair, but to the uncommitted her ladies cry out... Come, turn in here!

But like Jesus and the gospel, the call goes out to those who have not turned! This is likely a picture of the gospel and the call for men and women to turn, for men and women to repent and dine at the Lord’s table!

Lady wisdom is inviting the simple to a banquet, this is likely a symbol of living life with God’s wisdom. As we will see the adulteress is inviting the simple to something much different!

**Vs 4b-5 - To him who lacks sense she says, 5 "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.**

To the simple, to the ones who lack sense, she says come.

Come eat my bread, come drink my wine, come dine in my home, come dine at my table, come enjoy the banquet meal that has been prepared!

Come dine free of charge!

“**1** ¶ "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. **2** Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. **3** Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.” (Isa 55:1-3 ESV)

“Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” (Joh 6:35 ESV)

Food and drink provide physical life, the teachings of the Father provide spiritual life:

“And Jesus answered him, "It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’"” (Lu 4:4 ESV)

Wisdom has built a beautiful home, the wise are present with her, learning at her feet, meanwhile she invites the simple to dine.

**Vs 6 - Leave your simple ways, and live, and walk in the way of insight."**

Leave your simple ways connects with turn, turn from that path and turn to this path.

Turn of the path the leads to folly, turn off the path that leads to destruction and turn on the path that leads to life!

The stakes are much higher than you might imagine turn and live.

“Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life.” (Pr 4:13 ESV)

“20 ¶ My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. 21 Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. 22 For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh.” (Pr 4:20-22 ESV)

“For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,” (Pr 6:23 ESV)

Walk in the way of insight, walk in the path of understanding, that is the path that leads to life!

**the need to practice humility (9:7-12)**

**Vs 7 - Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.**

Whoever corrects denotes the one who applies the teaching of the great “I AM” to increase understanding or in this case to right a wrong.

The one who corrects a scoffer (the one who loves self and rejects truth) the one who attempts to correct a scoffer will likely receive for himself abuse.

It is folly and fruitlessness to try to impose wisdom on the unwilling.

The one who attempts to correct a wicked man (a person on the perverse path), will likely incur injury.

**Vs 8 - Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.**

The commands to teach and correct must always be nuanced with this warning or as Jesus stated:

“"Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.” (Mt 7:6 ESV)

Understanding who and in some cases when the scoffers (and dogs) are requires prayer and wisdom.

But reprove a wise man, Solomon’s idea seems to be one who is open to wisdom, one who is imperfect but open:

“Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance,” (Pr 1:5 ESV)

“A wise son hears his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.” (Pr 13:1 ESV)

Jesus said it this way:

“For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” (Mt 13:12 ESV)

Warren Wiersbe wrote this: “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.”

**Vs 9 - Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.**

“Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance,” (Pr 1:5 ESV)

**I am not Solomon, but as I look around me, I see the reality of this proverb.** Wise men, desire instruction so that they might become wiser.

Do you know who I love to teach, those who love to learn, those who want to learn, those who desire insight and knowledge.

Righteous men seek knowledge and understanding so that they will increase in knowledge and understanding.

I pray that I am always a wise man, seeking to be wiser still.

Do you know none of us have arrived. Do you know none of us know it all. Do you know in spite of being a believer for 30 years I too am still learning. I pray that remains true for all of us!

**Vs 10 - The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.**

Here it is, **this was in our introduction!**

It is the fear of the LORD, that is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom!

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Pr 1:7 ESV)

Solomon traces the wisdom of the wise back to its genesis, back to its source. Wisdom has a starting point. Wisdom begins with a right relationship and approach to God. The fear of the LORD, that is the genesis of wisdom. Today that right relationship with God, that fear of Yahweh is only available by bowing to King Jesus!

The book of proverbs is not about knowing stuff, at the end of the day it is about **knowing God and His ways**!

“And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,” (1Co 1:30 ESV)

**Vs 11 - For by me your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life.**

Lady Wisdom tell us plainly one of the benefits of obtaining wisdom is life, abundant life!

Years of life are added to those who obtain wisdom.

We have been told this before:

The Father said:“1 ¶ My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, 2 for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.” (Pr 3:1-2 ESV)

Again in Chapter 4: “7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. 8 Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. 9 She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown." 10 Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many.” (Pr 4:7-10 ESV**)**

Jesus said it this way: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (Joh 10:10 ESV)

**With Wisdom come the abundant life!**

**Vs 12 - If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.**

The greatest beneficiary of following wisdom or following folly is you!

Alone reminds us that each of us are individually accountable to God!

The conclusion of this section reminds us that we are each accountable to God and we can choose our sin, and we should understand there will likely be “consequences.”

I love the way the Message catches this verse:

“Live wisely and wisdom will permeate your life; mock life and life will mock you.” (Pr 9:12 Message)

Paul summed this principal up this way:

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” (Ga 6:7 ESV)

**woman folly’s invitation (9:13-18)**

**Vs 13 - The woman Folly is loud; she is seductive and knows nothing.**

The woman folly is now presented, she is juxtaposed against Lady Wisdom.

The woman folly is loud (turbulent), she is seductive attempting to seduce the simple even though she herself is married, she knows nothing.

Waltke says in his commentary: “Solomon describes her character as a turbulent moral ignoramus.”

**But worse that that, as Solomon will remind us in a few verses, she is deadly!**

**Vs 14 - She sits at the door of her house; she takes a seat on the highest places of the town,**

In chapter 7 the adulteress was portrayed as approaching her pray on the city streets at dusk.

Here she sits at the open door of her house, prominently at the highest point in the city.

This is a false presentation to impress, she desires to draw the simple into her lair.

**Vs 15 - calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way,**

Like Lady Wisdom in verse 3, she too is calling out to those who pass by.

She seems to be calling out to those who are currently going straight on their way.

Likely these are those who are moral, but do not know God. John described them like this:

**“18 ¶ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.” (1Jo 2:18-19 ESV)**

**Vs 16 - "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" And to him who lacks sense she says,**

The start of Folly’s call is almost verbatim to Lady Wisdom.

**Vs 17 - "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant."**

But the content of her call exposes who she really is:

“Water” sometimes used in Proverbs as a metaphor for sexual pleasure (5:15; 5:16), and here her message is “stolen water is sweet.”

Men, the Bible does sugar coat what we face in the world. Stolen water can initially and for a short season be sweet.

Bread (another incomplete metaphor) eaten in secret can, for a short season be pleasant.

This is all true...

**Vs 18 - But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.”**

With the conjunction but, it is almost like Solomon steps back into his own Proverb, he nudges Lady Wisdom and takes center stage.

He looks at his sons and warns them of what happens to those who enter woman folly’s lair.

The simple does not even know, they do not even understand that the dead are there, Woman folly’s guest are in the depths of Sheol.

My brothers, beware of sexual sin, it may appear alluring, and for a moment it may provide gratification.

But do we not understand that there are other guest they who are in the depths of the grave.

Sexual sin like all sin, blinds as it binds.

It takes us further than we want to go, keeps us longer than we want to stay and will cost us more than we want to pay.

Paul gave us this warning:

“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.” (1Co 6:18 ESV)

Men, I encourage us to constantly pursue Lady Wisdom as revealed in the Scriptures and as manifested in Jesus Christ and flee from all forms of sexual immorality.

May God grant us a desire for His Wisdom!