

CLIPPINGS FROM PROVERBS

Proverbs 8

3C Sunday School Class

Sunday, July 12, 2015

- I. The Appeal of Wisdom (8:1-21)
 - A. The Voice of Wisdom ([8:1-5](#))
 - B. The Value of Wisdom ([8:6-11](#))
 - C. The Virtue of Wisdom (Righteousness) ([8:12-21](#))
- II. The Activity of Wisdom (Creation) ([8:22-31](#))
- III. The Admonition of Wisdom (Waiting Near Wisdom's Door) ([8:32-36](#))

I. Introduction.

The Double Eagle II

On August 11, 1978, the *Double Eagle II*, a large helium balloon, set sail from Maine for France. As the crew approached the continent six days later, they were losing altitude, and they had to lose weight or crash in the ocean. One of them wrote, "We have been expending ballast (weight) wisely, but as we neared land, not cheaply... over went such gear as tape recorders, radios, film magazines, sleeping beds, lawn chairs, most of our water, food, and the cooler it was in." They made their destination and enjoyed the feeling of satisfaction, plus the recognition of the world, and the financial rewards that went with it.

As we follow Christ, if there are things that are keeping us from following him fully, we need to throw them overboard. Like the *Double Eagle II*, it might not be cheap. But it is better to lose the things that weigh us down than for us to ditch in the ocean of failure. No price is too great to pay if God asks it of us.

That is the point that wisdom makes in this chapter. "Follow me," she calls. "Give everything you must, but follow me. Personal satisfaction and the full blessing of

God are found only in me." *Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Proverbs.*

WHO IS LADY WISDOM?

The identity of Wisdom in [Proverbs 8](#) has been a topic of lively discussion for centuries. Some writers, including contemporary feminists, have claimed that the chapter is a description of an Israelite or pagan goddess. However, this idea contradicts the monotheism of the Old Testament and the admonition of Proverbs to "fear the Lord" rather than any goddess.

Most writers have debated whether we should understand Wisdom as a personification (a figurative way to describe the attribute of wisdom) or an actual person (Jesus Christ as the Wisdom of God).

There are problems with the view that Wisdom here is a direct description of Christ, even though it has been a popular view. The verbs used in [8:22-25](#) seem to support the idea that Wisdom is a creation of God rather than an eternal part of the Godhead. The Arian heretics in the fourth and fifth century A.D. actually used this passage to argue against the deity of Christ.

Proverbs 8:22-25 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

Wisdom as a female personification of the attribute of wisdom escapes that doctrinal drawback and fits smoothly with the rest of [Proverbs 1-9](#). Chapter 1 portrays Wisdom as a woman, and chapter 9 moves directly into a comparison of two women, Wisdom and Folly, calling simple young men to come to dinner with them. Almost all agree that the bulk of chapter 8 can be understood as a personification, so it seems reasonable to maintain that approach through [verses 22-31](#).

The New Testament does present Jesus as God's Wisdom ([Col. 2:3](#)) and teaches that he participated with his father in creation ([Col. 1:15-17](#); [Rev. 3:14](#); [John 1:3](#)). Therefore we should not be surprised if many of the phrases in [Proverbs 8](#) also serve as excellent descriptions of Christ. The chapter speaks of him indirectly but is not a direct description of him. *HOTC*

Colossians 2:3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 1:15-17 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Revelation 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

MAIN IDEA: Solomon portrays Wisdom as a wonderful woman, extolling the value of pursuing her rather than wasting energy on fleeting romances.

I. **The Appeal of Wisdom (Prov. 8:1-21)**

SUPPORTING IDEA: Wisdom is available to everyone, particularly those who need it most.

PERSONIFICATION OF WISDOM

In the first three verses, Solomon introduces Wisdom, pictured as a gracious woman. Rather than giving counsel directly as he did in the earlier chapters, he allows Lady Wisdom to speak for herself for the rest of the chapter. He uses the literary device of personification elsewhere ([1:20-33](#);

[3:13-20](#); [4:5-9](#); [9:1-9](#)) but develops it most fully here. The chapter makes a useful contrast to the description in chapter 7 of an immoral woman enticing a gullible young man to destruction. *HOTC*

A. The Voice of Wisdom ([8:1-5](#))

1. Wisdom's Shout (8:1)

Proverbs 8:1 Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

- We often make the will of God to be a deep mystery.
- God wants you to know it more than you desire to find it out!
- Wisdom is shouting at you but are you listening?

2. Wisdom's Strategy (8:2-3)

DISCUSS: If you had a message to get out today, where would you go? How would you choose to communicate? What if all technology ceased? How was it done in colonial America? How about in the Wild West?

Proverbs 8:2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. **3** She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

[8:2-3](#). Wisdom plants herself in the busiest public place, at the very entrance to the **city**, where all the roads **meet** and caravans funnel through the **gates**. Accessible to all, she issues a loud invitation to the crowds bustling past her. *HOTC*

3. Wisdom's Subjects (8:4-5)

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.

5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

QUOTE: [8:4-5](#). What is the message of Wisdom? From this point on, Lady Wisdom is the speaker, and she begins by making a direct appeal addressed to all mankind. Whoever wants to gain wisdom can do so by coming to her. She addresses the invitation specifically to two groups badly in need of her help. To the simple, who are naive and gullible because of lack of experience, she offers to teach prudence, so they can avoid the pitfalls of life. To the foolish, she offers understanding. Solomon uses the word for a fool who chooses his own way rather than God's path but is not yet confirmed in rebellion. *HOTC*

QUOTE: "Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. To know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom." Charles Haddon Spurgeon

FOLLOWING BEGINS AUGUST 9, 2015

B. The Value of Wisdom ([8:6-11](#))

SUPPORTING IDEA: Wisdom's noble words are right and are much more valuable than financial wealth.

NOTE THE TWO VERBS THAT BEGIN THE SECTIONS: HEAR AND RECEIVE.

1. Wisdom's Speech

a. The Content of Her Speech ([8:6-8](#))

Proverbs 8:6-11 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things. 8:7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips. 8:8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.

1) **Stated Positively**

a) **Excellent Things (8:6)**

Proverbs 8:6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

Hear – Heb., *shama*. To listen attentively with intelligence.

Excellent – Heb. *Nagid*. The word is the ordinary word for a commander or leader (captain, prince). The implication is that such a rank is reserved for those who have served with honor. Therefore, wisdom speaks honorably. The only other use in Proverbs is found in 28:16 where it is translated as “prince.”

QUOTE: her words are like the people who exemplify the highest levels of moral excellence. HOTC

b) **Right Things (8:6)**

Proverbs 8:6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

Right – Heb., *mesharim*. Evenness, concord, straightness. From this we get the figurative meanings of prosperity (no bumps in life), equity, and uprightness. It is also translated in Proverbs as “equity.”

c) **Truth (8:7)**

Proverbs 8:7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.

Truth – Heb., *ehmet*. Stability, trustworthiness, reassuring.

Psalm 19:9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

d) Righteousness (8:8; Ps. 12:6)

Proverbs 8:8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.

Righteousness – Heb., *tsedeq*. This word is translated 77 times in the AV as righteousness. That which is right, morally, ethically, legally.

Psalm 12:6 The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

2) Stated Negatively

a) No Wickedness (8:7)

Proverbs 8:7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.

Wickedness – Heb., *rasha'*. Wrong, especially morally. Wicked, iniquity.

b) Nothing Froward (8:8)

Proverbs 8:8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.

Froward – Heb., *patal*. To twine (literal), to struggle (figurative). To show oneself poorly, to wrestle.

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

c) **Nothing Perverse (8:8)**

Proverbs 8:8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.

Perverse – Heb., *'iqqesh*. Lit., distorted, thus the figurative use here of crooked, perverse, forward.

b. **The Comprehension of Her Speech (8:9)**

8:9 They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

Plain – Heb., *nakoah*. Straightfoward.

Understandeth – Heb., *bin*. To separate an issue mentally, to distinguish or make a distinction.

Knowledge – Heb., *da'at*. Cunning, witty.

QUOTE: What one hears from the lips of Wisdom is sure to be **true** because any sort of evil is abhorrent to her. Her speech stays consistently righteous, with no taint of **crooked** or crafty deceit or **perverse** distortions of truth. In fact, those who have walked the path of

righteousness long enough to have a degree of discernment are the ones who recognize the merits of her counsel. Every word is **right**, upright and straight, and **faultless**, straightforward and honest. HOTC

Proverbs 14:6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not: but knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.

Proverbs 15:14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

Proverbs 17:24 Wisdom *is* before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

Proverbs 18:2 A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

Proverbs 18:15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

Psalms 25:12-14 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.

13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. 14 The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Matthew 13:11-12 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he

shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

John 7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

1 Corinthians 2:14-15 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

2. **Wisdom's Supremacy (8:10-11)**

8:10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. 8:11 For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

NOTE: Receive, Heb., *laqah*. Translated 747 times as “take.”

FOUR CONTRASTS

a. **Instruction versus Silver (8:10; Pr. 16:16)**

Proverbs 8:10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

Instruction – Heb., *masar*. Literal meaning is “chastisement.” Figuratively, as here, it is referring to reproof, correction, discipline.

Proverbs 16:16 How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather than silver!

b. Knowledge versus Gold (8:10)

Proverbs 8:10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

Knowledge – Heb., *da'at*. Cunning, witty. Same as verse 9 above.

Psalm 19:9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

Psalm 19:10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Psalm 119:127 Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

c. Wisdom versus Rubies (8:11)

Proverbs 8:11 For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Wisdom – Heb., *hokma*. Skillful, wisdom, wit.

Proverbs 20:15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

d. Wisdom versus Anything Desired (8:11)

Proverbs 8:11 For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

[Mt 16:26](#) — For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

[Php 3:8](#) — Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

[Php 3:9](#) — And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

QUOTE: [8:10-11](#). Once again Wisdom issues a command. [Verse 6](#) instructed people to listen, and [verse 10](#) asks them to **choose**. Pick **wisdom**, not wealth, because wisdom possesses much greater value than treasures such as **silver**, refined or **choice gold**, and jewels (possibly rubies or coral). The writer **weighs** these costly commodities against **instruction, knowledge, and wisdom**, and urges, "Choose wisdom." Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Proverbs.

Life Application: Burning the Ships Behind Them

Legend has it that when the Spanish explorer Cortez landed at Vera Cruz to begin his conquest of Mexico with his small force of seven hundred men, he set fire to his fleet of eleven ships. As his men watched the ships burn, they realized they had no hope of going back, and

they had to make a success of their new life in the new world. All thoughts of going back were vanquished, and their minds were focused only on the future in this new world.

This kind of single-mindedness is required to meet the demands of the Christian life. We must not look back to the old life for cues on how to live. We must not harbor affection for things of the past. We must not keep a mental note of an avenue for going back. We have to make a break with the old life. We must realize that there is nothing about the old life that could be better than the new life Jesus calls us to.

That is the point Wisdom makes as she calls us to follow her. She is the path of new life in Christ. She is the avenue of peace, love, and joy. She is the secret to the fulfilled longings of our soul.

Like Cortez setting fire to his ships, we must mentally set fire to any thought we have about an old life being superior to the new one. We must make a clean break from a life of rebellion or carelessness or laziness. We must look ahead to the path of wisdom and let the past be a thing of the past. HOTC

C. The Virtue of Wisdom (Righteousness) (Proverbs 8:12-21)

1. Wisdom's Practices (8:12)

Proverbs 8:12-21 I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

a. Her Dwelling

With **Prudence** – The Hebrew word here can mean trickery (Cf. Joshua 9:4), but in the book of Proverbs, it always refers to behavior that is good, behavior that is sensible.

b. Her Discovery

“find out”

- 1) **Knowledge** – the Hebrew refers not to merely empty knowledge, but knowledge of the truth.
- 2) **Witty Inventions** – (or, discretion, cf. NKJV). The Hebrew refers to careful behavior that results when one practices clear thinking. It is the opposite of recklessness.

APPLY: Someone has said that, apart from the books that you read and the people that you meet, you will always stay the same. We could say that you will be stagnant. Wisdom hangs out with people that can change your life: Sensible behavior, truth, and careful behavior.

2. Wisdom’s Purity (8:13)

13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

a. The Motivation

“fear of the Lord”

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is*

understanding.

Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honour *is* humility.

b. The Manifestation

NOTE the punctuation. Wisdom hates evil in general.

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

- We are often reminded that God is love, and, of course, He is.
- But He is also Holy.
- And, contrary to modern thought, God doesn't love indiscriminately.
- He is angry with the wicked every day. (Ps. 7:11)
- So to love God is to love what He loves and hate what He hates!

Specifically, wisdom expresses her hatred for four things:

1) Pride

Note: Noun form occurs only here. The verb form *ge'd* means to grow up, to be high or elevated. We see this literal meaning in Job 8:11, where it describes the natural growth of a plant, and in Ezekiel. 47:5, where it describes the rising of a river. It is a natural extension of this meaning to the figurative usage as majesty and exaltation. While it is used to describe the exaltation of God (Ex. 15:1,21), (we see this in Ps. 68:35), here it is

used to describe the self exaltation of an arrogant human. This is also seen in Pr. 29:33. See Steveson, *Proverbs*

- This word, occurring only here, describes the arrogant, presumptuous person, who feels that all are inferior.
- That is why it is paired with the next word below.
- Yes, Wisdom hangs out with knowledge.
- But knowledge alone puffs up.
- And Wisdom hates pride.
- So Wisdom learns truth, and among God's truths are humility and lowliness.
- In Proverbs 6:17, a proud look is listed first among those things that our God hates!

2) **Arrogance**

“Arrogancy” (*ga'on*) is the masculine form of *ge'd* (above). The combination of masculine and feminine forms indicates totality, every indicating n of pride. Wisdom hates every manifestation of pride. Steveson

- The literal use of the word here refers to “swelling.”
- High and lofty are similar concepts.
- In figurative meanings, the idea is “excellence,” that which tops all others.
- It is translated as “majesty” several times in the OT. (Cf., Isa. 24:14)

- In this context, we have the man or woman that feels that they are the best of the best, that all others are inferior.
- We would not be far removed from this word to say that those guilty of it feel that they deserve and thus demand “royal treatment.”

3) The Evil Way

- The Hebrew word *derek* is used here.
- It is the path of evil (same word as above).
- Motivated by the fear of the Lord, Wisdom detests not only evil itself, but evil in all its manifestations.

DISCUSS: What are some of the ways that evil manifests itself.

Psalm 1:1-2 1 Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

4) The Froward Mouth

- The Hebrew word, meaning “perversity,” it used only in Proverbs with the exception of one occurrence in Deuteronomy.

Proverbs 2:12 (KJV) To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh **froward** things;

Proverbs 2:12 (ESV) delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech,

Proverbs 2:14 (KJV) Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

Proverbs 2:14 (ESV) who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil,

Proverbs 10:32 (KJV) The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* frowardness.

Proverbs 10:32 (ESV) The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked, what is perverse.

Deuteronomy 32:20 (KJV) And he [God] said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they *are* a very froward generation, children in whom *is* no faith.

Deuteronomy 32:20 (ESV) And he said, 'I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faithfulness.

SUMMARY: Motivated by the fear of the Lord, Wisdom hates evil in general, and thus wisdom hates, pride, arrogance, the resulting paths of evil, and perverse speech.

THREE CLASSES OF SIN

1. PRIDE/ARROGANCE

- Sins of the mind. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

2. EVIL WAY

- Sins of Conduct (Rom. 6:8-13)

3. FROWARD MOUTH

- Sins of Speech (Mt. 12.36)

NOTE: These are the three areas in which man goes astray from God. Steveson

3. Wisdom's Possessions (8:14)

14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength.

- Counsel** – Heb. *etsah*. Advice, by extension, a plan.
- Sound Wisdom** – Heb. Substantiate, that which has substance.
- Understanding** – full knowledge.
- Strength** – lit., force. By implication, victory.

4. Wisdom's Practitioners (8:15-17)

15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

- Kings Reign**
- Princes**
 - 1) **Decree Justice**

2) **Rule**

c. **Nobles - Rule**

d. **Judges**

e. **Lovers of Wisdom**

8:17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

1) **Reciprocal** "I love them that love me"

2) **Requirements**

Seek

Seek Early

3) **Reward**

Shall find me

5. **Wisdom's Profit (8:18-21)**

18 Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness.

19 My fruit *is* better than gold, *yea*, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

a. **The Right Kind of Riches (8:18-19,21)**

8:18 Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness.

8:19 My fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

“Riches AND Honor”

- Often separate, rare together.

Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Durable Riches – that which has lasted, endured. Lit., antique.

[Riches] and **Righteousness**

- As we saw above, riches and righteousness do not always go together!
- Add Luke 16:11 to Proverbs 8 study. See context.

Luke 16:11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

The word alethinous refers to that which is not only in name, but also in substance, a reality.

Better than gold, silver

Luk 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Vs. 21 Inherit substance

8:21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

b. The Right Kind of Life (8:20)

8:20 I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

Proverbs 3:6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 4:11-12 11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

Proverbs 6:22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

Psalms 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalms 25:4-5 4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Psalms 32:8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Isaiah 2:3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

John 10:3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep

hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

John 10:27-28 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

II. The Activity of Wisdom (Creation) (8:22-31)

Many have equated wisdom in this chapter with Jesus Christ. This connection works only so far as Jesus reveals the nature of God the Father, including his wisdom, just as Proverbs presents the personification of the attribute. Jesus' claims included wisdom (Matt 12:42) and a unique knowledge of God (Matt 11:25-27). He even personified wisdom in a way that was similar to Proverbs (Matt 11:19; Luke 11:49). Paul saw the fulfillment of wisdom in Christ (Col 1:15-20; 2:3) and affirmed that Christ became our wisdom in the Crucifixion (1 Cor 1:24, 30). So the bold personification of wisdom in Proverbs certainly provides a solid foundation for the revelation of divine wisdom in Christ. But because wisdom appears to be a creation of God in 8:22-31, it is unlikely that wisdom here is Jesus Christ. *Expositor's*

Proverbs 8:22-31 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not

pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:
30 Then I was by him, *as one brought up with him*: and I was daily *his*
delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of
his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

A. Wisdom Possessed by God (Prov. 8:22)

Proverbs 8:22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way,
before his works of old.

- Wisdom makes no claim to being deity, only to being with deity.

B. Wisdom Pre-existing God's Creation (Prov. 8:23-26)

Proverbs 8:23-26 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,
or ever the earth was. 24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought
forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought
forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor
the highest part of the dust of the world.

Wisdom warms to her task of making clear why she, not Dame Folly,
should be heeded and followed. Her self-description turns from her
present assets to her past experience, as a witness to and celebrant
in God's creation. As Job had learned, an understanding of the
mysteries of creation was one major distinction between God and
him. God had been there, knew all about it, and was responsible for
it. Job had not, did not, and was not ([Job 38:1-42:6](#)).

[For Example] **Job 38:4** Where wast thou when I laid the
foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

What the sages craved more than anything else was insight into the
way creation worked. To understand its patterns and processes was
to clutch the key to life. Wisdom gives herself the ultimate
commendation when she says, "I was there when it happened." Folly

can only stand in the corner and cringe with her hand over her mouth in the face of that claim. *The Preacher's Commentary*

1. Wisdom before the Earth (8:23)

Proverbs 8:23-26 (KJV) 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

2. Wisdom before the Oceans and Fountains of Water (8:24)

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

3. Wisdom before the Mountains or Hills (8:25)

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

4. Wisdom before the Earth, Fields, Peaks (8:26)

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

QUOTE: Wisdom was present at the creation ([vv. 22-29](#)). She recounts her presence and the priority it gives her over all other virtues in some of the loftiest language the Bible contains. First, her antiquity is featured in [verses 22-23](#) where the dominant words are "beginning," "of old," "from everlasting," and "before." Second, her priority is stressed in [verses 24-26](#) as she recalls a time when there was not even a drop of water—"no depths" or oceans, "no fountains" or rivers. Since the Genesis account mentions the deep and waters in its second verse, wisdom's claim is a vaunted one. See also the division of the waters above from the waters below on day two ([Gen. 1:6-8](#)). "Before" ([v. 25](#)) and "while as yet" ([v. 26](#)) introduce her claim to out rank the "mountains," "hills," "earth," and "fields," all part of the dry land that appeared on the third day ([Gen. 1:9-13](#)). *The Preacher's Commentary*

C. **Wisdom Present in God's Creation (Prov. 8:27-30)**

Proverbs 8:27-30 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

QUOTE: Third, throughout this text, wisdom's humility should be noted. Her claims are unique but not overweening: She plainly recognizes the difference between her and the Creator—a crucial recognition. Twice she speaks of her own origin: "*I was brought forth*" ([vv. 24-25](#)), the terminology of childbirth. This clear term helps us interpret her claim in [verse 22](#): "*The Lord possessed me*" translates an ambiguous word that can also mean "created me" (see NEB, JB, RSV). The context supports the latter meaning, as does the Greek translation. Vital as is wisdom to the divine plan, she is part of the creation not a co-creator.

Fourth, wisdom's witness to the creation is spelled out in [verses 27-29](#). The clause that governs the meaning and should be repeated with each clause in this section is "*I was there*" ([v. 27](#)). The setting in Genesis is again days two and three with the formation of the "*heavens*," the marking off of the horizon of the sea ([v. 27](#)), the division of the waters above ("*clouds*") from the waters below ("*fountains of the deep*," [v. 28](#)), the setting of the boundaries of the "*sea*," and the lining out of the earth's "*foundations*" ([v. 29](#)). All that divine surveying and construction wisdom watched. She was privy to the how's and what's and who of those mysterious beginnings—prime credentials for any teacher. *The Preacher's Commentary*

GENESIS	PROVERBS 8
<p>Genesis 1:6-8 (KJV) ⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which <i>were</i> under the firmament from the waters which <i>were</i> above the firmament: and it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.</p>	<p>Proverbs 8:27-28A When he prepared the heavens, I <i>was</i> there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above:</p>
<p>Genesis 1:9-13 (KJV) ⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry <i>land</i> appear: and it was so. ¹⁰ And God called the dry <i>land</i> Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that <i>it was</i> good. ¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, <i>and</i> the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed <i>is</i> in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, <i>and</i> herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed <i>was</i> in</p>	<p>Proverbs 8:28-29 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:</p>

itself, after his kind: and God saw that <i>it was</i> good.	
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¹³ And the evening and the morning were the third day.	
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D. Wisdom's Practices before God and Men (8:30-31)

Proverbs 8:30-31 Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

Wisdom: The Companion of God

Wisdom: Rejoicing together with God

Wisdom: Rejoicing over God's creation (both the earth and mankind)

BEGIN HERE ON NOV. 8 2015

III. The Admonition of Wisdom (Waiting Near Wisdom's Door) (8:32-36)

We could call this Wisdom's Curtain Call or, Wisdoms Final Call.

QUOTE: Wisdom has made her case. Her assets are sterling, her credentials impeccable. She has more than earned the right to be heard. She need say little more about herself, so she returns to her first concern: the welfare of the disciples whom she is recruiting. Her "*ways*," her "*instruction*" or discipline (see [1:2-6](#)) are the road to happiness ("*blessed*," see [3:13](#)).

Wisdom has made her case; they now must make their choices *The Preacher's Commentary*

A. Part 1: An Appeal Based on the Blessed Life.

Proverbs 8:32-36 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed *are they that* keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be

wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed *is* the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

1. The Requests that Wisdom Makes

a. Hearken

Heb. *Shama*. To hear intelligently, often with the implication of attention and obedience. *Strong's*

children – Heb. Ben – properly, “son.” At the end of the last section (8:31) we saw that wisdom delights in the sons of men. Though wisdom observed all of God’s creation she delights most in mankind. Here she refers to humans as her children. And like any mother, she expect them to listen to her and to obey.

Psalm 81:11-12 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. 12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.

[Lk 11:28](#) — But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Hebrews 12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

b. Hear Instruction

The word “hear” is the same as above. The word “instruction” reflects the Hebrew word *musar* which carries the meaning of chastisement. Here it is instruction that includes discipline. We might translate it as reproof.

c. Be Wise

Heb. – *hakam*. Verb. To be wise (in mind, word and deed).

d. Do not Refuse Wisdom

The word **refuse** is literally to loosen. Figuratively, the idea is to let something loose, let it go, dismiss it.

2. The Result that Wisdom Promises

ADD A SHORT STUDY ON “BLESSED” HERE

"*Blessed*" or "happy" is one of Hebrew's most comprehensive words for human well-being (see [3:13-14](#)). It captures the goal of human life as well as any word we have. *The Preacher's Commentary*

Happy

Hebrew expression: *'esher*

Pronunciation: 'EH shehr

Strong's Number: [<H835>](#)

The “pursuit of happiness” is so central to human drives that it has even been written into a nation’s constitution as one of the goals of its citizens. It is one of the things discussed in any good beginning philosophy course in college. It is also something that is mentioned often in the book of Psalms and elsewhere in both the Old and New Testament. *'Esher*, the word translated “happy” (kjv, nlt), can also be translated as “blessed.” These two felicitous states of human beings are intimately laced together. They are at times impossible to differentiate in some biblical passages; by definition, the Lord blesses the happy person and the person blessed by the Lord is

happy. The word *'esher* is used only in the plural form in the Old Testament. The noun comes from an original root, *'shr*, meaning “to go straight or advance.” So the blessedness and happiness of the person of God is one who advances in understanding and in the ways of God, turning neither to the right or the left. In some cases, *'esher* also means to “be led on” ([Isa. 9:15](#)). The happiness or blessedness of the people of God is tied to God leading them forward. Happy is the person who does not live according to the counsel of the ungodly ([Ps. 1:1](#)), for God approves of his ways and makes him happy. The book of Psalms notes many reasons why the “blessed” man is indeed blessed and happy. Happiness belongs to those who: take refuge in the Lord ([Ps. 2:12](#)), have their sins forgiven ([Ps. 32:1](#)), live in a nation whose God is the Lord ([Ps. 33:12](#)), have righteous parents ([Ps. 37:25-26](#)), have regard for the poor ([Ps. 41:1](#)), have a wise king as their ruler ([Ps. 84:4](#)), trust in the Lord ([Ps. 84:12](#)), and fear the Lord ([Ps. 112:1](#)). This is only a partial list of who is happy and why, but in every case it is the Lord who is the ultimate cause and source of happiness.



Key Verses

[Job 5:17](#); [Psalms 1:1](#); [2:12](#); [144:15](#); [Proverbs 8:32](#); [Daniel 12:12](#)

Jesus' words in the beatitudes echo and reflect these Old Testament concepts. He says: happy or “blessed” are the peacemakers, the pure in heart, the merciful, and those persecuted for His name ([Matt. 5:3-16](#); *makarios* in Greek). Jesus' words remind us that the truly blessed in this world are those who believe in Him ([John 20:29](#)). Blessings and real

happiness are not and cannot be found in the things of this world, for they are merely gifts from God and come from His hand. *Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words*

The following verse could be the summary of this entire section. You may want to use this verse at the end.

Job 5:17 Behold, happy *is* the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

3. **The Requirements that Wisdom Gives**

Keep My Ways (Hear, yes, but obey)

To hedge about or to guard.

Heareth Me

Same as “hearken” and “hear “above.

Watching Daily at My Gates

The Hebrew here refers to being alert. It has the idea of being sleepless.

Waiting at the Posts of My Doors

This is the same Hebrew word as “keep” above. Here it is one assigned to his post and one who attends A that which he is assigned to guard.

B. Part 2: An Appeal Based on Life and Death

QUOTE: Invitation: Listen to wisdom and be blessed (8:32-36). 32-36 Verses 32-33 offer the explanation to the sons to listen, for a blessing is in store for all who live by wisdom's teachings. The explanation of this follows in vv.34-36. The alternatives could not be more striking—it is a choice between life and favor (vv.34-35) and harm and danger (v.36). This contrast is further marked out by the verb "finds me" (masa' v.35) and "fails to find me" (hata' lit., "misses me," v.36).

Expositor's

1. The Way of Life

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

Findeth – Heb., literally to come forth. Here, the figurative is in view, meaning to attain or to acquire.

Life – alive. That which is alive.

Favor – Lit., delight. Here the idea is that God finds one acceptable.

2. The Way of Death

36 But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

Sinneth – Heb., lit., to miss. Application here is to missing God's ideal for your life and thus missing the blessings that would have come from a life of favor.

Wrongeth – Heb., Lit., to be violent. Thus, to maltreat (mistreat).

Soul – Man, sinning against God and thus losing His blessing, has violently attacked his very life, his entire existence!

Hate – to hate (as an enemy).

Love – to have affection for [death].

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

1 John 5:11-12 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Proverbs 12:2 A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

QUOTE: The tug of war between wisdom and folly for the loyalty of the heart is perpetual in Proverbs. It will dominate the argument of [chapter 9](#). Here it is featured as a stark and simple summary of how wisdom sees the issues. They are white and black. The form is antithetic in that the first verse states the positive results of choosing wisdom, and the second the negative. Beyond that it is chiasmic. The first line opposes the fourth, and the second line counters the third: "Life" in line one is the alternative to "death" in line four; "favor from the LORD" in line two contrasts with "wrongs [or "does violence to"] his own soul [or "self," "person"]" in line three. The envelope pattern thrusts the outer lines into prominence—the ultimate contest between life and death. The inner lines define what the outer mean: Finding

favor from the Lord is an explanation of life; wronging one self is a description of death.

Thus does wisdom conclude her call. She yields nothing to Joshua ([ch. 24](#)) in riveting the attention of her hearers on the ultimacy of their decision. Both say "Choose this day whom you will serve." Both make clear the consequences of that choice. *The Preacher's Commentary*

