

Lady Wisdom
Proverbs 1:20-33
June 14, 2015

Introduction

Solomon introduces to us a person to help us understand the urgency and value of wisdom. He personifies wisdom into a Lady. He mentions her three times (**1:20-33**; **8:1-36**; **9:1-12**). Solomon tells us that Lady Wisdom's foundation comes from God from eternity past, so it is imperative that we pay attention to what she says.

Proverbs 8:22-23

22 *The LORD brought me forth as the first of His works,
before His deeds of old;*

23 *I was appointed from eternity,
from the beginning, before the world began.*

Who is this Lady Wisdom? Is she a real person? No, she is a personification, an idea that is pictured as a person. Remember that Proverbs is poetry, and Hebrew poetry uses personification to teach us about the nature of God's attributes. We see this in Scripture (**Deut 32:1**; **2 Kings 19:21**; **Ps 23:6**; **85:9-11**; **96:11-13**).¹

Solomon has Lady Wisdom all over the place (**1:20-21**; **8:2-3**). She is those places calling, shouting, speaking, pleading, and warning (**1:20-23**; **8**; **9**). She laughs (**1:26**). She is eternal and assisted in and witnessed creation (**8:22-32**). Most importantly, to hear and accept Lady Wisdom is to have her gifts of long life, riches, and peace (**1:33**; **8:32-35**; **9:11**). However, to reject Lady Wisdom is to experience destruction and death (**1:24-32**).

Solomon has Lady Wisdom talking after the sinners' attempt to entice the son. Let us look closely at Solomon's first portrayal of Lady Wisdom.

I. Lady Wisdom's Calling (20-23)

- Her presence

20 *Wisdom calls aloud in the street,
she raises her voice in the public squares;*

21 *at the head of the noisy streets she cries out,
in the gateways of the city she makes her speech:*

- Where is she?
 - In city—busy, public locations where everyone passes by her
 - Every day of work, home, play, and struggles of life²
- What is she doing?
 - Calling out to everyone who passes by her—and everyone passes by her
 - Strong verbs—very vocal and not silent
 - Even today, God has a loud voice

¹ Dan Phillips, "Knowing Wisdom--personally" (sermon, Copperfield Bible Church, Houston, TX, August 11, 2013)

² John Kitchen, *Proverbs: The Mentor Commentary Series* (Cornwall: Christian Focus, 2006), 48.

- People who ignore Wisdom have no excuse³
- Her plea

22 *"How long will you simple ones love your simple ways?
How long will mockers delight in mockery
and fools hate knowledge?"*

- To who? Why?
 - Simple ones—gullible, naïve
 - They love their simple ways
 - They do not have full understanding of the consequences
 - Mockers—scoffers
 - They delight in mockery
 - Attitude of “so what” to authority
 - Fools—stupid ones
 - Hate knowledge
 - Complete rejection
 - Urgent and loud cries
 - She is exasperated by their continual refusal⁴
 - She is beckoning the simple ones to change
 - If they don't, they will harden to mockers and fools respectively
- Her gift

23 *If you had responded to my rebuke,
I would have poured out my heart to you
and made my thoughts known to you.*

- Her rebuke
 - Is a gift
 - Warning to stop destruction
 - Encouragement to turn around (repent) to live in the fear of YHWH
 - Response to her rebuke
 - Better—turn around (repentance)
 - She would pour out her heart (spirit)
 - Make her thoughts (words) known to us
 - Our Lord Jesus says the same things to us

John 6:63, 66-69 *The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. 66 From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him. 67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. 68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God."*

II. Lady Wisdom's Warning (24-27)

- What she did and the fools' responses

³ Duane A. Garrett, *The New American Commentary*, vol. 14, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993), 72.

⁴ Derek Kidner, *Proverbs: Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 58.

24 *But since you rejected me when I called
and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand,
25 since you ignored all my advice
and would not accept my rebuke,*

Note: the word “since” in **verses 24 and 25** indicates that since you did A, you will face consequences of B. Since A, then B (in other words, B is what happens when you do A).

- Repeat of **verses 20-21** and the fools rejection of each Wisdom’s call
- The awful consequences

26 *I in turn will laugh at your disaster;
I will mock when calamity overtakes you-
27 when calamity overtakes you like a storm,
when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind,
when distress and trouble overwhelm you.*

- What happens to fools when they reject Wisdom’s call?
 - God laughs at the fools

Psalms 2:1-4 *Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against His Anointed One. 3 "Let us break Their chains," they say, "and throw off Their fetters." 4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.*

- Not the giggles of children or silly laughter
- Laughing at the absurdity of choosing folly⁵
- Disaster happens to them
 - Like a hurricane or tornado
 - For every sinful actions, there will be consequences

Hosea 8:7a *They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.*

Galatians 6:7 *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.*

III. Lady Wisdom’s Promises (28-33)

- The fools

28 *"Then they will call to me but I will not answer;
they will look for me but will not find me.
29 Since they hated knowledge
and did not choose to fear the LORD,
30 since they would not accept my advice
and spurned my rebuke,
31 they will eat the fruit of their ways*

⁵ Raymond Ortund, *Proverbs: Wisdom That Works: Preaching the Word Series*, edited by R. Kent Hughes (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 43.

and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

- When trouble happens they try to get out of the situation they have gotten themselves into
 - They turn back to Wisdom
- Wisdom refuses to help them
 - Rejected her advice
 - Did not fear YHWH
- Consequences of rejecting Lady Wisdom's advice

32 *For the waywardness of the simple will kill them,
and the complacency of fools will destroy them;*

- This is their own fault
- They prepare their bed and must lay in it
- They did something ungodly, and they must reap whatever consequence they face

- The wise

33 *but whoever listens to me will live in safety
and be at ease, without fear of harm."*

- They embrace Lady Wisdom
- Solomon uses this as a jumping point for **Chapter 2**

Coram Deo

Jesus is Wisdom Incarnate, and He is making the same warning as Lady Wisdom.

Matthew 7:24-27 *Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.*

Hear Him and obey Him.