PROVERBS 8-19

Solomonic Wisdom

8-9 WISDOM AS A WOMAN TO SEEK

- Solomon anthropomorphizes or personifies the concept of wisdom; apparently no serious scholar sees Wisdom as an actual being, spiritual or otherwise
- Encomium, -a: *“a composition in praise of either an abstract quality or a general character type”* - Leland Ryken

BIBLICAL LITERATURE TYPE: ENCOMIA

Proverbs 8 — wisdom • Proverbs 31 — womanhood

1 Corinthians 13 — love • Hebrews 11 — faith

8. DOES SHE NOT CALL?

- Shared elements with Job 38 (humbling correction), Psalm 90 (God as a home)
- As an invitation to idiots, it's reminiscent of Mark 2:17. You have to admit you need God's help before you can be willing to seek it
- Wisdom precedes creation, success, wealth. See also Prov 9:10 and Matthew 6:33
- Very compatible with Romans 1:20: an attribute of God visible in nature leaving even idiots with no excuse
- Shares attributes with the diagnostic description of wisdom from God Jas. 3:17-18



9. YES, FROM THE ROOFTOPS!

- She has a welcoming establishment
- It is not unpleasant, it is hospitable
- Folly and wisdom have no shared language
- Folly is also personified as a woman
- She has only death to welcome you to

10. WHAT YOU GET

- Wisdom: proud parents; Folly: shamed parents
- Wisdom: plenty; Folly: paucity
- Wisdom: life-bringing, true benediction; Folly: maledictions and lies, hate, violence
- Wisdom: fall into fortune; Folly: fears and inevitability
- Wisdom: durability, longevity, still standing; Folly: transience, loss, gone

11. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Don't weigh things unfairly or tilt things in your favor
- Pride is the opposite of honor
- Integrity is not a static state but a guide
- Wicked vs righteous: Ebenezer Scrooge as a study
- Concealment is an attribute of trustworthiness (contrast: “I'm just being honest.”)
- Gracious woman: honored; beautiful, foolhardy woman: gilded pig



12. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES

- Seek hard feedback so you can understand and course-correct
- Think about whether your significant other will ultimately shame you
- The opposite of being fair is being deceived
- How you treat animals indicates how true your attempts at compassion will be
- The quality of your words and work ethic will earn you fruit in kind
- Righteousness earns you God's favor and positive externalities for your neighbor

13. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Discussion can be fruitful, violence is treacherous
- Revealing a lot, speaking a lot are attributes of a fool
- Untruthful reputation: deception is an attribute of a disgusting, shameful loser
- Wise teaching brings life by steering you away from death
- Goals, desires are not bad, but something to work for an enjoy
- Father: discipline; Son: heed — everything else is hate and folly

14. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- A woman's “hands” — wise builds up, foolish tears down
- Speech as reward: foolish words will punish you, restraint will earn gains
- Mockery is a sign of folly, goodwill a sign of wisdom
- Fool: naïve, careless, quick-tempered
- Wise: consideration, caution, sensible
- Talk as the opposite of gainful work
- Tranquility of heart vs. Passion as an inner rotting



15. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Conversational tone: gentle talk can diffuse anger; harsh talk can cause it
- You are under surveillance by a fair and just power, 24-7
- A foolish heart does not spread knowledge
- Mere veggies with love are nicer than the richest foods with hatred
- Fools are preoccupied, the wise are seeking to know what they don't know
- Wickedness puts distance between you and God (that's bad)
- The wise are established in lasting ways and get good answers

16. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- We weigh plans and appearance but God judges motives, truth, and outcomes
- Even if evil and iniquity are your place, there is a redemptive path with God
- Wisdom superior to success and wealth, not either/or, but as a source
- Words of affirmation are psychologically healing
- Fool: digs up buried evil, “sick burn,” divisive talk, slander, drama & disapproval
- Ruling your anger and spirit are more impressive than military conquest



17. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Wisdom is better than position (servant vs son)
- Destructive talk and lying go hand in hand
- Let sleeping dogs lie
- Fools are more dangerous company than an angry mother bear
- Fools underwrite others and make pledges
- Bribes make people seem successful but pervert justice

18. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Fools just have the thoughts they have, and gain nothing
- If you act shamefully and others will see it, breeding contempt and scorn
- Laziness the destroyer
- God's name is the refuge of the righteous (maybe not for the unrighteous)
- Malady of the body is survivable; malady of the spirit is unbearable
- Friendship is not about volume but quality

19. MORE WISE VS. FOOL

EXAMPLES:

- Integrity contrasted with perverse speech
- A person who is ruining his own way also rages against God
- A prudent wife is from God
- If you don't discipline your son while there's time, you desire his death
- Honesty and kindness are what make a man desirable, not money
- Power dynamics: qualifications and favor/wrath

THANK YOU, LORD!