

## “The Course of Wisdom” (Prov. 1:7)

1. Preeminence/Priority of Wisdom (Prov. 1:7)
  - a. Reverence for YHWY viz. “fear of the LORD.” “fear” connotes a reverent obedience.
  - b. Foundational to life is such an acknowledgment. “Beginning” is not a mere commencement but preeminent or of first priority. This is not unlike “Firstborn” which does not indicate literal birth but preeminence of power, order, prestige, etc. We’ll see this later.
  - c. Bruce Waltke wrote: “the temporally first step in this case is not on a horizontal axis that can be left behind but on a vertical axis on which all else rests. It denotes both the *initium* and the *principium*. What the alphabet is to reading, notes to reading music, and numerals to mathematics, the fear of the Lord is to attaining the revealed knowledge of this book.”<sup>1</sup>
  - d. The foundation of a building is not just first but fundamental to the structure’s entire integrity. Jesus likens His words to such a foundational reality – and the stakes are not just life and death but eternity (Mat. 7:24-27).
  - e. Contrasted to the wise who build on the sure foundation, “fools despise wisdom and instruction” – the very means of their ‘would be’ success, victory, and joy filled life.
2. Pervasiveness of Wisdom (Prov. 8)
  - a. Wisdom’s Reach (1-3) Wisdom is on display and ubiquitous.
  - b. Wisdom’s Rule (15-16 cf. Col. 1:16)
  - c. Wisdom’s Riches (18, 21 cf. Col. 2:2-3)
  - d. Wisdom’s Righteousness (20 cf. Mat. 11:18-19 where wisdom is also personified as a woman (see Prov. 8:1-3 again)).
  - e. Wisdom’s Retrospect (22-30 cf. Col. 1:15-18) hermeneutical excurses. Poetic genre not literal but metaphorical e.g. personification of wisdom and being “brought forth” not literal as God never existed w/o wisdom. Just like Jesus’ came forth from Bethlehem yet was eternal (Mic. 5:2). The eternal Godhead subsists in three persons.
3. Person of Wisdom (Prov. 1-9)
  - a. Plea calling decision Revelation. Not unlike the call from wisdom in Proverbs, Jesus is the revelation of God (Heb. 1:1-3) the Word made flesh (Jn. 1:14). He is the Subject of Scripture (Lk. 24:27, 44, 45) and the One upon whom salvation rests (Jn. 5:39-40).
  - b. Authority, wisdom, and knowledge which confounds (Lk. 2:46-47 cf. vv. 40, 52).
  - c. Superior to the wisest Solomon (Lk. 11:32)
  - d. Innate authoritative wisdom (amazing wisdom) see Mk. 1:22 cf. 6:2; Mat. 7:28-29 cf. vv. 24-27 where Jesus affirms His own word as the ultimate authority upon which salvation hinges.
  - e. Christ is the “wisdom from God...” (1 Cor. 1:30-31 cf. Jer. 9:23-24. 1 Cor. 1 is merely one place where the motif of contrasting worldly and godly wisdom is found.
  - f. In Christ is found “all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery...treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2-3).
  - g. Thus the contrast of worldly wisdom vs godly wisdom and the motif of Lady Wisdom vs the wonton foolish woman convey the same. And Christ is the fulfillment of the personification of Lady Wisdom in the Proverbs.
  - h. Going back to the plea of Lady Wisdom e.g. Prov. 1:20-21 where she pleads for reason/adherence; also consider the rejected plea of Jesus and His lament for the foolish rebels who claimed to know God yet rejected the most clear revelation of Himself; thus they were left desolate of His presence (Mat. 23:37-38).

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<sup>1</sup> Waltke, B. K. (2004). [\*The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1–15\*](#) (p. 181). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

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Proverbs is not a collection of mere self-help speeches and sayings, but a declaration of what is righteous and how to become wise to practice such unto salvation. Though we must always consider the biblical passage of study in its natural, historical, literary, biblical context – all of Scripture is now revealed to be a revelation of the person and work of our Savior and Lord Jesus Messiah. Therefore, we should see the warnings, promises, and pleas of Jesus in the collection of *Proverbs*. Wisdom begins and finds its fulfillment in Christ – the Word who created all things which were created by His wisdom and might (Ps. 33:6; Prov. 8:23, 27, 30; Jn. 1:1-3). He descended to save us because we could never ascend to Him. Receiving Christ is to begin living with godly wisdom, and to reject Christ is to be the ultimate fool. Therefore, the key to life’s success is “fear of the LORD.”