

“Wisdom’s Welfare” (Prov. 8)

1. Wisdom’s Revelation (1-5)
 - a. Cries out in the creation i.e. hills and highways (1-2)
 - b. Cries out in the city (3)
 - c. Calls out to our consciences (4-5), to our hearts. More than merely display herself, she reaches out to see if she’ll receive an embrace.
2. Wisdom’s Righteousness (6-16)
 - a. Her Standard (6). The excellent, noble, or princely things are of highest regard and they are for everyone who will embrace such.
 - b. Her Integrity (7-9). Truth is her impetus and agenda, thus the wicked prefer perversity (a corruption of the truth) to suit their carnal desires.
 - c. Her Value (10-11). Mat. 6:33
3. Wisdom’s Reward (17-21)
 - a. Attainable (17). Wisdom is saying as it were, “I’m available, do you love me?”
 - b. Enduring (18). “I provide riches that are righteous and endure!”
 - c. Superlative (19). “I yield produce “fruit” that is greater than any revenue.”
 - d. Active (20). “I’ll be found in the procurement of justice.” Wisdom is not a mere reward but purposeful priority.
 - e. Abundant (21). “Those who love me, I will fill their treasuries.” Mat. 6:19-20.
4. Wisdom’s Relationship (22-31)
 - a. Humility (22-25). As wisdom’s personification is poetic, so too the language of birth. God was never without wisdom. Likewise, the Son is always with the Father albeit via the virgin; a child would be born but an eternal Son was given to us. Phil. 2:5-11.
 - b. Antiquity (26-29). Like the title “Ancient of Days,” is a way of signifying God’s aseity/eternality, this language conveys the reality of Col. 1:15-18 & 2:3!
 - c. Felicity (30-31)
 - i. V. 30. Who was beside Him? Although there is no consensus Re: the translation rendered “master craftsman,” the term and its morphology is ambiguous. A rendering of the term or root term is used as craftsman elsewhere but strictly it is the name of an Egyptian god. Furthermore, it is translated as nurturing or nursing. However, the technical debate is ultimately not a critical problem for interpretation because each option or a combination of the three point to the relationship of wisdom and God and/or God in multi-personhood. The context fits nurturing because as the analogous person of wisdom was brought forth (vv. 22, 24, 25) and thus nurtured and/or rejoiced before Him. Bruce Waltke noted:

Many, appealing to Aquila, emend the MT to *’āmûn*, a *Qal* passive participle II *’mn* meaning “to be looked after,” “to nurture” (cf. Lam. 4:5).¹⁴² The meaning “ward,” “nursling,” fits both the imagery of the Lord giving birth to Wisdom (vv. 22–24) and the parallels of “delight” and “laughs.” Kayatz defends it from the Egyptian parallels about Ma’at, a close Egyptian equivalent of *ḥokmâ*, who is likened to a child playing and dancing before the deity (cf. Isa. 11:8; Zech. 8:5).¹⁴³

MT Masoretic Text

¹⁴² So Toy, *Proverbs*, p. 177 and McKane, *Proverbs*, p. 357.

¹⁴³ Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1–9*, pp. 93–95.

¹ Waltke, B. K. (2004). *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1–15* (p. 419). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

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- ii. Vv. 30-31. There is a clearly stated relationship of rejoicing with and in creation. Not destroying the analogous personification of wisdom and her being brought forth and nurtured; Scripture’s multilayered nature, typology, and Christological arch allow for us to embrace both the analogies and their ultimate substance.
 - iii. Jesus mentioned the glory and felicity of His eternal existence with the Father e.g. Jn. 17:5. And John began his Gospel account with said relationship (Jn. 1:1) i.e. the Logos (the ultimate logic, reason, wisdom).
5. Wisdom’s Reception (32-36)
- a. Beautiful Beatitudes (32-34).
 - i. Mat. 5:3-11.
 - ii. The ploy of the evil one is to promote the thinking that biblical laws are odious prohibitions which only steal our joy. The opposite it true!
 - iii. Hear and Heed – seek and abide in wisdom. Compare vv. 32-34 “listen,” “keep,” “hear,” with Mat. 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34 etc. Compare v. 34 “watching,” and “waiting” with Jn. 15:4.
 - b. Listen unto Life (35). cf. Jn. 5:24-25.²
 - c. Accursed Alternative (36). Just as there is a contrasting conclusion in vv. 35 & 36, there is an ironic nature of the disdain for wisdom in v. 36. Sinning against wisdom (God) equates to wronging one’s own soul. Likewise, all who hate wisdom (God) love death! This is also poignantly stated by Jesus in Jn. 5:39-40! To reject Jesus is to reject the One who came to give us life eternal (Jn. 10:10).

PC:

Wisdom, as we define the word, is knowing and taking the best course of action. As the writer personified wisdom, he portrayed wisdom as displaying herself so as to invite those who would receive her righteous ways which yield reward. He went on to describe how the relationship and union of wisdom and the LORD Creator preceded creation. He finally concludes with the sobering contrast of receiving or rebelling against wisdom. This personification of wisdom foreshadows the person, mission, and call of Christ. As Jesus said on more than one occasion, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

² Note that Jn. 5 esp. vv. 19-20 also parallels verses 22-31 re: Jesus doing and wisdom rejoicing in only what the Father does.