

“Salvific Selection” (Prov. 9)

1. Contrasting Calls (1-6 & 13-18)

- a. Context: Last Wisdom Speech
- b. Conclusion: Using primarily the Lady Wisdom and Adulterous Woman metaphor, the author included allusions to metaphors of paths, households, banquets, prophets, temples, etc.
- c. Contrasts: Using the chiasmic structure of contrasting the two women, we can compare the beginning and end of the speech as follows:
 - i. Purposed, stable, sound wisdom (1a) vs pretentious, ungrounded folly (13a).
 - ii. Wisdom’s house is sturdy, built with the completion of 7 pillars (1b). She has built her house in wisdom thus securing security while the “clamorous” or pompous adulterer “knows nothing” (13b).
 - iii. Wisdom legitimately builds a house while folly destroys one (17).
 - iv. Busy for the banquet, wisdom has prepared all for the feast (2) while lazy folly simply “sits at the door of her house” (14). Folly has no concern for truth, righteousness, integrity, discipline, industry, or investment (sacrifice). Wanton folly lazily offers a crude and licentious lure. Rather than setting a banquet table in preparation for a feast, the shortcut to immediate gratification instead consumes the consumer. However, wisdom moved heaven and earth to secure our household with room for all who reply to the invitation in the affirmative (Jn. 14:1-3).
 - v. And even until then, He has prepared a table in the presence of our enemies (Ps. 23:5-6) as our blessings far outweigh the fleeting comforts, pleasures, and ease which sin/folly temporarily offer.
 - vi. Wisdom is proactive in sending out messengers to invite the “simple” (3-4a) while folly poses seated and waiting to lure passersby. Wisdom’s maidens calls for the simple to come and learn wisdom while the adulterous wife calls them to bed.
 - vii. Lu. 14:15-24 echoes this proverb’s call to say yes to wisdom and thus life (see Prov. 9:6).
 - viii. There is a transparent and legitimate prosperity of wisdom as she call “from the highest places in the city,” yet folly (idolatry and adultery) promises what is “stolen” and what is secret (17).
 - ix. Further considerations of v. 14 compared to v. 3
 1. Folly sits at the door of the highest places – and indeed is celebrated. [Optional: read Waltke on v. 14 in **Further Consideration**] The true Temple in the highest place is where the LORD resides and though our earthly tabernacles may not get the worldly esteem, we are Kingdom citizens with true Kingdom nobility.
 2. Conversely, there is no concern for truth, righteousness, integrity, discipline, industry, or investment (sacrifice) for wanton folly – only a crude and licentious lure.
 3. We are seated in the heavenly realm (Eph. 2:6) and have the righteous authority of Christ, who sat and taught in the synagogue (Lk. 4:20) and – w/o a chair, sat on the mount to teach (Mat. 5:1). Significance: no chair needed for His authority as He spoke from the mount not unlike God at Sinai.
 4. There is a popular prominence of our “celebrities” but the poor in spirit and meek will inherit the Kingdom and New Creation.
 - x. Vv. 5-6 vs vv. 17-18. Wisdom invites her pupils to a proper meal prepared to nourish and yield life and understanding. Folly offers a perversion of wisdom’s promise –

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only offering stolen and secret pleasures which end in death. Wisdom operates in the light of transparency and legitimacy while folly can only offer the darkness of perversion and idolatry.

2. Critical Choice (7-12)

- a. Wisdom’s Rejection (7-8a)
 - i. 7a. Because the scoffer scoffs, it is not wise to correct him.
 - ii. 7b. Rebuking a wicked man is dangerous.
 - iii. 8a. Think not that your rebuke of a fool will be met with appreciation. Rather →
- b. Wisdom’s Reception (8b-9)
 - i. 8b. It may not always be obvious who will receive instruction so don’t kick against the goads of unbelief (Mk. 6:11). It is, however, always our duty to maintain accountability. The wise will take heed to Scripture’s instruction (9).
- c. Wisdom’s Reason (10)
 - i. V. 10 – the theme of wisdom and success.
 - ii. Why? Because God created all environments, means, and laws.
 - iii. “Knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” Jer. 9:23-4 knowing God = salvation & there is one name whereby we are saved (Acts 4:12) cf. 1 Tim. 2:4-5 saving knowledge, v. 16 = Gospel.
- d. Wisdom’s Reward (11). Practical and eternal.
- e. Wisdom’s Responsibility (12). Personal responsibility for each. Mat. 7:24-27. Of this section, Derek Kidner wrote, “its content corrects the impression that men are saved or lost merely through an isolated, impulsive decision. The choice is seen ripening into character and so into destiny.”¹

Pastor’s Corner

Our passage (Prov. 8) concludes the wisdom speeches section in the book. The message is the same as all others in Scripture – trust the LORD. Here, the author concludes with a chiastic structure which opens and closes with two contrasting women and centers on the rule of wisdom. For purposes of preaching the message in an easily understood way, I’ve chosen to present the contrasts of Lady Wisdom and the Wanton Adulterer, and then consider the center of the passage, which emphasizes the essential choice of wisdom’s path. Knowing God is salvation is the beginning of wisdom.

¹ Kidner, D. (1964). [*Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*](#) (Vol. 17, p. 78). InterVarsity Press.

Further Consideration:

Background info on the wording of v. 14

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------|
| מְרֹמֵי | עַל-כִּסֵּא | בֵּיתָהּ | לְפֶתַח | וַיֵּשְׁבָה | 14 |
| מְרוֹם | עַל · כִּסֵּא | בַּיִת · הִיא | לְ · פֶתַח | וְ · יֵשֵׁב | |
| high place | on · seat | house · she | at · door | and · sit | |
| [at the] high places of | on · a seat | house · her | at · the door of | and · she sits | |
| NCMPC | P · NC-SA | NC-SC · RS3FS | P · NC-SC | C · Vap3FS | |

קִרְתָּ:
 קִרְתָּ
 city
 [the] city
 NC-SA

2

On a throne (kissē') means a “seat of honor” (with the possible exception of 2 K. 4:10). According to Oswalt, of the 136 occurrences of *kissē'* all but seven designate a royal or divine throne.⁸⁰ Probably chairs were so rare that only the highest nobleman owned one. In Elizabethan times chairs were a luxury. Common people sat on stools and benches, the gentry used cushions on the floor, and even the grandest ballroom rarely held more than one chair. Only the nobleman himself sat on it. When a teacher was raised to the position of professor, he was presented with an actual chair as a symbol of his elevated status in the world of learning. So also in Proverbs the chair or throne symbolizes a seat of honor (cf. 16:12; 20:8, 28; 25:5; 29:14). Sitting is the posture of authority that teachers take. The scribes and Pharisees sat on the chair of Moses (Matt. 23:2), and the Lord Jesus sat down to teach (Matt. 5:1; Luke 4:20–21). When the pope speaks *ex cathedra* (“from the chair”), faithful Roman Catholics bow to his authority. The pretentious imposter presents herself as an empress who rules a city, and the gullible bow to her authority. From time immemorial fools have frequented her carnal house (cf. Gen. 38:14; Josh. 2:1, 15; Jer. 3:2). Vying with Wisdom, who calls from the city’s highest walls (9:3b), Folly sits *on the heights of the city (m^erōmê qāret; see 9:3) to get the attention of the masses and impose her rule over them.*³

²Van der Merwe, C. (2004). *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible* (Pr 9:14). Lexham Press.

⁸⁰J. Oswalt, *TWOT*, 1:448, s.v. *kissē'*.

³Waltke, B. K. (2004). *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1–15* (p. 444). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.