

The Matter of Life and Death

Proverbs 7, (8, 9 various)

My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you.
Keep my commands and you will live;
guard my teachings as the apple of your eye.
Bind them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,”
and to insight, “You are my relative.”
They will keep you from the adulterous woman, from the wayward
woman with her seductive words.

At the window of my house
I looked down through the lattice.
I saw among the simple,
I noticed among the young men,
a youth who had no sense.
He was going down the street near her corner,
walking along in the direction of her house
at twilight, as the day was fading,
as the dark of night set in.
Then out came a woman to meet him,
dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent.
(She is unruly and defiant,
her feet never stay at home;
now in the street, now in the squares,
at every corner she lurks.)
She took hold of him and kissed him
and with a brazen face she said:
“Today I fulfilled my vows,
and I have food from my fellowship offering at home.

So I came out to meet you;
I looked for you and have found you!
I have covered my bed
with colored linens from Egypt.
I have perfumed my bed
with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.
Come, let's drink deeply of love till morning;
let's enjoy ourselves with love!
My husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey.
He took his purse filled with money
and will not be home till full moon.”

With persuasive words she led him astray;
she seduced him with her smooth talk.

All at once he followed her
like an ox going to the slaughter,
like a deer stepping into a noose
till an arrow pierces his liver,
like a bird darting into a snare,
little knowing it will cost him his life.

Now then, my sons, listen to me;
pay attention to what I say.
Do not let your heart turn to her ways
or stray into her paths.
Many are the victims she has brought down;
her slain are a mighty throng.
Her house is a highway to the grave,
leading down to the chambers of death.

Does not wisdom call out?
Does not understanding raise her voice?
At the highest point along the way,
where the paths meet, she takes her stand;
beside the gate leading into the city,
at the entrance, she cries aloud:
“To you, O people, I call out;
I raise my voice to all mankind.
You who are simple, gain prudence;
you who are foolish, set your hearts on it.

Choose my instruction instead of silver,
knowledge rather than choice gold,
for wisdom is more precious than rubies,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

To fear the Lord is to hate evil;
I hate pride and arrogance,
evil behavior and perverse speech.
Counsel and sound judgment are mine;
I have insight, I have power.
By me kings reign
and rulers issue decrees that are just;

“The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works,
before his deeds of old;
I was formed long ages ago,
at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

“Now then, my children, listen to me;
blessed are those who keep my ways.
Listen to my instruction and be wise;
do not disregard it.
Blessed are those who listen to me,
watching daily at my doors,
waiting at my doorway.
For those who find me find life
and receive favor from the Lord.
But those who fail to find me harm themselves;
all who hate me love death.”

Wisdom has built her house;
she has set up its seven pillars.
She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
She has sent out her servants, and she calls
from the highest point of the city,
“Let all who are simple come to my house!”
To those who have no sense she says,
“Come, eat my food
and drink the wine I have mixed.
Leave your simple ways and you will live;
walk in the way of insight.”

Folly is an unruly woman;
she is simple and knows nothing.
She sits at the door of her house,
on a seat at the highest point of the city,
calling out to those who pass by,
who go straight on their way,
“Let all who are simple come to my house!”
To those who have no sense she says,
“Stolen water is sweet;
food eaten in secret is delicious!”
But little do they know that the dead are there,
that her guests are deep in the realm of the dead.

Wisdom (hokmâ)

“masterful
understanding”

“the skill of living”

You have to be good to be wise—though Proverbs is particularly concerned to point out the converse: that you have to be wise to be really good; for goodness and wisdom are not two separable qualities, but two aspects of a single whole. To take it further back you have to be *godly* to be wise; and this is not because godliness pays, but because the only wisdom by which you can handle everyday things in conformity with their nature is the wisdom by which they were divinely made and ordered.

-Kidner, *Proverbs 30*

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Prov 7:21-23

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Prov 7:6-8

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Prov 8:1-5

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

-Jesus (Matt 11:28)