

Proverbs

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TRANSLATION	2
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	3
CHAPTER 1	8
CHAPTER 2	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
RESOURCES	41

Translation

Prov. 1:1 The proverbs [wise & ethical maxims] of Solomon, son of David, [3rd] king of Israel:

Prov. 1:2 For the purpose of learning wisdom [prudence in spiritual matters] and discipline [child training leading to self-discipline], for the purpose of perceiving the words of understanding [spiritual discernment],

Prov. 1:3 For the purpose of acquiring disciplined instruction [leadership training] in the prudent application of righteousness [making wise decisions], both judiciously [honest evaluation] and equitably [fair & reasonable],

Prov. 1:4 For the purpose of producing astuteness [shrewdness] in the foolish [untrained], towards insight [sound judgment] and discretion [common sense] in the adolescent.

Prov. 1:5 A wise believer listens attentively [to doctrine] and will increase insight [never stops learning], and a man who is intelligent seeks to acquire leadership ability [biblical counsel],

Prov. 1:6 To understand a proverb and a satirical poem [taunting song], the words [clever sayings] of wise men [doctrinal teachers] and their enigmatic questions [perplexing riddles],

Prov. 1:7 Respect [reverence] for God is the beginning [first priority] of knowledge, but fools despise [treat with contempt] wisdom [spiritual insight] and discipline [correction].

Prov. 1:8 Son, pay close attention to your father's disciplinary principles [corrective doctrinal instruction], and do not abandon [repudiate] your mother's precepts [established doctrinal law of the household],

Prov. 1:9 For they [doctrinal principles and precepts] are a wreath of grace [source of rewards and blessings] around your head [something to think about], and a golden collar [something to restrain the old sin nature] around your neck.

Prov. 1:10 Son, if sinful men [criminals] attempt to lead you astray [social temptation], do not succumb [to peer pressure].

Prov. 1:11 If they say: Come with us [join our criminal gang], let us secretly wait in ambush [concealed from view] for blood [bodily violence, even murder], let us hide and assault innocent people for no cause [just for kicks];

Prov. 1:12 Let us swallow them up [completely overwhelm the innocent] alive and whole [without leaving a trace or clue] like the underworld [Sheol: where souls went after death in OT times], like those who descend to the pit of the grave [where the body went after death].

Prov. 1:13 We shall seize [steal] all manner of valuable possessions; we shall fill our homes with stolen goods [plunder].

Prov. 1:14 You should cast in your lot [donate your particular skills] among us [join our pool of collective criminal resources], you ought to acquire one share [your percentage] with reference to the entire money bag [everything the gang steals].

Prov. 1:15 Son, do not walk [conduct oneself] in the same direction [along the same road] with them [gang members]; turn your foot [person] away from their path [wicked course of life],

Prov. 1:16 For their feet run quickly [hastily] towards the malignant [vicious evil], and they hurry [with hostile intent] towards shedding blood [committing murder].

Prov. 1:17 Of course a net which is dispersed [trap that is set] in front of the eyes of any winged bird [in sight of the victim] is of no use [good for nothing] to the fowler;

Prov. 1:18 Indeed, they [the gang members] might in effect [by showing the location of their trap] be hiding for their own blood [the quarry turns on his attackers], in effect waiting to ambush their own souls [if the intended victim discovers their trap, he might kill his attackers in self-defense].

Prov. 1:19 Such are the ways [criminal lifestyle] of all those who gain profit by violence; it [a life of violent crime] takes away the soul [life] of the owner [participant].

Prov. 1:20 Wisdom(s) cries out in the streets [summons everyone to listen]; in the public plaza [not behind closed doors] she utters a loud voice.

Introductory Remarks

I use the Hebrew Masoretic text for my primary translation, but because the Greek Septuagint (LXX) is quoted frequently in the New Testament, even by our Lord Jesus Christ, I supplement my translation with Greek grammar and syntax. In my opinion, the Greek language offers greater detail into moods and tenses that escape me when utilizing Hebrew only. I also like to use the Latin Vulgate because it sometimes offers the closest link to the English language when the meaning of some words is vague.

For example, if I present the concept of “wisdom” in the following manner, which language is easier for you to grasp inherently? Wisdom in Hebrew is “hokmah,” in Latin it is “sapientia,” and in Greek it is “sophia.” I dare say the word “sophia” from which our English word “sophomore” is easiest to grasp. So in this case, the Greek offers a hitherto unseen “flavour” not seen in the Hebrew. And what a perfect word to use as an example for this book, since the combination of “sophia” and “moros” means “wise fool” – exactly the profile of person that may benefit from Proverbs! The fool “has no heart for education or disregards moral truth and recklessly vents his folly. His spiritual problem is rooted in his overweening pride. His supercilious arrogance blocks him from wisdom. He has genius for invective and denigration that impresses the gullible as long as he has his way. The fool is related to the sluggard, who is unreliable and procrastinating. He is a constant source of irritation to all those who do business with him, a shame to his parents, and often a destroyer of the family inheritance.” (B. Waltke)

I highly recommend the short but excellent commentary on Proverbs by Sid S. Buzzell in the Bible Knowledge Commentary, edited by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Dr. Buzzell was my pastor in Austin, Texas for a couple years back in the 1980’s. His opening comments are as follows: “The Book of Proverbs is a book of moral and ethical instructions, dealing with many aspects of life. The teachings in this book guide its readers in how to lead wise, godly lives and how to avoid the pitfalls of unwise, ungodly conduct. It has a broad, timeless appeal because of its great variety of subjects and their relevance to everyday life. Proper and improper attitudes, conduct, and characteristics are referred to repeatedly and in succinct, penetrating ways. Proverbs is God’s book on ‘how to wise up and live.’ It is His treasure book of wisdom ...The fivefold purpose of Proverbs is given in the introduction to the book (Prov. 1:2-4,6). They are (a) for attaining wisdom and discipline, (b) for understanding words of insight, (c) for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, (d) for giving prudence to the simple, and (e) for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. These purposes focus on helping readers live wisely and skillfully. Proverbs were employed by parents and teachers to impart wisdom in a manner that made learning an adventure, a challenge. The purpose in using a proverb was to help the young acquire mental skills that promote wise living. Both the content and the structure of the sayings contributed to the hearers’ development. The process was a challenge and the product a reward.”

Proverbs is the book on wisdom. Ecclesiastes is the book on folly. Song of Solomon is the book on love. Love is the happy medium between wisdom and folly. Solomon was an expert on all three subjects! A proverb is a truth that is couched in a form that is easy to remember, a philosophy based on experience, and a rule for conduct. While the Book of Proverbs seems to be a collection of sayings without any particular regard for orderly arrangement, some of us believe that it tells a story ... It is a picture of a young man starting out in life. He gets his first lesson in

Proverbs 1:7, which is the key to the book ... The advice that is given is the Book of Proverbs transcends all dispensations. Whether one lives in OT or NT times, old Jerusalem or new Jerusalem, its truths are still true. It is a good book for anyone. I think you will find there is a proverb that will fit all your friends and acquaintances – but perhaps you had better not mention to them the proverb that fits some of them! There is a proverb that will fit every one of us, and we can have a good time going through this book. (J.V. McGee) By their very nature proverbs express eternal truths applicable to many situations. Though their expressions of truth are historically conditioned by political and cultural changes, the truth they express is unchanging. (B. Waltke)

Hebrew poetry does not have rhyme or meter as our poetry does. Hebrew poetry consists of parallelism of ideas. Three kinds of parallelism have been pointed out: (1) Synonymous Parallelism – Here the second clause restates what is given in the first clause. It expresses the same thought in a different way. (Prov. 19:29) “Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.”(2) Antithetic or Contrast Parallelism – Here a truth, which is stated in the first clause, is made stronger in the second clause by contrasts with an opposite truth. (Prov. 13:9) “The light of the righteous rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” (3) Synthetic Parallelism – The second clause develops thought of the first. (Prov. 20:2) “The terror of a king is as the roaring of a lion; He that provokes him to anger sins against his own life.” (A.C. Gaebelein) Proverbs is written entirely in poetic style. The predominant structural feature of Hebrew poetry is so-called poetic parallelism. Usually the two poetic lines in a verse have a parallel relationship. As brief maxims, the verses in Proverbs are distilled, to-the-point sentences about life. They tell what life is like and how life should be lived. The book of Proverbs focuses on human character and conduct. Many human emotions, attitudes, and relationships are spoken of in Proverbs, and often they are set in contrast. Little is said in Proverbs about the afterlife. The stress is on life now.” (S. Buzzell)

There are details of character small enough to escape the mesh of the law and the broadsides of the prophets, and yet decisive in personal dealings. Proverbs moves in this realm, asking what a person is like to live with, or to employ; how he manages his affairs, his time and himself ... There is calculation in Proverbs, for there is every encouragement to count the cost or reward of one’s actions, and to study the ways of getting things done ... A sense of purpose and calling lifts the teaching of Proverbs above the pursuit of success or tranquility, clear of the confines of a class-ethic or a dry moralism, into the realm of knowing the living God in all one’s ways ... We should do Proverbs a poor service if we contrived to vest it in a priestly ephod or a prophet’s mantle, for it is a book which seldom takes you to church. Like its own figure of Wisdom, it calls across to you in the street about some everyday matter, or points things out at home. Its function in Scriptures is to put godliness into working clothes; to name business and society as spheres in which we are to acquit ourselves with credit to our Lord, and in which we are to look for His training. (D. Kidner)

Hard facts of life, which knock some of the nonsense out of us, are God’s facts and His appointed school of character; they are not alternatives to His grace, but means of it; for everything is of grace, from the power to know to the power to obey. Yet while all go to God’s school, few learn wisdom there, for the knowledge which He aims to instill is the knowledge of

Himself; and this, too, is the ultimate prize. In submission to His authority and majesty we alone start and continue our education; and by the diligent search for wisdom “as for hid treasures” we shall find our prize in a growing intimacy with the same Lord. He is the beginning; He is also the end; for the goal is: (Prov. 2:5) “Then shall you understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” The godly man is in the best sense a man of affairs, who takes the trouble to know his way about, and plan his course realistically. He knows the ropes. A knowing of truth and indeed of God Himself through doctrine is something given and received, or grasped. (D. Kidner) By contrast, the unchaste wife serves a paradigmatic purpose. The proverbs and sayings of this book are exemplars by which to judge one’s life in many situations, and as such the unfaithful wife’s sexual infidelity against her godly husband functions as a paradigm for spiritual infidelity against the Lord. Sexual and spiritual infidelity interpenetrate each other. A sexual adulterer proves himself incapable of having a single eye toward God. Solomon’s sexual infidelity stole away his heart from loving God because his sex life was married to his spiritual life. (B. Waltke)

Proverbs admonishes parents not to spare the rod, but the state’s welfare workers want to jail those who obey it. Some academics substitute trust in man for trust in God, and speak of a world order instead of divine retribution. Instead of accepting its inspired teachings by faith, they call for a curriculum of human rationality and experimentation. Americans may claim to trust in God on their coinage, but in fact they teach and preach, “Trust in yourself.” Proverbs contrasts divine theology with human philosophy and psychology ... God’s transcendence as Creator and Sustainer of the world assures His sovereign supremacy, His freedom to enact His will. Chance does not rule, but the Lord rules chance, as symbolized by His rule over the casting of dice. God’s transcendence and sovereignty also involve His inscrutability. If the king’s heart or motives are unfathomable in his earthly realm, how much more are the Sovereign’s ways inscrutable. The king searches out the affairs of state, but none, not even the king, comprehends the vast extent and complexity of the heavenly Sovereign’s acts ... There is also retribution. What you do now will determine what will happen then. A more precise formula is a character > conduct > consequence connection – that is, what you are determines what you will become. Human beings are fully aware of God’s superiority to them and their dependence on Him. But they differ in their responses. The wise, who are righteous, trust and obey Him; the wicked deny and rail against Him. Human responsibility and divine retribution are inseparable. (B. Waltke)

Many proverbs are addressed to the simple, the fool, the scoffer, the sluggard, and the good friend. (1) Because of his lazy thoughtlessness, the simple may need a visual aid to bring him to repentance. If he refuses it, he will graduate to a more serious condition. A man who is empty-headed will end up wrongheaded. The simple is no half-wit; he is a person whose instability could be rectified, but who prefers not to accept discipline in the school of wisdom. (2) The root of the fool’s trouble is spiritual, not mental. He likes his folly, going back to it like a dog that returns to his vomit; he has no reverence for truth, preferring comfortable illusions. In society the fool is, in a word, a menace. At best, he wastes your time; you will not find a word of sense in him. Give him a wide berth, for the companion of fools shall smart for it. (3) The scoffer shares with his fellows their strong dislike of correction, and it is this, not any lack of intelligence, that blocks any move he makes towards wisdom. The mischief he does is not the random mischief of the ordinary fool, but the deeper damage of the debunker and deliberate trouble-maker. (4) The

sluggard will not begin things. All he knows is delicious drowsiness; all he asks is a little respite: a little ... a little ... a little. He does not commit himself to a refusal, but deceives himself by the smallness of his surrenders. So by inches and minutes, his opportunity slips away. He will not finish things. The rare effort of beginning has been too much; the impulse dies. He is restless with unsatisfied desire and helpless in face of the tangle of his affairs. Through shirking hard work he has qualified for drudgery, and through procrastination the disorder of his life has become irreversible: all is wasteland. (5) The good friend is wise to offer silence rather than criticism. Fair-weather friends are many. The reader should think only of the friendship he hopes to receive; he is urged to give this kind of loyalty, especially to the old friend of the family who may easily be dropped in the search for new company, but whose staunchness would stand any test. (D. Kidner)

Some proverbs may be grouped under: the power of words, the weakness of words, husbands and wives, parents and children, life and death ... One's attitude to another person may be deeply affected by a mere whisper, unforgettable as soon as relished, and one's self-esteem ruinously inflated by flattery. Since words implant ideas in other minds, their effects ramify – again, for good or evil. A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool. The most spicy gossip has power over the listener only in so far as he is himself an evildoer and a walking falsehood ... The woman is the making or the undoing of her husband; indeed his crown or else rottenness in his bones ... Proverbs is well known for its praise of the rod. Its maxim, “he that spares the rod hates his son” is a corollary of its serious doctrine of wisdom. “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; it will take more than words to dislodge it.” In a child left to himself, the only predictable result is shame. A son may be too opinionated to learn. A good home may produce an idler or a profligate. He may be rebel enough to despise, mock, or curse his parents, or heartless enough to run through their money ... The vitality of our whole being is a tranquil mind. Life means fellowship with God. (D. Kidner)

In Proverbs men's foibles are satirized and set against the opposing virtues. Vices of all kinds, which corrupt the mind and body, are relentlessly exposed and denounced. The benefits which accrue from sound principles of conduct are brought to the disciple's attention, to make their appeal to his self-interest when he is unable to rise to the plane where he perceives that goodness is its own reward ... To conduct oneself in the light of wisdom means to get the best out of life, discover sources of strength which assure final victory over calamity and evil, and become a blessing to oneself and society. (A. Cohen) Laziness in Proverbs is more than a character flaw; it is a moral issue, for it leads to loss of freedom, the perpetual frustration of getting nowhere, and a loss of life. The sluggard is poor by virtue of his moral degeneracy. He is not worthy to be called “poor.” Thus Proverbs does not instruct the disciple to feed him (13:4, 16:26, 19:17). The sluggard is left begging in harvest and has plenty of poverty (20:4, 28:19), a telling oxymoron. (B. Waltke)

Proverbs have limits. Their very literary form means that they overstate or oversimplify. They carry no fine print, no footnotes, no lists of exceptions. That is why we need so many of them. Each is precisely true in certain situations; neither is true in every circumstance. Knowing when and where to use them is part of wisdom. We cannot use proverbs like subway tokens, guaranteed to open the turnstile every time. They are guidelines, not mechanical formulas. They

are procedures that we follow, not promises that we claim. We heed them as best we can, try to gain the wisdom that experience can teach, and then leave large amounts of room for God to surprise us with outcomes different from what our plans prescribe. (D. Hubbard) Israelite wisdom literature is distinctive but not unique in form and subject matter. Throughout the ancient Near East, many analogies to Israelite wisdom (some closer than others) can be found. While none of the wisdom literature of the other nations is exactly like that of Israel, similarities are so conspicuous that they cannot be ignored. More than that, the comparison of the Bible to contemporary ancient Near Eastern material has often clarified the purpose and message of the biblical text. (D. Garrett)

CHAPTER 1

LWB Prov. 1:1 The proverbs [wise & ethical maxims] of Solomon, son of David, [3rd] king of Israel:

KJV Proverbs 1:1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

These proverbs, aphorisms, maxims of ethical wisdom, or instruction in prudent behavior (Latin: parables) were written by Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, and other “wise men.” According to 1 Kings 4:32, Solomon authored 3,000 proverbs; only a few hundred are recorded here. He was the 3rd king (Latin: regal) of Israel (Saul, David, Solomon) when they were written, at a time when Israel and Judah were one kingdom. After the death of Solomon, the nation was split into two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. During the reign of Solomon, Israel was the name of the entire nation, whereas under Jeroboam, Israel was the name of the northern kingdom only. The name Solomon means “peace,” a derivative of shalom. The name David means “beloved.” The name Israel means “God prevails.” The Hebrew and Latin texts have no verbs, but the Greek has a Constative Aorist tense combined with a Nominative of Apposition that would read “who ruled.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Though “masal” usually means a brief, pithy saying, it can also refer to longer discourses. The word “proverb” then refers to various forms of wise, insightful pronouncements. (S. Buzzell) A proverb may then be described as an object lesson based on or using some comparison or analogy. It may be a short saying that provides a general truth, a lesson drawn from experience, a common example, or a pattern of future blessing or cursing. The purpose of a proverb is to help one choose the best course of action from among those available – the foolish way is to be avoided and the wise way followed. (A.R. Johnson) Proverbs is particularly slanted to young men – but applies to young women also. It has a special message for youth. (A.C. Gaebelein)

Solomon is named at the outset as the principal author, although his own collection of proverbs will not be reached till chapter 10, where the heading is repeated. Solomon's own proverbs are deferred for the good reason that the reader needs preparation if he is to use them fruitfully. So the introduction, an extension of the title, makes it clear that this book is no anthology, but a course of education in the life of wisdom. (D. Kidner) Solomon is a better theologian than Frank Sinatra. Sinatra sang, "Do-be, do-be, do." Solomon sang: "Be-do, be-do, be." (B. Waltke) Solomon is to be seen as a wise and learned man compiling an anthology of wise sayings, his own and others, and leaving on it the imprint of his own personality. In that sense it is his composition. (A. Walls)

The contents of Proverbs speak volumes to our modern age as they have to every generation. Modulating power with wisdom and compassion is the basic message of Proverbs. Can such a lesson ever be irrelevant, ever obsolete, ever misdirected? Not so long as the sons and daughters of Eve and Adam seek to make sense of human life in a world where folly is in large supply, arrogance knows no shortage, and fickleness is a way of life. The practical nature of the proverbs and the sage advice they tender in so many aspects of personal, social, economic, and political life make them a handy guide for instruction to young and old alike. (D. Hubbard)

Each proverb is an independent unit that can stand alone and still have meaning. Textual context is not essential for interpretation. Context, however, sometimes qualifies or gives a more precise meaning to a given proverb. Each proverb may have its own meaning, but it may also have a more specific meaning in the context of a small collection of proverbs. Like other wisdom literature, it stresses the act-consequence relationship ... While Deuteronomy tends to stress more the concept of punishment or reward being direct acts of God, Proverbs tends to speak more of each action containing within itself a link to reward or punishment. (D. Garrett)

Prov. 1:1 The proverbs (מִשְׁלֵי, Subj. Nom.; parables, aphorisms, maxims, ethical wisdom, examples) of Solomon (שְׁלֹמֹה, Abl. Source; "peace"), son (בֵּן, Gen. Appos.) of David (דָּוִד, Gen. Rel.; "beloved", and Bathsheba), king (מֶלֶךְ, Gen. Appos.; 3rd king of Israel) of Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל, Loc. Place; "God prevails", the same name was given to the northern kingdom, comprised of the 10 tribes under Jeroboam, after the death of Solomon, due to the split - the southern kingdom was named Judah):

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:1** παροιμίαι Σαλωμῶντος υἱοῦ Δαυιδ ὃς ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν Ἰσραηλ

מִשְׁלֵי שְׁלֹמֹה בֶן-דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:1**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:1** parabolae Salomonis filii David regis Israhel

LWB Prov. 1:2 For the purpose of learning wisdom [prudence in spiritual matters] and discipline [child training leading to self-discipline], for the purpose of perceiving the words of understanding [spiritual discernment],

KJV Proverbs 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There are several reasons for the writing of these proverbs. The first purpose is for learning (Qal Infinitive) wisdom and discipline. The Hebrew word for “learning” means objective education, scientific discernment, and categorical perception. In the Greek, it is knowledge acquired and stored (Gk: Iterative Present) on the launching pad of the soul for future use (gnosis); but it is not yet knowledge that has been applied to life on many occasions with success (epignosis). Solomon’s desire is that his proverbs will eventually become wisdom (Greek: sophia) and a form of self-discipline to his hearers. The Greek word “paideia” points to these proverbs as a form of correction and child training. Solomon probably wrote these to instruct his own sons as they grew to adulthood. He hopes they will be able to grow from enforced humility to genuine self-discipline.

Another reason for writing these proverbs was for the purpose of perceiving (Hiphil Infinitive) the words of understanding. This is a reference to spiritual discernment, with the hopes that they will become (Gk: Ingressive Aorist) preemptive weapons against the flesh, the world, and the devil. By rote memorization, these sayings or promises are to be stored as wise “snippets” in a child’s or adolescent’s mind. When certain temptations arise, the hope is that they can be recalled immediately to prevent transgressions and sins. Although they were written primarily for children and adolescents, the explicit content of some proverbs is meant for the young adult (primarily males) who is about to leave home. Since some of us never seem to grow up, due to our own foolish decisions or poor upbringing, there are important principles we can learn here, too.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A person with this wisdom has “expertise” in godly living. Such wise, skillful living is a life of discipline and order. (S. Buzzell) Some call Solomon’s proverbs a combination of ethics, politics, and economics ... His wisdom often stands for doctrine in general, and his instruction signifies the means of attaining to it. Wisdom may design a wise scheme and plan of truths, and the theory of them, while instruction is learning it and putting it into practice. Both theory and practice are useful in this book. (J. Gill) The first general object of the Proverbs is the reception into oneself of wisdom and moral edification by means of education and training. This includes understanding as the capability to possess the right criteria of distinguishing between the true and the false, the good and the bad, the wholesome and the pernicious. (Keil & Delitzsch) Parents: Do not substitute better circumstances and improved environment for Bible doctrine in the training of your children. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Israel's teachers were persistently passionate in their concern to lead their students in the right path. They argued, badgered, reasoned, illustrated, pleaded, warned, and commanded in order to make their points. In short, they cared. The speeches had as their main purpose to state every possible reason why wisdom should be valued and folly despised. Wisdom for them was a matter of nothing less than life or death. Proverbial sayings played a role in Israel's clan life from the beginning – conserving, organizing, packaging, and transmitting the lessons learned from apt observation and painful experience. But not until Solomon came along, with his divinely gifted skills at wisdom and his need to transmit it to those who managed his burgeoning administration, was there a means to collect, edit, and disseminate the varied sayings that had been used to train Israel's young. (D. Hubbard)

The book of Proverbs has two purposes: to give moral skillfulness and to give mental discernment. The disciple will be able to develop skillfulness and discipline in holy living; the book encompasses an intellectual and experiential acquisition of wisdom and discipline. The ability to make wise choices and live successfully according to the moral standards of the covenant community signifies skillful living. Proverbs will train people to discern lessons about life, such as distinguishing permanent values from immediate gratifications. (F. Gaebelein) The aim of Proverbs is for man to know. His first duty is to obtain a knowledge of wisdom; then it is hoped he will allow it to rule his life. The Hebrew "chochmah" (wisdom) is the key word of the Book and the basis of the whole structure of its teaching. It is an understanding of the principles which control and direct human living at its highest and best. (A. Cohen)

To prevent the repetition of folly, "musar" is learned with "the rod," the symbol of corporal punishment. The responsibility to respond to instruction lies squarely on the child's shoulders; he must listen to it, accept it, love it, prize it more highly than money, and not let go of it. Once accepted, discipline springs from the power of internalized wisdom, not from sporadic "New Year's resolutions." (B. Waltke) Many people cannot see the truth when it is staring them in the face – often because the truth is unpalatable and they do not want to see it. (J. Phillips) Admonitions illustrate the reasonableness of the wise teachers. They did not merely pull rank and cram their commands down the throats of their pupils. More often than not they gave solid reasons, cogent motivations, in support of their instructions. Again the role of experience as the foundation of the call to right behavior is crucial. (D. Hubbard)

A principle that believers must teach their children is that in their pursuit of wisdom they will be surrounded by others going the opposite direction who will be encouraging them to do likewise. (D. Garrett) Proverbs begins with the assumption that there is a personal God who gives meaning to all of life. In contrast, Ecclesiastes begins with the assumption of "man under the sun," autonomous man without God. Proverbs begins with God and asks the question, "How should we live?" Ecclesiastes begins without God and asks, "Why should we live?" Proverbs is positive, while Ecclesiastes is negative and pessimistic. Proverbs promises us that life will be wonderful if we begin with God. Ecclesiastes warns us that life is empty and without meaning if we begin without God. In Proverbs, wisdom is more important than money. In Ecclesiastes, money is more important than wisdom. (R. Morey)

Prov. 1:2 For the purpose of (ל, prep.; according to, in regard to) learning (יָדַע, Qal Infin. Construct, Purpose; objective education, scientific discernment, categorical perception) wisdom (חֵכְמָה, Acc. Dir. Obj.; shrewdness, skill, prudence in spiritual matters) and (ו, connective) discipline (מוֹסֵר, Acc. Dir. Obj.; correction, chastening, child training), for the purpose of (ל, prep.; according to, in regard to) perceiving (בִּין, Hiphil Infin. Construct, Purpose; discerning) the words (אָמַר, Acc. Dir. Obj.; sayings, vocabulary, promises) of understanding (בִּינָה, Adv. Gen. Ref.; spiritual discernment, insight),

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:2** γινῶναι σοφίαν καὶ παιδείαν νοησαί τε λόγους φρονήσεως

לְדַעַת חֵכְמָה וּמוֹסֵר לְהָבִין אִמְרֵי בִינָה: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:2**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:2** ad sciendam sapientiam et disciplinam

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:3** **For the purpose of acquiring disciplined instruction [leadership training] in the prudent application of righteousness [making wise decisions], both judiciously [honest evaluation] and equitably [fair & reasonable],**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:3** To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

These proverbs were also written so that (Purpose) the readers might acquire (Qal Infinitive) doctrinal principles (Latin: intelligence) related to the application of righteousness. This application of righteousness (Hiphil Infinitive) can be in the personal sphere or in the public arena. Proverbs can be applied to problems in the family unit or civic issues that require good governmental decisions. This application of righteousness must be honest and fair; the LXX refers to an understanding of what is righteous, true and just and an ability to exercise leadership in the same manner. This could be in the sphere of the family unit, such as administering discipline or rewards for behavior. Or it could be applied in official capacity, such as legal jurisprudence exercised after weighing all the evidence and coming to a fair conclusion on a matter of public policy.

“Acquiring” is a parallel to the intake and metabolization of Bible doctrine, while “application” is a parallel to the highest quality or standard of using this doctrine in daily life. The Hiphil points to a state or quality of being able to apply doctrine with understanding and circumspection. Correct application, however, first requires an acceptance of the doctrine with approval, realizing it is good common sense. “Wisdom and knowledge are inseparable, for mastery of life’s experience demands knowledge of the divine order, the nexus between cause

and consequence. It is imperative that the gullible youth seek it, find it, and acquire it.” (B. Waltke) The same applies for those of us who have passed our youthful age, but are still doctrinally brainless.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Sedeq, mishpat and mesharim are Hebrew adverbial accusatives of manner which mean conformity to a standard, the exhibition of justice, and a life style that is equitable. (F. Gaebelien) Justice is righteousness, and it means “right behavior.” Right and wrong are not relative terms except in the minds of the contemporary average man. God says they are not relative. Just like light and darkness, they are absolutes. Equity refers to principle rather than conduct. The child of God is not put under rules, but we are given great principles which should guide us. (J.V. McGee) Intellectual reception and appropriation, blended with discipline training to wisdom, is such morality and good conduct as rests not on external inheritance, training, imitation, and custom, but is bound up with the intelligent knowledge of the Why and the Wherefore. (Keil & Delitzsch) A youth was held fully accountable when 20-years old, but he could not serve at the temple until he was thirty. (B. Waltke)

The word “instruction” means you teach by discipline. That is a forgotten truth today. Our contemporary society is certainly out of kilter and out of step with the Word of God. For example, we are told that lawbreakers are put in prison to discipline them and to reform them. That never was the purpose of dealing with criminals according to the Word of God. The purpose there was to judge them, punish them. No other reason was ever given. On the other hand, when you are dealing with a son, you discipline him because that is part of his instruction. You are to chasten him. You are to teach him by disciplining him. Your purpose is not to punish him. We often hear it said, “That child should be punished!” No, that is not the purpose of turning little Willie across your knee and paddling him. I hope you do paddle him. But why do you do it? To punish him? No, to teach him by discipline. Our purposes are all confused today – we discipline criminals and punish our children. We need to get back to God’s purposes. Our schools today are practicing the “new methods” of teaching. What about the old method of teaching by discipline? That is absolutely out. I believe the board of education being applied to the seat of learning is desperately needed – both in the home and in the school. A man asked a father, “Do you strike your children?” The father answered, “Only in self defense.” That’s about what it has come to in our day – the children are bringing up the parents! They are disciplining the parents and telling them what they ought to do. (J.V. McGee)

Proverbs is a collection of collections of materials designed initially for use by the young men of Israel’s society who were being groomed for positions of leadership. Building projects, international diplomacy and trade, census taking, military mobilization, tax collection, judicial procedures – these and many more governmental functions called for a whole cadre of administrators to be recruited and trained for positions of responsibility within the government. Israel’s court, for example, had to set up some kind of schooling system to meet the intense and widespread need for formal learning. The masculine orientation of Proverbs is best accounted for if the specific initial purpose of the book was to support the training of leaders for political and

mercantile responsibility. (D. Hubbard) Wisdom is Bible doctrine in the frontal lobe applied. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:3 For the purpose of (ל, prep.; according to, in regard to) acquiring (לקח, Qal Infin. Construct, Purpose; seizing, fetching, snatching) disciplined instruction (מוֹסֵר, Acc. Dir. Obj.; mental motivation, child training) in the prudent application of (שכל, Hiphil Infin. Absolute; circumspection, understanding) righteousness (צֶדֶק, Adv. Acc.; good government), both (ו, adjunctive) judiciously (מִשְׁפָּט, Adv. Acc.; legal jurisprudence, honest evaluation of the evidence) and (ו, connective) equitably (מִיִּשְׁרִים, Adv. Acc.; right, correct, fair),

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:3** δέξασθαι τε στροφὰς λόγων νοῆσαι τε δικαιοσύνην ἀληθῆ καὶ κρίμα κατευθύνειν

לְקַחַת מוֹסֵר הַשֵּׂכֶל צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט וּמִיִּשְׁרִים: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:3**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:3** ad intellegenda verba prudentiae et suscipiendam eruditionem doctrinae iustitiam et iudicium et aequitatem

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:4** For the purpose of producing astuteness [shrewdness] in the foolish [untrained], towards insight [sound judgment] and discretion [common sense] in the adolescent.

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:4** To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

These proverbs were also written so that (Purpose) the reader might produce (Qal Infinitive) shrewdness (Latin: astute) in the untrained (Gk: Customary Present, Potential Indicative), along with sound judgment (Latin: scientific) and a common sense approach to life (Latin: intellect). The primary audience of Proverbs is the adolescent male, the young lad or neophyte. But that doesn't mean we all can't learn something from the book, because which one of us had perfect parents who instructed us in sound wisdom? I dare say we all make stupid mistakes on occasion, and some of those may be due to the incorrect perception of a problem or an overall bad attitude that day. The Hebrew word "armah" should be taken in a good sense, referring to a man who sees *meaning* in life and is prudent and tactful in following it, rather than in a bad sense, such as crafty and deceitful. The Hebrew word "dat" refers to accurately *defining* the Christian way of life and knowing how to use that expertise and skill creatively. The Hebrew word "momah" refers to a man of *purpose* and direction. In other words, this verse points to "obtaining meaning, purpose and definition in the spiritual life." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Men of mean abilities, weak capacities, shallow understandings, incautious, credulous, and easily imposed upon – these, by attending to what is herein contained, may arrive to a serpentine subtlety. Though they are simple and harmless as doves, they may become wise as serpents. They may attain to an exquisite knowledge of divine things and know even more than the wise and sage philosophers among the Gentiles, or any of the Rabbins and masters of Israel, or any of the princes of this world, whose wisdom comes to nought. They may become very cautious and circumspect how they are drawn aside by the old serpent the devil, or by such who lie in wait to deceive, and yet perform their duty both to God and man. This book will teach him the knowledge of things moral, civil, and religious: to think and act aright; how to behave and conduct himself wisely and discreetly before men; and be a means of forming his mind betimes for piety and religion; and of furnishing him with rules for his deportment in future life, in all the periods of it. (J. Gill)

Being prudent is the meaning of giving subtlety to the simple; it is to act prudently. It means to be wise in what we do. A child of God ought not to act foolishly. Knowledge is information that is useful. Discretion means thoughtfulness. (J.V. McGee) Man is endowed with instincts and passions which must be kept under restraint or they make him brutish. The instruction of this Book, if put into practice, teaches how self-discipline may be exercised. (A. Cohen) In a special way, naïve and innocent youths are in need of the teaching of the sages. Because folly can take various forms, it must be met with a cleverness and prudence that will be a match for it. (R. Murphy) “Simple” originally meant without guile, open, artless – but now because a person who acts thus is considered devoid of all sense, it has come to mean foolish. In the Bible the word is used in its original sense, as the usage had not then changed. (E.W. Bullinger) This verse means “to give even the stupid something of value,” to give the teenager Bible doctrine and something to think about, something to concentrate on. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Those who are likely to benefit from Proverbs are those who are sensible of their own ignorance and their need to be taught, and are therefore desirous to receive instruction. (M. Henry) Subtlety or shrewdness is not used in the sense of worldly cunning, but that knowledge which will put one on his guard against the subtle snares of the world; as Jesus told His disciples, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” (R. Jamieson) Immaturity must first obtain intellectual and moral clearness and firmness. (Keil & Delitzsch) Some, with a cynical and superficial knowledge of the Scriptures, have gone so far as to say that God opposes knowledge. That is ludicrous! We know that the greatest virtue in the Christian life is maximum understanding and application of the Word of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The foolish or silly ones are those believers who are easily distracted from Bible doctrine. Their friends or pursuit of friends who are not interested in doctrine end up dragging them away from Bible class. Knowledge and discretion in the KJV is the perception and application of common sense from maximum Bible doctrine in the soul. (ibid)

Some people are so gullible that they believe everything they are told. They are easy prey for the con man. Solomon wanted us to be prepared to meet such deceivers. Eve had the Word of God,

which would have rendered her invincible, had she relied on it. All she needed to say in response to temptation was “Thus saith the Lord.” Solomon wanted to put this same almighty Word into the hands of the simple. A mastery of the book of Proverbs will go far toward equipping even the most guileless for life’s treacheries. (J. Phillips) Youth is the learning age – catches at instructions, receives impressions, and retains what is then received; it is therefore of great consequence that the mind be then seasoned well, nor can it receive a better tincture than from Solomon’s proverbs. Youth is rash and heady, and inconsiderate, and therefore needs to be broken by the restraints and managed by the rules we find here. (M. Henry) Proverbs also helps reversionists recover from their sorry state of affairs and enable them to begin forward momentum in the spiritual life. You don’t have to take any of these goofy psychology courses that enable people to adjust to people. Because if you take in doctrine and adjust to the justice of God, everything works out the way it should. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Eph. 1:4 For the purpose of (ל, prep.; according to, in regard to) producing (נתן, Qal Infin. Construct, Purpose; ascribing, granting) astuteness (עֲרֻמָּה, Dat. Ind. Obj.; meaning: shrewdness, prudence, subtlety, craftiness) in (ל, prep.) the foolish (פְּתִי, Loc. Sph.; simple, naïvete, untrained, innocent, unsuspecting), towards (prep.; short-term goal) insight (דַּעַת, Adv. Acc.; definition, sound judgment, expertise, creative skill, perception) and (ו, connective) discretion (מוֹזְמָה, Adv. Acc.; purpose, common sense, correct attitude) in the adolescent (נֶעֱר, Loc. Sph; young lad, neophyte).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:4** ἵνα δὴ ἀκάκοις πανουργίαν παιδοὶ δὲ νέω αἴσθησίν τε καὶ ἔννοιαν

לְתַת לַפְתָּאִים עֲרֻמָּה לְנֶעֱר דַּעַת וּמוֹזְמָה: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:4**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:4** ut detur parvulis astutia adolescenti scientia et intellectus

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:5** **A wise believer listens attentively [to doctrine] and will increase insight [never stops learning], and a man who is intelligent seeks to acquire leadership ability [biblical counsel],**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:5** A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

A wise and learned man never stops listening and learning (Qal Frequentive & Habitual Imperfect) because he thinks he has arrived at a complete knowledge of all important matters in life. He pays close attention to subjects he is not familiar with and is duly interested in expanding his knowledge in other fields of study. If he continues to approach life in this manner (Gk:

Gnomic Future), he will grow (Hiphil Imperfect) incrementally – from learning to discernment to insight to skill in application (Gk: Progressive Future). An intelligent and thoughtful man (Niphal Participle) continually seeks to acquire (Qal Frequentive & Habitual Imperfect) leadership ability. A thoughtful man does not seek leadership ability (Latin: gubernatorial) because he wants to climb the corporate ladder and rule over the lives of others with an iron fist. A thoughtful man is motivated to obtain divine guidance in his life first, so he is able to give good advice and wise counsel to others. Three of the verbs are Jussives, which means the writer is trying to encourage us to listen and learn, as well as having proper motivation in our desire to become spiritual leaders at work and in our community.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Increase in learning” is the same word as in Prov. 4:2, “I give you good doctrine.” Wise counsel is the discernment to steer a right course through life. (A. Cohen) Whoever is wise is invited to hear these proverbs in order to add to learning (doctrinam) to that which he already possesses. One who is caused to understand or who lets himself be informed, is thus an intelligent person. (Keil & Delitzsch) Were the wise person to fail to listen, he might be one who is “wise in his own eyes,” the most dangerous of all situations. (R. Murphy) To “hear” means motivation to learn Bible doctrine – no excuses, no rationalizations – and to be successful in the use of Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Even wise men must hear, and not think themselves too wise to learn. A wise man is sensible of his own defects, and is therefore still pressing forward, that he may increase in learning, may know more and know it better, more clearly, distinctly, and may know better how to make use of it. As long as we live we should strive to increase in all useful learning. If our stock of knowledge is not increasing, it is wasting; and those that would increase in learning must study the Scriptures. A man of understanding in these precepts of wisdom, by comparing them with one another and with his own observations, shall by degrees attain unto wise counsels. (M. Henry) A wise believer will concentrate on doctrine; he grabs it with both hands and does not let go. The art of leadership is the art of common sense. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:5 A wise man (חָכָם, Subj. Nom.; learned) listens attentively (שָׁמַעַ, Qal Imperf. Jussive 3MS, Frequentive & Habitual; pays close attention to, is duly interested in, heeds) and (וְ, continuative) will increase (יִסַּף, Hiphil Imperf. Jussive 3MS, Denominative; multiply, adds to, intention) insight (לִקְחָ, Adv. Acc.; doctrine, learning, skill), and (וְ, connective) a man who is intelligent (בֵּין, Niphal Ptc.MS, Substantival; discerning, thoughtful) seeks to acquire (קָנָה, Qal Imperf. Jussive 3MS; obtain, purchase) leadership ability (תְּחָבוּלָה, Acc. Dir. Obj.; good advice, tactical skill, divine guidance, wise counsel, direction),

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:5** τῶνδε γὰρ ἀκούσας σοφὸς σοφώτερος ἔσται ὁ δὲ νοήμων κυβέρνησιν κτήσεται

יְשִׁמְעַ יְשִׁמְעַ חָכָם וַיִּוֹסֶף לִקְחַ וְנִבְּוֹן תַּחְבְּלוֹת יִקְנֶה׃ ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:5**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:5** audiens sapiens sapientior erit et intellegens gubernacula possidebit

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:6** To understand a proverb and a satirical poem [taunting song], the words [clever sayings] of wise men [doctrinal teachers] and their enigmatic questions [perplexing riddles],

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:6** To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

An intelligent and discerning man seeks to understand (Hiphil Desiderative Infinitive) proverbs and poems to the best of his ability, including songs that mock and ridicule the fool, taunt the self-sufficient, and confuse the unbeliever due to its seemingly dark perspective (Greek: skotos, dark saying). He also seeks to understand (Latin: interpretation) the clever sayings of wise men and their difficult inquiries into the nature of things. These obscure utterances (Greek: enigmas) were often questions about perplexing moral issues, what we might call “exceptions to the rule” regarding thoughts and behavior. They were in the form of riddles and other obscure lessons couched in unusual literary forms. A simpleton would pass over such wise sayings and obscure riddles as being a waste of time and effort to understand, but a wise person would try to interpret them for guidance in daily life - warnings against falling into some category of sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The secondary purpose of Proverbs is to introduce the reader to a style of teaching that provokes his thought, getting under his skin by thrusts of wit, paradox, common sense and teasing symbolism, in preference to the preacher’s tactic of frontal assault. (D. Kidner) The second major purpose of the book is to give mental acumen to the student. (F. Gaebelien) He who strives after wisdom earnestly and really, reaches in this way fellowship with God; for just as He gives wisdom, it is nowhere else than with Him, and it never comes from any other source than from Him. It is communicated through the medium of His Word, it is His breath; the inspiration of the Almighty gives men understanding. (Keil & Delitzsch)

The Word of God deserves all the study that you can possibly bring to it. If you haven’t found Christ in the Bible, you simply have not been mining for diamonds – you haven’t been digging deep enough. The tragedy of the hour is the ignorance of the Word of God in both pulpit and pew. There needs to be a serious, concentrated study of the Word of God. Somehow there is an idea today that one can read over a passage once and then you have it all. I trust you will see that you cannot get the nuggets out of the Word of God without study. (J. McGee) The repetition of “understand” underscores the necessity of grasping the meaning of the words to enter into the truth and again implies that this skill is learned through the exercise of study ... The words

“proverb” and “riddle” asks the audience to make an intuitive critical judgment of their own behavior in the light of that history. (B. Waltke)

Proverbs 1:2-6 is chock full of meaty morsels about wisdom. Its synonyms are piled one on another, are calculated to show wisdom’s well-stocked larder. They are an instance of the use of repetition by Hebrew authors to expand, reinforce, and enrich the meaning of a concept. It is their accumulative force that conveys the teacher’s intention, more than the precise nuance of each term, though each word adds something to our understanding of wisdom. (D. Hubbard) These riddles are epigrammatic statements with a meaning intelligible only to the initiated. (A. Cohen) True wisdom is never stationary, but progressive, always engendering an insatiable desire for more doctrine. The more doctrine we learn, the more secure is the ground over which we advance, and the greater consolidation for further advance. If you have advanced over ground properly, the more consolidated you are for further advance and continued spiritual momentum. Proverbs are designed for consolidating old ground and advancing on new ground. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:6 **To** (ל, prep.) **understand** (בין, Hiphil Infin. Construct, Desiderative; think over, consider) **a proverb** (משל, Acc. Dir. Obj.; parable) **and** (ו, connective) **a satirical poem** (מליצה, Acc. Dir. Obj.; mocking taunting song, dark saying), **the words** (דבר, Acc. Dir. Obj.; clever sayings) **of wise men** (חכמים, Abl. Source; doctrinal teachers) **and** (ו, connective) **their** (suffix: Poss.) **enigmatic questions** (חידה, Acc. Dir. Obj.; perplexing riddles, difficult inquiries, obscure utterances),

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:6** νοήσει τε παραβολὴν καὶ σκοτεινὸν λόγον ῥήσεις τε σοφῶν καὶ αἰνίγματα

לְהַבִּין מִשָּׁל וּמְלִיצָה דְּבַרֵי חֲכָמִים וְחִידוֹתָם: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:6**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:6** animadvertet parabolam et interpretationem verba sapientium et enigmata eorum

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:7** **Respect [reverence] for God is the beginning [first priority] of knowledge, but fools despise [treat with contempt] wisdom [spiritual insight] and discipline [correction].**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:7** The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The first priority for a believer who wants to obtain spiritual discernment is to respect the Lord. If you do not revere God as Creator of heaven and earth, and the Sovereign over all people and

events, you do not possess insight into the true nature of things. By contrast, fools treat wisdom and discipline with contempt (Qal Perfect), regarding the pursuit of both as nothing. Fools are always preoccupied with some form of bird-dogging; they have no time for the Word of God, and as rebels against the Lord, they reject all manner of discipline. According to their way of thinking, they are freebirds; they have no desire for training and no need for correction or chastening.

We are living in a generation where a huge percentage of parents (fools) have rejected God's mandate to correct and chastise children and have neglected to train them with biblical truth. They believe the very notion of training and discipline is obsolete, both for themselves and their children. They have rejected God's Word and have chosen human, psychological panaceas instead. The word "beginning" intimates that one may continue to advance, to further profit from additional study of the Word; true wisdom abounds the more time and effort we put into it.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God is the Creator of the universe and of life; it is consequently impossible to obtain an understanding of man's place in the design and purpose of living without a humble approach to Him. So this is not dread, but reverence of God expressed in submission to His will ... Divorce God from knowledge and it becomes an instrument of destruction instead of construction. Unless knowledge brings one to the reverence of God, it is futile and misleading. (A. Cohen) The Book of Proverbs is attempting to get you and me out of a position of being stupid in life today. I think we shall find it to be a great help to us. This book has quite a bit to say about stupidity, as we shall see. (J. McGee) Effective knowledge about God is the only thing that puts a man into a right relationship with the objects of his perception. (R. Murphy) Our first proverb (verses 7-9) is about respect for authority. If you do not have an inner respect for authority, you become arrogant, you become bitter, you become a malcontent, and your great potentiality never becomes realized. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

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 ... Fools, however, are incapable of this prerequisite for understanding the sage's teaching and knowing wisdom, for they willfully make the corrupt moral choice to refuse the sage's moral teachings. These conceited fools, in contrast to the teachable wise, are fixed in the correctness of their own opinions – unlike the gullible – and so not educable. In fact, they despise, regard as worthless and vile, God's revelation. Their contempt is rooted in their pride. (B. Waltke) In the ancient Near East a person would use the word "love" in his will to designate the person chosen to inherit his estate, and he would use the word "hate" to mean a legal rejection of any rival claim. In a similar fashion, to despise or hate wisdom is to reject it. (R. Zuck)

Three Hebrew words are translated "fool" in Proverbs. One kind of fool is characterized by a dull and closed mind. He is thickheaded and stubborn. By his laziness and shortsightedness, this kind of fool rejects information from others. Another kind of fool is one who lacks spiritual perception. A third kind of fool is arrogant and flippant as well as mentally dull. He is coarse and hardened in his ways. (S. Buzzell) Fools are those who choose against God's way, disrupt

society, shame their families, and bear the dreadful consequences. Do not even begin this cycle. Wisdom and instruction are not only ignored, they are totally devalued by them. That is why they are fools. (D. Hubbard) It is the congregation's responsibility to learn doctrine by discipline and the pastor's responsibility to teach the vocabulary of doctrine to the congregation. The key to authority orientation is found in Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Fools have no respect for their pastor or teacher and they have a total negative attitude towards doctrine. They do not like it when a passage is tough and demands discipline. (ibid).

Bible doctrine in the home establishes the authority of the parents. Fear or awe of the Lord is occupation with Christ. This awe stimulates the desire for more Bible doctrine; everything else in life is just details. Your moment-by-moment inner happiness is dependent upon the intake of Bible doctrine. Therefore, the believer who is indifferent to Bible doctrine is a fool. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) There are four paragraphs or poems in the first chapter of Proverbs. Paragraph One from verses 1-6 is the introduction to Proverbs as a whole. Paragraph Two from verses 7-9 is on respect for authority. Paragraph Three from verses 10-19 is about distractions from doctrine. Paragraph Four from verses 20-33 is on the importance of doctrine. (ibid)

Prov. 1:7 Respect (יִרְאַתָּה, Subj. Nom.; reverence, awe, fear) for God (יְהוָה, Obj. Gen.; Yahweh) is (ellipsis) the beginning (רֵאשִׁית, Pred. Nom.; chief, first priority, principle) of knowledge (דַּעַת, Adv. Gen. Ref.; spiritual discernment), but (Gk: δέ, contrast) fools (אֵוִיל, Subj. Nom.; simpletons, dolts) despise (בִּזוּ, Qal Perf.3P, Certitude; treat with contempt, reject as nothing) wisdom (חֵכְמָה, Acc. Dir. Obj.; skill, spiritual insight) and (ו, connective) discipline (מוֹסֵר, Acc. Dir. Obj.; correction, chastening, child training).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:7** ἀρχὴ σοφίας φόβος θεοῦ σύνεσις [δὲ ἀγαθὴ πᾶσι τοῖς ποιούσιν αὐτήν] εὐσέβεια δὲ εἰς θεὸν ἀρχὴ αἰσθήσεως] σοφίαν δὲ καὶ παιδείαν ἀσεβεῖς ἐξουθενήσουσιν

יִרְאַתָּה יְהוָה רֵאשִׁית דַּעַת חֵכְמָה וּמוֹסֵר אֵוִילִים בִּזוּ: פ ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:7**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:7** timor Domini principium scientiae sapientiam atque doctrinam stulti despiciunt

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:8** Son, pay close attention to your father's disciplinary principles [corrective doctrinal instruction], and do not abandon [repudiate] your mother's precepts [established doctrinal law of the household],

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:8** My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This proverb is given by a father to his son. There is a divinely ordained order of authority in the household. The father is number one in the chain of command (commanding officer), the mother is number two (operational officer), and the children are under their authority (privates). The father issues a prohibition to his son to not reject (Qal Imperfect) his mother's instructional precepts. These precepts are the established law (Latin: legislation) of the household. As a teenager approaches adulthood, the tendency is to ignore the mother's commands and requests. If this occurs, the father must step in and correct the situation, because authority orientation is crucial to his son's upbringing. This child training is corrective in nature (Latin: discipline), and according to the Word of God, includes corporal punishment when necessary.

Corporal punishment should be followed by an explanation of the importance of obeying legitimate authority (parents). This explanation was forthcoming in this situation, because the father commands (Qal Imperative) his son to pay close attention to the important principles at hand. There is a contrast between the father's and mother's role; the father sets up the household rules while the mother utilizes these established rules to run the household. The father is also involved in the final discipline and instruction when there is an infraction. There is also a subtle difference between principles and precepts. The mother's precepts are to be obeyed; if they are ignored, the father explains the principles behind obedience before and after disciplinary action has been taken.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Precepts are doctrine in concise form, as in proverbs and aphorisms ... "My son" is a reference to Solomon; "your father" is a reference to David; "your mother" is a reference to Bathsheba. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In connection with the father the sterner word "musar" is employed for the reason that his discipline at times involves chastisement. The mother's teaching is denoted "torah," since she usually limits herself to verbal exhortation. (A Cohen) When Solomon recovered from reversionism, the reason is because he went back to the note that his father gave him in his teaching. He not only went back to his notes, like you should go back to your notes from Bible class, but he also under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit put them down so other people might profit from them. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Adolescence is the quest for a sense of identity. The son and the gullible stand on the threshold of full adulthood. The time is at hand when the son and the gullible must make a decisive stand for the godly parents' and sages' world-and-life views and values. Two conflicting worldviews make their appeal, of Wisdom/Folly, Good/Pseudo-good, Life/Death, and one must choose between them, for there is no third way. These two competing views are each represented by two voices. On behalf of wisdom's worldview, the father addresses the son in the home and the literary figure, Wisdom, addresses the gullible at the city gate. On behalf of folly, wicked men offer fast money, and the adulteress, casual sex. In pitched battle these combatants, through their speeches more than anything else, compete for the "souls" of the youth. At this juncture when a commitment must be made to one or the other way, the young man is vulnerable to easy sex and easy money, for his sexual passions are now strongest and his tendency to be wise in his own eyes – and paradoxically to have group

approval – has not yet been tempered by reality. Since a spiritual and enduring kingdom cannot be based on naked power, the father uses all his persuasive powers to win his son to wisdom and away from folly. The tender address, “my son,” connotes that the father considers his son as his spiritual heir, not merely his biological offspring. (B. Waltke)

Prov. 1:8 Son (בן, Voc. Address), pay close attention to (שמע, Qal Imp.MS, Command; hear, listen) your (Gk: σύ, Gen. Rel.) father’s (אב, Abl. Source; David) disciplinary principles (מוסר, Adv. Acc.; child training, correction), and (ו, continuative) do not (אל, neg. adv.) abandon (נטש, Qal Imperf.MS, Jussive, Injunctive Prohibition; ignore, reject, forsake, repudiate) your (Gk: σύ, Gen. Rel.) mother’s (אם, Abl. Source; Bathsheba) precepts (תורה, Adv. Acc.; doctrinal teaching, established law of the household, instruction, direction),

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:8** ἀκούε υἱέ παιδείαν πατρός σου καὶ μὴ ἀπόση θεσμούς μητρός σου

שמע בני מוסר אביך ואל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:8**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:8** audi fili mi disciplinam patris tui et ne dimittas legem matris tuae

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:9** For they [doctrinal principles and precepts] are a wreath of grace [source of rewards and blessings] around your head [something to think about], and a golden collar [something to restrain the old sin nature] around your neck.

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:9** For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The father’s disciplinary principles and the mother’s precepts are a wreath of grace around your head. This wreath or crown (Gk: stephanos) is a figure for the seat of your thought processes. In other words, the instruction of parents is something the young child and teenager should continually think about when a situation arises. This parental instruction should be honored and respected, the way a person would wear a victory wreath or a combat helmet with your family name and rank on it. For an unbeliever, these proverbs can be a source of common sense and a foundation for living life according to establishment principles. For a believer, the emphasis should be expanded from establishment teachings to Bible doctrine. Parents should teach their children Bible doctrine.

The first half of this verse points to instruction and the possibility of receiving blessings and rewards for positive volition, while the second half points to discipline. Parental instruction should also be worn like a golden collar around your neck. A gold collar was a sign of

submission worn by wives and household slaves. It carries a positive, not a negative connotation – one of protection and belonging, not embarrassment or abuse. It points to the restraint of the old sin nature by discipline and correction. Parental instruction should give you all the warning signals (information) as well as the discipline to keep the flesh under control in compromising situations.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The “wreath of grace” refers to supergrace blessings and rewards as a motivated believer moves from supergrace A to B to ultra-supergrace. It is by cracking the maturity barrier that these blessings are given. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In Solomon’s kingdom wise children wear his splendid teachings figuratively as a necklace. (B. Waltke) If children heeded their parent’s teachings, they were promised a garland (some kind of head ornament) and a neck chain. That is, heeding parental instruction would give them an attractiveness of life and position. They would be honored. (S. Buzzell)

This heavenly instruction will grace both your head and your whole outward bearing. As the crown on the head and the chains on the neck are ever present, and cannot easily be forgotten, so the young are urged ever to be mindful of, and glory in, this godly wisdom, which is their brightest ornament. (R. Jamieson) The one who loses the rough edges through disciplined training will present a pleasing presence to the world. (F. Gaebelin)

Prov. 1:9 **For** (כִּי, explanatory) **they** (הֵם, Subj. Nom.; father’s disciplinary, doctrinal principles and mother’s doctrinal precepts) **are** (ellipsis) **a wreath** (לְיוֹיָהּ, Pred. Nom.; military crown, parent’s instruction, work of wisdom) **of grace** (חַן, Gen. Content; favorable, source of rewards and blessings) **around your** (לְ, Gk: σός, Poss. Gen.) **head** (רֵאשׁוֹ, Dat. Ind. Obj.; thoughts: something to continually think about), **and** (וְ, continuative) **a gold collar** (עֲנָקָה, Pred. Nom.; necklace, pendant) **around your** (לְ, Gk: σός, Poss. Gen.) **neck** (גְּרִיבָה, Dat. Ind. Obj.; throat, something to restrain the old sin nature).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:9** στέφανον γὰρ χαρίτων δέξῃ σὴ κορυφῇ καὶ κλοιὸν χρύσειον περὶ σὺ τραχήλω

כִּי לְוֵיתָ חָן הֵם לְרֵאשׁוֹ וְעֲנָקִים לְגְרִיבָתְךָ: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:9**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:9** ut addatur gratia capiti tuo et torques collo tuo

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:10** Son, if sinful men [criminals] attempt to lead you astray [social temptation], do not succumb [to peer pressure].

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:10** My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The father warns his son about criminals who may attempt to persuade him (Piel Imperfect) to engage in something that is detrimental to his spiritual life. Unless the believer is isolated from everyday social life, this is bound to happen. The father knows the limitations of his son at this stage in his life and understands the potential power of peer pressure from the wrong crowd to ambush a young man with an over-supply of “sphincter.” There is no shortage of reversionistic believers who are living a life of sin and who try to entice the growing believer into their sphere of activity. The father warns his son not to succumb (Qal Imperfect) to this peer pressure. In other words, do not be deceived (Injunctive Prohibition) by their “siren song” and do not participate in their sinful activities. The temptation may be great to get something for nothing, but do not give in (Latin: acquiesce). It may sound like a lot of laughs or an adrenalin rush to engage in criminal activities, but do not go along with them when you know they are wrong.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The son’s allegiance to the family’s inherited worldview must be sharply delineated from that of the gang, who seek to draw him into their corruption. In the warning against sinners, the father gives discretion and caginess to his son by exposing the discourse of his rivals – to be forewarned is to be forearmed – and by debunking their scheme. The gang promises a counterfeit community based on the conviction that prosperity can be had outside the law. In their worldview they have no fear because God has not established and/or upholds moral boundaries. The father’s rebuttal is based on his fear of the Lord and his certainty that God will uphold justice. His weapon of argumentation is spiritual, not human wisdom. (B. Waltke) As strong as were the parental ties saluted in verses 8-9, the voices of mother, father, or teacher were not the only calls vying for attention. People with malice on their minds were also uttering their seductive invitations. (D. Hubbard)

The pressure of peers can be strong, especially on young people. Therefore they need to avoid the invitations by the wrong kind of people who invite them to take part in murder and theft. To give in to such influence is a downward step. (S. Buzzell) In ancient Israel, no less than in the modern world, the comradeship, easy money, and feeling of empowerment offered by gangs was a strong temptation to the young man who felt overwhelmed by the difficulties of the life he confronted every day. (D. Garrett) If you are weak, you will always find a wrong crowd wherever you go. But if you are strong in Bible doctrine, you will resist them wherever you go. It takes more courage to say NO to the wrong crowd than to join them. Pressure to do what everybody else is doing should be conquered by Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:10 Son (בן, Voc. Address), if (אם, protasis, 3rd class condition, “maybe they will, maybe they won’t”) sinful men (רשעים, Subj. Nom.; criminals) attempt to lead you (Gk: σύ, Acc. Dir. Obj.) astray (הפתה, Piel Imperf.3MP, Potential Ability; entice, tempt, deceive, persuade, beguile), do not (אל, neg. adv.)

succumb (הִכָּנַע, Qal Imperf. Jussive 2MS, Injunctive Prohibition; yield, consent, give in, be willing to participate).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:10** υἱέ μή σε πλανήσωσιν ἄνδρες ἀσεβεῖς μηδὲ βουληθῆς ἔαν παρακαλέσωσί σε λέγοντες

בְּנֵי אֲמִיפְתוּךָ אֶל־תִּבְנֵן׃ ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:10**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:10** fili mi si te lactaverint peccatores ne adquiescas

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:11** **If they say: Come with us [join our criminal gang], let us secretly wait in ambush [concealed from view] for blood [bodily violence, even murder], let us hide and assault innocent people for no cause [just for kicks];**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:11** If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This group of reversionists is in fact juvenile delinquents who are committing crimes against society. Their idea of fun is violent and criminal. The father anticipates that some of these gangsters will approach his son and try to coax him (Qal Imperfect) into coming with them. They will ask him to join their (Qal Imperative of Entreaty) gang. They will present themselves as a group of guys that are fun to hang out with. Their idea of fun, however, is in the sphere of criminal arrogance. These degenerate gang members hide in the shadows, secretly waiting to ambush (Qal Imperfect) others for the apparent purpose of testing their physical prowess. The idea is to engage in bodily struggle with someone who passes by unawares. The word “blood” means rude violence and cruelty, even to the point of murder.

The lure of the criminal gang member is to hide and assault (Qal Imperfect) completely innocent people. It is a sick, twisted and criminal form of violence; these particular gang members assault innocent people for no reason or purpose. The victims are totally innocent. The violence against them comes from cowards who conceal themselves from view until the last minute - then they jump out and assault the unsuspecting citizen. It is not done on an individual basis; gang members are cowards who rarely act in private – but always in unison with other gang members. The gang members are engaging in this hostile behavior “just for kicks.” The two cohortatives mean the gang members think this violent behavior is fun and they continue to persuade other young men to join them (Gk: fellowship) in this “fun.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The nature of the enticement is that the young man is offered a part with professional criminals in a life of crime. (F. Gaebelien) These youths picture themselves as persons to be reckoned with, instead of patronized and kept in their place. (D. Kidner) The epithet also refers to murderers who kill out of envy, or perhaps from a lust for power, or even out of venality. (B.

Waltke) The slaying of the innocent appears to be practically mindless, despite the motivation of gain, since it is without reason, totally unprovoked. (R. Murphy) As a metalepsis (where something more has to be supplied entirely by the thought), here “blood” is put for blood-shedding and points to the murderers who shed it. It is a figure of speech for “some man whom we may kill.” (E.W. Bullinger) A mob is a cowardly, emotional, non-thinking group of misfits. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Folly is not just an individual matter but a social one as well. We travel in groups – whether they are our social friends, our service club, our prayer partners, our tennis set, our business colleagues, or our street gang. What we become is determined in some significant measure by the company we keep. (D. Hubbard) The steady repetition of “we” and “us” in the gang’s appeal graphically portrays the peer pressure to which a young person is susceptible. (D. Garrett) Though we have not been provoked or wronged, yet let us assail and kill. Not that they would actually say so, for this would rather be a dissuasive than an inducement; but Solomon, by the Spirit, makes them the mouthpiece of expressing their conduct in its true light. He speaks the language which their own conscience would use respecting their conduct, if they would heed it. (R. Jamieson)

Who would have thought when opening the book of Proverbs that full-grown sin would leap so aggressively and untameably from the first page? We would have expected Solomon to lead up gradually to this climax – to show sin manifesting itself in a childhood lie or tantrum, then a theft perhaps, then some act of immorality, then an angry blow, and then and only then a cold-blooded premeditated murder. But sin does not need any incubation period. It needs no process of evolution. It leaps full-grown into our experience as it leaped full-grown into the world. The very first person ever born on this planet murdered his own younger brother and then threw his insolence into the face of God Himself. Thus Solomon, before he wrote a dozen verses, grappled with the problem of full-grown sin. (J. Phillips)

Prov. 1:11 **If** (protasis, 3rd class condition, “maybe they will, maybe they won’t”) **they say** (אָנֹכִי, Qal Imperf.3MP, Conditional): **Come** (Qal Imp.MS, Entreaty; join, walk, hang out) **with us** (אִתָּנוּ, Gen. Rel.; gang members, sinister brotherhood), **let us secretly wait in ambush** (בְּחַיָּלָה, Qal Imperf.1P, Cohortative; concealed from view, bodily struggle, public hostility) **for** (לְ, prep.) **blood** (דָּם, Obj. Gen.; injustice, cruelty, violent putting to death), **let us hide and assault** (וְנִסְתֵּר וְנִכְרַחֵם, Qal Imperf.1P, Cohortative; blatant crime, to spy) **innocent people** (אֲנָשִׁים צְדִיקִים, Acc. Dir. Obj.) **for** (לְ, prep.) **no cause** (בְּלֹא שָׂוָה, adv.; for nothing, no reason, undeservedly, just for kicks);

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:11** ἐὰν παρακαλέσωσί σε λέγοντες ἔλθε μεθ’ ἡμῶν κοινῶνῃσιν αἵματος κρύψωμεν δὲ εἰς γῆν ἄνδρα δίκαιον ἀδίκως

אִם־יֹאמְרוּ לְכֹה אֲתַנּוּ נֶאֱרָבָה לְדָם נִצְפְנָה לְנִקְיֵי חַנּוּם: ^{WTT} Proverbs 1:11

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:11** si dixerint veni nobiscum insidiamur sanguini abscondamus tendiculas contra insontem frustra

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:12** Let us swallow them up [completely overwhelm the innocent] alive and whole [without leaving a trace or clue] like the underworld [Sheol: where souls went after death in OT times], like those who descend to the pit of the grave [where the body went after death].

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:12** Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The hypothetical gang members continue to coax young lads to join their group by engaging in unprovoked violence. They propose to completely swallow up (Latin: gluttony) innocent bystanders (Qal Imperfect) by murdering them. The phrase “alive and whole” is an idiom for taking the innocent victim by surprise; one minute they are minding their own business and living life to the fullest, and the next minute they have been murdered and are entering the underworld. These gangsters are bragging about sending their victims to hell (Latin: the infernal region). They are comparing their violence to the manner in which the dead are engulfed by the underworld. The Hebrew word is Sheol; the Greek word is Hades. This is the OT location where souls went after death. Sheol is not equivalent to the grave and should never be translated as grave; the KJV is all fouled up. Technically, Sheol or Hades is not “hell” either. The Greek word for hell, the final place of punishment for the wicked, is Gehenna. “Alive and whole” also means without leaving a clue that might point to the gang or a trace of the victim’s whereabouts.

The second comparison is “like those who descend (Qal Participle) to the pit of the grave.” The pit is the OT location where the body went after death. Sheol is contrasted with the pit; the soul which remains whole and intact goes to Sheol, while the body goes to the pit. The KJV translates Sheol as “hell” 31 times, “grave” 31 times, and “pit” 3 times. This inconsistency has caused considerable mischief over the years; it has been seized by cultists such as the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah’s Witnesses, who teach that it always means the grave. They are dead wrong, no pun intended. See note by Dr. Morey below. The 2nd half of this verse is a bit different in the LXX; it expresses the notion that the murderers will “take away the memory of the innocent victim from the earth.” In other words, the gang members considers the innocent victim to be less than nothing – somebody that nobody cares about and nobody will remember when they are gone.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the midst of complete external health they will devour them like those that go down to the grave, like those under whose feet the earth is suddenly opened, so that, without leaving any trace behind, they sink into the grave and into Hades. (Keil & Delitzsch) The speech used is

obviously fictitious, for enticers would hardly use these condemning, unvarnished signals that expose, not cover, their deeds as vile. However, although the father gives their invitation the roar of a lion to repulse the son, he also invests it with the subtlety of a serpent. Its allurements are not far to seek: excitement, easy money, and the camaraderie of being one of the gang. Instead of enabling fellowship of the righteous, they crave that of bloody sinners. “Let’s set an ambush” is a verb often used of animals lurking for their prey. It exposes their crime as a coldly calculated, high-handed, brutish plot against a hapless victim to give him no chance to flee or to defend himself ... The evocative metaphor of “swallowing up” connotes that they are in league with Sheol. (B. Waltke)

Where the Old Testament consistently refers to the body as going to the grave, it always refers to the soul or spirit of man as going to Sheol. They define Sheol as the underworld where man descends at death. They trace the origin of Sheol to either “sha-al,” which means the spirit world to which mediums directed their questions to the departed, or “sha-al,” which refers to the hollow place in the earth where the souls of men went at death. It is the equivalent of the Greek word Hades. Israel from the beginning of its recorded history cherished the most settled conviction of the persistence of the soul in life after death. The body is laid in the grave and the soul departs to Sheol. None of the lexicographical literature defines Sheol as referring to the grave or to passing into nonexistence. (R. Morey) The criminals assure the novice of swift success: they will swallow up victims who are in the vitality of life as surely and swiftly as death opens up and swallows its victims. (F. Gaebelien)

The shift from the singular victim to the plural “them” makes clear that this is not an isolated murder, but their pattern of life. The combination of “alive” and “whole” connotes that they are in full health, not old and sickly, and so not expecting death. In sum, the sinners dispatch the innocent, not the guilty, prematurely, thoroughly, unexpectedly, and unjustly. The murdered innocent must await a justice that lies beyond his death. (B. Waltke) Who of us can say that he or she has felt no tug of attraction, no glint of envy, upon hearing stories of wealthy criminals, flamboyant desperadoes, or fast-living gangsters? There is enough rebellion in all of us to lure us to look sympathetically at a life of waywardness, particularly if we can keep from getting caught. (D. Hubbard) “Let us swallow them up alive and whole” so as to leave no clue to our being discovered, and no trace to run suspicion upon us. They unwittingly use language awfully significant of their own retributive doom. (R. Jamieson) Take all the property they carry with them, in the same manner that the grave receives the body. (A. Cohen)

Since the conditional immortalists stress that Sheol means the grave, we will pause at this point to demonstrate that Sheol cannot mean the grave. Exegetically speaking, the initial occurrence of Sheol in the OT cannot mean the grave. The word Sheol is first found in Gen. 37:35. After the brothers had sold Joseph into slavery, they informed their father that Joseph had been killed and devoured by a savage beast. As Jacob held the bloodied and tattered remains of Joseph’s coat in his hands, he declared: “A wild beast has devoured him: Joseph has surely been torn to pieces.” As a result of the shock of the death of Joseph, Jacob cried: “Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.” Jacob assumed that his son was still alive and conscious after death and that he would eventually reunite with his son after his own death. Whatever else Sheol may mean, in this passage it cannot mean Joseph’s grave, for Jacob believed that Joseph had been

devoured by an animal and had no grave. Since Joseph had no grave, it is impossible for Jacob to be referring to being buried in a common grave with his son. He even speaks of “going down” to reunite with his son, because it was assumed that Sheol was the place of departed spirits, probably a hollow place in the center of the earth. “Kever” and “Sheol” are never used in Hebrew poetic parallelism as equivalents. They are always contrasted and never equated. Sheol is under the earth, or the underworld, while graves were built as sepulchers above the earth, or caves, or holes in the earth. (R. Morey)

Prov. 1:12 Let us swallow them (Acc. Dir. Obj.) up (בלע, Qal Imperf.1MP, Cohortative, Futurity; engulf, devour, ruin, overwhelm by calamity, extortion, devastation by enemy) alive (חי, Adv. Acc.) and (ו, connective) whole (תמים, Adv. Acc.; completely) like (כ, comparative) the underworld (שאול, Gen. Place, Sheol; Gk: ᾗδης, Hades), like (כ, comparative) those who descend (ירד, Qal Ptc.MP, Fientive, Substantival; go down) to the pit of the grave (בור, Gen. Place; well, prison, dungeon).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:12** καταπίωμεν δὲ αὐτὸν ὡς περ ᾗδης ζῶντα καὶ ἄρωμεν αὐτοῦ τὴν μήμηρ ἐκ γῆς

נִבְלָעִם כְּשֵׂאוֹל חַיִּים וְתַמִּימִים כְּיֹרְדֵי בֹרַי: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:12**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:12** degluttiamus eum sicut infernus viventem et integrum quasi descendentem in lacum

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:13** We shall seize [steal] all manner of valuable possessions; we shall fill our homes with stolen goods [plunder].

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:13** We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The gang members plan to steal (Qal Imperfect) all kinds of valuable possessions from their victims. The Hebrew vocabulary presents their twisted view of this theft as that of soldiers who have conquered an enemy and are grabbing all the plunder (Latin: substance) they can carry. But in reality their enemy consists of honest, hardworking citizens of their own country, so their behavior is better described as an act of criminal piracy. Like all thieves, they want something for nothing. They demand other people’s possessions because they do not believe in honest work themselves. Honest work, in their warped scale of values, is for suckers. Instead, they are going to watch the honest man work day-after-day, and then ambush him and steal the fruits of his labor. They plan on seizing the private property of many individuals, filling their homes (Factitive Piel Imperfect) with stolen goods. The picture Solomon is portraying is that of murdering thieves who are trying to recruit “new blood” into their criminal organization by promising quick and easy money and other valuables.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They are confident that by sharing the wealth from their life of crime, they will fill their houses with plunder. (F. Gaebelein) The sinner has a plan and a program to get something for nothing. He lives off someone else and makes someone else suffer in order that he might prosper. (J.V. McGee) The addition of “all” and the mention of “filling” their houses with plunder point to a scheme for a whole series of robberies. A career of crime is suggested, not a single act of violence. (A. Cohen) To their invitation, bearing in itself its own condemnation, they add as a lure the splendid self-enriching treasures which in equal and just fellowship with them they may have the prospect of sharing. (Keil & Delitzsch)

Having disposed of the owner of the house, they can now plunder it. “Houses” may infer that they were part of the established society, not brigands living outside of it. The houses of these crooks, who think they are above all laws, are mansions in the best part of the city, with high walls. Powerful people see the world as a place to be conquered; vain artists as a stage from which to win applause; and the covetous as a place of transferring wealth from the bank account of others into their own. Sinners love wealth and use people. (B. Waltke) God’s purpose for our lives on earth requires that we mentally separate ourselves unto Him. Simultaneously we separate ourselves from satanic distractions that would swerve us away from God’s plan. Impersonal love obeys the divine commands to avoid a life of crime. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

People in the law-abiding segment of society find it hard to believe that propositions to enter a life of violence and crime really abound, but they do. Millions have been drawn into syndicated crime, racketeering, the drug trade, pornography, loan sharking, and murder. Others have become involved with gangs. Not infrequently initiation into a gang cannot take place until the candidate has offered convincing proof that he has committed an act of violence. Some gangs even demand that initiates commit murder before they can be accepted as members. Offering a life of excitement and crime, gangs can be highly attractive to young people being reared in slums. Gangs offer a means to dissipate boredom, a family, status, money, sex, and power – at a price. People who enjoy relative security and affluence find it difficult to imagine the glittering allure of an offer of swift and easy wealth. But Proverbs 1:13 does not point to a make-believe world. (J. Phillips)

Prov. 1:13 **We shall seize** (נִצַּח, Qal Imperf.1PM, Simple Futurity; acquire, apprehend, secure booty, plunder, dishonorable gain, robbery) **all manner of** (כָּל, Acc. Spec.) **valuable** (יָקָר, Compl. Acc.; precious, rare, prized) **possessions** (הוֹן, Acc. Dir. Obj.; wealth); **we shall fill** (מָלֵא, Piel Imperf.1P, Factitive; amass for ourselves) **our** (Gk: ἡμέτερος, Acc. Poss.) **homes** (בַּיִת, Acc. Place; tents) **with stolen goods** (שָׁלָל, Gen. Content; booty, plunder);

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:13** τὴν κτῆσιν αὐτοῦ τὴν πολυτελεῖ καταλαβόμεθα πλήσωμεν δὲ οἶκους ἡμετέρους σκύλων

^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:13** כָּל-הֶון יִקַּר נִמְצָא נִמְלֵא בְתִינוּ שְׁלָל:

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:13** omnem pretiosam substantiam reperiemus implebimus domos nostras spoliis

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:14** You should cast in your lot [donate your particular skills] among us [join our pool of collective criminal resources], you ought to acquire one share [your percentage] with reference to the entire money bag [everything the gang steals].

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:14** Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The gang members continue to persuade the young lad to join in their collective criminal endeavors (Obligative Hiphil Imperfect) by throwing in his lot. I prefer the Ingressive Aorist tense in the LXX because it points to the initial act of joining the gang (becoming a new member) by donating your particular skills or resources to the group effort. The idea is that as an individual you do not have the ability to assault someone, seize their money and other assets, and cover your tracks so you won't be caught by the police. By "casting in your lot," an idiom for providing your individual set of skills to the criminal organization, you gain security, protection, and a share of the stolen goods that you otherwise might not obtain.

Their enticement is the promise of a share in everything the gang steals. They word their invitation as an obligation: "You really ought to join us; you'd be crazy not to. You'll get a share in the loot if you do." The LXX uses the Potential Subjunctive mood to point to the continuation of the offer; the gang members are applying every ounce of peer pressure they can muster to bring the lad into their organization. They promise a distributive share or percentage of everything the gang steals, a temptation that is supposed to open the eyes of the potential new gang member to the financial rewards that accrue from joining up. By "becoming one with them" he would receive an equal share of all future booty.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The oneness of the purse consists in this, that the booty which each of them gets, belongs not wholly or chiefly to him, but to the whole together, and is disposed of by lot; so that, as far as possible, he who participated not at all in the affair in obtaining it, may yet draw the greatest prize. The apparent contradiction between distributing by lot and having a common purse disappears when the distribution by lot of the common property is so made, that the retaining of a stock-capital, or reserve fund, is not excluded. (Keil & Delitzsch) The mob always operates on the premise of socialism. "Sharing one purse" is the concept of socialism. No national entity throughout history has ever survived socialism. It destroys the character, the courage, the integrity of the national entity. Socialistic education destroys every nation it touches. Our educational system today is contributing to our eventual destruction. It destroys the power and

the initiative of free enterprise. Its economic policies are slowly destroying our nation, just like it has destroyed that of other nations. We are here today in spite of socialism and communism. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This is the philosophy of the hour: Let's all live out of the same purse. Generally those who hold this philosophy are doing nothing themselves. They want the working people to share what they have worked for, but they don't have any contribution to make to it at all. That is a false philosophy, but it is one that is common among young people today. It is so easy for a young man to fall in with a group that is doing shady things. And it is easy to join in with a group who "goofs off" at work, as they say today. They do not return a full day's work for a full day's wages. It is so easy to cooperate in that type of thing. (J.V. McGee) Sinners love company in sin. They do not threaten or argue, but entice with flattery and fair speech; with a bait they draw the unwary young man to the hook. (M. Henry) This is the essence of the communist creed: "What's yours is mine, and what's mine is mine." (J. Phillips) The word "lot" stands here for the common fate and sharing that will come from the evil adventure. (R. Murphy)

Prov. 1:14 You should cast in (נפל, Hiphil Imperf.2MS, Obligative, Denominative; entering into a new state of membership: Gk: βάλλω, Ingressive Aorist; fall in, throw) your (Gk: σός, Poss. Acc.) lot (גורל, Acc. Dir. Obj.; used to make a final decision, assignment of property, distributing plundered garments, allotment or portion) among (ב, prep.; with) us (תוֹךְ, Dat. Rel.; in the midst of us), you ought to acquire (היה, Qal Imperf.3MS, Obligative, Potential) one share (אֶחָד, Pred. Acc., Distributive; small sack, portion) with reference to (ל, prep.) the entire (Acc. Measure) money bag (כִּס, Acc. Gen. Ref.).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:14** τὸν δὲ σὸν κληρὸν βάλε ἐν ἡμῖν κοινὸν δὲ βαλλάντιον κτησώμεθα πάντες καὶ μαρσίπιον ἐν γενηθήτω ἡμῖν

גורלך תפיל בתוכנו כִּס אֶחָד יהיה לכלנו: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:14**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:14** sortem mitte nobiscum marsuppium unum sit omnium nostrum

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:15** Son, do not walk [conduct oneself] in the same direction [along the same road] with them [gang members]; turn your foot [person] away from their path [wicked course of life],

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:15** My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

David warns (Prohibition) his son, Solomon, not to walk (Qal Habitual Imperfect) according to the degenerate lifestyle of these gang members. The road they are traveling on is dangerous to his own life, and would most likely lead to some form of criminality. The verb “walking” refers to daily behavior, such as who you associate with and what you do with them. “Road” or “direction” refers to the lifestyle the gang members are following, which in this case is criminal reversionism. In other words, “Do not imitate their way of life.” Solomon also commands his son (Qal Imperative) to turn his foot away from their path. “Foot” refers to the entire body or person. “Path” refers to their immoral, wicked course of life. Solomon doesn’t want his son to move even one step in their evil direction. When his son has to decide whether to join them or go his own way, his father advises him to go in the opposite direction from the gang members. In other words, he must decide to “Get away from them.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Do not follow it, nor join them in it. When there is an inclination or a temptation to it, withstand it. Stop in time, do not proceed, but draw back, and go on in the way you have been trained up in, and remember the instructions of your parents. (J. Gill) One must not even set foot in it, and certainly not walk along it, though only a short distance. (A. Cohen) Get rid of that crooked crowd that you’re with. (J.V. McGee) “Derek” (road or destination) also means the character and context of life, specific choices and behavior, and the inevitable consequences of that conduct. It is derived from the route marked out by wagon wheels ... often over a passage rather than an open road. (B. Waltke) A person that is weak will often go along with a crowd. And ironically it is the weak person who always seems to get caught and ends up in jail. Decisions you make today can ruin your future. Hanging out with the wrong crowd can ruin your life. Don’t start life with a record of being weak, weak, weak. Listen to doctrine instead. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:15 **Son** (בן, Voc. Address; Solomon), **do not** (אל, neg. adv., Prohibition) **walk** (הלך, Qal Imperf.2SM Jussive, Frequentative or Habitual; accompany, proceed, conduct one’s life) **in the same** (את, prep.; beside, in the manner of, towards) **direction** (הדרך, Dat. Ind. Obj.; journey, lifestyle: along the same road) **with** (ב, prep.; among) **them** (Gk: αὐτός, Gen. Accompaniment); **turn away** (מנע, Qal Imper.2SM, Command; withhold, deviate) **your** (Gk: σύ, Gen. Poss.) **foot** (רגל, Acc. Dir. Obj.; body, person) **from** (מן, prep. expressing separation or removal) **their** (Gk: αὐτός, Gen. Poss.) **path** (נתיבה, Obj. Gen.; beaten track, course of life: immoral, wicked character),

BGT **Proverbs 1:15** μή πορευθῆς ἐν ὁδῶ μετ’ αὐτῶν ἔκκλινον δὲ τὸν πόδα σου ἐκ τῶν τριβῶν αὐτῶν

בְּנֵי אֵל-תִּלְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲתָם מִנְע רֵגְלְךָ מִנְתִּיבָתָם: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:15**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:15** fili mi ne ambules cum eis prohibe pedem tuum a semitis eorum

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:16** For their feet run quickly [hastily] towards the malignant [vicious evil], and they hurry [with hostile intent] towards shedding blood [committing murder].

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:16** For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Solomon understands the thought processes of gang members; his father, David, taught him about it. They lure new converts with promise of money and sex, but they initially hide the fact that they are willing to commit murder to get these things. Their feet run quick (Qal Habitual Imperfect) towards all categories of evil. They are poised, waiting for any opportunity to indulge in criminal behavior. They wait patiently like a vulture for their next victim to present himself. Then they rush towards him with hostile intent (Intensive Piel Frequentative Imperfect), for the purpose of murdering (Qal Purpose Infinitive) the victim and seizing his material wealth. The neophyte or pledge gang member is drawn into a web of secrecy and crime due to his presence and involvement in a crime that deserves capital punishment.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They will quickly be brought to a bad end by the arm of justice. (A. Cohen) “Their feet rush into evil” gives concrete expression to the compulsion of these addicts to wrongdoing. The clever double entendre, which aptly fits both the preceding descriptions of the enticement and the following calamitous consequences, succinctly encapsulates the deed-consequence connection. (B. Waltke) The way of sin is down-hill; men not only cannot stop themselves, but, the longer they continue in it, the faster they run, and make haste in it, as if they were afraid they should not do mischief enough and were resolved to lose no time. (M. Henry)

Prov. 1:16 For (כִּי, explanatory conj.) their (Gk: αὐτός, Poss. Gen.) feet (רַגְלֵי, Subj. Nom.) run quickly (רָוַץ, Qal Imperf.3MP, Frequentative, Habitual; hastily hostile) towards (לְ, prep.) the (הַ, particle) malignant (רַע, Acc. Dir. Obj.; vicious evil), and (וְ, connective conj.) they hurry (מָהֵר, Piel Imperf.3MP, Intensive, Frequentative, Habitual; hasten, speedily) towards (לְ, prep., in the direction of; with hostile intent) shedding (שָׁפַךְ, Qal Infin. Construct, Purpose; pour out, spill) blood (דָּם, Acc. Dir. Obj.; committ murder, mob violence).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:16** οἱ γὰρ πόδες αὐτῶν εἰς κακίαν τρέχουσιν καὶ ταχίνοι τοῦ ἐκχέαι αἷμα

כִּי רַגְלֵיהֶם לָרַע יָרוּצוּ וְיִמְהָרוּ לְשַׁפֵּךְ-דָּם: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:16**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:16** pedes enim illorum ad malum currunt et festinant ut effundant sanguinem

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:17** Of course a net which is dispersed [trap that is set] in front of the eyes of any winged bird [in sight of the victim] is of no use [good for nothing] to the fowler;

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:17** Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Solomon explains another tactic of gang members who lie in wait for their victims: concealment. It is a well known fact (Factitive Pual) to all fowlers and hunters that you should never set a trap (Attributive Participle) that is in plain sight (Latin: ocular) to the bird or animal. In other words, you get to your chosen location ahead of time and you set up your ambush or trap so that the intended creature does not see, hear or smell anything suspicious in his path. Gang members never meet their victims head-on; they always hide in the background, concealed behind a building, automobile or tree, where they can spring forth and murder their victim without difficulty. Anyone who sets his trap or snare in front of the very creature he wants to capture is obviously wasting his time. This kind of trap is good for nothing; it serves no purpose (Latin: frustrates) because it fails in its design.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The lure of booty is merely bait to lead the believer away from Bible doctrine. Bait is analogous to reversionism and evil. Bait is anything that comes between you and Bible doctrine. The use of the wing to fly away is the application of Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Not only is the way of sinners wrong; it is stupid. Every flying creature has the God-given instinct to avoid the fowler's net, but these sinners set an ambush for themselves! In other words, the birds represent the criminals. The wise son with the father's help is able to deconstruct the trap of words set by the sinners. Like every flying creature, the wise son will take flight, for they spread their net in his full view. (B. Waltke) Birds are smart enough to avoid a net they see spread out to catch them. But these gangsters, more stupid than birds, not only see the trap, they even set it for themselves! The humor of this boomerang result is evident. Thieves steal money, but then it takes their lives. In other words, crime does not pay. (S. Buzzell)

If the poet wished to say that they carried on their work of blood with such open boldness, that he must be more than a simpleton who would allow himself to be caught by them, that would be an unsuitable ground of warning; for would there not be equally great need for warning against fellowship with them, if they had begun their enticement with more cunning, and reckoned on greater success? (Keil & Delitzsch) Two meanings are possible: the trap fails because the bird sees it and avoids it – or the bird sees the net and foolishly plunges into it. If it is an aside to the son, it implies that any trap the wicked set for him will fail because of the good advice he receives – or possibly that the son can avoid the trap which is so obvious. If the saying is applied to the wicked, then the point is that any warning is inefficacious since they go ahead with their project. (R. Murphy)

The alluring net, when it is shaken out and spread, is, as it were, scattered. But if this is done incautiously before the eyes of the birds to be caught, they forthwith fly away. (Keil & Delitzsch) A smart bird is the teenager with doctrine who stays away from the wrong crowd. The wrong crowd has no perspective on life, as pictured by the bird trap. The birds (teenagers) have their eyes on the bait when they are caught. The bait is the enticement of the wrong crowd. The smart bird (teenager) flies away when he sees the net. He says, “Not me!” Bible doctrine warns the teenager about the net. The parent warns their teenagers about the net. So the smart teenager uses Bible doctrine and respect for the authority of his parents to stay away from the wrong crowd. This is an illustration on how not to be stupid. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Prov. 1:17 Of course (כִּי, distinctive affirmation; surely) a (א, particle) net (רֶשֶׁת, Subj. Nom.) which is dispersed (זָרְהָה, Pual Ptc.FS, Factitive, Attributive; scattered, trap that is set) in front of (ב, prep.) the eyes (עֵינַי, Loc. Place; in plain sight of) of any (כָּל, Acc. Spec.) winged bird (כַּנְּף, Acc. Gen. Ref.; victim, lords of the wing: hawk, eagle, buzzard) is (ellipsis) of no use (חֲנָם, Adv. Purpose; has no effect, serves no purpose, good for nothing) to the fowler (בַּעַל, Dat. Disadv.; owner, hunter, trapper);

BGT **Proverbs 1:17** οὐ γὰρ ἀδίκως ἐκτείνεται δίκτυα περωτοῖς

כִּי־חֲנָם מְזַרְהָה הַרְשֵׁת בְּעֵינַי כָּל־בַּעַל כַּנְּף: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:17**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:17** frustra autem iacitur rete ante oculos pinnatorum

LWB Prov. 1:18 **Indeed, they [the gang members] might in effect [by showing the location of their trap] be hiding for their own blood [the quarry turns on his attackers], in effect waiting to ambush their own souls [if the intended victim discovers their trap, he might kill his attackers in self-defense].**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:18** And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Gang members, like hunters and trappers, try to keep the location and timing of their ambush a secret from their intended victims. There’s a rather obvious reason why concealment and secrecy is so important. If an intended victim discovers an ambush before it is effectively launched, he may have the ability to kill his attackers in self-defense. The gang members would therefore be hiding (Qal Permissive Imperfect) in wait for their own destruction. The minute they jump out to murder their victim, he seizes the initiative and kills them instead. The irony in this scenario is that the gang member always risks the possibility that the ambush he is planning (Qal

Incomplete Imperfect) turns out to be his last ambush. The victimizer may become the unintended victim.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the final analysis, the trap the wicked lay for others in reality will catch them. (F. Gaebelein) The believer who leaves doctrine to join a gang will eventually become miserable. The reversionist always ambushes himself and ends up in self-induced misery. Conspirators wind up hurting themselves. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The robber and murderer bring destruction upon themselves. They lay snares, as they themselves say, for the blood of others; but it is in reality for their own blood. (Keil & Delitzsch) They overreach themselves and become the executors of their own doom. (A. Cohen) The father now clinches the argument. “But they” sharply juxtaposes the cleverness of every bird, and hopefully of the son, with the obtuseness of sinners. (B. Waltke)

Prov. 1:18 **Indeed** (ו, affirmative), **they** (הֵם, Subj. Nom.; the gang members) **might in effect** (ל, prep.; with regard to, by showing the location of their trap) **be hiding for** (לִּפְנֵי, Qal Imperf.3MP, Permissive; concealing themselves) **their own** (Gk: αὐτός, Dat. Poss.) **blood** (דָּם, Acc. Dir. Obj.; if the intended victim discovers their trap, he might kill his attackers in self-defense), **in effect** (ל, prep.) **waiting to ambush** (לִּפְנֵי, Qal Imperf.3MP, Incomplete) **their own** (Gk: ἐαυτου, Dat. Poss.) **souls** (נַפְשֵׁם, Acc. Dir. Obj.; persons).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:18** αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἱ φόνου μετέχοντες θησαυρίζουσιν ἑαυτοῖς κακά ἢ δὲ καταστροφή ἀνδρῶν παρανόμων κακῆ

וְהֵם לְדָמָם יֵאָרְבוּ יִצְפְּנוּ לְנַפְשֵׁתָם: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:18**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:18** ipsique contra sanguinem suum insidiantur et moliuntur fraudes contra animas suas

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:19** **Such are the ways [criminal lifestyle] of all those who gain profit by violence; it [a life of violent crime] takes away the soul [life] of the owner [participant].**

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:19** So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The preceding violent lifestyle and its inevitable violent end is the path of all those who obtain plunder (Qal Ptc.) by violence. In other words, violence begets violence. “All who live by the sword will die by the sword.” (Matt. 26:52) A man who pursues a life of crime cannot expect to

live a peaceful or long life. A life of violence eventually takes possession of (Qal Future Imperfect) the life of the perpetrator. In other words, he who lives by the sword, dies by the sword. The reflexive particle points to the irony of a tragic end to a life of violence. The very criminal behavior that is pursued ends up becoming the criminal's own undoing. We can recall many examples of a tragic end to violent crime in our nation's history, i.e., Bonnie and Clyde, Butch and Sundance, and a host of infamous mafia dons.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The prospect of abundant loot has the same effect upon such men as the corn in the net has on birds which are tempted by it. (A. Cohen) There is no third way between wisdom and folly, and there is no second chance between life and death. (B. Waltke) Men do not always reap the consequences of their deeds in this life, but history records enough cases to assure us that the proverb is true. Full reckoning sometimes has to await the judgment of the Great White Throne. We can be sure, however, that when the retribution comes, it will be fitting. (J. Phillips)

Unsound friendships may lead to disaster. That is the chief point of verses 10-19. It exposes greed's false promises: precious goods, spoil, one purse. But such advertisements do not tell the whole story. No mention is made of pained consciences, lives that stew in regret, heartache for friends and family, fear of being caught by authorities or betrayed by comrades who want the one purse for themselves, as did Judas in the apostolic company. Evil's inevitable outcome is a lesson not to be missed. (D. Hubbard)

Prov. 1:19 Such (כֵּן, Adv. as Subj. Nom.; preceding events) are (Gk: εἰμί) the ways (אֲרָחַת, Pred. Nom.; course, violent lifestyle) of all (כָּל, Gen. Measure) those (Gk: τῶν; Adv. Gen. Ref.) who gain profit (בִּצְעַת, Acc. Dir. Obj.; plunder) by violence (בִּצְעַת, Qal Ptc.MS, Substantival); it (אֵת; reflexive life of violence) takes away (לִקַּח, Qal Imperf.3SM, Future; takes possession of) the soul (נַפְשׁוֹ, Acc. Dir. Obj.; life) of the owner (בְּעַלָּיו, Poss. Gen.; murdering thief).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:19** αὐται αἱ ὁδοί εἰσιν πάντων τῶν συντελούντων τὰ ἄνομα τῇ γὰρ ἀσεβείᾳ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ψυχὴν ἀφαιροῦνται

כֵּן אֲרָחַת כָּל-בִּצְעַת בִּצְעַת אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ בְּעַלָּיו יִקַּח: פ ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:19**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:19** sic semitae omnis avari animas possidentium rapiunt

^{LWB} **Prov. 1:20** Wisdom(s) cries out in the streets [summons everyone to listen]; in the public plaza [not behind closed doors] she utters a loud voice.

^{KJV} **Proverbs 1:20** Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Wisdom is constantly summoning (Qal Customary Imperfect) anyone who might listen and follow her advice. She shouts at the arrogant fool in order to get his attention; she sings to those who are worried and stressed-out to heed her call. This is not a private proclamation, because wisdom shouts with a loud voice (Qal Customary Imperfect) in the middle of the street. This is not a *cul-de-sac* in some rural setting; wisdom is looking for listeners in the public forum, in the grocery store, in the shopping mall, and in the office. The public plaza or forum in ancient times is equivalent to the town square or shopping center of today. Bible doctrine is available everywhere. There is no excuse for anyone not to listen; wisdom has been made available to everyone without prejudice.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Wisdom is readily available for the business of living: it is for the common person, not the scholar exclusively. (F.E. Gaebelien) Wisdom is provided publicly, and not to a restricted circle of disciples. (A. Cohen) The offer of wisdom is to the man in the street, and for the business of the living, not to an elite for the pursuit of scholarship. (D. Kidner) Here the person instructing throughout this whole book is represented under the name of “Wisdom,” by which we are to understand that a divine Person is intended, the Logos, Jesus Christ. (J. Gill) The word is plural – wisdoms, for there is infinite wisdom in God. (M. Henry)

Wisdom comes from maximum epignosis doctrine in the soul. Doctrine is always available. If you are positive, God will provide. It might even be outside a church building, such as non-face-to-face teaching by tape. The content of doctrine is by sound (hearing) or sight (reading), not necessarily face-to-face. God will be just in making it possible for you to continue learning doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Wisdom does not wait for an audience to come to her; she has a mission both in the home and in public. She makes every effort to reach the uncommitted masses with her teachings. Her podium is the most prominent place at the hub of the city, where she speaks with full lungs and a clear voice above the din and bustle of daily life. Lady Wisdom is no gentle persuader. She shouts, pleads, scolds, reasons, threatens, warns, and even laughs. Pulpit bashing and hell-fire preaching if ever there were! All quite unladylike; and nowadays also quite unfashionable, even frowned upon. (B. Waltke)

Prov. 1:20 **Wisdom(s)** (חָכְמָה, Subj. Nom.) **cries out** (רָנָה , Qal Imperf.3FP, Customary; shouts, summons, sings, exhorts) **in** (בְּ, prep.) **the** (הַ, article) **streets** (חוּץ, Loc. Place; outside, open auditorium); **in** (בְּ, prep.) **the** (הַ, article) **public plaza** (רָחֹב, Loc. Place; open market, forum, city square) **she utters** (נָתַן , Qal Imperf.3Fs, Customary; raises, gives forth) **a loud voice** (קוֹל, Acc. Dir. Obj.; bold sound, noise).

^{BGT} **Proverbs 1:20** σοφία ἐν ἐξόδοις ὑμνεῖται ἐν δὲ πλατείαις παρρησίαν ἄγει

חִכְמוֹת בַּחַיִּץ תִּרְנָה בְּרַחֲבוֹת תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ: ^{WTT} **Proverbs 1:20**

^{VUL} **Proverbs 1:20** sapientia foris praedicat in plateis dat vocem suam

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