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## Lady Wisdom's Rebuke of the Foolish

### 1: 20-33

**A proverb is a short and memorable saying designed to be our blueprint for living in the world that ADONAI has created. It is important to note that proverbs are not promises; they are generally true principles, all other things being equal.**

In **Proverbs 1:8-19** we overheard a **father** speaking to **his son**. The book of **Proverbs** is generally like that - a **father-figure** preparing **his son** for **the wise** and good **path** in life. Now **the father** points to **Wisdom** as the speaker, and **Wisdom** personified as a **woman**, but not a typical **woman**, especially for that culture. **Women** were not given the same voice as men. But **Lady Wisdom** is standing here at the crossroads of culture - where business, government, education, the arts, and athletics all intersect - right in the middle of all the bustle and noise and competition, and **she** stands up and shouts more loudly than everyone else. Here, **Lady Wisdom** is likened to a street preacher, warning, scolding, and demanding. **This is the first interlude from Wisdom (to see link click [Aj - Proverbs to the Youth](#)).**

Why does **Lady Wisdom** go out to the streets and markets and **city gates**? Because the people are there. That is where they live, and where they need **wisdom**. **God's wisdom** is not designed for a secluded life. **ADONAI** is speaking to the influencers of our day in Jerusalem and New York and Nashville. **God** wants to speak into your life with the help that only **He** can give. We should not think, "When I can thin out my schedule, I might be free to pay more attention." No. **God** is free right now; **He** isn't holding out. **He's** available. But **He** demands a hearing above all the noise that wants to drown **Him** out.<sup>39</sup>

**Lady Wisdom** addresses all **the foolish men** who come across **her path**. **She herself** will not speak again until **Chapters 8** and **9**, but **the father's** teachings will refer to **her** as a **woman** whom **his son** should get to know. In any case it is probably not an accident that the two voices dominating the first **nine chapters**; **the father** and **Lady Wisdom**, each have an introductory speech in **the first**

**chapter. She** comes across as angry and unyielding in **her** speech. **She** shows no mercy to those who come to **their** senses in the middle of **their** punishment that **their foolish** actions have brought on **themselves**. But, the intention of **her** speech is to spur **them** to action. **She** doesn't want for **them** to wait until **they** are in the middle of **their** suffering, but wants **them** to turn to **her** right away to avoid the pain.<sup>40</sup>



**Don't resist Lady Wisdom (1:20-21):** We now come to the most important character in the book of **Proverbs, Lady Wisdom. She** is the personification of **ADONAI's wisdom** and thus stands for **God Himself**. When **she** speaks, **she** solicits a relationship with those around **her**, reminding us of the motto of the book: **The fear of ADONAI is the beginning of knowledge (1:7)**. There is, in other words, no **wisdom** outside of a relationship with **Lady Wisdom**. We will watch her closely as we proceed through the book. In the first **nine chapters, she** speaks to a young male audience, as do **his parents. Lady Wisdom** does not wait for an audience to come to **her**, she **shouts in the streets, she lifts her voice in the square (1:20 Hebrew)**. **Her** podium is the most prominent place in **the city. She calls to the crowds along the main street, to those gathered at the city gate (1:21 NLT)**. **Lady Wisdom** is no gentle persuader. **She** shouts, pleads, scolds, reasons, threatens, warns, and even laughs. But, as we shall see, many of **her** hearers are in no mood to listen, let alone obey, to what **she** has to say.<sup>41</sup>

**Her message (1:22-27):** First, **she** brings an indictment against **them** and asks **how long they** plan to remain in **their** dangerous spiritual condition. **How long, you simpletons (1:4), will you insist on being gullible? Lady Wisdom** urges

**her** hearers to delay no more. **She** has spoken to **them** time and time again, but **they** have refused to listen. This will make their judgment even more severe. Three types of people, or perhaps three stages of rejection of wisdom, appear:

**simpletons, mockers, and fools. How long will you mockers, who think they know everything, delight in your mocking? How long will you fools hate knowledge (12:22 NLT)? Fools** are people who are ignorant of the truth because **they're** dull and stubborn. Their problem isn't low IQ or poor education; **their** problem is lack of spiritual desire to seek and find **the wisdom of ADONAI. Fools** enjoy **their foolishness** but **they** don't actually realize how **foolish they** really are! The outlook of **fools** is purely materialistic and humanistic. **They** hate knowledge and have no interest in eternal things.<sup>42</sup>

Then we hear **Lady Wisdom's** invitation to these **foolish people. If you had repented at my rebuke, then surely I would have poured out My Spirit on you; I would have made My words known to you (1:23 BSB).** This is a call to repentance and faith. **She** promises to change **their** hearts and teach them **the wisdom of God** from **the Word of God**. This is not the permanent indwelling of **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** that we see in the B'rit Chadashah (see [Acts An - Peter Speaks to the Shavu'ot Crowd](#)). During the Dispensation of Torah (see [Exodus Da - The Dispensation of the Torah](#)) **the Spirit of God** would come and go (**Exodus 31:3; First Samuel 16:14a; First Kings 7:13-14; Psalm 51:11**). This was a call to join the righteous of the TaNaKh, the believing remnant of that day. This connection between **Lady Wisdom** and **the Spirit of God** will become even clearer later when we explore the relationship between **ADONAI** and **Lady Wisdom** in **Chapters 8 and 9**.

There is grave danger, however, in rejecting the invitation. The payment will be bitter when **Lady Wisdom** hands **the fool** over to the results of **his foolishness. But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, I will turn and laugh when disaster strikes you. I will laugh at you when terror comes (1:24-26 NIV).** **They** have slapped the hand that has offered **them** such a wonderful gift. **She** has offered to help **them**, and **they** have rejected **her**. One thing is certain, since **they** have rejected **her** advice on how to live in a way that will avoid the troubles of this life, such troubles will surely come.<sup>43</sup> **When your terror comes like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress comes upon you, you will call upon me, but I will not answer (1:27-28a Heb).** The end result of refusing **Wisdom's** call is

hopeless abandonment to suffering.

**Reflection on Her message (1:28-33):** Lady Wisdom will not be there to help when **the fools** cry out from **their** distress. **They** will be forced to meet the consequences of **their** actions. **You will call out to me, but I will not answer.** What would bring on such abandonment to suffering? **You will diligently seek after me, but you will not find me since you hated knowledge and did not choose to fear ADONAI (1:28b-29 Hebrew).** Refusing **ADONAI** and **his wisdom** ultimately has a price. **They** rejected her advice, so now **they** must experience the results of **their** own **counsel**. **Since you would not accept my counsel, and spurned my rebuke, you will eat the bitter fruit of living your own way, choking on your own schemes (1:30-31 NLT).**

The lesson concludes by addressing the fates of both **the fools** who disobey and **the wise** ones who obey **Lady Wisdom**. **For the simple turn away from me to their own demise. Fools are destroyed by their own complacency. But all who listen to me will live in peace, untroubled from the dread of evil (1:32-33 NLT).** For the first, the result is death; for the second, it is a secure life, far from trouble. **Lady Wisdom's** harsh words serve the purpose of shaking some reality into their heads in order to preserve them from an awful fate and steer them toward a better future. **Her** invitation was an echo from **Isaiah**, who said: **Seek ADONAI while He is available, call on Him while He is still nearby. Let the wicked person abandon his ways and the evil person his thoughts; let him return to ADONAI, and He will have mercy on him; let him return to our God, for He will freely forgive (Isaiah 55:6-7).**

The contrast of the **path of foolishness (1:10-19)** and **the path of the wise (1:20-33)** sets up the fundamental choice in **Chapters 1-9**. Here we are given a reading strategy for the book as a whole: start with the foundation of **the fear of ADONAI (1:7)**, allow your character and thinking to be shaped **(1:2-6)**, and immediately reject **the path of foolishness (1:10-19)** in order to embrace **the path of wisdom (1:20-33)**. The tone of warning is the more dominant one. Even in the call to follow **Lady Wisdom**, there is a greater focus on **the folly** of not doing so, rather than on the benefits of following **her path**.<sup>44</sup>

*Dear Heavenly Father, praise you for your infinite wisdom which is wrapped in your Steadfast Love and Holiness. How wonderful it is, that you know all- including the future and the motives in the hearts and when your love and wisdom guides your child—what you say to do is always the wisest. You always have in mind what is the*

*very best for your child and what will bring him the greatest joy for all eternity!*

*Thank you that you not only delight in pouring blessing and love on each of your children, you also are a wise Heavenly Father and you call each child to be wise in his choices in life. You are always there right beside him (**Hebrews 13:5c**) to help and to encourage; but you allow each person to make his own choices. You bless wise choices and you discipline selfish choices.*

*Wisdom to make the right choices is so important! No one is a robot that has to follow any of your commands. **Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my household, we will worship Adonai!" (Joshua 24:15b).***

*What a joy it is to choose to follow Your path. Even when following Your path brings problems and trials, it is the wisest and best path to follow. Trials in this life will soon be over, but heaven's joys will last for all eternity!*

***For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18).***

*Wisdom means being responsible with what God has given. The consequences of being responsible or being a slacker is shown in the parable of the talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**).*

*There are serious consequences to neglecting to follow the wisdom of God. Yeshua the Messiah told this parable to show how important it is to not ignore your wisdom, but to trust and follow you in everything. In the parable, the untrusting steward is severely chastised. **Throw the worthless servant out, into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."** (**Matthew 25:30**).*

*Though you are a loving God, you also are a wrathful God who will not allow into heaven those who may know about you, but who are selfish and refuse to trust and to love you. **He who trusts in the Son has eternal life. He who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.3:46).***

*Wisdom is not just knowing "about you," nor is it calling you Lord with the mouth. Rather true wisdom and love flows from the heart creating acts of love for you in all that is said and done. You will chastise those whose hearts are filled with selfish thoughts of promoting themselves, even when they appear to be doing an act of*

*kindness in your name but really have selfish pride in their hearts.*

***“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?’ Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7:21-23).***

*Yes! The steward who listened and obeyed, brings joy to his master and is rewarded! **His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a little, so I’ll put you in charge of much. Enter into your master’s joy!’ (Matthew 25:23).***

*Those who listen and obey your Words will be rewarded with abundant eternal life **(John 10:10)**, rest and peace for their souls. **Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and ‘you will find rest for your souls.’ (Matthew 11:28-29).***

*Wisdom says be wise and follow wholeheartedly all that God says to do in his Word. Not only does God promise a wonderful Home in an Eternal Heaven for those who love him, but he also promises rewards for works done with a heart of love for God. **(1 Corinthians 11-15).***

*The wisest thing to do is always to follow your Word, for your wisdom is perfect and you are always eager to guide your child to the best path. Sometimes that path may mean turning away from a frivolous pleasure, and instead receiving an eternal joy in heaven!*

*Real Wisdom seeks how to please you. Loving you with all one’s heart, soul and strength **(Deuteronomy 6:5)** is so worth it. It fills one’s heart with hope, joy and peace **(Philippians 4:7)** on this earth and it unlocks the door to eternal life in Heaven with you **(John 14:6,23)!***

*Thank you that in your love and wisdom, knowing the pain and shame that Messiah would have to go through to ransom mankind, Messiah went through with his sacrificial death that those who love him would receive His righteousness. **(2 Corinthians 5:21).***



**Wisdom** tells us that though we may be mocked, laughed at and hurt for following you, it is worth it for an eternity of joy and peace await all who love and follow you! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen