

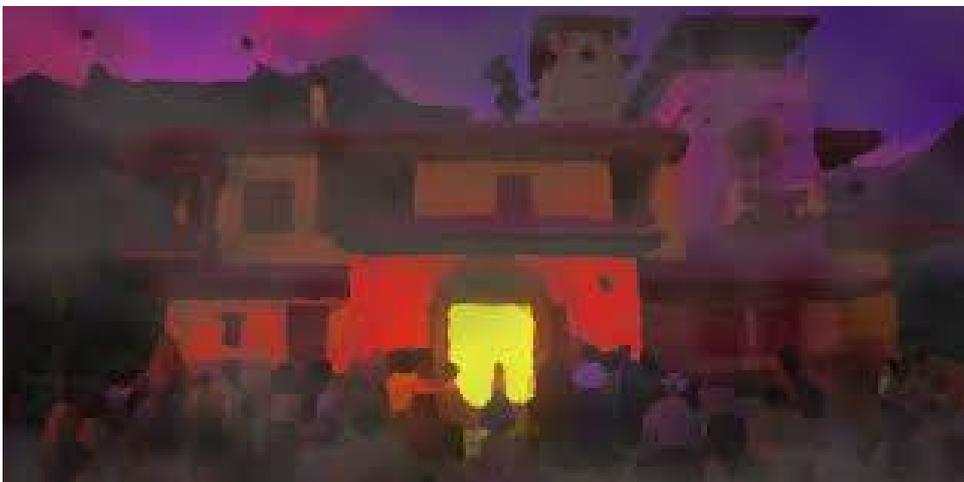
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Lady Wisdom's Invitation to Life

9: 1-12

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.

We now come to the climax of the first **nine chapters**. Previously, we have spoken of **a path** on which **the son** is encouraged to walk. That **path** represents life's journey. **The son** has received instruction to stay on **the right path** and not to go astray on **the crooked path**. The previous **chapters** have warned of violent ambushes from **evil men** and the amorous advances of **flattering women**. These instructions have come to **him** from **his parents**, voiced by **his father** and from **Lady Wisdom**. In **Chapter 9** a choice presents itself to **him**, and to us.¹⁹⁸ The passage portrays two **houses**, one on either side of the road. On one side, **a house** stands open, with an elegant **lady** named **Wisdom** inviting us into **her** house of holiness. On the other side of the road, another **house** stands open, with a seductive **woman** named **Folly** inviting us into **her** macabre manor. It is decision time for **the son** and **the simpleminded**. Will they embrace **Lady Wisdom** or **Madam Folly**?¹⁹⁹



Lady Wisdom’s Invitation (9:1-6): Lady Wisdom has built herself a house; she has carved seven pillars of wisdom (9:1 CJB). Wisdom is personified as a classy **lady**, opening **her** palatial home. But what is **Solomon** talking about in real terms? Taking the whole Bible into account, this is a picture of **Yeshua** as a wealthy and wise **Friend** who has thought of everything we need and provided it in full. The word “**wisdom**” here in English is singular, but plural in Hebrew . . . “**wisdoms.**” It isn’t a numerical plural, it isn’t alternative wisdoms to choose from; **it’s** a plural of majesty, standing for **wisdom** in all its perfections and fullness. **Messiah** lacks nothing we need. Here is another biblical way of saying it: **You satisfy me more than the richest feast (Psalm 63:5a NLT).** **Yeshua Himself** said: **I came that they may have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10 ESV).** The fact that **Lady Wisdom’s house** has **seven pillars** says the same thing – effort in hewing **them** out, wealth to finance **them** (ordinary houses did not have pillars), and perfection in completing **them**. If you think of our **Lord** as a really nice guy who, like Santa Claus, gives you everything you ask for (prosperity doctrine), then you don’t understand **Him** at all.²⁰⁰ **He** is the greatest expert in the universe on you, and **He’s** better at giving you what you need (including discipline), rather than what your flesh wants.

According to Rashi in Shabbat 116a, the “seven pillars” are the seven days of creation. The sages also note that this could refer to the completeness of the number seven (see the commentary on Genesis, to see link click [Ae](#) - The Number Seven), the sum of the sun, moon, and five known planets, or just plain architectural beauty. The point is that Lady Wisdom has built a well-structured and completely outfitted house. Regarding creation, Rashi concludes, “With wisdom, has the Holy One, blessed be He, built the world.”²⁰¹

She has prepared her food, mixed her wine, and also set her table (9:2 CJB). No junk food at this feast! **Lady Wisdom** has been very busy preparing a banquet of her best . . . for us. The **mixed wine** promises a celebratory mood. Such **wine** adds either honey or spices.²⁰² The point of **verse 2** is that what **Messiah** offers you is ready right now, and it couldn’t be more loving, generous, or honoring to you. But again, what is the reality behind the metaphor? Let’s think back over what we have learned thus far from the book of **Proverbs**. This table has been spread with **wisdom** and has delicacies to satisfy us in every area of life. From **Chapter 1** we have learned that **wisdom** preserves us from **violent people**; from **Chapter 2**, **wisdom** enters our **hearts** with **peace** and **conscience**; from

Chapter 3, wisdom improves us financially; from **Chapter 4, wisdom** elevates our status in society; from **Chapter 5, wisdom** makes sex better; from **Chapter 6, wisdom** gets us up off the sofa and successfully accomplishes worthwhile goals; from **Chapter 7, wisdom** protects us when we are tempted; from **Chapter 8, wisdom** opens our eyes to the joyous creation in which we live. And that’s just the beginning. We have not even gotten to the actual **proverbs** in **Chapters 10-31**. **Messiah** has set a good table for us.

Lady Wisdom has prepared a sumptuous banquet in **her house** and **has sent out her young women to invite everyone to come (9:3 NLT)**. That is, her servants are getting the invitations out, but **Lady Wisdom herself** is speaking through **them**. It is a picture of the prophets and the apostles. It is a picture of faithful parents, Bible teachers, and Messianic rabbis and pastors today. The Bible says: **When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God (First Thessalonians 2:13 ESV)**. When you know that what you are hearing is biblical, you are hearing **the Word of God**. **ADONAI** is inviting you to the banquet. **God** is inviting us all into joys we have never known before, because they came down from heaven. **She calls out from the heights overlooking the city**, where many would hear the invitation. **Madam Folly** also called out from this **high point (9:14) (9:3 NLT)**.²⁰³

We hear **Lady Wisdom** speaking of a specific group in the last three verses. Specifically, she addresses the simpleminded, who are also called **those who lack understanding**. This reference is neither to **the wise** nor to **the foolish**, but to the naïve or immature. These are the ones who vacillate between **Lady Wisdom** and **Madame Folly**. So **Lady Wisdom** wants to woo **them** into **her home**, she wants to teach **them** the **path** of life. **“Whoever is simpleminded, let him turn in here!” she says to those who lack understanding (9:4 BSB)**. She thus invites **them** to come into **her home** and share a meal with **them**. **Come and eat my food! Drink the wine I have mixed (9:5 CJB)**. In the ancient Near East, for a woman to invite a man to a meal has erotic overtones. What **Lady Wisdom** wants is an intimate relationship with **the simpleminded**. This reminds us of the erotic language used earlier, in **the father’s** admonition to **the son** to grow **wise**. **She is a tree of life to those who embrace her, and those who hold her tight are blessed (3:18)**. So, **Lady Wisdom** issues the invitation to turn from **simplemindedness** and gain **understanding**. **Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding (9:6 NIV)**. We don’t hear any

response, but by the end of the chapter, we hear the voice of another woman, **Madam Folly**.²⁰⁴

Ignore the mockers (9:7-12): Chapter 9 is divided into three paragraphs of six verses each. The first (**verses 1-6**) and third (**verses 13-18**) paragraphs mirror each other like bookends, each one with an invitation. **Solomon** is telling us, “This is an either/or decision. There’s no third option.” The invitation to **wisdom** stands open to everyone except the **mockers (9:7 and 12)**. However, **he** welcomes both **the wise** and the **simpleminded (1:4)**.²⁰⁵

Anyone who corrects a mocker will get an insult in return. Anyone who rebukes a wicked man will be insulted in return (9:7 Hebrew). A Rabbi, the Talmud reported, lamented the fact that nobody in his generation accepted correction, and if one told his neighbor, “Remove the splinter from your eye,” the answer was, “Remove the beam from your own eye.” So don’t bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you. Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous and they will learn even more (9:8-9 NLT). Every one of us needs someone to whom we can regularly turn to and say, “How am I doing?” And then we need to listen. Openness and humility are how we grow. **Mockers** are not like that. What is a **mocker**? A **mocker** is someone who never accepts correction. **He** thinks other people really need **his** opinions. **He** is easily offended. **He** is smarter than other people. Above them, actually. And if someone seems to threaten **his** superiority, **he scoffs. He mocks. He** mouths off. **He** belittles. This kind of person is dangerous. If you cross **him, he** will punish you – and claim it’s your fault.

We see this attitude abounding in the congregations of **God** today. At some point, we have all been let down. By now many of us have no reason not to be cynical **mockers** . . . no reason except for **Yeshua**. And **He** is reason enough. **He** will never let us down. **He** is why we humble ourselves and open up and listen. **He** is why the tone of our places of worship need not be sarcasm but reverence: **The fear of ADONAI is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One results in understanding (9:10 CJB). For through wisdom your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life (9:11 BSB).** We revere **Yeshua** as **the Holy One**, which means **He** is outside of our categories, surprising us, especially as **He** loves us more than we love **Him**. The truth is, we have let **Him** down so many times. But here is **His** answer to us: **I will not execute my burning anger . . . for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst (Hosea**

11:9). The Holy One is sweet-natured. **He** is the easiest **Person** in the universe to get along with. **He** says: **Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline (Revelation 3:19a NASB)**. But because it is **His** loving heart speaking into our lives, we open up and say, “**Lord, I want** to know how I can grow. Please tell me. I want to be conformed into **Your** image.” That humble eagerness is **wisdom** and **the fear of ADONAI**. It is reverence.

Revering Him makes all the difference. **If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; but if you are a mocker, you alone will bear the consequences of your mocking (9:12 Hebrew)**. As important as community is, I cannot borrow character from you, nor can you borrow character from me. Just being at church will not change us. Just because you sit in the garage doesn’t make you a car. No one gets a college degree by hanging out on campus blending in with the other students. Likewise, each of us must receive **Messiah** personally. We must seek **Him** and engage with **Him** personally. **He** is how we change. **He** is how we get **wisdom** when we **ask** for it. **If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you (James 1:5 NIV)**. And when **He** gives it to us, no one can take it away from us, no matter what they do. Good thing, given the world that we are all walking through.²⁰⁶

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **Your** wonderful invitation to eternal life in heaven with **You!** **For if you confess with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart it is believed for righteousness, and with the mouth it is confessed for salvation. For the Scripture says, “Whoever trusts in Him will not be put to shame” (Romans 10:9-11)**. **Wise** people are those who choose to do more than just know about **Messiah**, who choose to trust **in Him** that they might **praise Him** thru all eternity! **So that we, who were first to put our hope in Messiah, might be for His glorious praise, sealed with the promised Ruach Ha’Kodesh (Ephesians 1:12, 13c)**. Thank **You** for your invitation to **life** thru **Yeshua**. In **Messiah’s** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*