



WISDOM'S INVITATION 9:1-18

In the first eight chapters of **Proverbs**, “*wisdom*” is often personified in the feminine gender [1:20-33; 3:15-18; 4:6-8; 8:1-21] and likewise here in this chapter. Sin (foolishness), the rival to wisdom is also personified in this chapter under the character of a “*foolish woman*” [verses 13-18]. In this chapter there is a picture of two women calling out to the people in the streets, inviting them to come into their houses. These two women represent two competing calls, two world views, two alternatives, two ways and philosophies of life (wisdom and sin), and these two have been calling out to mankind ever since the garden of Eden and they are still calling today!

I. THE CALL AND FEAST OF WISDOM [verses 1-12]

1. The Rich Provision Which Wisdom Has Made [verses 1-2].

☞ “*Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars*” This is a strong house supported by seven pillars. This speaks of the beauty and stability that the words and instruction of “*wisdom*” has to offer. Just as pillars give a building strength and beauty, so will the instruction of “*wisdom*” give strength and beauty to one’s life. The strength and beauty that “*wisdom*” gives is real and unfading, unlike the prostitute’s glamour.

☞ “*She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table*” This speaks of a feast prepared and ready. A table prepared [Psalm 23:5] speaks of the love, care, and forethought of the preparer, and the provision and fellowship that is available for the guests.

2. The Gracious Invitation That Wisdom Has Given [verses 3-6].

☞ “*She (wisdom) hath sent forth her maidens: (preachers and instructors in righteousness) she crieth upon the highest places of the city*” The call, invitation, and proclamation of “*wisdom*” is a public call with fervency and earnestness.

☞ “*Whoso is simple (lacking understanding, and subject to delusion), let him turn in hither*” This is an invitation to enter “*wisdom’s*” house which is one of stability, beauty, and provision!

☞ “*Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled*” This is an invitation to “*wisdom’s*” table, and conveys the idea that a spiritual feast has been prepared and is available, and in order to receive its benefits one must come and partake [Luke 14:18].

☞ *“Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding”* These words reveal what is required of those that come. There must be a separation-*“forsake the foolish”* and there must be a turning-*“go in the way of understanding”* There must be a turning from and a turning to [Isaiah 55:7]. It is not enough to turn away from that which is evil and foolish, there must also be a turning to that which is good.

3. Wisdom’s Counsels [verses 7-9].

☞ *“He that reproveth (reprimand, admonish) a scorner getteth to himself shame”* The *“scorner”* is *“one who treats the things of God with open contempt and disrespect”* The *“scorner”* is mentioned several times in the book of Proverbs [13:1; 14:6; 15:12; 19:25; 21:11, 24; 22:10; 24:9]. He that attempts to reprove such an individual *“getteth to himself shame”* (he will be ridiculed, reviled, and derided). THE SCORNER DOES NOT RECEIVE THE REPROOF OF WISDOM, AND THEREFORE DOES NOT PARTAKE OF WISDOM’S FEAST.

☞ *“and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot”* When one rebukes the *“wicked man”* (one bent on his wicked ways), the rebuker becomes the object of slander. THE WICKED MAN DOES NOT RECEIVE THE REBUKE OF WISDOM, AND THEREFORE DOES NOT PARTAKE OF WISDOM’S FEAST!

☞ *“Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee”* This is a warning against casting pearl before swine [Proverbs 23:9; Matthew 7:6].

☞ *“rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee”* The *“wise man”* is the opposite of the *“scorner”* and the *“wicked man”* A *“wise man”* conscious of his own failings, and with a desire to be right loves his reprover as a friend [Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 27:6], and is able to partake of *“wisdom’s”* feast.

☞ *“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning”* A *“wise man”* and a *“just man”* will be willing and ready to learn, and therefore able to partake of *“wisdom’s”* feast.

The *“scorner”* and the *“wicked man”* will not listen to, nor appreciate the message of *“wisdom”* but the *“wise man”* and *“just man”* delights in not only the message of *“wisdom”* but in the *“rebuke”* and *“instruction”* of *“wisdom”*

4. The Foundation And Message Of Wisdom [verse 10].

☞ *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”* This is a repetition of Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7. The *“fear of the Lord”* is a reverence for God and the things of God. WISDOM’S INVITATION IS A CALL TO FEAR THE LORD! This *“fear of the Lord”* is mentioned several times in the book of Proverbs.

- Reverence for the Lord will cause one to live life abundantly [Proverbs 10:27].
 - Reverence for God will cause one to have assurance [Proverbs 14:26].
 - Reverence for God will enable one to escape many snares [Proverbs 14:27].
 - Reverence for God will cause one to be humble and therefore receive instruction [Proverbs 15:33].
 - Reverence for God will cause one to depart from evil [Proverbs 16:6].
 - Reverence for God will cause one to be satisfied [Proverbs 19:23].
 - Reverence for God will prevent envy [Proverbs 23:17].
- ☞ *“and the knowledge of the holy is understanding”* Knowledge of holy things increases insight, and is a reason for joy [Jeremiah 9:24], and will liberate from error [John 8:31-32].

5. The Promises And Benefits Of Reverence Toward God [verses 11-12].

- ☞ *“For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased”* Reverence toward God, which results in *“wisdom”* will result in **fulness of life**.
- ☞ *“If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it”* The individual who has reverence for the Lord, profits himself, but the one who pursues the way of foolishness opposes one’s self [II Timothy 2:25].

II. THE CALL AND FEAST OF FOOLISHNESS [verses 13-18]

1. The Character Of Foolishness [verses 13-14].

Sin and **folly** are characterized by *“a foolish woman”* [verse 13]. What is said of her, is that she *“is clamorous”* (noisy, loud, and insistent), yet her message is empty! This is the opposite of that which is pleasing to God [I Peter 3:1-4]. It is also said of her that *“she is simple”* (disposed to error and sin), and that she *“knoweth nothing”* (ignorance, lacks any depth). Folly is characterized by an **undisciplined** life, and **ignorance**. She is also pictured as looking for occasions to sin [verse 14].

2. Her Invitation [verses 15-17].

She calls those who are going innocently about their business [verse 15]. In her call, she puts the emphasis upon the **pleasure** of sin-*“stolen waters (adultery) are sweet”* and she puts the emphasis upon **secrecy**-*“bread eaten in secret is pleasant”* The chapter closes with the miserable state of them that are deceived by this *“foolish woman”* [verse 18].

In this chapter “*wisdom*” is seen calling to those who are on the wrong path [verse 4] to walk in the way of “*wisdom*” while folly is seen calling for people to leave the straight path and follow her. “*Wisdom’s*” invitation leads to life, while folly’s lead to death.
