

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 282—Wisdom & Folly)

Introduction: A great part of the content of Proverbs is devoted to the distinguishing characteristics of the wise as opposed to the foolish. We learn that wisdom is not so much a matter of intellect as attitude toward God and His will. Proverbs makes clear the surpassing value of wisdom in a person's life.

Lesson aim: To know the characteristics of wisdom and folly.

The value of wisdom

1. Why is wisdom valuable to those who acquire it? (24:13-14; 15:24)
What does Solomon say about the man who gets wisdom? (19:8)
2. What warning does he issue about self-direction? (16:25)

Attitudes in acquiring wisdom

1. If one is prudent or intelligent, for what does he seek? (14:18; 15:14; 18:15) In contrast, what is the fool's attitude about knowledge? (14:15; 17:24)
2. What kind of person finds learning difficult? (14:6)

The importance of learning from others & accepting correction

1. Why is it so hard to teach a fool? (18:2) What should a man's attitude be toward good advice or counsel? (12:15; 15:22)
2. What should one's attitude be toward reproof? (15:31; 21:11; 10:17; 17:10) How does the scoffer feel toward those who seek to correct him? (15:12) How does he conduct himself in a disagreement? (29:9)
3. What does discipline reveal about those who receive it? (12:1; 15:32)
4. Explain the four proverbs that discuss how to answer fools (26:4-5)
5. Why should we listen to counsel and accept discipline? (19:20)

6. Was Solomon optimistic about making a foolish person wise? (27:22; 17:16)
7. Sometimes it is necessary to resort to what means in order to correct the foolish? (26:3; 20:30; 10:13; 19:29)

The results of wisdom in one's life

1. How does a wise person manifest his wisdom? (13:16; 14:8; 14:16)
2. In contrast, how do fools respond to evil and sin? (14:9; 15:21; 13:19; 19:3) What does the fool experience due to his rejection of wisdom? (22:3; 27:12) To what did Solomon compare the fool who repeats his folly? (26:11)
3. What affect does the wise man's behavior have on others? (13:15; 24:5) In contrast, what is not fitting to be given to a fool? (26:1,8)
4. How does Solomon convey the obnoxious nature of the fool? (12:16; 17:12; 24:9; 27:3)
5. What warning does he give to those who hire a fool to work for them? (26:10) What warning about keeping company with them? (14:7)
6. What does a man's wisdom enable him to do? (20:5; 24:3-4) In contrast, what do fools often cause among men? (29:8; 13:10).
7. How does Solomon show the unreliability of a fool? (26:6) To what does Solomon compare "a proverb in the mouth of a fool"? (26:7,9)
8. What blessing does understanding provide to its possessor? (16:22) In what endeavors will he succeed? (24:6; 28:26)
9. What is the fate of the one who neglects sound teaching? (13:18; 10:14; 29:1)