

## TEXT — 1:1-9

1. The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:
2. To know wisdom and instruction;  
To discern the words of understanding;
3. To receive instruction in wise dealing,  
In righteousness and justice and equity;
4. To give prudence to the simple,  
To the young man knowledge and discretion;
5. That the wise man may hear, and increase in learning;  
And that the man of understanding may attain unto  
sound counsels;
6. To understand a proverb, and a figure,  
The words of the wise, and their dark sayings.
7. The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge;  
But the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.
8. My son, hear the instruction of thy father,  
And forsake not the law of thy mother:
9. For they shall be a chaplet of grace unto thy head,  
And chains about thy neck.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 1:1-9

1. Compile background information on Solomon besides the 2 things mentioned in v. 1.
2. What other books of the Bible did Solomon write?
3. The first purpose of Proverbs is to help one know ..... (vs. 2-6).
4. What is the meaning of "discern" (v. 2)?
5. What is meant by "wise dealing" (v. 3)?
6. What is the meaning of "equity" (v. 3)?
7. What does "prudence" mean (v. 4)?
8. What would be the purpose of Proverbs to one who is already wise (v. 5)?
9. What is meant by "dark sayings" (v. 6)?
10. What is the first proverb (or wise saying) in the book v. 7?
11. What in v. 8 shows that mothers should join fathers in laying down the law to their children?
12. What was a "chaplet" (v. 9)?
13. What New Testament passages also describe virtues as ornaments (v. 9)?

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### PARAPHRASE OF 1:1-9

1. These are the proverbs of King Solomon of Israel, David's son:
- 2-6. He wrote them to teach his people how to live--how to act in every circumstance, for he wanted them to be understanding, just and fair in everything they did. "I want to make the simple-minded wise!" he said. "I want to warn young men about some problems they will face. I want those already wise to become the wiser and become leaders by exploring the depths of meaning in these nuggets of truth."
- 7-9. How does a man become wise? The first step is to trust and reverence the Lord! Only fools refuse to be taught. Listen to your father and mother. What you learn from them will stand you in good stead; it will gain you many honors.

### COMMENTS ON 1:1-9

V. 1. A "proverb" is a wise saying. Solomon (the author of all the book except the final chapters) was famous for the proverbs that he spoke--and he spoke 3,000 of them (I Kings 4:32), which is more than we have in this book. "Solomon is the first of the sacred writers whose name stands at the head of his "works" ("Clarke"). Because the first 9 chapters of the book are extended material (chiefly on wisdom) rather than short sayings, though the title of the book is "Proverbs", 10:1 is where the actual "sayings" themselves begin (note that verse). Solomon was David's son by Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Uriah (Matt. 1:6). He became king of Israel during his father's final days of infirmity even though his brother Adonijah (Adonijah had a different mother than Solomon) had tried to beat him out of the kingship (I Kings 1:5-40).

V. 2. The purpose of this divine book is spelled out in a series of infinitives. "Wisdom" is the goal, and "instruction" is the method of gaining it. The end-result is that the listener himself will be able "to discern the words of understanding" by having this divine wisdom laid up in his mind and heart.

V. 3. The instruction to be given was to teach "wise dealing" (wisdom and prudence), "righteousness" (not show how to "beat somebody out of what was rightfully his"), and "justice and equity" (what is fair and honest). Oh, that all our education

were bent on making men right, honest, and upright and not merely to make them richer by whatever means they may follow to become such!

V. 4. Sayings (whether Biblical sayings or otherwise) are made by older, wiser people who have been over many of the roads of life and who desire to pass on portions of their knowledge to the younger and to the lesser experienced. Actually, then, when one knows, quotes, and follows time-honored sayings, he is actually speaking and being guided by a knowledge superior to that which he would know on his own.

V. 5. This verse goes a step farther: it shows that the wise and experienced also profit by the wisdom and sayings of others. Nobody is a first-hand expert in all fields so that he cannot profit by the wisdom of others in those fields in which he has not the opportunity to turn his special attention. But even if he has, he may still profit by the wisdom couched in such sayings of others. In fact, it is the wise who are always seeking to advance their knowledge, and a wise man is a joy to teach: "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: Teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning" (Prov. 9:9).

V. 6. We live in a world where figures of speech, informed comparisons, big and technical words, etc. are often heard. If we are not posted in the understanding and handling of such, we can draw wrong conclusions, misuse words, and in general betray our ignorance. Thus, 26:7,9 both speak of a "parable in the mouth of fools". The Bible also employs the parabolic in its teachings ("I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old"--Psa. 78:2). Jesus spoke many things in parables and at times used language that confounded His hearers. Even the disciples were able to grasp the meaning of other forms of expression more readily: "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no dark saying" (John 16:29). Prophecy (especially the book of Revelation) is written in such a way that one needs a good knowledge of history to understand its symbols and predictions. Peter acknowledges that Paul's writings contain "some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest" (II Peter 3:16).

V. 7. We might say that this verse contains the first actual proverb or saying in the book, and it rightfully begins where the whole Bible itself begins--with God (Jehovah). "The fear of the Lord signifies that religious reverence which every intelligent

being owes to his Creator...No man can ever become truly wise who does not begin with God" ("Clarke"). Other like passages of the fear of Jehovah as the beginning of wisdom: Prov. 9:10; Psa. 111:10; Job 28:28. The implied contrast within our verse is that the "foolish" do not "fear" Jehovah and, therefore, "despise wisdom and instruction." Note v. 1 for the connection between "wisdom" and "instruction". Those who do not fear come to despise. II Pet. 2:10 shows this: "...despise dominion. Daring, self-willed, they tremble not to rail at dignities." Special instructions, both in the Old and New Testaments, grow out of this fact: "Speak not in the hearing of a fool; For he will despise the wisdom of thy words" (Prov. 23:9): "Neither cast your pearls before swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you." (Matt. 7:6).

V. 8. Though Solomon had many wives and concubines (700 of the first and 300 of the second--I Kings 11:3), and we consequently assume numerous sons, it is a surprising fact that we know the name of only one of his sons (Rehoboam, who succeeded him on the throne in Jerusalem). It is likely that the material presented in Proverbs that says, "My son" (this verse: v. 15, 2:1; 3:1,3; 3:11; etc.), was originally Solomon's material to his son Rehoboam. However, the expression, "My sons" (plural), occurs four times in the book (4:1; 5:7; 7:24; 8:32), in which we have Solomon's teaching to all of his sons. Solomon employed "my son" in two noticeable ways: to begin with a section to make the teaching more personal to the son (as in 1:15; 6:3; and others. When he uses the expression to begin a section of material, he usually tells what listening to his instruction will mean to his life (see vs. 8,9; 3:1,2; 4:10; and others) before actually proceeding to present the section of material. One final thought on our verse: Both parents have important parts in a child's rearing--the "instruction of thy father", the "law of thy mother". In far too many homes the instruction and rearing of the children becomes the responsibility of but one instead of both, or the mother does the instructing, but the father is the disciplinarian who lays down the "law."

V. 9. A chaplet is a wreath or garland that the victor wore on his head. When Joseph was promoted to a ruler in Egypt, they "put a gold chain about his neck", he rode in Egypt's "second chariot", and they cried before him, "Bow the knee" (Gen. 41:43). Following the sound teachings of the father would

bring the son to great dignity as well as give a beauty to his life. The elements of good character are likened to spiritual ornaments. Women particularly are warned in physical charm: "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing of jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Pet. 3:3,4). See I Tim. 2:9,10 and Prov. 3:22.

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 1:1-9

1. What is a "proverb" (v. 1)?
2. How many proverbs did Solomon speak (v. 1)?
3. What is the relation between "wisdom" and "instruction" (v. 2)?
4. What might be said of the character of the wisdom that Solomon was teaching to his son (v. 3)?
5. What can wise sayings do for a "young man" (v. 4)?
6. Who besides young men can also profit by wise sayings (v. 5)?
7. What are some Bible examples of "dark sayings" (v. 6)?
8. Comment on fools despising wisdom and instruction (v. 7).
9. Discuss "my son" as included in v. 8.
10. What does v. 9 say that following a father's instruction will bring?

### TEXT — 1:10-19

10. My son, if sinners entice thee,  
Consent thou not.
11. If they say, Come with us,  
Let us lay in wait for blood;  
Let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause;
12. Let us swallow them up alive as Sheol,  
And whole, as those that go down into the pit;
13. We shall find all precious substance;  
We shall fill our houses with spoil;
14. Thou shalt cast thy lot among us;  
We will all have one purse:
15. My son, walk not thou in the way with them;  
Refrain thy foot from their path:

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

16. For their feet run to evil,  
And they make haste to shed blood.
17. For in vain is the net spread  
In the sight of any bird:
18. And these lay wait for their own blood;  
They lurk privily for their own lives.
19. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain;  
It taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

### STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 1:10-19

1. Why will sinners entice innocent people (v. 10)?
2. What are the three big words in v. 10?
3. What does "lurk privily" mean (v. 11)?
4. What does "Sheol" mean (v. 12)?
5. Is the second statement in v. 12 different from its first, or is it a restatement of it?
6. To what extent will selfishness go (v. 13)?
7. What does "cast thy lot" in v. 14 mean?
8. V. 15 is but an enlargement of what three important words already given?
9. What two words in v. 16 show their eagerness to do wrong?
10. What is the connection of v. 17 with this section of material?
11. Why for their "own" blood and lives (v. 18)?
12. Does sin end up the way it was planned (v. 19)?

### PARAPHRASE OF 1:10-19

- 10-14. If young toughs tell you, "Come and join us"--turn your back on them! "We'll hide and rob and kill," they say; "Good or bad, we'll treat them all alike! And the loot we'll get! All kinds of stuff! Come on, throw in your lot with us; we'll split with you in equal shares."
- 15-19. Don't do it, son! Stay far from men like that, for crime is their way of life, and murder is their specialty. When a bird sees a trap being set, it stays away, but not these men; they trap themselves! They lay a booby trap for their own lives. Such is the fate of all who live by violence and murder. They will die a violent death.

## COMMENTS ON 1:10-19

V. 10. This verse breaks down into two parts: sinners' attempt to mislead a young man and what he should do about it. Be assured that the world (sinners) will put pressure on every person to join them. Oh, the rosy picture that they can paint in the fantasies of a young person's mind! And to be different from the world would be to be "out of steps", "odd", and all that a young person does not really want to be. And so the invitation becomes enticement, and their urging becomes irresistible temptation. The only way a young person (or anybody else) can resist and overcome these pressures from the outside is by that which he has on the inside (parental instruction that has become personal conviction, faith in God, reverential fear, etc.). Oh, how Solomon pleads with his son, "Consent thou not." What important three words they are! This is what Joseph did when urged by Potiphar's wife: "he refused" and said, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen., 39:8,9). Oh, for more young men with the conviction, native honesty, and courage of Joseph! Daniel did the same (Dan. 1:8); so did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Dan.<sup>3</sup> 17,18). We, too, are commanded to abstain from the world's evil: Eph. 5:7,11; I Thess. 5:22; II Tim. 2:19; Jas. 1:27.

V. 11. Often throughout the book Solomon warns against both evil men and evil women (both are mentioned in 2:12-17). The evil men are wicked oppressors out to get ill-gotten gain, and the evil women are immoral adulteresses. This chapter 1 warning is concerning going in with evil men to become an oppressor. This verse and the ones following put the enticement of v. 10 into words. Notice that the people to be hurt by them wouldn't deserve it ("the innocent"), nor would they expect or suspect it ("Let us lay in wait...let us lurk privily").

V. 12. "Sheol" is Hebrew, and "Hades" is Greek for the place of departed spirits. This verse employs Hebrew parallelism in which the two statements mean the same thing; that is, "Sheol" and "pit" are the same; "alive" and "whole" are the same; and "swallow" and "go down" are the same. Death is spoken of as "going down into the pit" in Psa. 28:1: "Unto thee, O Jehovah, will I call: My rock, be not thou deaf unto me; Lest if thou be silent unto me, I become like them that go down into the pit." Sheol is pictured in Prov. 30:15,16 as one of four things personified as never satisfied, that never says, "It is enough."

So, it was no small damage that these evil men planned to inflict and in which they were inviting the young man to participate.

V. 13. This is the part that was luring them on--the hope of gain. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil (see I Tim. 6:10). As they passed from one robbery and murder to another, all they were thinking about was themselves. The "innocent" (v. 11) had worked to obtain the precious substance; the innocent had not found it amassed in one place as his robbers wanted to. They had patiently seen it grow and accumulate though hard work and saving ways; the robbers were wanting to "fill" their houses with it immediately.

V. 14. "Cast thy lot among us" meant that he would decide to go with them, he would trust his future and his outcome to their way of doing. "We will all have one purse" meant that he would share equally with them. But people who do will lie and cheat and rob and kill others might be untrue to their promise to him too. This was their final appeal to him to join them. What would his decision be?

V. 15. Oh, the concern of the father at this point! He realizes it is a decision-time for his son. Will he fall for their line, or will he go the way he has been taught from youth? He pleads, "My son, walk not thou in the way with them," and restated for emphasis and additional appeal: "Refrain thy foot from their path." This verse is really an enlargement upon "Consent thou not" in v. 10. Other verses on this subject: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked" (Psa. 1:1); "Enter not into the path of the wicked, And walk not in the way of evil men" (Prov. 4:14); "I have refrained my feet from every evil way" (Psa. 119:101).

V. 16. A good reason for Solomon's not wanting his son to take up with such "toughs". They "run" to evil; they "make haste" to shed blood. Ever notice that man is quick to get into iniquity, but he wants to take his time to get out of it? The reverse should be true. Two other passages say much the same thing: "Their feet run to evil, they make haste to shed innocent blood" (Isa. 59:7); "Their feet are swift to shed blood" (Rom. 3:15).

V. 17. The wicked are represented as lurking privily for the innocent. It is in this way alone that they can hope to destroy them and take their substance; for if their designs were known, proper precautions would be taken against them" ("Clarke"). In other words, "Son, can't you see what they are doing? Don't get



caught!"

V. 18. Their intention would be to hurt others, and they do for awhile, but in time justice catches up with them, and they pay with their lives! The father would have his son view his final outcome from the beginning, and the enticement to join up with the oppressors would not be so strong.

V. 19. Other passages also teach the sorrows and losses to be reaped by those greedy of gain: "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house" (Prov. 15:27); "...which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10). Instead of "getting", there is "losing". We note too that the "important" (his own life) is lost trying to gain the "unimportant" (material gain).

#### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 1:10-19

1. What are the two parts of v. 10?
2. What sin usually characterized "evil men" of Proverbs (v. 11)?
3. Cite the three parallels in v. 12.
4. What does I Tim. 6:10 say about the love of money (v. 13)?
5. Comment on the two parts of v. 14.
6. Why is the father so earnest in v. 15?
7. What should men reverse (v. 16)?
8. What should the son be able to see that evil men are actually doing when they paint such a rosy picture (v. 17)?
9. What would keep the enticement from being so strong (v. 18)?
10. What do oppressors "get", and what do they "lose" (v. 19)?

#### TEXT — 1:20-33

20. Wisdom crieth aloud in the street;  
She uttereth her voice in the broad places;
21. She crieth in the chief place of concourse;  
At the entrance of the gates,  
In the city, she uttereth her words:
22. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?  
And scoffers delight them in scoffing,

And fools hate knowledge?

23. Turn you at my reproof:  
Behold, I will pour out my spirit upon you;  
I will make known my words unto you,
24. Because I have called, and ye have refused;  
I have stretched out my hand, and no man hath regarded.
25. Be ye have set at nought all my counsel,  
And would none of my reproof:
26. I also will laugh in the day of your calamity;  
I will mock when your fear cometh;
27. When your fear cometh as a storm,  
And your calamity cometh on as a whirlwind;  
When distress and anguish come upon you.
28. Then will they call upon men, but I will not answer;  
They will seek me diligently, but they shall not find me.
29. For that they hated knowledge,  
And did not choose the fear of Jehovah.
30. They would none of my counsel,  
They despised all my reproof.
31. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way,  
And be filled with their own devices.
32. For the backsliding of the simple shall slay them,  
And the careless ease of fools shall destroy them.
33. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell securely,  
And shall be quiet without fear of evil.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 1:20-33

1. How does wisdom "cry" (v. 20)?
2. What does "concourse" mean (v. 21)?
3. Are the "simple ones", "scoffers," and "fools" different groups or the same group under different words (v. 22)?
4. Is v. 23 speaking of inspiration?
5. What is the antecedent of "I", "my", and "me" from v. 24 to the end of the chapter?
6. What does "set at nought" mean (v. 25)?
7. Will such a day as pictured in v. 26 come to the foolish?
8. How serious will things become for the foolish (v. 27)?
9. What sad news does v. 28 bear?
10. They should have ..... knowledge instead of hated it (v. 29)?

11. The fear of Jehovah is something to be ..... (v. 29)?
12. V. 30 is a restatement of what previous verse?
13. What is the meaning of "eat" in v. 31?
14. Find three parallel expressions in the two statements of v. 32.
15. What contrast belongs to those who will listen (v. 33)?

### PARAPHRASE OF 1:20-33

20-28. Wisdom shouts in the streets for a hearing. She calls out to the crowds along Main Street, and to the judges in their courts, and to everyone in all the land. "You simpletons!" she cries, "how long will you go on being fools? How long will you scoff at wisdom and fight the facts? Come here and listen to me! I'll pour out the spirit of Wisdom upon you, and make you wise. I have called you so often but still you won't come. I have pleaded, but all in vain. For you have spurned my counsel and reproof. Some day you'll be in trouble, and I'll laugh! Mock me, will you?--I'll mock you! When a storm of terror surrounds you, and when you are engulfed by anguish and distress, then I will not answer your cry for help. It will be too late though you search for me ever so anxiously.

29-33. "For you closed your eyes to the facts and did not choose to reverence and trust the Lord, and you turned your back on me, spurning my advice. That is why you must eat the bitter fruit of having your own way, and experience the full terrors of the pathway you have chosen. For you turned away from me--to death; your complacency will kill you, Fools! But all who listen to me shall live in peace and safety, unafraid."

### COMMENTS ON 1:20-33

V. 20. From here to the end of the chapter (yes, and on beyond that) wisdom is personified as talking, teaching, crying, watching, and turning a deaf ear to people's cries when suffering from refusing her. Virtue itself is usually represented as a woman; so is wisdom here (note the "her"). Other verses that have wisdom crying or speaking: Prov. 8:1,3,4,6,7. Our verse tells of wisdom uttering her voice and crying aloud in the street and the broad places. Their streets were very narrow. Where two

streets met, they made a broad place (see Mark 11:4). Actually wisdom speaks everywhere if people will but listen. What have you learned today from life?

V. 21. "The chief place of concourse" is translated "at the head of the multitudes" ("Young's Literal") and "at the head of the thronged ways" ("American Bible Union Version"). "The entrance of the gates" would be where people entered or left the city and where legal transactions were conducted (Ruth 4:1-11). "In the city" would be where people lived. Vs. 20,21 shows that wisdom spoke to the ancients from every place (the street, the broad places, the chief place of concourse, the entrance of the gates, and in the city). Today wisdom also speaks to us from many places: it speaks from the juvenile court (on child-rearing; from the curse of alcoholicism (asking, "Was Prohibition a failure after all?"), from tobacco-statistics, etc. What do tobacco statistics say? "Don't smoke!" Wisdom tells us it is a foolish habit (look at the effect upon your health); it is a wasteful habit (in outlay of money and in costs in minutes of life when added together; it is a bad habit (bad breath, spreading foul smell wherever one goes, causing others to cough from smoke, etc.).

V. 22. There are those who 'love' simplicity (ignorance), some who "delight" in scoffing at the truth and at righteousness and at those who hold them, and some who "hate" knowledge. Wisdom, God, parents, and godly people cannot help wondering, "How much longer will such people live that way?"

V. 23. The very question, "How long...will ye love simplicity...delight in scoffing...hate knowledge?" of v. 22 was itself a "reproof" to those addressed, the hope being to get them to "turn" or change. The height of wisdom which men have sometimes scoffed at and hated is Inspired Wisdom found within the Word of God. The language, "I will pour out my spirit," sounds like a parallel prediction with Joel 2:28, which was fulfilled in God's sending the Holy Spirit to inspire the apostles and prophets of New Testament times. Old Testament writers often "jumped in" such long-range prophecies without elaboration and sometimes without a close topic-connection with its surroundings. Thus, we take this to be a prediction of New Testament inspiration.

V. 24. Wisdom again speaks. "A pause may be imagined, and seems to be implied between this and the preceding verses (22 and 23), when the address passes into a new phase--from that

of invitation and promise to that of judgment and stern denunciation" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Other passages on God calling and speaking but men refusing to hearken: Isa. 65:12; Isa. 66:4; Jer. 7:13; Zech. 7:11.

V. 25. "Set at nought" means to treat as nothing. Men who reject God's "counsel" (His instructions, commandments, and prohibitions) usually do not listen to His "reproof" (correction of their ways) either. This verse's last statement is also found in v. 30. Luke 7:30 says, "The Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him (John the Baptist)." Why do men act as if they know more than God? Or, as if they don't have to bow down to God? Whatever the reason, it is both wrong and ruinous!

V. 26. That such a day of calamity is coming for the wicked is rightfully assumed. It is coming! Those who lack the fear of Jehovah and the wisdom that it brings (v. 7) will finally end up in a "fear" that they cannot escape! "The terrific nature of the punishment of the wicked is marked by a succession of terms all of terrible import--calamity, fear, desolation, destruction, distress and anguish (vs. 26,27)" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Wisdom here (and Jehovah in Psa. 2:4) is represented as laughing and mocking when such deserved calamity comes. Actually judgment will but return men's laughing and mocking upon them.

V. 27. What can be more fearful than overpowering storms in nature? These are used to depict the fear, distress, and anguish that will come upon those who have refused to follow wisdom's counsel. All of this was unforeseen when they were scoffing and refusing to listen to sound instruction.

V. 28. Now they will "turn" by the hardships that come upon them even though they wouldn't "turn" in obedience to v. 23. When men begin to reap the results of their own foolish choices, it does very little good to cry to God in the day of judgement! Other passages on His not listening to them and their cries: Job. 27:9; Isa. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; Jer. 14:12; Eze. 8:18. Oh, the desperation of calling when no one will answer! Had they sought God and wisdom diligently, they would have found a rich reward (Heb. 11:6).

V. 29. The reasons for their calamities are here given: they had "hated knowledge", and this helped bring the downfall of the Northern Kingdom ("My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also

reject thee"--Hos. 4:6), and they "did not choose the fear of Jehovah" (Job said the wicked say to God, "Depart from us; For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways"--Job 21:14). V. 22 also spoke of their hating knowledge.

V. 30. Further reasons for their calamities: they had refused God's way ("counsel") and had despised all the "reproof" He had sent them because of their disobedient ways. This verse is a restatement of v. 25.

V. 31. Just as Gal. 6:7 says people will reap what they have sown, so this verse says the wicked will eat what they have planted (v. 22); in judgment God will laugh, God will mock (v. 26). "When we are punished, the blameworthiness lies not with God, but with us sinners" ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 32. The "simple" referred to in v. 22 are here pictured as "backsliding"--as "fools" they will return to their folly ("as a dog that returneth to his vomit, So is a fool that repeateth his folly"--Prov. 26:11; "If, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowlede of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first...It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turneth to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire"--II Pet. 2:20-22). For "careless ease" destroying one, consider the Rich Fool of Luke 12:19,20: "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee"). The beginning of sin is "confidence" (v. 13); the end of sin is destruction (this verse).

V. 33. In contrast to the wicked this verse sets forth the security of the righteous who have hearkened to wisdom: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17); "What man is he that feareth Jehovah? He shall be instructed in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; And his seed shall inherit the land" (Psa. 25:12,13); "He shall never be moved; The righteous shall be had in everlasing remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: His heart is fixed, trusting in Jehovah" (Psa. 112:6,7). "Evil" here is used in the sense of "trouble."

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 1:20-33

1. What is wisdom as personified busy doing (v. 20)?
2. What are some of the places where wisdom is crying today (v. 21)?
3. What question was raised in v. 22?
4. In v. 23 what was wisdom trying to get the disobedient to do?
5. Cite a passage where God called, but they did not listen (v. 24).
6. What is the difference between "counsel" and "reproof" (v. 25)?
7. Why will wisdom laugh and mock in the day of the foolish people's calamities (v. 26)?
8. How is the fear that comes upon the disobedient pictured (v. 27)?
9. Will these who once mocked in time "call" (v. 28)?
10. What reasons are given in vs. 29,30 for their destruction?
11. According to v. 31 their judgment will only visit what upon them?
12. In what other verse are "fools" and "backsliding" put together (v. 32)?
13. On what subject does the chapter close (v. 33)?

## THE HUMAN TONGUE

Of all the subjects that can be named, the subject of the tongue is one that needs to be considered the most. This important part of our bodies can get so far out of line at times, and the terrible havoc that the tongue has done cannot be completely recorded. On the other hand, the good that has been done through words is likewise inestimable.

Exclusive of Proverbs, when preachers go to the Bible to prepare messages on the tongue, the book of James, the book of Ephesians, and the book of Matthew are among the chief sources of material. But, Proverbs discusses this subject more fully than any other book of the Bible—so much that all the material found elsewhere in the Bible does not nearly equal the material found alone in it.

## PONDERING THE PROVERBS

### FROM THE 7th CHAPTER

The writer tells of a sad scene that he once beheld: "For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: and, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot and subtil of heart...She caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee" (verses 6-15), and the following verses show her enticing words, "I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed by bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves" (verses 16-18). Then she goes on to assure him that he need not fear about her husband coming home: "For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: he hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed" (verses 19,20). Oh the sadness in the next verses: "With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life" (verses 21-23). What is the lesson? Listen to the next verses: "Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."