

# Proverbs 1 Commentary

## PROVERBS 1 WORD/PHRASE STUDY DR BOB UTLEY

CLICK VERSE  
To go directly to that verse

- [Proverbs 1:1 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:2 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:3 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:4 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:5 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:6 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:7 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:8 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:9 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:10 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:11 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:12 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:13 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:14 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:15 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:16 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:17 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:18 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:19 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:20 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:21 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:22 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:23 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:24 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:25 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:26 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:27 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:28 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:29 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:30 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:31 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:32 Commentary](#)
- [Proverbs 1:33 Commentary](#)

---

### ***FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL***

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five translations above. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Etc.

## INTRODUCTION TO WISDOM LITERATURE

1. During the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon a literary genre known as wisdom literature developed in the royal court of Israel. It is similar to the same type of practical oriented writings of other nations of the Middle East, especially Egypt.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: WISDOM LITERATURE

2. Wisdom literature is a balance to the two other sources of divine revelation, the Law of Moses and the Prophets (cf. Jer. 18:18). It emphasizes the practical aspect of daily living. It could be characterized as "divine horse sense." It does not accentuate historical events nor ritual observances. See NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1276-1284.
3. In the English Bible, Job through Song of Songs is considered Wisdom Literature. In the New Testament, James is a good example of this genre.
4. Notice the different words used to describe a godly lifestyle related to divine revelation.
  1. wisdom (BDB 315, KB 314), Prov. 1:1,7
  2. instruction (BDB 416), Prov. 1:2,3,7
  3. understand (BDB 106, KB 122, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT), Prov. 1:2,5,6
  4. insight (BDB 108)
  5. wise dealing (BDB 968 I, KB 1328, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT), Prov. 1:3
  6. knowledge (BDB 395) Prov. 1:4,7
  7. discretion (BDB 273), Prov. 1:4

Remember, Pr 1:1-7 are an introduction to the book of Proverbs. True wisdom for godly living comes only from YHWH and His choice to reveal Himself to His human creation.

For a theology of Proverbs see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1079-1093.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1-6

<sup>1</sup>The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

<sup>2</sup>To know wisdom and instruction,  
To discern the sayings of understanding,

<sup>3</sup>To receive instruction in wise behavior,  
Righteousness, justice and equity;

<sup>4</sup>To give prudence to the naive,  
To the youth knowledge and discretion,

<sup>5</sup>A wise man will hear and increase in learning,  
And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,

<sup>6</sup>To understand a proverb and a figure,  
The words of the wise and their riddles.

**Proverbs 1:1 "proverbs"** The Hebrew term *mashal* (BDB 605, KB 648 I; NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 1134-1136) came to characterize the literary form related to the sages. It basically means "comparison" or "to make like."

■ **"of Solomon"** Jewish tradition (i.e., Talmud) asserts Solomon wrote (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:4-28; 4:29-34):

1. Song of Songs when he was young
2. Proverbs in his middle years
3. Ecclesiastes when he was old

In reality, there are several authors connected to the canonical book of Proverbs. See Introduction, IV. B.

**Proverbs 1:2-4** Notice the four parallel infinitive constructs which describe the purpose of wisdom.

1. to know – BDB 393, KB 390, *Qal*
2. to discern – BDB 106, KB 122, *Hiphil*
3. to receive – BDB 542, KB 534, *Qal*
4. to give – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal*

Wisdom is a process of knowledge, understanding, and implementation!

**Proverbs 1:2 "wisdom"** Wisdom (BDB 315, KB 314; see *How To Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, pp. 231-241) is used in several senses (NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1276-1284).

1. divinely inspired artisans – Exod. 28:3; 31:3,6; 35:35; 36:1,2; 1 Kgs. 7:14
2. sailors – Ps. 107:27
3. military skill
4. administration – Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9

Human skills come to humans because they were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and given dominion over His earthly creation (Gen. 1:26,28).

1. Job 28 is a wonderful poem to wisdom.
2. Proverbs 8 is wisdom personified as YHWH's agent of creation.

■ **"instruction"** This NOUN (BDB 416, KB 557) refers to child training (LXX). It is often translated "discipline."

■ **"understanding. . .instruction"** These have similar roots and may be a word play.

1. understanding – BDB 106
2. Instruction/insight – BDB 108; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 652-653

**Proverbs 1:3 "to receive"** God's instructions must be received (cf. Prov. 8:10; 24:22). To receive wisdom one's basic attitude needs to be teachableness (cf. v. 5) and having a fear of God (cf. v. 7).

■ **"wise behavior"** Wisdom issues in godly behavior. This is from the VERB "to be successful" (BDB 968 I, KB 1328, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE). This is the major practical focus of Wisdom Literature. Notice the characteristics of wise behavior.

1. righteousness – This (BDB 841) means a "standard" or "measuring reed." It came to be a metaphor for God's moral character and standard of judgment (cf. Lev. 11:44; Matt. 5:48).

**SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS**

2. justice – This (BDB 1048) means "to be fair or impartial."

**SPECIAL TOPIC: JUDGE, JUDGMENT, and JUSTICE**

3. equity – This is from the root "to be straight" (BDB 449). It is the same concept as "righteous." The Hebrew words for sin reflect a deviation from this standard of YHWH's holiness and righteousness. YHWH wants a people who reflect His character!

**Proverbs 1:4**

NASB	"naive"
NKJV, NRSV, NJB, REB, JPSOA, Peshitta	"the simple"
TEV	"inexperienced person"
LXX	"the innocent"

The MT has an ADJECTIVE (BDB 834, KB 989 I), which has two connotations.

1. someone open to teaching (i.e., open minded)
2. someone easily deceived
3. here, someone lacking "prudence"

It does not convey rebellion but ignorance or inexperience.

■		
NASB, NKJV		"prudence"
NRSV, REB, JPSOA, LXX		"shrewdness"
TEV		"clever"
NJB		"sound judgment"
Peshitta		"subtlety"

The MT has the FEMININE NOUN (BDB 791, KB 886; NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 539-540) which is found only here and

1. Exod. 21:14 for premeditated murder
2. Josh. 9:4 of the Gibeonites' tricking Joshua

The ADJECTIVE is used several times

1. of the serpent in Gen. 3:1
2. of the plan of the shrewd in Job 5:12
3. often in a good sense in Proverbs (cf. Prov. 12:23; 13:16; 14:8,15,18; 19:25; 22:3)

■ **"knowledge"** This is the word (BDB 395, KB 228 l.) used in Gen. 2:9,17 of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

■		
NASB, NKJV, REB, Peshitta		"discretion"
NRSV		"prudence"
NJB		"reflection"
JPSOA		"foresight"
LXX		"insight"

The MT has the FEMININE NOUN (BDB 273, KB 566) which is translated

1. purpose
2. discretion
3. device

Here, #2 fits the context best. This word, like several others in the long opening introduction (i.e., vv. 1-7), has two connotations, positive and negative. Wisdom and knowledge can be used for good or for evil (i.e., Genesis 3).

**Proverbs 1:5** It is a spiritual truth that those who are able to discern truth and can receive teaching are blessed. It is not enough to know. Knowledge must affect life. The wise increase in wisdom. Evil people grow in wickedness.

The NET Bible, p. 1014, translates "hear" and "increase" as JUSSIVES.

■		
NASB, NKJV		"wise counsel"
NRSV, REB		"skill"
NJB		"the art of guidance"
LXX		"direction"
Peshitta		"leadership"

The MT has the FEMININE PLURAL NOUN (BDB 287, KB 1716) which means "advice" or "guidance" (cf. Prov. 1:5; 11:14; 12:5; 20:18; 24:6). KB suggests a translation here of "the art of leadership." The etymology of this root is uncertain. BDB suggests it is related to "rope-pulling," related to steering a ship (see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, p. 285, and UBS *Handbook for Translators*, "Proverbs," p. 27).

**Proverbs 1:6** Notice the different words in v. 6 used to describe a practical kind of wisdom (i.e., a practical wisdom like Solomon's).

1. proverb – BDB 605, KB 647-648 l

1. brief, pithy saying
  2. similitude
  3. parable
2. figure – BDB 539, KB 590, which denotes an enigma or satire (i.e., Hab. 2:6)
  3. riddles – BDB 295, KB 309 (NIDOTTE, vol. 2, p. 107), which is a perplexing saying or question (cf. Num. 12:8; 1 Kgs. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1)

In a sense all three terms have a united semantic field. Wisdom is only understandable to certain divinely gifted people but all can learn from them.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:7

<sup>7</sup>The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;  
Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Proverbs 1:7 "fear"** This (BDB 432) refers to our respect (cf. Lev. 19:3) and awe (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:28) for God as the Holy One of Israel, the only Creator, redeemer God.

#### [SPECIAL TOPIC: FEAR \(OT\)](#)

■ **"Lord"** This is the covenant name for Israel's Deity, from the verb "to be".

#### [SPECIAL TOPIC: NAMES FOR DEITY, D.](#)

■ **"the beginning of knowledge"** This is the first and guiding principle of wisdom. This verse is the central truth of the entire book (cf. Prov. 9:10; 15:33; Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10).

Proverbs 1:7 is a good example of "antithetical parallelism," as v. 8 is an example of "synonymous parallelism." Wisdom Literature is structured in lines of poetry.

#### [SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW POETRY, III](#)

The word "beginning" is the same word (BDB 912, KB 1169) used in Gen. 1:1, which denotes the start of an ordered series. Wisdom is not one teaching session but a life of prayer, study, application (cf. Ezra 7:10).

■ **"Fools despise"** They (BDB 17, KB 21; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 306-308) refuse to hear. This involves willful rejection of YHWH or His Word (i.e., Prov. 13:13; 23:9).

#### [SPECIAL TOPIC: FOOLISH PEOPLE \(TERMS\)](#)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: Proverbs 1:8-19

<sup>8</sup>Hear, my son, your father's instruction  
And do not forsake your mother's teaching;  
<sup>9</sup>Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head  
And ornaments about your neck.  
<sup>10</sup>My son, if sinners entice you,  
Do not consent.  
<sup>11</sup>If they say, "Come with us,  
Let us lie in wait for blood,  
Let us ambush the innocent without cause;  
<sup>12</sup>Let us swallow them alive like Sheol,  
Even whole, as those who go down to the pit;  
<sup>13</sup>We will find all *kinds* of precious wealth,  
We will fill our houses with spoil;  
<sup>14</sup>Throw in your lot with us,  
We shall all have one purse,"  
<sup>15</sup>My son, do not walk in the way with them.  
Keep your feet from their path,  
<sup>16</sup>For their feet run to evil  
And they hasten to shed blood.  
<sup>17</sup>Indeed, it is useless to spread the baited net  
In the sight of any bird;

<sup>18</sup>But they lie in wait for their own blood;

They ambush their own lives.

<sup>19</sup>So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence;

It takes away the life of its possessors.

**Proverbs 1:8 "Hear"** This is a *Qal* IMPERATIVE (BDB 1033, KB 1570) which means "to hear, so as to do" (i.e., Deut. 6:4). This is a common grammatical construction in Wisdom Literature (someone open to hear and act on Divine revelation). Proverbs 1:8-9:18 is basically parental advice (i.e., godly family and covenant society traditions).

■ **"my son"** This is a type of address which is common in Wisdom Literature in the ANE. The sage acts as the parent to the young men being taught. In this area and period only young men from well-to-do families had the advantage of education.

■ **"your father's instruction. . .your mother's instruction"** It is extremely important that both parents are seen as teaching in the home. Mothers, although officially seen as the property of the husband, still had a place of great respect and honor in the OT. Her admonitions and place of teaching in the home is emphasized by being linked to the father over and over again in the book of Proverbs (cf. Prov. 6:20; 10:1; 15:20; 20:20; 23:22,25; 30:17). The home is the place of training, both spiritual and academic (cf. Deut. 4:9; 6:6; 9:20-25; 11:19; 32:46). The wisdom teacher only supplemented that which the child learned in the home. Remember that as far as Israel was concerned, wisdom was not just academic acumen but the religious worldview of life that worked out into daily conformity to the covenant of YHWH.

In the ANE mothers taught the children when they were young. The boys were taught by their fathers at a certain age. Later all males had to attend special religious training by specialists (i.e., wisdom teachers).

**Proverbs 1:9 "Indeed they are a graceful wreath to your head  
And ornaments around your neck"**

It is obvious that parental teaching is of great value to a young person if it can be received and walked in. The metaphor here is that of a headpiece which is obvious to everyone and shows that the young person is walking in parental wisdom (cf. Prov. 4:9). The concept of ornaments shows that parental wisdom is as valuable as jewels.

**Proverbs 1:10 "My son, if sinners entice you"** There is an ingrained pull in fallen humanity (i.e., Genesis 3) to rebel and act selfishly. This is manifested in peer pressure in one's younger years (cf. Prov. 1:11,12,14).

The other temptation is that of "get rich quick" (cf. v. 13). Parental wisdom can protect young people from these two common temptations.



NASB, NKJV, NRSV, LXX, "do not consent"  
Peshitta

TEV "don't give in"

NJB "do not go with them"

REB, JPSOA "do not yield"

The LXX follows the MT, "do not consent" (BDB 2, KB 3, *Qal* JUSSIVE), but it is possible to read the Hebrew consonants as "do not go." The UBS Text Project, p. 445, gives the MT a "B" rating (some doubt).

The MT reading is the "most difficult," which makes it probably original.

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: TEXTUAL CRITICISM**

**Proverbs 1:11-12 "Let us swallow them alive like Sheol"** "*Sheol*" (BDB 982, KB 1368) is parallel to "those who go down to the Pit." Here, the wicked young people plan the murder of others. "*Sheol*" is often personified as an animal opening its mouth wide to receive the dead (cf. Isa. 5:14).

The word "pit" (BDB 92, KB 106 I; NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 610-611) is synonymous to *Sheol* (cf. Prov. 28:17; Ps. 30:4; 88:5; 143:7; Isa. 14:19; 38:18). It refers to the grave.

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: SHEOL**

**Proverbs 1:13** The lure for easy money is a recurrent temptation for the children of Adam and Eve.

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: WEALTH**

## Proverbs 1:14 - No Notes

**Proverbs 1:15-16** This emphasizes lifestyle. We are influenced and affected by the peer group we choose (cf. Psalm 1).

"Walk" and "path" are OT idioms for lifestyle choices (cf. Ps. 119:105; 139:24). YHWH's path/road is

1. well defined
2. straight
3. clear of obstacles
4. level

but there is also a path of evil (cf. Ps. 146:9; Prov. 7:25; 15:9; 28:10; Jer. 25:5; 36:3).

**Proverbs 1:15 "Keep your feet from their path"** YHWH desires they "turn back" to Him (cf. Prov. 1:23; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

**Proverbs 1:17 "Indeed, it is useless to spread the baited net  
In the eyes of any bird"**

Proverbs 1:17, along with v. 18, seems to imply the foolishness of criminals in conducting an activity which they know will bring destruction. Verse 18 is a perfect example of the truth of Gal. 6:7. For a full discussion see Gal. 6:7 online.

## Proverbs 1:18 No Notes

**Proverbs 1:19 "So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence;  
It takes away the life of its possessors"**

This is biblical truth, "What does it profit persons if they gain the whole world and lose their own souls?" (cf. Matt. 16:26) The means determine the end.

The UBS Text Project, p. 446, illumines a MSS option.

1. "the path's" – ארחות (MT, LXX, Peshitta)
2. "the end" – אחרית (NRSV, REB, JPSOA)

The UBS Text Project gives the MT an "A" rating.

■ **"the life"** This is the Hebrew NOUN *nephesh* (BDB 659) which denotes the whole person.

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: NEPHESH](#)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: Proverbs 1:20-33

<sup>20</sup>Wisdom shouts in the street,

She lifts her voice in the square;

<sup>21</sup>At the head of the noisy *streets* she cries out;

At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:

<sup>22</sup>"How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded?

And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing

And fools hate knowledge?

<sup>23</sup>Turn to my reproof,

Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you;

I will make my words known to you.

<sup>24</sup>"Because I called and you refused,

I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;

<sup>25</sup>And you neglected all my counsel

And did not want my reproof;

<sup>26</sup>I will also laugh at your calamity;

I will mock when your dread comes,

<sup>27</sup>When your dread comes like a storm

And your calamity comes like a whirlwind,

When distress *and* anguish come upon you.

<sup>28</sup>Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;  
They will seek me diligently but they will not find me,

<sup>29</sup>Because they hated knowledge  
And did not choose the fear of the Lord.

<sup>30</sup>They would not accept my counsel,  
They spurned all my reproof.

<sup>31</sup>So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way  
And be satiated with their own devices.

<sup>32</sup>For the waywardness of the naive will kill them,  
And the complacency of fools will destroy them.

<sup>33</sup>But he who listens to me shall live securely  
And will be at ease from the dread of evil."

**Proverbs 1:20 "Wisdom"** This is a Hebrew PLURAL. It speaks of the "fullest wisdom." Wisdom is often personified as a woman because the NOUN "wisdom" is FEMININE (BDB 315, KB 314).

**Proverbs 1:20-23** The UBS *Handbook for Translators*, "Proverbs," p. 43, suggests that these verses are a chiasmic parallelism. This type of literature structure uses a sustained parallelism over several verses. The unique concept in this type of parallelism is that the main truth of the strophe is in the middle of the structure, here, vv. 26-28.

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW POETRY, III.](#)

**Proverbs 1:20-21 "shouts in the street. . .in the square. . .At the head of the noisystreets. . .At the entrance of the gates in the city"** Wisdom is not a hard thing to find. She is calling out to whosoever will respond. YHWH wants to make His truth known to humanity. It is not a difficult or exclusive thing (i.e., James 1:5).

**Proverbs 1:20 "Wisdom"** The basic root is found in vv. 2, 7 (BDB 315). Here, it is spelled differently (cf. Prov. 24:7; Ps. 49:3). Scholars called it "an archaic Canaanite form" (see UBS *Handbook*, p. 44).

"Wisdom" is a FEMININE NOUN in Hebrew so it is personified as

1. Lady Wisdom – Prov. 1:20-33; 8:1-36; 9:1-18 (long term joy, peace)
2. The stranger/harlot – Prov. 7:5,6-23; 9:13-18 (instant gratification)

**Proverbs 1:22 "naive. . .scoffers. . .fools"** There are three distinct groups here:

1. the naive ones (BDB 834, KB 989 I) who simply are ignorant of God's truth
2. the scoffers (BDB 539, KB 529) who talk a lot about that which they do not know or understand
3. fools (BDB 49) who seemingly know God's truth but reject it as a viable lifestyle

■ **"fools"** This (BDB 493; NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 678-680) is a different word than in v. 7. Both terms describe someone not interested in receiving YHWH's wisdom (i.e., Mosaic covenant).

**Proverbs 1:23 "turn"** This (BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense) is an appeal to repentance. This VERB is often used in this sense.

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE \(OT\)](#)

■ **"reproof"** The need for parental discipline (BDB 407, KB 1698, cf. Prov. 1:25,30) in the early years of our lives is quite obvious. This is true not only for young people but for all of us in a spiritual sense (cf. Heb. 12:5-13).

**"I will pour out my spirit on you;  
I will make my works known to you"**

This is a reaffirmation of the truth that YHWH wants to give us guidance (cf. Isa. 32:15; Joel 2:28). He is not trying to make it difficult for us to find Him or to find His will for our lives.

The term "spirit" (BDB 924, KB 1197) is not used in the NT sense of the Holy Spirit, but of YHWH's actions (i.e., Gen. 1:2).

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRIT IN THE BIBLE](#)

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY](#)



### SPECIAL TOPIC: THE PERSONHOOD OF THE SPIRIT

**Proverbs 1:24,25,29,30** "refused. . .no one paid attention. . .neglected. . .did not want. . .they hated. . .and did not choose. . .would not accept. . .They spurned" It is obvious from these parallel VERBS that it was not ignorance of YHWH's will but a willful rejection of it, which resulted in the tragedy of v. 28.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW POETRY

**Proverbs 1:26** "I will also laugh at your calamity;  
I will mock when your dread comes"

This is similar to Ps. 4:1. It does not show a heartless attitude on the part of YHWH, but does show that when His invitation is spurned over and over again; the consequences of one's choices will come to a settled character (i.e., Rom. 1:24,26,28).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD (OT)

**Proverbs 1:27** Those who neglect YHWH's counsel (v. 25) will reap

1. dread – BDB 808, KB 922
2. distress – BDB 865 I, KB 1053 I
3. anguish – BDB 848, KB 1014

Wisdom is free but rejection of it brings great heartache and pain. Life without God and His word is hard, confusing, and fearful (as is death).

**Proverbs 1:28** "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;  
They will seek me diligently but they will not find me"

This is the horror of rejecting God (cf. Deut. 31:17; 1 Sam. 8:18; Job 35:12; Ps. 18:41; Isa. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; 14:12; Ezek. 8:18; Micah 3:4; Zech. 7:13). God is available not only in times of crisis or need; He wants to be in daily fellowship with His people. Do not build too much theology on this verse for I believe that God continually woos humans to repent and turn to Him. He quite often uses times of tragedy and need. But the truth is that when the only time we call on God is in crisis or need, it is obvious that we do not know Him in a covenantal way. Covenant disobedience has consequences in time and eternity.

**Proverbs 1:29-30** These verses give the reason why YHWH will not respond to the foolish (v. 28). The rejection of YHWH results in His rejection of sinners! This is the two-way aspect of the covenant (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

Proverbs 1:31 No notes

**Proverbs 1:32-33** The "two ways" (i.e., cursing and blessing, cf. Deuteronomy 30; Psalm 1) are clearly seen:

1. humans try to run their lives based solely on their own desires and plans
2. humans seek God's will and knowledge about daily decisions

One will end in fellowship and eternity with God and the other will result in judgment, both temporally or eschatologically (cf. Gen. 6:7).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT

Proverbs 1:32

NASB, NRSV, JPSOA	"waywardness"
NKJV, Peshitta	"turning away"
NJB	"the errors"
NAB	"self-will"
LXX	"wrong"
ASV	"backsliding"

The MT has the NOUN (BDB 1000, KB 643; NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 1121-1123) that is a word play on "turn, repent" (BDB 996, KB 1427). If a person will not turn to wisdom (v. 23) he/she will turn to death (v. 32).

This is the only place the NOUN appears outside the Prophets. It is usually translated "faithlessness" or "apostasy."

**Proverbs 1:33** The person who receives YHWH's word and walks in it will

1. dwell securely (BDB 1014, KB 1496, *Qal* IMPERFECT, i.e., Jer. 6:16)
2. be at ease (BDB 983, KB 1374, *Palel* PERFECT)
3. not tremble because of evil

Your choice—peace, security or fear and trembling (cf. Deut. 39:15,19). This is the "two ways" of the Mosaic Covenant (i.e., the performance-based covenant of Moses, cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; Psalm 1; Proverbs 1).

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Define the NOUNS of Prov. 1:2,3.
2. Explain the difference between the Hebrew words "wisdom" and "knowledge."
3. What is the significance of the phrase "fear the Lord" found in v. 7?
4. Is this a father speaking to his children or a wisdom teacher speaking to the young men of the covenant people in vv. 5-33?
5. What are the two temptations which plague young people found particularly in vv. 8-19?
6. Why are vv. 20 and 21 so important in our understanding of how one gains wisdom (cf. v. 23)?
7. Explain in your own words the "two ways" in Wisdom Literature.

Source: [Dr Bob Utley - Free Bible Commentary](#)