משלי

Insights Into

**Proverbs**

**The 3 Books of Solomon:**

**Song of Songs**

**Ecclesiastes**

**Proverbs**

**Outline of Proverbs:**

Ch. 1 - 9 Introduction

Ch. 10 - 22a Proverbs of Solomon

Ch. 22b - 24 Words of the Wise

Ch. 25 - 29 More Proverbs of Solomon

Ch. 30 Words of *Agur ben Yakeh*

Ch. 31 Words of King **Lemuel**

למואל = “to Him, God”

 c. עמנואל = “with us, God”

**Important Terms**

רשעים

(*rasha’im*)

Does what is right

in his own eyes

צדיקים

(*tzadikim*)

Submits to God’s commandments

חכמה (*chochmah*) = “wisdom”

בינה תבונה \ (*binah / tavunah*) = “understanding”

דעת (*da’at*) = “knowledge”

מוסר (*mussar*) = “discipline, instruction, punishment”

“Chochmah *without* mussar *is like a tent without ropes.”*

**Two Warring Women**

**Lady Wisdom**

* 1:20-33
* 3:13-18
* 4:6-9
* Ch. 8
* 9:1-12

**The Adulterous**

(“Woman of Folly”)

* 2:16-19
* 5:1-14
* 6:24-35
* 7:6-23
* 9:13-18

**Solomon’s Proverbs**

(Ch. 10-30)

**Woman of Valor**

31:10-31

אשת חיל

**Glossary of Foolishness**

פתי (*peti*)

“**simpleton**”

One easily swayed toward evil ways because he is untaught and lacks understanding. (15x in Proverbs)

**Examples:**

**9:4-6** “Whoever is **simple**, let him turn in here!” To him who lacks sense she says, “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Leave your **simple** ways, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

**14:15** The **simpleton** believes everything …

ערמה *(ar’mah)*

“**prudent** / **shrewd** **person**”

(-) Uses persuasion to convince others to do wrong but is also shrewd enough to recognize someone else’s evil designs. (Genesis 3:1) (+) But in Proverbs, *Ar’mah* is used only in a positive sense (Proverbs 1:4). (11x)

**Examples:**

**Genesis 1:1** Now the serpent was more **crafty** (ערמה, *arum*) than any other beast of the field that Adonai God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

**Matthew 10:16** “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

**8:12** “I, wisdom, dwell with **prudence**, and I find knowledge and discretion.”

אויל *(evil)*

“**fool**”

Lacks fear of God and hates wisdom; in fact, *evil* is the opposite of wisdom. Malbim relatesאויל to אולי – “maybe” – denoting doubt. Their skepticism does not allow them to accept the teachings of wisdom and discipline. *Evil* is the essence of “I know better than you.” The *evil* is unable to see the light. (42x)

**Examples:**

**1:7** The fear of Adonai is the beginning of knowledge; **fools** despise wisdom and instruction.

**5:23** He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great **foolishness** he is led astray.

**10:21** The lips of the righteous feed many, but **fools** die for lack of sense.

**14:1** The wisest of women builds her house, but a **fool** with her own hands tears it down.

**22:15** **Foolishness** is bound up in the heart of a youth, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

**27:22** Crush a **fool** in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his **foolishness** will not depart from him.

לץ *(leitz)*

“**scoffer**”

Is the enemy of wisdom and mocks it because it cannot be proven logically, but he does not hate it. Lacks fear of God. (14x)

**Habakuk 2:6** Shall not all these take up their **taunt** (מליצה, *me’litzah*) against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, “Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own – for how long? – and loads himself with pledges!”

**Examples:**

**Psalm 1:1** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of **scoffers.**

**3:34** Toward the **scoffer** He **scoffs**, but to the humble He gives grace.

**21:24** “**Scoffer**” is the name of the arrogant, haughty man who acts with arrogant pride.

**22:10** Drive out a **scoffer**, and strife will go out, and quarreling and abuse will cease.

כסיל *(c’sil)*

“**silly**”

Knows wisdom but rejects it because it demands he not indulge every desire. Despises wisdom!

R’ S.R. Hirsch: *“…not feeble-minded, but prejudiced by an erroneous view of things, blindly follows his opinions in utter disregard of rational consequences.”* (49x)

**Examples:**

**3:35** The wise will inherit honor, but the **silly** get disgrace.

**10:18** The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a **silly** [person].

**10:23** Doing wrong is like a joke to a **silly** [person], but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding.

**13:19** A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, but to turn away from evil is an abomination to **silly** [people].

**28:26** Whoever trusts in his own heart is a **silly** [person], but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.

נבל *(naval)*

“**senseless** / **worthless** / **degraded person**” / “**carcass**”

Lacks wisdom and intelligence but not committed to evil like the *casil.* (4x)

**Examples:**

**1Samuel 25:25** “Let not my lord regard this man of *belial*  (בליעל), **Nabal** (נבל), for as his name is, so is he. **Nabal** is his name, and ***navalah*** (נבלה) is with him…”

**Psalm 14:1** The ***naval*** (נבל) says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds. There is none who does good.

**Leviticus 5:2**  “Or if a person touches any unclean thing, whether a **carcass** (נבלה) of an unclean beast or the **carcass** of unclean cattle or a **carcass** of unclean swarming things, though it is hidden from him and he is unclean, then he will be guilty.”

**References:**

**Simpleton** – פתי (*peti*)

**14:18**  The **simple** inherit **foolishness**, but the **prudent** are crowned with knowledge.

**21:11** When a **scoffer** is punished, the **simple** becomes wise; when a wise man is instructed, he gains knowledge.

**14:15** The **simpleton** believes everything, but the **prudent** gives thought to his steps.

**Prudent** / **Shrewd Person** – ערמה (*armah*)

**12:16** The vexation of a **fool** is known at once, but the **prudent** ignores an insult.

**12:23** A **prudent** man conceals knowledge, but the heart of the **silly** proclaims **foolishness**.

**13:16** Every **prudent** person acts with knowledge, but a **silly** [person] flaunts his **foolishness**.

**Fool** – עויל (*evil*)

**14:3** By the mouth of a **fool** comes a rod for his back, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.

**16:22**  Good sense is a fountain of life to him who has it, but the instruction of **fools** is **foolishness**.

**Scoffer** – לץ (*leitz*)

**9:7-8** Whoever corrects a **scoffer** gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a **scoffer**, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

**14:9**  **Fools** **scoff** at the guilt offering, but the upright enjoy acceptance.

**24:9** The devising of **foolishness** is sin, and the **scoffer** is an abomination to mankind.

**Silly** – כסיל (*c’sil*)

**15:2** The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of **silly** [people] pour out **foolishness**.

**15:14**  The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouths of the **silly** feed on **foolishness**.

**23:9** Do not speak in the hearing of a **silly** [person], for he will despise the good sense of your words.

**26:4** Answer not a **silly** [person] according to his **foolishness**, lest you be like him yourself.

**26:5** Answer a **silly** [person] according to his **foolishness**, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

**Senseless / Worthless** – נבל (*naval*)

**17:7**  Fine speech is not becoming to a **senseless** [person]; still less is false speech to a prince.

**17:21** He who sires a **silly** [son] gets himself sorrow, and the father of a **senseless** [son] has no joy.

**Proverbs Symbols**

