**Proverbs 1-4** - July 5th

Purpose and Theme

**1**The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

**2**for gaining wisdom and instruction;
    for understanding words of insight;
**3**for receiving instruction in prudent behavior,
    doing what is right and just and fair;
**4**for giving prudence to those who are simple,
    knowledge and discretion to the young -
**5**let the wise listen and add to their learning,
    and let the discerning get guidance -
**6**for understanding proverbs and parables,
    the sayings and riddles of the wise.

**7**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,
    but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Prologue: Exhortations to Embrace Wisdom

Warning Against the Invitation of Sinful Men

**8**Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction
    and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.
**9**They are a garland to grace your head
    and a chain to adorn your neck.

**10**My son, if sinful men entice you,
    do not give in to them.
**11**If they say, “Come along with us;
    let’s lie in wait for innocent blood,
    let’s ambush some harmless soul;
**12**let’s swallow them alive, like the grave,
    and whole, like those who go down to the pit;
**13**we will get all sorts of valuable things
    and fill our houses with plunder;
**14**cast lots with us;
    we will all share the loot” -
**15**my son, do not go along with them,
    do not set foot on their paths;
**16**for their feet rush into evil,
    they are swift to shed blood.
**17**How useless to spread a net
    where every bird can see it!
**18**These men lie in wait for their own blood;
    they ambush only themselves!
**19**Such are the paths of all who go after ill-gotten gain;
    it takes away the life of those who get it.

Wisdom’s Rebuke

**20**Out in the open wisdom calls aloud,
    she raises her voice in the public square;
**21**on top of the wall she cries out,
    at the city gate she makes her speech:

**22**“How long will you who are simple love your simple ways?
    How long will mockers delight in mockery
    and fools hate knowledge?
**23**Repent at my rebuke!
    Then I will pour out my thoughts to you,
    I will make known to you my teachings.
**24**But since you refuse to listen when I call
    and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand,
**25**since you disregard all my advice
    and do not accept my rebuke,
**26**I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you;
    I will mock when calamity overtakes you -
**27**when calamity overtakes you like a storm,
    when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind,
    when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

**28**“Then they will call to me but I will not answer;
    they will look for me but will not find me,
**29**since they hated knowledge
    and did not choose to fear the Lord.
**30**Since they would not accept my advice
    and spurned my rebuke,
**31**they will eat the fruit of their ways
    and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.
**32**For the waywardness of the simple will kill them,
    and the complacency of fools will destroy them;
**33**but whoever listens to me will live in safety
    and be at ease, without fear of harm.”

Moral Benefits of Wisdom

**2**My son, if you accept my words
    and store up my commands within you,
**2**turning your ear to wisdom
    and applying your heart to understanding -
**3**indeed, if you call out for insight
    and cry aloud for understanding,
**4**and if you look for it as for silver
    and search for it as for hidden treasure,
**5**then you will understand the fear of the Lord
    and find the knowledge of God.
**6**For the Lord gives wisdom;
    from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.
**7**He holds success in store for the upright,
    he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,
**8**for he guards the course of the just
    and protects the way of his faithful ones.

**9**Then you will understand what is right and just
    and fair - every good path.
**10**For wisdom will enter your heart,
    and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
**11**Discretion will protect you,
    and understanding will guard you.

**12**Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men,
    from men whose words are perverse,
**13**who have left the straight paths
    to walk in dark ways,
**14**who delight in doing wrong
    and rejoice in the perverseness of evil,
**15**whose paths are crooked
    and who are devious in their ways.

**16**Wisdom will save you also from the adulterous woman,
    from the wayward woman with her seductive words,
**17**who has left the partner of her youth
    and ignored the covenant she made before God.
**18**Surely her house leads down to death
    and her paths to the spirits of the dead.
**19**None who go to her return
    or attain the paths of life.

**20**Thus you will walk in the ways of the good
    and keep to the paths of the righteous.
**21**For the upright will live in the land,
    and the blameless will remain in it;
**22**but the wicked will be cut off from the land,
    and the unfaithful will be torn from it.

Wisdom Bestows Well-Being

**3**My son, do not forget my teaching,
    but keep my commands in your heart,
**2**for they will prolong your life many years
    and bring you peace and prosperity.

**3**Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
    bind them around your neck,
    write them on the tablet of your heart.
**4**Then you will win favor and a good name
    in the sight of God and man.

**5**Trust in the Lord with all your heart
    and lean not on your own understanding;
**6**in all your ways submit to him,
    and he will make your paths straight.[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+1-4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16462f)]

**7**Do not be wise in your own eyes;
    fear the Lord and shun evil.
**8**This will bring health to your body
    and nourishment to your bones.

**9**Honor the Lord with your wealth,
    with the firstfruits of all your crops;
**10**then your barns will be filled to overflowing,
    and your vats will brim over with new wine.

**11**My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline,
    and do not resent his rebuke,
**12**because the Lord disciplines those he loves,
    as a father the son he delights in.

**13**Blessed are those who find wisdom,
    those who gain understanding,
**14**for she is more profitable than silver
    and yields better returns than gold.
**15**She is more precious than rubies;
    nothing you desire can compare with her.
**16**Long life is in her right hand;
    in her left hand are riches and honor.
**17**Her ways are pleasant ways,
    and all her paths are peace.
**18**She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her;
    those who hold her fast will be blessed.

**19**By wisdom the Lord laid the earth’s foundations,
    by understanding he set the heavens in place;
**20**by his knowledge the watery depths were divided,
    and the clouds let drop the dew.

**21**My son, do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight,
    preserve sound judgment and discretion;
**22**they will be life for you,
    an ornament to grace your neck.
**23**Then you will go on your way in safety,
    and your foot will not stumble.
**24**When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
    when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.
**25**Have no fear of sudden disaster
    or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked,
**26**for the Lord will be at your side
    and will keep your foot from being snared.

**27**Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
    when it is in your power to act.
**28**Do not say to your neighbor,
    “Come back tomorrow and I’ll give it to you” -
    when you already have it with you.
**29**Do not plot harm against your neighbor,
    who lives trustfully near you.
**30**Do not accuse anyone for no reason -
    when they have done you no harm.

**31**Do not envy the violent
    or choose any of their ways.

**32**For the Lord detests the perverse
    but takes the upright into his confidence.
**33**The Lord’s curse is on the house of the wicked,
    but he blesses the home of the righteous.
**34**He mocks proud mockers
    but shows favor to the humble and oppressed.
**35**The wise inherit honor,
    but fools get only shame.

Get Wisdom at Any Cost

**4**Listen, my sons, to a father’s instruction;
    pay attention and gain understanding.
**2**I give you sound learning,
    so do not forsake my teaching.
**3**For I too was a son to my father,
    still tender, and cherished by my mother.
**4**Then he taught me, and he said to me,
    “Take hold of my words with all your heart;
    keep my commands, and you will live.
**5**Get wisdom, get understanding;
    do not forget my words or turn away from them.
**6**Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you;
    love her, and she will watch over you.
**7**The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom.
    Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
**8**Cherish her, and she will exalt you;
    embrace her, and she will honor you.
**9**She will give you a garland to grace your head
    and present you with a glorious crown.”

**10**Listen, my son, accept what I say,
    and the years of your life will be many.
**11**I instruct you in the way of wisdom
    and lead you along straight paths.
**12**When you walk, your steps will not be hampered;
    when you run, you will not stumble.
**13**Hold on to instruction, do not let it go;
    guard it well, for it is your life.
**14**Do not set foot on the path of the wicked
    or walk in the way of evildoers.
**15**Avoid it, do not travel on it;
    turn from it and go on your way.
**16**For they cannot rest until they do evil;
    they are robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble.
**17**They eat the bread of wickedness
    and drink the wine of violence.

**18**The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
    shining ever brighter till the full light of day.
**19**But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
    they do not know what makes them stumble.

**20**My son, pay attention to what I say;
    turn your ear to my words.
**21**Do not let them out of your sight,
    keep them within your heart;
**22**for they are life to those who find them
    and health to one’s whole body.
**23**Above all else, guard your heart,
    for everything you do flows from it.
**24**Keep your mouth free of perversity;
    keep corrupt talk far from your lips.
**25**Let your eyes look straight ahead;
    fix your gaze directly before you.
**26**Give careful thought to the[[j](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+1-4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16517j)] paths for your feet
    and be steadfast in all your ways.
**27**Do not turn to the right or the left;
    keep your foot from evil.