

wisdom and folly

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[0 : 00] It didn't work. So two weeks ago we had a quick introduction to the book of Proverbs and as Phil said you learnt a new word, a chiasm.

This structure of the book is what is known as a chiasm where it's sort of an in and out structure. And well I won't go through all that again but that is the structure of the book.

And I noted there at the bottom that this first section, wisdom and the adulteress, forms a much stricter chiasm, a much stricter structure it has.

And so that's what we're going to look at this evening. This idea of the two women, wisdom and the adulteress.

And if you look at the various sections, now of course I can't possibly deal with the whole of this section tonight because it's about nine chapters.

[1 : 16] But it is in fact, it runs from chapter 1 verse 20 right through to the end of chapter 9. I intend to look mainly in chapters 8 and 9 but let's just look very briefly first about the whole structure of the whole thing.

It starts with an invitation to accept or reject wisdom's call. And we remember that the subject as it were of the book is, the hero of the book is this young man who's always addressed as my son.

We never do find out what his name is. He's just addressed all the way through as my son. And in this first section, it talks about the call of wisdom.

And then it talks about the paths of wisdom. And also the adulteress is introduced at that point, the paths of the adulteress. There's a comparison there as you see between wisdom and the adulteress.

And then there's a section on the benefits of wisdom. And then the warning against the adulteress. And then because, say, this chiastic structure is so strong, instead of having the appeal at the end, Billy Graham style, the appeal is in the middle.

[2 : 33] A call to action in chapter 6 verses 1 to 19. I'm not actually going to look at that much but it is worth reading. And then you have this famous section, really, the warning against the adulteress.

And you have this really quite horrific chapter 7, which I'm not going to read now.

If I did, I'd probably get complaints. I'm going to quote odd bits of it as we go on, but I'm not going to read chapter 7. But I invite you to sit yourself down with a strong cup of tea and read it for yourself.

The seduction scene is what it is. Worthy of a Hollywood blockbuster. But we're not going to actually look at that. I'm going to look mainly at chapters 8 and 9.

So what wisdom offers and the invitations of wisdom and folly compared. But I want to do this in two bits, two sections. First of all, I just want...

[3 : 42] Well, let me get the next... Go the wrong way, sorry. I'm going to talk about four headings here. First of all, who are these women?

What do they offer? How are we to respond to their invitations? And then, as I said, this is a matter of life and death. So we'll look at that issue of life and death at the end.

But I intend to address just, first of all, that first section. Who are these women? And then we'll sing. And then we'll read chapter 9 after that. And go on and look at the invitations. So who are these women? Well, let me remind you of some form of Occam's razor, if you want to use that term.

That sounds a bit posh. Let's say the duck. Just think of the duck principle. The duck principle says that if it looks like a duck, and it swims like a duck, and it says quack, well, most likely it's a duck.

[4 : 42] And if you think it's not a duck, you better have a very good reason for saying that. Why do I say that? Well, because let's see how wisdom describes herself.

It's up on the screen there. If you want to follow it, it's chapter 8, verses 22 to 31. So starting in verse 22.

The Lord brought me forth. Sorry, I should say, this is wisdom's description of herself. The Lord brought me forth. The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old. I was appointed from the earth. I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth. When there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled in place. Before the hills I was given birth. Before he made the earth, or its fields, or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place. [5 : 47] When he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep. When he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep. When he gave the sea its boundary, so that the waters would not overstep his command.

And when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day. Rejoicing always in his presence. Rejoicing in his whole world. And delighting in mankind. So that's wisdom's description of herself. At the beginning I read that passage from the beginning of John. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God. And the word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made. Without him nothing was made that has been made.

In him was life. And that life was the light of men. Now all the old commentators from the church fathers. Right back to the times of the Trinitarian controversies. [6 : 53] Through Augustine and Calvin. Right up to the time of Matthew Henry. Had no difficulty in asserting that wisdom was indeed the word. God. And Matthew Henry just says we've only got to read these first chapters.

These first chapters of John are the commentary on proverbs and wisdom. And there are one or two other passages like that in the New Testament. So for instance 1 Corinthians 1.24 says, To those whom God has called both Jews and Greeks.

Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Or in Colossians 1.15-17.

He is the image of the invisible God. The firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created. Things in heaven and on earth. Visible and invisible.

Whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities. All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things. And in him all things hold together.

[7 : 58] Or Hebrews 1.2. In these last days he has spoken to us by his son. Whom he appointed heir of all things.

And through whom he made the universe. So as I say the church fathers. Augustine, Calvin. The later commentators had no difficulty in inserting that wisdom is none other than the word.

The logos. The logos perhaps not yet incarnate. But the logos nonetheless. Now some modern commentators are balked at this. And it is true I suppose.

That if you only had the text of Proverbs. You would find it difficult to construct a Trinitarian doctrine. Just on the basis of the book of Proverbs. And some may say that wisdom is merely the personification of one aspect.

An attribute of God. But I would remind you of the duck principle I think. If it has all the attributes of the logos. Then surely wisdom is the logos himself or herself in this case.

[9 : 06] Even Derek Kidner doesn't actually go as far as to say that the word is. The wisdom is the logos. The word. But Atkinson in the new IVP.

The Bible speaks today. Effectively takes the old view. Without stating it in so many words. I would commend this to you. I would say that wisdom is none other than Christ himself.

So what does that tell us about folly? Well we don't actually have a description of folly in our own words. But we do have a description of folly. For instance in Proverbs chapter 6.

25 to 26. It says. Do not lust after her beauty. Or let her captivate you with her eyes. For the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread.

And the adulteress. Prays upon your very life. With persuasive words she led him astray. She seduced him with her smooth talk. That's Proverbs 7. 21.

[10 : 04] 21. Well who is it? The father. Or in this case the mother. Of all lives. Lives. Surely it is. Satan himself. So I'd commend to you the old view.

That wisdom is the word. And that folly. Is Satan. But even if you want to take the alternative view. I think it.

We're not going to throw you out of the church for that. I don't think it really makes that much difference anyway. Because Christ is still the wisdom of God. Wisdom's call is still the offer of Christ.

Satan is still the father of folly's lies. So. And it's still true that the fear of the Lord. Is the beginning of wisdom. So I would commend the old interpretation. That wisdom is.

No other than. None other than the word. Himself. But. If you want to take the modern view. I don't think it really makes that much difference anyway. Should we be worried then.

[11:03] Some people are balked at it. Because obviously wisdom and folly here are given. Female personalities. Female. Personae. If you want to use that term. But I don't think that should.

Throw us off too much. Doesn't Jesus himself. Give himself. A female. Personae. When he says in. Matthew 23. 37. No Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. You who kill the prophets. And stone those sent to you. How often have I longed to gather your children together. As a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. You were not willing. Shall a woman's tender care cease towards the child she bear. Yes she may forgetful be. Yet will I remember thee. God created man in his own image.

In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them. So I don't think we should be thrown off here. By the fact that. The word is given a female. Person.

[12:01] There is a reason for it of course. Because these two women. Are in competition. For the affections of our hero. My son. And.

Who will he find the most attractive. That's the question. Who will he go for. Will he go for wisdom. Or will he. Be seduced by the adulteress. That's what the whole book is about really.

Who will he find the most attractive. So I would recommend. The old interpretation. That wisdom is none other than the word. Himself. And that folly.

Is none other than Satan. Himself. So before we go on. Let's sing again. Let's sing a hymn about Christ the word. This is hymn 290.

So that's. What. Wisdom is about. Making us holy. And making us whole. So I'd like to read now. The whole of chapter 9. If you'll turn to chapter 9.

[13:13] I'll read the whole of this chapter. And you'll notice that that verse that's up on the screen there. Goes twice. That all who are simple come in here. She says to those who lack judgment.

So let's read the whole chapter. Wisdom has built her house. She has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat.

And mixed her wine. She has also set her table. She has sent out her maids. And she calls from the highest point of the city. That all who are simple come in here.

She says to those who lack judgment. Come eat my food. And drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways. And you will live. Walk in the way of understanding.

Whoever corrects a mocker. Invites insult. Whoever rebukes a wicked man. Incurs abuse. Do not rebuke a mocker. Or he will hate you.

[14:12] Rebuke a wise man. And he will love you. Instruct a wise man. And he will be wiser still. Teach a righteous man. And he will add to his learning.

The fear of the Lord. Is the beginning of wisdom. And the knowledge of the Holy One. Is understanding. For through me. Your days will be many. And years will be added to your life. If you are wise. Your wisdom will reward you. If you are a mocker. You alone will suffer. The woman folly is loud.

She is in undisciplined. And without knowledge. She sits at the door of her house. Or a seat in the highest point of the city. Calling out to those who pass by.

Who go straight on their way. Let all who are simple come in here. She says to those who lack judgment. Stolen water is sweet. Food eaten in secret is delicious.

[15:14] But little do they know. That the dead are there. That her guests. Are in the depths of the grave. Through those words. That this first section. Of the book finishes.

So wisdom and folly.

Both offer an invitation. In fact they both offer the same invitation. They offer. They say. Let all who are simple come in here. She says to those.

Who lack judgment. So here is our young man. Just in from the city. Just in from the country. Into the city. And both these ladies.

Spot him. And invite him in for a meal. They say something perhaps like. I see you're a young man. Just in from the country. You aren't familiar with the city ways.

[16:12] Come in and I'll tell you how we roll around here. So he says. Perhaps I like this city. Just got here. And already I've got two invitations. So.

Who are I going to. Who's he going to choose. As his date. So let's see what is on offer. What does wisdom offer. First of all. Wisdom offers the opportunity.

Doesn't she. Of a better lifestyle. Wholesome food. And blended wine. And her call is to leave. Simple. Foolish we might say.

But perhaps here. It just means more. You know. He's a bit of a country bumpkin perhaps. He needs a bit of education. So. To leave. Those simple ways. And to seek understanding.

Look at what. Look at verse nine. Instruct a wise man. And he will be wiser still. Teach a righteous man. And he will add to his learning. The fear of the Lord.

[17:12] Is the beginning of wisdom. And knowledge of the Holy One. Is understanding. So what. Wisdom offers. Is understanding. Knowledge of God.

Knowledge of the Holy One. And knowledge of how to live. And to increase in understanding. The knowledge that's in view here.

Is moral isn't it. Is described as righteousness. If you accept the invitation of Christ. The invitation of wisdom. You'll gain understanding. In the ways of his kingdom. Knowledge of the Holy One.

Is understanding. Understanding. You cannot have real morality. Or true wisdom. Without Christ. You can try. But you're just inviting trouble. How much does the world around us.

Try and try again. They come up with political correctness. Or something else. Moral rearmament. Something like that. All attempts to construct a morality.

[18:09] A wisdom. Independent of the word. And all. Just land up going around in circles. Start with political correctness.

His main doctrine is tolerance. And what you do. Is you'll end up with. Perhaps the least tolerant. Political theory. That's been around for an awful long time. Certainly since the demise of communism.

You just can't do it. You're just inviting trouble. We read. Whoever corrects a mocker. Invites insult. Whoever rebukes a wicked man. Incurs abuse.

Do not rebuke a mocker. Or he'll hate you. But rebuke a wise man. And he will love you. Isn't that what. One finds. Rebuke a mocker.

And he will hate you. He's not going to. Think you're trying to help. Out to help him. And just say. Yeah. I'm just not interested. I think you're talking nonsense.

[19:09] Don't want to hear. In fact. I really want to get rid of you. And that's exactly what the world says. If we bring the message of Christ to him. So that's the invitation of wisdom.

Still. This young man's got. Two invitations. And perhaps he ought to check out the competition. So. What does folly have to shout about? Well what is it the folly offers?

Well junk food isn't it? In verse 17. That which gives an immediate pleasure.

But without any need to change. Any consideration of the nutritional value of it. There's nothing there. It's just food as we say. That's naughty but nice.

Indeed. It's food which is nice because it's naughty. Stolen water is sweet. Food that's shameful. Yet delicious. And it's not that folly doesn't deliver on her offer.

[20:13] In some ways she does. Folly's invitation. Is to live in the eternal now. If you read Dave's book.

Oh yeah. Empire versus Kingdom. That's his description of empire. To live always in the eternal now. With no thought of consequence.

To worship the eternal self. With no thought of other. Proverbs 7.18-20 says. Come let us drink deep of love till morning.

Let us enjoy ourselves with love. My husband is not at home. He has gone on a long journey. He took his purse filled with money. And will not be home till full moon.

We'll notice that folly has no intention of divorcing her husband. He's the one who provides for her rich lifestyle. But she's only in this marriage for what benefits her, isn't she?

[21:16] There's no faithfulness. There's no giving. Just taking. Even the seduction is not because she wants another man, really.

She just wants to enjoy herself with love, she says. Just the sex she's interested in. What folly has an offer is junk food.

Which gives an immediate kick, an immediate pleasure, certainly. But what is the problem with junk food? Well, we read it, don't we, at the end in verse 18. It will kill you.

All that fat and sugar is not good for you. It will kill you. But in fact, it actually says more than this, doesn't it?

It says that in fact, if you go to folly's meal, you're already dead. It says the dead, those who are there, are those who are already dead.

[22 : 14] And we'll come back to this in a minute. So how are we supposed to respond to these invitations?

Remembering that however old we are, whatever gender we are, we still count as my son here. And those invitations are offered to both of us.

What is it that seductress tries to tell us? She tries to tell us, doesn't she, that what wisdom offers is boring. The true excitement is to be found at her house.

7.16 I have covered my bed with coloured linens from Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. Come, let's drink deep of love till morning.

Let's enjoy ourselves with love. But who are her clients? The ones who accept her invitation. The ones who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil.

[23 : 27] As it says in Proverbs 2.14. And of course these chapters are not just about sexual sin. Entirely the wrong end of the stick if you read it that way.

It's clear from chapter 6 where in fact some foolish players draw unwise words seem to be in mind rather than any sexual sin. And what wisdom is offering here is obviously much broader than just sexual purity.

So we need to think of the seductress as not just talking, well this passage is not just about sexual sins. As often in the Old Testament sexual sin stands in place of all forms of evil and covenant breaking, doesn't it?

That's indeed really the point. That's why she's the adulteress, the one who breaks the marriage covenant. Because it is breaking the covenant with God that is what evil is really about.

That's why here Satan is described as the adulteress. But he does use sexual imagery of course. And of course particularly for the young man, perhaps my son, the seduction seems most intense.

[24 : 47] The pleasure of it is so immediate. The gratification is so instant. And it is that instant reaction, that instant gratification that the mother and father are trying to warn their son about.

Proverbs 6, 23 to 25 says, For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life.

Keeping you from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. Do not lust in your heart after her beauty, or let her captivate you with her eyes.

She does have a certain beauty. She does have a certain captivation. The thing about sin, in fact, is that it's so intensely desirable, isn't it? What we read in Genesis 3, verse 6, The woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food, and pleasing to the eye, and desirable for gaining wisdom. And so she took some and ate it. Sin appears so desirable. That is why folly is presented here as the adulteress, as the seducer.

[26 : 05] The one who offers that instant gratification, sex with no strings. Whatever you do, it doesn't matter. No thought for the future.

Live in the now. That's the message of the seductress. Actually, of course, what Satan offers is junk food. And yet it's a cheap fake.

And yet the wisdom that was offered Eve was not true wisdom at all. But it appears often more attractive and a lot easier, doesn't it, than the real thing.

Who wants to go through all the stresses of marriage? As Ben and Anya were demonstrating this morning. That was just a sketch.

But all of us who are married recognize that to some extent, don't we? We go through that sometimes. Who wants to...

[27 : 06] We want it without strings, don't we? Without responsibilities. It seems a lot easier than the real thing. But if Satan is presented as a seductress, then surely the antidote to this is to learn to desire wisdom.

That's why she's presented here as a woman. In the middle of Proverbs... In the middle of this passage, in Proverbs chapter 5, we read the following.

May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth, a loving doe, a graceful deer. May her breasts satisfy you always.

May you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?

For a man's ways are in full view of the laws, and he examines all his paths. The invitation of wisdom is not to grin and bear it. We're not just supposed to avert our eyes from the adulteress, but rather to embrace wisdom.

[28 : 15] Proverbs 3.18, Indeed, wisdom is presented here as the most desirable thing.

What is it that wisdom offers? She offers choice mixed wine, not some undrinkable homebrew. But it's that which is truly desirable.

She is a tree of life to those who embrace her, to those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

Proverbs 4.7-9, Wisdom is supreme.

Therefore get wisdom, though it costs you all you have, get understanding. Esteem her, and she will exalt you. Embrace her, and she will honor you.

She will set a garland of grace on your head, and present you with a crown of splendor. We are to acknowledge her desirability and value.

[29 : 18] Gold and precious stones are things that men find desirable, but wisdom is more so.

Proverbs 3.13-15, Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver, and yields better returns than gold.

She is more precious than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with her. We will be looking later on in this series about wisdom in business.

It's not that there's anything wrong necessarily with making a profit in business, but the true profit, we're told, is to be found not in gold or silver, not in investment in the metals market, but the true profit is to be found if we invest in wisdom.

Remember Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven is like a man who is looking for pearls, and he finds finally the best, the greatest pearl in the world, and he sells everything else he's got.

He has to realize all his assets, and sell everything he has to buy that pearl. Or he says it's like the man who finds treasure in a field, and he goes away and sells everything he has to buy that field, so the treasure can be his.

[30 : 37] Proverbs 8, verses 10 to 11, choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

And right at the end of this book, in Proverbs 31, verse 10, we read, a wife of noble character who can find she is worth far more than rubies.

We are told to embrace wisdom, to delight in her, to drink of her teaching, to drink of her mixed wine, to eat of her wholesome food, to value her as more precious than anything else, to value Christ as more precious than anything else.

Some of you will be old enough to remember that this, there's a Barbra Streisand song which says, I was raised in a no you don't world, overrun with rules, memorise your lines, and move as directed. Well of course, if that was your world, if that was the world she was raised in, and of course anybody would want to escape from that. But that really, is the lie of the adulteress.

[31 : 58] That, to live, the way of Christ, the way of wisdom, is a no you don't world, overrun with rules, memorise your lines, and moves as directed. The call of Christ, isn't a stoical, rejection of pleasure.

It's not the rejection of passion, it's not moving into a grey, barren wasteland. One of the poets said, Pale Nazarene, you have triumphed.

Was it William Wordsworth? I'm not sure. I think it might have been. No, Yeats I think it was.

Anyway, one of the English poets. But that's not, how we are to esteem Christ.

Not to think of, him as the pale Nazarene, gentle Jesus, meek and mild, as though, no, it's just grey. Instead, we're to embrace, true pleasure, the true pleasure, that's to be found, through Christ, in the word of God.

And true passion. We have Moses, an example, don't we? Hebrews, 11, 24 to 26, says, By faith, Moses, when he has grown up, refused to be known, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

[33 : 12] He chose to be ill-treated, along with the people of God, rather than to enjoy, the pleasures of sin, for a short time. He regarded disgrace, for the sake of Christ, as of greater value, than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead, to his reward.

It's not that, Moses couldn't have enjoyed, pleasures of sin, for a short time. He was brought up, in Pharaoh's household, as a prince, in Egypt.

And, he could have, indeed, have enjoyed, those pleasures of sin, for a short time. But, he found something, even more valuable. He found that, the promise of God, and the people of God, was more value, than all the, treasures of Egypt.

the call of wisdom, is the call, for a change of heart. Not, just to, learn a lot of rules.

Not just to, certainly not to, grit your teeth, and try and fight, your way through. We do, sometimes have to do that, of course.

[34 : 27] But the call of wisdom, is to change your heart. Proverbs 2, verse 10 says, wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge, will be pleasant, to your soul. Now, finally, let's look at the, consequences, of the wrong choice.

Which invitation, will our young man accept? Well, we don't actually know, we're not told. it's left, as we say, as a cliffhanger, as we say.

It's open. But what, we've already seen, that this junk food, that, folly offers, will kill you.

But what is this, life and death, that Proverbs, speaks of? Proverbs 3, 1 to 2, says, my son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands, in your heart, for they will prolong, prolong your life, many years, and bring you prosperity.

Okay, but is that it? I mean, if, yes, it's true, that if you live on a, diet of beef burgers, and chocolate, and sugar, you're not gonna, you're gonna die, an early death, probably.

[35 : 39] If you eat healthy, you may live, another, 20 years. But is that it? Is it really worth it? Perhaps, the better, it is the better advice, if you're going to live, just in the present.

Say, a short life, and a merry one, as they say. Perhaps, perhaps it would be better, just to live, in the eternal now. Because after all, everyone dies, eventually.

And in fact, Proverbs like the, earlier books, the, um, Bible, do lack a full-blown doctrine, of resurrection, such as we find, in 1 Corinthians 15. It wasn't entirely clear, perhaps, and yet, it is clear, there is much more, to this issue, of life and death, than just living, a few extra, years, by, you know, avoiding a few, sexually transmitted, diseases, and, avoiding a few, heart disease, by, what you eat.

There's surely, far more to it, than that. The benefit of wisdom, is a lot more, than just, a few extra years, of life. Proverbs 3, 18 to 22, we've already, looked at this.

It says, she is a tree of life, to those who embrace her, those who lay hold of her, will be blessed. By wisdom, the Lord, laid the earth's foundations, by understanding, he set the heavens, in place.

[37 : 07] By his knowledge, the deeps were divided, and the clouds, let drop the dew. My son, preserve sound judgment, and discernment. Do not let them, out of your sight. They will be life for you, an ornament, to grace your neck.

By contrast, we're told, of the adulteress's house, for her house, leads down to death, and her paths, to the spirits, of the dead. None who go, to her return, or attain, the paths of life.

Little do they know, that the dead are there, that her guests, are in the depths, of the grave. The guests, are fully already dead, even as they enjoy, the pleasures, of her house.

Throughout the book, we find, verses, say similar things. Wealth is worth, this in the day of wrath, but righteousness, delivers from death. Proverbs 11, verse 4.

The fear of the Lord, is a fountain of life, turning a man, from the snares of death. Proverbs 14, 27. When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down, but even in death, the righteous, have a refuge.

[38 : 18] Remarkable verse. Proverbs 14, 32. That is. Clearly, this is, more, about much more, than just, physical death. Life and death, are with us now, and even in the shadow, of death, the righteous, have a refuge.

In fact, wisdom tells us, doesn't it, that she, that she is, the tree of life. Where do we hear, about the tree of life? That comes from, Genesis 3, 22, doesn't it? The Lord God said, the man, has now become, like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed, to reach out his hand, and take also, from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.

Now we find, through Christ, the tree of life, is available, once again. Wisdom, is the fountain of life, of which Jesus speaks.

Jesus answered, everyone who drinks, this water, will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks, the water I give him, will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him, will become, a spring of water, welling up, to eternal life.

Eternal life, that we have now, when we, drink the Holy Spirit. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture said, streams of living water, will flow, from within him.

[39 : 41] You may feel, we've had too much water, around in the last, few days, the last few months, in this country. But of course, remember that, these, are stories, these are things, of people who lived, in a desert land.

And water was, an intensely, valuable thing. Without water, there would be no life. But when you have water, then you have life. And you can see, sometimes, can't you, in these deserts, when it does rain, how life, suddenly springs up.

almost miraculously, when there is water there. It is water that gives, life. And so, wisdom makes her appeal.

In the following weeks, we're going to see, how wisdom enables, rulers to make just laws. How families, and businesses, can achieve, true peace, and prosperity.

Which is, what she talks about, in chapter 8, 1 to 21. But first, she offers us her love. Wisdom offers us, first her love. I love those, she says, who love me, and those who seek me, find me.

[40 : 59] Proverbs 18, verse 17. So, will you accept, the invitation of wisdom, her wholesome food, her spice, mixed wine, or perhaps, you still fancy, the adulteress.

It's your choice. So, let's sing again.