

A Guide To The Reader

Pastor recommends that to obtain maximum benefit from his comments you read in full from the Bible every reference whenever one appears. Otherwise the reading of the comments is simply a skimming over the surface. They are rather designed to make you stop and meditate and even look up further references as the Holy Spirit guides you. Do pray before you read that the Holy Spirit will be your Tutor and that the time you spend will be time spent with Him.

Proverbs 9

It is possible that the Lord Jesus Christ fashioned His parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matthew 22. 1-14) with its final observation, "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22.14) on elements in this passage. The picture here seems to be of "house warming" rather than marriage, but the "calling" aspect, "let him turn in hither" (9.16), is of prime importance. "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst...all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out...no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him...every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6. 35, 37, 44-45).

"Wisdom hath builded her house (9.1). "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14.2).

1 Kings 7 tells us how Solomon built his own house, the house of the forest of Lebanon and a house for Pharaoh's daughter. In the former are mentioned four rows of cedar pillars, and a further 45 pillars (15 in a row). A row of cedar beams is mentioned concerning these other two houses. The fact that there are seven pillars in Proverbs 9.1 suggests that this is symbolic, picture language with seven representing the number of perfection. The church is described as "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3.15), that is the support and foundation of the truth. In the plural it is used of the apostles in Galatians 2.9. And in Revelation 3. 12 it is said, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God". The pillar of cloud and of fire would be towering pillars rather than supports. In the house of God the Lord has caused a perfect gospel, His completed, final atoning work to be made known, saying repeatedly (we have it twice in this chapter to give that effect, in verses 4 & 16) "whoso is simple, let him turn in hither".

The Saviour cried in the Temple (John 7.37), "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink". He also declared "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6.35). In Psalm 68.11 it is written, "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it"

where in the Hebrew the company is said to be female. Not that it refers to women preachers. But the church as the bride of Christ publishes the gospel; and in Proverbs 9 the wisdom of Christ is personified as a woman. The publishing of the gospel is wisdom; the receiving the gospel is the highest wisdom.

There are none so foolish as those who deny the existence of God. “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm 14.1; 53.1). It would be our wisdom to forsake the foolish and live. If we share their views we keep them company. There are many foolish ways and lifestyles but the most foolish of all is to be an atheist. It has the most appalling consequences in the final judgment. That there are gradations of eternal punishment is clear from the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 12. 45-48.

If we tamper with a scorner it is like baiting a wild animal and we will be savaged. Reluctantly they must be left to come to their senses if God should grant them grace to repent. “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you” (Matthew 7.6). However, we are to be like generous David whose response to rebuke was gratitude. “Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer shall also be in their calamities” (Psalm 141.5). “And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand” (1 Samuel 25. 32-33). We are once again reminded that “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” and that upon this foundation may many opportunities arise in our lives to receive and apply the wisdom which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. To possess and welcome such wisdom is to enrich our lives immeasurably. To be a scorner of God and the things which are noble and of good report is to bring down upon our own heads the full weight of God’s punishment for iniquity.

“Stolen waters are sweet...” (9.17). “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked...” (Genesis 3. 6-7). It is of the essence of temptation that, if indulged, it will seem wonderful at the time but afterwards “his mouth shall be filled with gravel” (Proverbs 20.17) and the experience savours of hell (9.18). Whereas the apparently unwelcome experience of chastening provides the reverse experience. “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Hebrews 12.11).

“He knoweth not that the dead are there...” A child does not understand, say, the danger of running into the road. It is for the parent to be on guard for him and for the child to be obedient. Such scriptures as these are our guardians. It is our wisdom to be obedient to them