

The Voice of Wisdom

Proverbs 7, 8 and 9

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Feb/Mar 1960

The book of Proverbs addresses itself particularly to the sons or children of wisdom, for both terms are used of the saints of God today. No doubt every chapter of this book has this company in mind but we are concerned only with these three chapters. Not all of the Proverbs were spoken by Solomon, but these chapters were. They form the last section of the first nine chapters of this book. It would seem that the constant repetition of the term "my son" had Rehoboam in view. Solomon may have seen the great need for his son to be rightly instructed in wisdom in view of his ultimately governing the kingdom. If this is so, we are left in no doubt as to the lamentable failure of Rehoboam to take heed to what his father had said. Instead of taking note of this instruction, or that of the elders who were taught of his father, he listened to the advice of younger men, and as a consequence ten of the tribes of Israel revolted from the kingdom. He acted on the advice of fools. If Rehoboam failed to profit by the advice given here, it is left on record for those who through Divine grace are children, or sons of wisdom, in this day. We know that the wisdom which Solomon possessed was given him of God; hence in these chapters, through him, we have the voice of Divine wisdom to our souls. If we are to avoid the mistakes which Rehoboam made we need to take heed to this instruction and great will be our profit if we do so.

In this section of nine chapters we have three women brought before our notice, and each of them is mentioned in the three chapters we call attention to. "The strange woman," Rev. 7: 5; "Wisdom," Rev. 8: 1; "The foolish woman," Rev. 9: 13. Three things are common to them all — they each have something to say; they each have something to offer; they each make an appeal to those who are simple. It thus becomes a question with each one of us, to whom shall I listen? At whose table shall I feed? In which company shall I move? Each one extends to us an invitation to enter her dwelling and to have fellowship in all that is found there.

Let us consider them separately and listen to what this wise man says about them, for in so doing we shall profit in our souls. We will listen to what these women have to say and consider what they have to offer; we shall learn something of their characters; and above all, we shall learn what their *end* is. Time after time in this book we are exhorted to consider the end of things, and if we are wise we shall do so. "A prudent man seeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished," Rev. 22: 3. As children of wisdom we do well to consider the latter end of each of these women.

We turn back first of all to consider the record of the "strange woman" who is mentioned more than once in the first seven chapters of this book. A careful consideration of all the places where this woman is described will show that she is an apt figure of what we know to be in New Testament language, "Mystery, great Babylon, the mother of harlots" Rev. 17: 5. In these first seven chapters of Proverbs we are called upon five times to consider this woman. Apparently she is a great danger to the sons of wisdom, and we need to take great care lest we fall victim to her blandishments. In recounting these passages, we quote at all times from the New Translation by J.N.D.

"To deliver thee from the strange woman, from the stranger who flattereth with her words; who forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God; — for her house inclineth

unto death, and her paths unto the dead; none that go unto her return again, neither do they attain to the paths of life," Prov. 2: 16-19.

In this first description of her, flattery, foolishness and faithlessness are the marks she bears. A footnote suggests that the word translated "guide" can be translated "familiar friend." Keeping in mind what we have already suggested, that this woman portrays "Babylon," this first mark indicates a system which is not true in what it has to say to men. The reason of this false representation is not far to seek, for she has forsaken the guide of her youth — her familiar friend. The true Christ of God has long been displaced in her midst, whatever her profession may be, for instead of walking in the light of His counsel, she is walking in the sight of her own eyes. Instead of seeking counsel from the lips of the Son of God, she is governed by pride and politics; her place in the world is of more importance to her than interest in the souls of men. We have a list of all that she lusted after in Prov. 18: 12, 13, and in that long list *gold* comes first and the *souls* of men last. Little wonder that in a system like this the claims of God have almost altogether been cast aside. As recorded here, she has forgotten the covenant of her God. We have three outstanding marks as to her character in this first reference to her; (1) A false representation; for she is marked by flattery instead of truth; (2) Unfaithfulness to her Lord; for she has forsaken her guide; (3) Astray from the truth; for she has forgotten the covenant of her God. No one can hope to find the path of life in her company. It is of this system we hear the Lord saying, "her children will I kill with death," Rev. 2: 23. Death and destruction are with her and this will come out yet more clearly as we proceed to enquire further into her character, for this book has much more to say about her and those who foolishly consort with her.

"For the lips of the strange woman drop honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on Sheol. Lest she should ponder the path of life, her ways wander, she knoweth not (whither)," Prov. 5: 3-6.

Other two marks of this evil woman are brought before us here, *deception and instability*. One great section of Christendom has been characterized by deception from its very inception. Its very foundation upon the supposed supremacy of Peter at Rome is a fable fabricated to hold in bondage the simple. Yet this was only the beginning of many more deceptions, for their name is legion. Who has not read in her public history of her uttering words like honey, yet coming from a heart like a two-edged sword? "Her steps take hold on Sheol," and such will be the end of all who succumb to her. These things, alas, are not limited to Roman Catholicism; she has many children who may not gather publicly with her yet are obviously marked by her ways, and who will ultimately end with her when the judgment of God breaks upon her. Instead of labouring for the truth in the path of life, their time is given to all that appertains to this "present world." Truly, "her ways wander." She has neither time nor inclination to ponder the path of life nor to consider the end of the road she is going, and lest those who follow her should ponder that path, "her ways wander." She is the very last person to whom the sons of wisdom should listen.

"And why shouldest thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" Prov. 5: 20.

In this short section we are warned against the danger of our affections going astray. In the verses preceding this exhortation, we are encouraged to give our whole affection to the One who has a right to it. This strange woman will make a bid to secure our affections, to which Christ only has a right. In the latter part of this book we meet with this appeal, "My son, give Me thy heart," Prov. 23: 26. This woman evinces another mark of the false bride, seeking the affection which only Christ has a right to,

and we are wise when we give Him the chief place. In view of this, one can understand the spiritual jealousy of the apostle Paul when, writing to the Corinthians, he said he wished to present them "a chaste virgin to Christ," 2 Cor. 11: 2. It is imperative that we avoid this woman if our affections are to be kept for Christ.

"For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching a light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life; to keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of the strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids; for by means of a whorish woman (a man is brought) to a loaf of bread, and another's wife doth hunt for the precious soul," Prov. 6: 23-26.

Two further marks of this evil woman are before us here, she is after our *treasures* and she is after our *life*. By every attractive artifice she is out to draw the sons of wisdom to herself. Beautiful she may appear to be, decked in purple and scarlet, with ornaments of gold, precious stones and pearls; holding out a golden cup to her devotees, a cup that is full of her abominations and the unclean things of her fornications. Instead of comforting and supporting the saints, she is drunk with their blood and has murdered the witnesses of Jesus, Rev. 18: 4-6. The word rendered soul by J.N.D. (or life as in the authorised version) is really a living soul. The sons of wisdom live to God, but this woman hunts for that life, and she will effectually destroy it in practice if we yield to her. The life which is ours in Christ risen is given to us in order that we might live to Him Who died for us and rose again, 2 Cor. 5: 15. Let us not be living to this harlot. The sure result of yielding to her is spiritual poverty and lifeless profession in this world. It is becoming more and more evident as we consider this woman that, while she attempts to attract us with many flattering speeches and seductive appeals, it is her own self, her own enrichment, her own satisfaction that are her chief concern, however much she may pretend to have the interests of her dupes at heart. Whilst making a pretence of giving, it is abundantly clear that it is her own selfish interest which she has at heart. Little wonder that spiritual poverty and spiritual death are the dangers of consorting with her.

Our next and last reference to her will show these features in all their naked reality, for we have a long description of her in Prov. 7. It will be clear beyond doubt what this woman really is; the methods by which she works; much of what she has to say; a clear indication of what she has to offer, and above all what her end will be and the end also of those who foolishly go after her.

"Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call intelligence (thy) kinswoman; that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger who flattereth with her words," Prov. 7: 4, 5.

We are exhorted to claim kinship with wisdom, and this suggests that our only safety lies in taking heed to that which wisdom has to say to us. Only those who are wise, that is, those taught by God, will clearly see the character of this woman and have power to resist her overtures. In verse 7, Solomon tells us he discerned one going after this woman, and he says he was a "simple one." When rightly instructed by divine wisdom we pass the simple stage — the babe stage — and are able to discern between good and evil, Heb. 5: 13, 14. If it was a simple one who went after her, it follows that a wise one would have avoided her. We are told that this incident happened in the dark. So it has ever been. Not only are Christians called sons of wisdom in the New Testament, they are also called "sons of light," 1 Thess 5: 5 (N.T.). This woman loves darkness rather than light because her deeds are evil. It is those who walk in darkness who are deceived by her; she will never deceive those who walk in the light. Therein lies our safety.

"And behold, there met him a woman in the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart," Prov. 7: 10.

The character of this woman is here clearly stated. "Great Babylon," the mother of others who are

like her in character. Many systems have sprung from her, and like her are unfaithful to the One Whom they profess to represent. Most are steeped in the politics of the lands in which they are found, with the result that what is ministered is moral but far removed from that which is spiritual. Moral fornication has turned them out of the path of virtue and allegiance to their Lord, and now they stand as a menace to those who go right on their way. The greatest danger of these systems is that they carry on a religious pretence as the next quotation shows.

"I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows; therefore came I forth to meet thee, to seek earnestly thy face, and I have found thee," vv.14, 15.

The evident meaning of this is, having fulfilled religious formalities, we are now free to do as we like. The vow speaks of servile worship — and obligation; while the peace-offering speaks of fellowship. In the main, this is the burden of so-called religious instruction in many places today. This is where the mass have got to in Christendom. Vows are taken, offices are filled, servile worship is carried on in a formal way and men think to do God service in this way. In this chapter all these things happened in the dark, and this is the root of the false worship of God today. Is it not of this sort of thing the apostle warns us when he says, "Having a form of piety but denying the power of it; and from these turn away" (2 Tim. 3: 5)?

"For the husband is not at home, he is gone a long journey; he hath taken the money-bag with him, he will come home on the day of the full moon," v. 19.

We see now that unfaithfulness to an absent Lord has made this woman what she is. We have here almost the identical words which fell from the lips of our Lord in a parable. "But if that bondman should say in his heart, My Lord delays to come, and begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants and to eat and to drink and to be drunken," Luke 12: 45. These unfaithful servants seem to have some hazy idea that Christ is coming back again to establish His Kingdom, but at such a remote date that they have lost interest in it. In the meantime they assert lordship over the rest of the servants and live thoroughly worldly lives; nor do they hesitate to use their Master's goods to gratify their own desires. "The Lord of that bondman shall come in a day when he does not expect it, and in an hour he knows not of, and shall cut him in two and appoint his portion with the unbelievers," Luke 12: 46. Such will be the end of this system, Babylon the Great, the aggregate of all false profession. Again in this chapter her end is brought before us, "Her house is the way to Sheol, going *down* to the chambers of death," v. 27.

Enough has been said about this wicked, dangerous harlot, to warn all who have ears to hear. Of her character we are not left in any doubt; she flatters instead of speaking sober truth to men; her counsel is foolish and not characterized by divine wisdom. She is faithless instead of being true to the trust committed to her; she is a deceiver instead of providing things honest; she is unstable whereas she ought to have been firmly established; she is self-seeking when she ought to have cared for the needs of others, and above all she is a harlot when she ought to have been marked by moral virtue. She is everywhere lying in wait with flattering lips and every enticement of the flesh to captivate the simple ones. Our only safety lies in being taught of God as true sons of wisdom.

Another woman of whom we are warned is brought before us in Proverbs 9, and the sons of wisdom need to be warned against her also. We shall find much in common between this woman and "the strange woman," yet there is that which is distinctive about her. We may have noticed in passing that two words are used in relation to the strange woman, one meaning a "foreigner," and the other meaning "profane." The word translated here as "foolish" means "stupid." If then the one woman is marked by profanity, the foolish woman is marked by stupidity. We believe the "strange woman"

portrays the false church and the "foolish woman" portrays the world. That the world and the professing church have much in common is true, but they are regarded in Scripture as distinct systems, and God will deal with each of them separately in judgment. The strange woman is regarded as a distinct system from the beast which carries her, Rev. 17; the one represents the ecclesiastical system, the other the political system. Hand in hand they may be, nevertheless they are distinct. We believe that this "foolish woman" describes a world system where divine wisdom is unknown, and where men are at open enmity with God. The description we are about to quote will demonstrate this.

"The foolish woman is clamorous; she is stupid, and knoweth nothing. And she sitteth at the entry of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, to call passers-by who go right on their ways; Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither. And to him that is void of understanding she saith, Stolen waters are sweet, and the bread of secrecy is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; (that) her guests are in the depths of Sheol." Prov. 9: 13-18.

With all its boast of knowledge, this world is foolish, for we read, "has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" 1 Cor. 1: 20. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ has demonstrated forever the folly of man away from God. We note here that while this woman appeals to the simple ones, she has not true wisdom to offer them. We have before referred to the fact that both of these women have houses, suggesting a circle of fellowship, indicating that they have something to offer to these whom they call upon to enter. What then has this foolish woman to offer? Is it wisdom to the simple ones whom she calls? If so, it can only be the wisdom which James in his epistle warns us to avoid. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish," James 3: 15. Mark again, this woman calls to those who go right on their ways and we may well ask, "To what does she call and what has she to offer?"; "Stolen waters and the bread of secrecy." She may say they are "sweet . . . and pleasant," but whoever yields to her invitation will prove that her sweetmeats are bitter-sweets. We do well to listen to what the apostle Paul wrote of such a fellowship, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph. 5: 11. Death to both body and soul is the result of consorting with the system which this foolish woman portrays. This world goes on with the secret things of darkness and the pleasures of sin for a season, but death and destruction await it at the end.

If those passengers who go right on their ways desire to *keep going* right on their ways, they will need to close their ears to the appeal of this woman, and thus refuse to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. We take note of the exhortation of Paul to his son Timothy, "from such turn away." Hence we turn from these two women who can only lead us astray, hinder us in the progress of our souls, and rob us of the ability to render fruitful service to our God.

We turn now to listen to this third voice, the voice of wisdom, divine wisdom.

"Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding give forth her voice. On the top of high places by the way, at the cross-paths she taketh her stand. Beside the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors, she crieth aloud," Prov. 8: 1-3.

This is the voice of divine wisdom which calleth to us daily. That the one who calls is a female need not stumble us; whenever a female is used in the types it is to set forth divine principles in their subjective character. No honest mind taught of God can have any doubts that it is Christ who is set before us in this chapter. It has been asserted that we cannot apply abstract principles to Divine Persons, but this is clearly disproved by Luke 11: 49. "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles." Here we have a divine Person speaking, and we can be assured that the voice which speaks in female character in our passage in Proverbs is the same voice which speaks

in Luke 11. Divine wisdom has been made available to us in Christ as we read, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who has been made to us wisdom from God." 1 Cor. 1: 30.

In the passage we have quoted from Proverbs, wisdom is held out to us in order to keep us going right on our ways; again in this wonderful chapter we have wisdom in operation in relation to the creation of the universe, and it is this same wisdom which is available to us in the passage we are considering. The One who ordered the creation aright for the pleasure of the Godhead, presents to us that same wisdom so that we might walk aright in that creation for the pleasure of the Godhead. "I walk in the path of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasuries," verse 20.

It is to this voice we turn, the voice of wisdom who stands at the cross-paths, with the "strange woman" on the one hand and the "foolish woman" on the other. Travellers desiring to go right on their ways come apparently to cross-roads where *three* ways present themselves. To turn one way means falling a victim to the "strange woman"; to turn another way is to be ensnared by the "foolish woman"; but to go *right on* involves walking in fellowship with divine wisdom whose voice calls to us just there. Whenever we arrive at a point in the history of our souls where the next step needs very careful consideration, Wisdom is always there to instruct us, and if we follow her instructions we keep going right on our ways. We may thank God that He has given instruction in His word for every step we need to take in our service for Him in this world. Sons of wisdom should know what to do in every circumstance which may confront them in the path of faith. If we consider the implications of the passage we are dwelling upon, we shall see how complete these instructions are. Three spheres are brought before us, and Wisdom has a voice in relation to each of them.

First, she cries "Beside the gates." In Scripture gates set forth administration in a city. It was there Lot sat in that dreadful city, Sodom; it was there Boaz went to obtain justice for Ruth. For us today it would indicate the governing authorities in the lands in which we live. "Let every soul be subject to the authorities that are above him," Rom. 13: 1. We are not left without instruction as to our conduct in relation to the authorities which God has ordained. As believers on our Lord Jesus Christ we are left in this world to represent Him, hence we must seek His guidance in every sphere of responsibility in which we are found, and to seek to walk worthily of Him. We are to render tribute, custom, fear and honour. We honour the ruler and we submit to governors as those who are appointed by Him. Hence "in the gates" we are helped to do that which is right in the sight of God and for conscience sake.

Secondly, Wisdom stands "at the entry of the city." Here we have the business circle in which all, more or less, have to move. What great need we have for instruction in the midst of the conflicting and complicated issues which beset us on every hand. To walk right in the city, with all its corruption, dishonesty, sharp practices, calls for right instruction and steadfast purpose of heart. All the guidance we so need is clearly outlined for us in the Word of God. If a bondsman, one now takes account of oneself as the bondsman of the Lord, looking to Him for reward in the world to come, Col. 3: 24. Not only have we instructions for the servants, we also have instruction for the masters, Col. 4: 1. Wisdom instructs the servants to be marked by faithfulness, and the masters to act towards them righteously. The turmoil of the city, servants opposed to masters and masters opposed to and oppressing servants, would all disappear if both servants and masters walked according to the instruction of Wisdom. Whatever, others may do, we who are the "sons of wisdom" should seek grace to manifest that we *do* act according to these instructions whether masters or servants.

Thirdly, Wisdom cries "at the coming in at the doors." Here the household is in view. We are fully instructed in regard to our household responsibilities as we are in relation to our city

responsibilities. Am I a wife? If so, *subjection* ought to mark me towards my husband. Am I a husband? Then *love* should mark me towards my wife. Am I a father? If so, *grace* ought to mark me in my dealings with my children. Am I a child? Then *obedience* to my parents should be my attitude. Instruction as to all these relationships is found in one passage of Scripture, Col. 3: 18-22. Nor are these instructions confined to one passage of Scripture; they are found in most of the epistles. It is in the observance of these things that the practical marks of the children of Wisdom come to light in the world. Whether it be in relation to the governing authorities of this world; life in the city, which to us is the business circle; or of our relationships in the family circle, Wisdom instructs us as to right conduct in each. We are children of Wisdom by faith as Luke 7: 35 assures us, "and Wisdom has been justified of all her children," but by taking heed to these instructions we become Wisdom's children in practice. Following this counsel will preserve us from the "strange woman" on the one hand, and from the "foolish woman" on the other, but unless we are watching daily at the gates of Wisdom we are in danger from both, Prov. 8: 34.

"I walk in the path of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasuries," Prov. 8: 20, 21.

We have seen that the "strange woman" led to poverty, and that both she and the "foolish woman" led to death and destruction, but Wisdom leads into the path of righteousness and to a life filled with substance and treasure. The first two women cannot boast of substance, for they will lose all they seem to possess at the end. Death is stamped upon everything here, and the Lord assured His disciples that there was nothing in this world which they could call their own. Earthly material riches belong to Israel and they will have them in the world to come; our true riches are spiritual and heavenly. These our Lord said are "your own," Luke 16: 10-12. If we are wise, we shall reach out to them today and possess what is spoken of as "substance."

The instruction of Proverbs 8 is able to guide us in the sphere of Christian responsibility, so that we may "walk in wisdom toward them that are without," Col. 4: 5. This counsel is not given merely to keep us from all pitfalls, but to form us in true godly character, and to fill us with the wisdom which cometh from above.

There are also the delights of wisdom and all that is available in order to feed and nourish our souls, and for this we turn to Proverbs 9.

"Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath slaughtered her cattle, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also prepared her table; she hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the summits of the high places of the city. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither. To him that is void of understanding, she saith, 'Come, eat ye of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled. Forsake follies and live, and go in the way of intelligence'" Prov. 9: 1-6.

We are not told of what material the houses of the two evil women were built, but one is inclined to think they were built of bricks. The first time we have mention of bricks in Scripture is at Babel, Gen. 11: 3. The next time they are mentioned is in Egypt, Ex. 1: 14. Bricks speak of human material, man's imitation of stone which is divine material. Both of these false systems, the ecclesiastical and the political, are built of human material and both have reared their heads to give glory to men. In Babel it is "a name"; in Egypt it is "treasure cities." In the house which wisdom has built its seven pillars have been hewn out from the solid rock, and they thus set forth what is divine in building material. Did not our Lord say, "On this rock I will build My assembly," Matt. 16: 18? It is divine material, and the only material referred to as giving character to what is wholly divine in that which the Godhead is bringing about for its own eternal delight. Seven indicates that the house is perfect and complete. It is not said

that the house is being built, but it *is* builded, and thus there is set forth the whole scope of wisdom as providing for the maintenance of its sons. If ever there was a day when we can speak of completeness in the things of God it is today. To Paul it was given to *complete* the word of God. In the mystery are hidden *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and embedded in the assembly is the *all-various* wisdom of God, Col. 1: 25; Col. 2: 3; Eph. 3: 10.

Many helpful suggestions have been given to the saints concerning these seven pillars, but that which appeals to us as their meaning is the whole scope of the time ways of God, embracing the whole period of His dispensational dealings with men. Herein, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are seen, and the assembly as the vessel in which all is contained in view of the day of display. Behind the time ways of God is the counsel of the Godhead, and in the way God acts we learn what that counsel is. The course of time is marked out in seven distinctive ages in Scripture.

- (1) From Adam to the flood — an age of *lawlessness*.
- (2) From Noah to Abraham — an age of *government*.
- (3) From Abraham to Moses — an age of *promise*.
- (4) From Moses to Christ — an age of *law*.
- (5) From the birth of Christ to His coming again — an age of *grace*.
- (6) From the coming of Christ to the appearing — an age of *judgment*.
- (7) The display in the kingdom — an age of *glory*.

Upon these seven pillars wisdom has builded her house, for while two ages have yet to come into being, the truth concerning them is clearly outlined for us in the Scriptures. The divine revelation is complete though much of it has yet to be carried into effect. We are in the privileged position of viewing that house as the complete revelation of God.

In the provision of that house, the slaughtered cattle would suggest the ample provision which is available to feed our souls, and the mingled wine the various joys of those who have a place at wisdom's table. One chapter alone will give us to see the variety of this food, We refer to John 6. We eat the flesh of the Son of Man, verse 53; we eat living bread, verse 51; we eat the bread of life, verse 48; and above all the Lord said, "He that eateth ME," verse 57. What an abundance of food! The mingled wine would also suggest the various joys that are to be found in that circle. We have joy in believing, Rom. 15: 13; the joy of faith, Phil. 1: 25; joy in the Holy Spirit, Rom. 14: 17; and in the path marked out by the Son of God we have fullness of joy, John 15: 11. All this is offered to the simple who seek to be taught of God. Nor need we fear to own to God that we are simple, for our Lord said at the moment when earthly things were about to be laid aside and that which was heavenly was to be brought in, "I praise Thee, Father, Lord of the heaven and of the earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes," Matt. 11: 25. That marked the beginning of the work of God in our souls. He brought us to the Son. Nor need we fear to own to God that we are simple now that we *do* belong to Him for again we read, "If any one of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all freely and reproaches not, and it shall be given to him," Jas. 1: 5. If we respond to the call of wisdom and accept what God offers to us, we shall be nourished by all the provision of that table, and enjoy all the delights of wisdom. We shall be enlightened, satisfied, and well nourished in the enjoyment of the things of God, with the result that we shall walk in wisdom to them which are without, redeeming the time. There are ample resources to satisfy us within and support us without. Being thus nourished and sustained we shall avoid the "strange woman" on the one hand, and the

"foolish woman" on the other, and we shall move through this world evidencing the true features of the sons of wisdom.