

Proverbs 9:1-3

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/prov/prov-9/proverbs-91-3/>

Solomon describes Lady Wisdom's efforts to construct a sturdy dwelling and invites us all to dwell there with her.

Following Lady Wisdom's speech in Chapter 8, Solomon returns to his own voice (the teacher speaking to the youth) and expands on his admonition of wisdom and its virtue.

Wisdom has built her house (vs 1). We have heard of Wisdom's dwelling in previous chapters. Those verses focused on the presence of Wisdom dwelling in her house. In this verse, Wisdom is building her *house*. She is not just the inhabitant, but the constructor. *She has hewn out her seven pillars* (vs 1). The word for *hewn* here is the Hebrew word "hasab," which can mean "dig," "cut," or "carve." It is a word of work. Of effort.

There is no clear description of what the *seven pillars* of her house represent. *Seven* is a significant number in Scripture: the number of completion (i.e. seven days of creation). 1 Kings 7:17 says that Solomon's temple had seven pillars. So, this most likely represents the same symbolic importance as Solomon's temple—that it is complete and holy.

Another clue can be found by comparing these first three verses with the description of Folly in verses 13-15. In verse 14, Folly "sits at the doorway of her house." Folly is idle, whereas *Wisdom* is active. Folly's house is nondescript and has no imposing features, whereas Wisdom's house is grand and solid. The main agenda seems to be to emphasize the stability of Wisdom and her work-like intention.

Wisdom is busy. Like the woman of Proverbs 31:10-31, she is not idle. She moves with intention and purpose: *She has prepared her food, she has mixed her wine. She has also set her table* (vs 2). Again, the contrast with Folly in verses 13-15 helps show us Solomon's intention. Folly "sits." All she does is "call out." In the previous chapters, Wisdom has called out. But she is also active. She works (*prepared, mixed, set*) and her work produces bounty (*food, wine, table*).

The focus of the first two verses of Chapter 9 seem to be that Wisdom is working hard. And she is working with intention. All she is doing is an effort to establish her house and entice others (all of us) to join her.

To this end, *she has sent out her maidens* (vs 3). In keeping with the feminine personification, the *maidens* are messengers of Lady Wisdom. They are, like Solomon, spreading the teachings of Wisdom, bringing her ways into the public view as living witnesses.

She calls from the tops of the heights of the city (vs 3). In other places (such as Proverbs 8:2), *Wisdom* is described as calling from the *heights*. It is a commanding and imposing position. In contrast, Folly, in verses 13-15, "sits" "By the high places of the city." So, perhaps surprisingly, Folly is close to the heights but not on the level of *Wisdom*. They are, in one sense, rivals—both

are calling and vying for the hearts and minds of man. On the other hand, Wisdom is superior. She calls from the *tops* of the *heights*. She is the path of industry and shared productivity while foolishness is the path of sluggards and consumption.

Biblical Text

**Wisdom has built her house,
She has hewn out her seven pillars;
² She has prepared her food, she has mixed her wine;
She has also set her table;
³ She has sent out her maidens, she calls
From the tops of the heights of the city:**